



NYS AGRICULTURAL MEDIATION PROGRAM

STRAIGHT TALK • FAIR SOLUTIONS

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NYSAMP Staff

Peter Glassman, Statewide Director, is a Capital District native, licensed attorney, trainer and mediator with over 20 years experience. Peter has led a variety of trainings on conflict management, communication skills and mediation in diverse settings. Peter has taught classes in Mediation and Conflict Resolution at Siena College, Skidmore College, and the Albany Law School.

Christine Tausel, Program Manager, was a constituent aide for NYS Senator James L. Seward and a program technician for the USDA Farm Service Agency in Delaware and Otsego Counties. Chris' family operates a dairy farm in Otsego County; she was active in the Farm Bureau, 4H and Cornell Cooperative Extension. She is a graduate of Cornell University.

Visit www.nysamp.com to find a NYSAMP affiliate in your area.



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2013 Annual Report



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Message from the Director:

Ben Franklin famously said that the only things certain in our world are death and taxes. I would humbly add a third unavoidable phenomenon to that short list: change.

Change happens whether we like it or not. In our lifetimes we are witnessing unprecedented changes in our economy, our culture, and our technology. For most of us, change is disruptive, disorienting, unpredictable and unwelcome. We resist change.

In agriculture, we see change manifest in many ways including an increased interest in locally grown food, an exploding demand for Greek yogurt, and in the challenges of a farm passing from one generation to the next.

Change, almost by definition, does not occur without conflict. And conflict must be managed well in order to produce beneficial results. Mediation is an effective tool for producing positive results. It is a tool that enables us to better adapt to change – whether that change is imposed upon us by the outside world (hotter, dryer growing seasons) or is initiated by us (working with family members to create a farm succession plan).

During 2013, many producers and agricultural service providers used free or low-cost NYSAMP services to better manage changes and solve problems in their business and personal lives.

Speaking of change, this year Charlotte Carter, the longtime Statewide Director of NYSAMP was promoted to the position of Executive Director of the NYS Dispute Resolution Association. I have both the privilege and the challenge of filling the shoes that Charlotte so ably wore for the past seven years as she crisscrossed the state to promote collaborative planning and conflict management for agricultural communities.

Change can be pretty scary. It is also energizing, exciting, and bristling with potential. I am looking forward to working with you as you utilize mediation to manage the changes that constantly impact your life.

Peter Glassman,

Statewide Program Director
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Statewide

NYSAMP has grown dramatically during the past nine years; we are now one of the largest certified agricultural mediation programs in the nation.

NYSAMP provides free and low-cost mediations statewide with **local offices in every county** of New York.

Straight Talk

In 2013, NYSAMP services helped farm families and agribusinesses sit down and talk about some very difficult and controversial situations in a way that was honest and productive. Some of these problems included:

- Small claims and unpaid bills
- Machinery and supplier credit
- Bank loans
- Farm succession
- Interpersonal and neighbor complaints
- USDA appeals

Fair Solutions

NYSAMP helps farmers and those in the agricultural community create workable solutions to their conflicts.

NYSAMP mediations also save time. Although complex cases can require multiple mediation sessions over several months, the vast majority of situations can be addressed quickly. **The average time from first contact with parties to the completion of the case is just over 16 days.**

Case Outcomes

Local NYSAMP staff accepts referrals, then talks with the individuals involved to learn about the disagreements and describes the mediation process. If all parties agree to meet, a session can be quickly scheduled for a mutually convenient time and location. In the last year, over 90% of NYSAMP cases resulted in agreement.

Presentations and Workshops

NYSAMP provides presentations and workshops for farmers and employees of agricultural organizations and agencies adapted to the needs of your group. Interactive, experiential, skill-based training is available with ample opportunities for practice and individualized feedback. NYSAMP works with a network of talented and experienced trainers across the state.

360

Mediated Cases

968

People Served

90.2%

Agreement Rate

NYSAMP Success Story

It is typical for a North Country farm family to have an ongoing credit account with a local fuel supplier. The supplier provides automatic delivery to ensure a constant and sufficient supply of fuel for operation of the farm. In February 2013, unusually heavy snowfalls combined with strong winds to bring down trees and power lines. The resulting power outages required constant use of back-up generators resulting in increased fuel consumption. One farmer's debt tripled for a two month period. This made him unable to pay in full as he had in the past. The supplier had known the farmer for decades and didn't want to sue in court, and certainly didn't want to stop the critical fuel deliveries. When the supplier eventually brought the matter to Small Claims Court, the parties were given the opportunity to work it out themselves with the help of a mediator. The mediation process allowed the supplier and the farmer to agree to a reasonable payment plan and ensure that necessary fuel delivery would continue.

