



## Press Release

For immediate release  
Date: February 13, 2020

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### The Farm Babe to Headline Agriculture Agriculture Conference

Internationally-known speaker The Farm Babe will highlight the importance of agriculture to the economy as she headlines the annual Jefferson County Agricultural Development Conference on March 19 and 20 with free public presentations.

Michelle Miller, also known as The Farm Babe, is an online influencer, columnist, popular keynote speaker and farmer from Iowa. She will be speaking on Thursday, March 19 at Sturtz Theater on the Jefferson Community College campus, and during the Ag Conference on Friday, March 20 at the Hilton Garden Inn, Watertown. She and her boyfriend operate a 2,200 acre crop, sheep and beef farm. Miller is known as a dedicated agricultural “myth buster” with over 120,000 followers and an average social media reach of 3 million monthly views. She has been featured in Forbes magazine and was recently a guest on Dr. Drew.

The March 19 evening event will begin with a reception at 6 p.m., followed by Miller’s presentation at 7 p.m. This event is part of both the annual JCC Business Symposium and the Ag Conference and is free and open to the public. Miller will speak about the farming “myths” she heard before she became a farmer and what she actually learned once she became involved in the industry. “This is such an exciting opportunity for our students and community members to learn more about an industry so vital to our region,” said Dr. Ty A. Stone, President of Jefferson Community College. “Most of us believe we know a little something about agriculture, but Michelle’s presentation is sure to broaden our perspective of the agricultural industry and how it has evolved, as well as increase our understanding of the realities faced by our local farmers.”

The Agricultural Development Conference kicks off at 9 a.m. March 20 with a panel discussion on a variety of brand new local agricultural programs including the Environment and Agriculture Academy at Jefferson – Lewis BOCES, the Sackets Harbor Agriculture Education and Awareness Center, and the Jefferson County Agricultural Guidance Team. At 10:30 am, Dr. Hiren Bhavsar, Assistant Professor and Curriculum Coordinator of the Agribusiness Management program at SUNY Canton, will discuss new consumer trends and their impact on agriculture, helping farmers and agribusiness people better understand what the consumer wants.

Miller will present a second session at the conference, this one more geared toward farmers, agribusiness representatives, agency staff, and elected officials. “Agriculture is a key component of the regional economy and it’s important that all North Country residents understand how it fits in,” said James W. Wright, Executive Director of the Development Authority of the North

Country, a sponsor of the event. “Ms. Miller’s perspective, particularly to the non-farmers among us, will be enlightening. I look forward to learning how much of what I’ve heard about farming is true and what’s a myth!”

Donald Alexander, Chief Executive Officer for Jefferson County Economic Development, indicated that the support for this event has been tremendous, thanking sponsors Midway International Logistics, the Development Authority of North Country, Great Lakes Cheese Company, National Grid Economic Development and Energy Efficiency programs, American Dairy Association Northeast, Lundy Group of Companies, AminoMax Feed Supplements, Jefferson County Farm Bureau and Converse Laboratories. Alexander said that, “some of our best local businesses recognize the tremendous contribution that Agriculture makes to the welfare and economy of northern New York. We thank them for the continued support they always demonstrate when asked to help.”

Lunch is included with conference registration. While attendance and lunch are free, advance registration is requested. For more information on the Ag Conference and to register, visit [www.agricultureevents.com](http://www.agricultureevents.com) or call Jay Matteson, Jefferson County Agricultural Coordinator, at 315-782-5865.

For more information on The Farm Babe, see: [www.thefarmbabe.com](http://www.thefarmbabe.com).