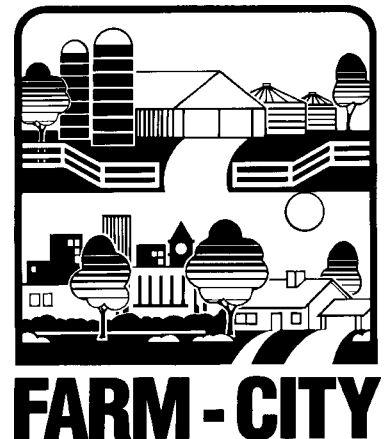


**Tips, tools  
and ideas  
for  
organizing  
a  
successful,  
local  
farm-city  
program**



## Site Committee

In planning a Farm-City event, there are several factors to consider involving location. You might have a perfect farm in mind but if you lose visitors on the way because it is too hard to find or the roads are impassable, your event will not be successful. It is important to consider weather. If it rains, will your site still be good? For example, parking — can the area designated for parking still be used if it rains?

This event **MUST** be held, rain or shine. The reason is obvious — it might rain at the Farm-City site but nowhere else (and vice versa). If you cancel, how are you going to let everyone know? If you've done a good advertising job people will come from multiple counties. Rain will not likely spoil a well-planned event, although it will affect your attendance to some degree. In 1996, our event was attended by the smallest crowd ever (about 1,100 persons) because the majority of Tioga County was dumped on by a hurricane coming up the coast. However, we had beautiful weather at the farm.

We have used a group of three or four individuals for our site committee. They then drive by the proposed site farms as a group. Using some preestablished criteria (location and accessibility, condition of the buildings, type of operation, adaptability, etc) we then rank the farms in preferred order. Each of the committee members completes the evaluation on their own as each site is observed. At the end of the tour, points are totalled from all sheets and the first, second and third choices are noted.

We do not discuss our visit with any of the farm families. This becomes important in case our first choice farm turns down our invitation to be host family.

It is then the responsibility of the group or chairman of the event to approach the farm family to invite them to host the Farm-City Day event. I have done this for many years and find the easiest way to approach them is with praise about the beauty of their farm and knowledge of how the event can be successful. We let them know we have a committee and plan to take care of insurance, trash disposal, tents (if needed), advertising, and other items necessary for a successful event. Make sure they realize you want to include them in the planning from the beginning. It is critical to invite the host family to attend your planning meetings — schedule a time when someone from the family can attend.

Several farms can be lumped together in a tour effect, but be careful as insurance can get sticky. We have chosen to stick to one farm and trying to keep wagon tours on the farm rather than on roads due to traffic, etc. Dairy, crop, beef, fruit, and vegetable farms all work out well.