FLRPnet serves a rural region extending from the Southern Tier to the Thruway, and from Hornell to Norwich – an area of 8,000 square miles and home to one million people. The largest city is Binghamton with a population of 46,000. Other small cities include Auburn, Canandaigua, Corning, Cortland, Elmira, and Ithaca. Agriculture and forestry are major land uses. Water is abundant. There are traditions of innovation and manufacturing. FLRPnet sees many opportunities for working towards an economy that creates wealth that stays local, improves the livelihoods of rural communities, and sustains the assets of the region.

FLRPnet Board Members
Daniel Fessenden (Chair)
Lou Walcer (Vice –Chair)
Gene Yarussi (Treasurer)
Jeannette Frank (Secretary)
Greg Hartz
Natasha Thompson
Charlie Trautmann

Mission
Working to improve the economic condition of the region particularly of under-served and economically isolated people.

Vision
Economic prosperity for the region.
FLRPnet has grown from Tompkins County Area Development’s (TCAD) efforts to start a 501(c)3 charitable organization. Established in 2013 FLRPnet now has a board of seven members from four counties and has received funding from TCAD, The Park Foundation, the USDA, Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), the Tompkins County Development Corporation, the Community Foundation of Elmira-Corning and the Finger Lakes, Farm Credit East, and several regional banks.

The Finger Lakes region has a strong agricultural heritage with increasing investment in small, independent farms, as well as a multitude of new food businesses. Located four hours from New York City, the region is ideally situated to provide fresh and lightly processed foods to the 20 million people in the metropolitan area.

In 2016, FLRPnet identified the need for a comprehensive food business development system. FoodBIP will create that system for new and expanding food industry businesses. It will address the many issues facing entrepreneurs including supply chain requirements, regulations, financing, and workforce development.

We completed a small preliminary study of the Food Processing sector as well as a larger feasibility study for the Food Processing Business Incubation Program (FoodBIP). In April 2018 the ARC awarded $67,700 to pilot the FoodBIP through a staffing partnership between FLRPnet and Cornell Cooperative Extension. During 2019, FoodBIP will initially serve Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, and Tompkins counties, and aims to serve the greater region starting in 2020.

• Catalyzing initiatives through convening and outreach.
• Supporting efforts initiated by other organizations.
• Providing planning support.
• Obtaining economic development funding.

FLRPnet seeks your participation

FLRPnet is committed to rural wealth creation. Food Processing is our first program area. We look to expand into other sectors where regional initiatives will be most effective – from Tourism to Advanced Manufacturing. Efforts will focus on workforce development, entrepreneurship, resource networking, and the Finger Lakes brand.

As we build Advisory Committees and a network of specialists we are seeking talented and committed organizations who want to build prosperity in this region.