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New York State Announces Access to Capital Event Aimed at Helping Agriculture, Food and Beverage Businesses Grow will be Held in Rochester on July 29

Hosted by ESD, NYS Ag & Markets and Federal Reserve Bank of New York, small business owners will meet financial industry reps to learn about accessing capital

Empire State Development (ESD) today announced that Access to Capital, a free conference and resource expo to help people in the food-and-beverage and agriculture industries access capital and grow their businesses, will be held in Rochester from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Friday, July 29. Representatives from the financial industry and federal, state and local government agencies will gather at the Thomas Flynn Campus Center on Monroe Community College's Brighton Campus, to give small business owners an inside perspective on what type of financing is most appropriate for their business, alternatives to traditional bank loans, what lenders look for in potential borrowers, and international market opportunities.

The event is a collaboration between ESD, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Registration at <http://www.cvent.com/d/0vqn5w> is required.

“Even the most talented and hard-working entrepreneurs often need help figuring out what their company’s next step should be and how to take it,” said **ESD President, CEO and Commissioner Howard Zemsky**. “Our Access to Capital forums are helping small business owners get the advice they need to grow their enterprises to their full potential.”

“So many of New York's food, beverage, and agricultural producers are smart, innovative, and driven,” said **State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball**. “With their talent and the right guidance from the experts at the Access to Capital expo, there are no limits to the success they will find. It is a terrific opportunity for our small business owners to take their companies to the next level.”

Access to Capital was first launched in 2014, with the goal of aiding owners of small food, beverage, and agriculture businesses, who often have difficulty finding industry lenders and entering international markets. Realizing that companies need capital and

markets to grow, ESD teamed up with the state Department of Agriculture and Markets and the Federal Reserve Bank of New York to help business owners connect with specialized banks, funds, investors and government programs for their industries.

The first Access to Capital event, held in Albany in 2014, was such a success that it was expanded to four events across the state in 2015, including one at the Finger Lakes Community College. This is the second Access to Capital event of 2016 with the first event held in Niagara Falls on June 27.

About Empire State Development

Empire State Development is New York's chief economic development agency. The mission of ESD is to promote a vigorous and growing economy, encourage the creation of new job and economic opportunities, increase revenues to the State and its municipalities, and achieve stable and diversified local economies. Through the use of loans, grants, tax credits, and other forms of financial assistance, ESD strives to enhance private business investment and growth to spur job creation and support prosperous communities across New York State. ESD is also the primary administrative agency overseeing Governor Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Councils and the marketing of "I Love NY," the State's iconic tourism brand. For more information on Regional Councils and Empire State Development, visit <http://www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov> and www.esd.ny.gov.

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