

BUFFALO NIAGARA PARTNERSHIP 2009/10 Agribusiness Industry Action Agenda

Our agricultural heritage, logistics capability, and manufacturing bench strength combine to make Buffalo Niagara one of the top food and food processing centers in the nation.

Agribusiness is the region's largest employer – well over a thousand food and food processing companies make their home here. New York is the third-largest dairy producing state in the U.S., and much of that industry is concentrated in Buffalo Niagara. Grain-related food producers take advantage of Buffalo Niagara's location. Grain is barged in via the St. Lawrence Seaway from the Midwest and Canadian bread baskets. In addition, Western New York is one of the country's most important wine growing regions.

Coordinate with agribusiness industry groups on supply chain / “Buy Local” efforts

Through events and cooperative advocacy efforts related to specific legislation, collaborate with agribusiness industry and economic development partners to support local supply chains and business-to-business opportunities within the region.

Advocacy on behalf of the agribusiness industry

Monitor, advocate in opposition to, and/or provide solutions for legislation at the state and federal level that burdens or hinders agribusiness production, processing, distribution or sales, including, but not limited to:

- Defeat of the proposed NYS Farm Workers Bill (A.1867/S.2247)
- Defeat of the proposed Clean Water Restoration Act (S.787)
- Passage of federal legislation and/or regulatory changes to reform the H2a program into an efficient and cost-effective means of securing seasonal and year-round workers
- Defeat NYS efforts to impose truck traffic regulations in rural areas

Increase broadband access in rural areas

Work with entities in federal and NYS governments toward the implementation of broadband service in the region's rural areas for use by the agribusiness industry for education, sharing of information and communication.

Cross-promote agribusiness with other industry clusters

Use the Partnership's business-to-business connections to engage agribusinesses employers with other industry clusters to help growth and market expansion, particularly the logistics industry.

Employer Outreach

Engage in regular outreach visits with agribusiness industry employers in coordination with the efforts of other strategic partners, including BNE, ECIDA, Erie County, City of Buffalo and ESD to ensure Partnership activities are aligned with the needs and opportunities of our members.