



Photo by Amy Halloran

A buckwheat field surrounds Farmer Ground Flour's new mill in Enfield, N.Y.

New Upstate NY Mill to Boost Production From Local Grain

AMY HALLORAN

New York Correspondent

ENFIELD, N.Y. — The largest producer of local flour in New York state is poised to make a major improvement in its operation

Farmer Ground Flour is building a new mill in Enfield, having outgrown its first home, in an old Agway feed building in Trumansburg, where it started in March 2009.

"Here we could make our mistakes," co-owner and miller Greg Mol said of the original mill,

where he has figured out how to snake a labyrinth of tubes and equipment through the building's two floors.

The long wooden building has a loading dock running the length of it, but no system to handle quantities of grains for processing, or to store them once processed.

The current site has shown Mol and farmer Thor Oechsner, his partner in Farmer Ground Flour, what they want at the new mill, not only for grain and product storage, but also in terms of

equipment flow.

Moving grain from Oechsner Farms in Newfield to the current mill eats up a lot of time. A truckload will fill eight one-ton totes at the mill. Maneuvering the totes through the heights and angles of the building's floor plan is not simple. While this is an improvement over the original transfer, the new mill will be much better, the owners said.

"We started with 50-pound bags in a pickup

More **FLOUR**, page **A3**

Sandy Brings Destruction to Some Farms

No Widespread Problems
Reported, However

CHRIS TORRES

Staff Writer

Even though Hurricane Sandy was far to the west by the time Mercer County, N.J., farmer Scott Ellis woke up Tuesday morning, she had left a lot of damage in her wake.

Howling winds blew a building four feet off its foundation on Ellis' farm. A roof on a barn had a hole blown through it. And a grain auger had been blown over.

"I'm just trying to figure out what's going on," Ellis said by phone Tuesday.

Nearly 200 miles to the west, an exhausted, bleary-eyed Chuck Fry was busy accessing the damage to his dairy in Point of Rocks, Md.

Water had gotten into some of his buildings. Fences and trees were blown down. And part of a roof on a barn was blown off.

"That was probably the biggest damage we had," Fry said.

Given the size of the storm and the varying effects of rain and wind, some farmers experienced extensive damage while others were counting their blessings, thankful the storm didn't cause as much damage as expected.

Leon Ressler, regional director with Penn State Cooperative Extension, said for the most part, farmers he knows in Lancaster and Chester counties experienced

More **SANDY**, page **A15**

Salvaged Timbers Take on New Life at NY Farm

PAUL POST

New York Correspondent

MALTA, N.Y. — They were felled by early settlers, shaped into mighty beams and sheltered livestock, people and farm equipment for almost 200 years.

Silently, they stood sentinel on upstate New York's rural landscape while the world around them underwent incredible change, from horse and buggies to lunar landings.

When their lesser parts began to fail, the structure they formed, an 18th century English barn, was torn down.

However, their usefulness hadn't expired, and on Oct. 26 these huge pine and hemlock timbers were re-assembled to provide pleasure and protection to future generations while preserving an important aspect of agricultural history.

"Restoring Americana, one barn

"I'm trying to create an experience here, where people can start family traditions."
Peter Brooks

at a time," Jim Sweet Jr. said.

That's what his father's firm, The Old Barn Company, is doing, and their latest project is a 30-by-40-foot structure at Peter Brooks' Boulder Rock Farm, a new cut-your-own Christmas tree enterprise in Malta, just outside Saratoga Springs.

Brooks purchased the 15-acre site two years ago and planted his first 500 trees last spring. He plans to add similar numbers each year until all available land is under production. It takes eight to 10 years before trees are ready to cut.

The barn will be the farm's focal point, where visitors can go to enjoy hot cider and donuts. A portion of it will also house a museum-type exhibit in which people can learn about its history and restoration.

"I'm trying to create an experience here, where people can start family traditions," Brooks said. "All along that's what I've had in mind. It's a real Currier & Ives-type scene."

Brooks has spared no expense in time, money or energy in seeing his project become reality.

