

Farm store celebrates reopening and expansion

By Katie Kocijanski Columbia-Greene Media | Posted: Monday, June 29, 2015 12:30 am

HARLEMVILLE— After a yearlong construction process, the Hawthorne Valley Farm Store celebrated its official grand reopening Sunday morning.

Attendees were treated to free tastings of Hawthorne Valley Farm's cheese, kraut and bakery artisan foods, along with special store giveaways, kids' activities and live music by Mark Herschler.

The celebration was marked by a special ribbon cutting by store manager Dana Wagner and Martin Ping, executive director of Hawthorne Valley Association.

"I want to especially thank our customers for putting up with the construction for the last year or so," Wagner said. "We wanted to enhance the shopping experience by making it easier for our customers."

The expansion project included an additional 430 square feet to offer expanded café seating, and a redesign of the front of the store to increase the produce, cheese and deli selections.

Wagner said the expansion also includes a new streamlined checkout, and a relocated bakery section and coffee bar. All food will now be stored in new, energy-efficient coolers and freezers.

Event attendees were able to see the new locally-made register and produce stands, and coffee counters.

The association's director of marketing and communications, Karen Preuss, agreed with Wagner about what the intent of the expansion was all along — to enhance their customers' shopping experience. The redesign provides a more enjoyable retail environment, they said.

"We are making a conscious effort to build a local, living, resilient food economy here at Hawthorne Valley," Ping said. "Our customers are the reason why the store is here."

The store gives many local farms and entrepreneurs in Columbia County the opportunity to sell their goods and services to the community.

According to the Hawthorne Valley Farm website www.hawthornevalleyfarm.org, the store was



Farm store

Farm store manager Dana Wagner cut the ribbon Sunday morning for the grand reopening of the Hawthorne Valley Farm Store after a year long expansion.

originally a self-serve old horse barn.

It was updated to a completely environmentally sustainable, green building completed in 2004. It has grown to sell several lines of organic/natural foods.

“All of the contractors and craftsmen who were used for this project were locally sourced, we are proud to support them,” Wagner said.

The association’s director of campus services, Gary Ocean, said Allegrone Construction of Pittsfield, Mass. completed the construction project.

The farm store is open seven days a week, from 7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.

All donations given at the various food stations and registers benefited the Salvation Army Food Kitchen in Hudson. The farm store matched up to \$1,000 in donations.

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