"I'm trying to be as historically accurate as possible," he said. "I had fun doing a lot of research. There's a lot of books and materials out there."

Jim Sweet Sr.'s firm does restorations all over the Northeast, and

More **TIMBERS**, page **A2**



Photo by Paul Post

Peter Brooks stands near the frame of a barn made from reassembled 18th-century timbers on his Malta, N.Y., farm.

Inside:



Market on
the Move
A7

Markets
A32



Rise to the
Occasion
B2



Mid-Atlantic
Horse
Section E

Flour

Continued from A1

truck. Greg had to climb a ladder and pour them into the top of the mill,” Oechsner said. “So going to totes was excellent. But now we’ll go to bulk bins and augers and gravity to do that work.”

Another problem that prompted the move is that Mol can’t run the existing sifters fast enough for optimal production. When he runs the sifters at full speed, the building shakes too much for the other tenants.

“Still, this was a great place to start,” Mol said.

While some people start similar businesses with brand-new buildings, hiring milling engineers and buying new — or at least newer equipment than they did — there is

an advantage to starting from scratch with little capital and in less than ideal conditions, they said.

That advantage is not just escaping debt. Trying to work within the given constraints, Mol understands how a structure can best serve the purposes of the mill. People who invest a lot of money right from the start could be investing in the wrong design, or tools that won’t suit a market that isn’t yet established. Experts can’t predict how a business will grow, and might not understand the unknown audience for a niche product like local grains.

Experience has been a great teacher, the partners said.

The building for the new mill sits on 1.5 acres of a 38-acre site that is 10 miles from Oechsner Farms and close to Wide Awake Bakery in Mecklenburg, which uses Farmer Ground Flour. Oechsner grew buck-

wheat on the surrounding fields this summer.

The new mill is a 30-by-80-foot box that is 30 feet tall on one end and a single 16-foot story at the other for storage and offices. Instead of putting in a wooden second floor on the tall side, they’re going to build a metal framework. Once harvest is done, Dan Gladstone, who works at the farm, will weld the framework to hold the equipment.

“We wanted a metal floor because that would hold a lot more weight and handle a lot more shaking from the sifter. We didn’t build a second floor because it needed to be really strong,” Mol said.

The mills will be on the first floor and the sifters on the second. The extra height allows them to place chutes at a good angle for grain flow. The whole milling operation will be encased in an insulated area to help contain sound and vibrations; the heat generated by the mill will heat the rest of the building.

While this space will let Mol lay out equipment in a fluid manner, the new system will resemble what he already uses.

“I’m happy with the system, and I’m into simplicity,” Mol said. “I can make the flour people are into. A guy from Canada said, ‘I can’t find this flour anywhere else.’”

Farmer Ground Flour is known to artisan bakers as a high-extraction flour. In milling, extraction refers to how much flour is extracted from the grains. Whole wheat flours have 100 percent extraction, while white flours are generally 70 to 75 percent extraction. High-extraction flours have more germ and bran than white flour, and are preferred by artisan bakers for the taste and nutritional qualities they lend to bread.

Currently, Mol uses two stone mills manufactured by Meadows Mills, a company in North Carolina. One mill has a set of 30-inch stones, and the other mill’s stones are 24 inches in diameter. The mills run in series; two sifters are used for various flour products.

The new mill also will have an additional mill exclusively for grinding corn. Outside, a bucket elevator will be con-



Photos by Amy Halloran
Thor Oechsner, left, shows Farmer Ground Flour’s new mill to farmer Dan Smith, who lives and farms nearby.



**pennfield**
Dairy Profitability Team

Grain Bank Prices Week of 11/4/12


- Use any grain to pay for any feed same as cash
- Choice of back-haul or cash freight reimbursement
- Reduce out-of-pocket feed payments all year long

Mount Joy
Corn - \$7.56 • Barley - \$6.10
Soybeans - \$14.72

Martinsburg
Corn - \$7.56 • Barley - \$6.10
Soybeans - \$14.72 • Oats - \$4.75

South Montrose
Corn - \$7.61

24/7 CUSTOMER SERVICE 1-800-995-0333

**Carlisle**
Livestock Market, Inc.

FED CATTLE SALE

Tues., Nov. 6 & 20
7 PM
Exit 44 off I-81 Turn South then Left on Alexander Spring Rd.
Market (717) 249-4511

**A&C Diffenbach Auction Inc.**

100 West Jackson Street • New Holland, Pennsylvania 17557
Office: (717) 355-7253 • FAX: (717) 355-9547
www.acauction.net

HAY, STRAW, GRAIN & FIREWOOD SALE EVERY MONDAY - 10:00 A.M.

EQUIPPED FOR AN AUCTION AT YOUR PLACE OR OURS
ALAN DIFFENBACH AUCT. -AU2258-L

VINTAGE SALES STABLES, INC.

MONDAY SALES
AT 11:30 AM
SELLING HEIFERS, BULLS, STEERS, FEEDER & BUTCHER COWS
CALVES 3:00 PM

TUESDAY SALES
12:30 P.M.
SLAUGHTER CATTLE AUCTION
STEERS, BULLS, HEIFERS, COWS, FEEDER CATTLE
4:30 P.M.
CALVES, SHEEP, GOATS
***GET CALVES IN EARLY!**
OUR STATE GRADER STARTS AT 10:30 A.M.

BUSINESS 717/442-4181
717/768-8204

FIELD REP BUTCH BROWN
717/341-8568

RT. 30 - 10 MILES EAST OF LANCASTER IN PARADISE, PA

**Feeder Sale 2nd Friday of Each Month**

NEW HOLLAND SALES STABLES INC.
THE ACTION AUCTION

Livestock Is Our Only Business!
Rescheduled Annual Dairy Show and Sale, Nov. 7th • Special Dairy Heifer Sale, Nov. 14th

MONDAY
7:30 A.M.
SLAUGHTER HOGS
EARLY BIRD HOG SALE
Sell Your Hogs At New Holland Sales Stables, Inc. See them weighed, sold and pickup your check.

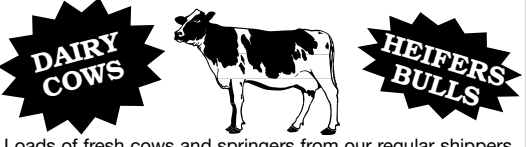
10:00 A.M.
RIDING HORSES, PONIES, DRIVING HORSES AND SOME WORK STOCK

9:00 A.M. - SHEEP, GOATS

12:30 P.M. BEEF SALE

4:00 P.M. - CALVES

WEDNESDAY
10:30 A.M.
COW SALE FOLLOWED BY BULLS FOLLOWED BY HEIFERS

**DAIRY COWS**
HEIFERS BULLS
Loads of fresh cows and springers from our regular shippers. Also some local fresh cows and springers. 200 Heifers Sell Every Week All Sizes & Ages Registered & Grades

1:30 P.M. FEEDER PIG SALE
1st & 3rd Wednesdays of each month
Pigs are accepted after 6:30 A.M. State graded from 8 to 12. Dairy Barn and Feeder Pig Barn are cleaned and disinfected weekly for your protection.

THURSDAY
9:30 A.M. BEEF AUCTION

BULLS, STEERS, BEEF COWS

1:00 P.M. STOCKERS & FEEDERS

2:00 P.M. GOATS, SHEEP

3:30 P.M. CALVES

New Holland Sales Stables, Inc.
12 Miles East of Lancaster Off Route 23, New Holland, PA
David Kolb Manager 61L
Sale Barn Office Manager:
Michael J. McDermott - 717-354-4341
FAX #717-355-0706

Order Buyer: Aaron Martin 717-445-4825
Field Representatives For Beef and Feeders:
Ron Ranck - 717-656-9849
Jim Martin - 717-445-4063 Home 717-405-5339 Cell
Field Representative For Sheep and Goats:
Paul Linehouser - 717-354-4341