

# MULTIVERSE MAYHEM



## THE POST-STANDARD

### TOPS, COMMITTED TO SUSTAINABLY SOURCED PRODUCTS & SUPPORTING LOCAL ECONOMY



At Tops Friendly Markets, social responsibility is deeply ingrained in its company mission by helping to reduce environmental waste and energy consumption and offering its customers sustainably sourced, high-quality products. Their strong emphasis on relationships is what sets them apart. Collaborating with like-minded partners who share their long-term vision leads to innovation and a more sustainable future.

John Persons, President of Tops, emphasizes the importance of trust in every connection they make. "We strive to build trust with our vendor partners, farmers, associates, customers, and the communities we serve. The trust placed in us as a company is a responsibility we take seriously."

As spring transitions into summer, Tops intensifies its focus on supporting local growers. Through its partnership with over 500 local produce and dairy farmers, as well as numerous local companies, they ensure that their stores are stocked with the freshest fruits, vegetables, eggs, and dairy products. By choosing local products, customers not only bring home quality goods but also support the local economy and contribute to positive change.

#### LOCAL COLLABORATIONS

One of Tops key collaborators that shares its sustainability goals is *Lactalis American Group*. Located in Buffalo, their production facility supplies Tops stores with fresh ricotta cheese, mozzarella, provolone, and lactose-free ricotta under the Galbani name. Jean-Luc Bruandet, the president and CEO of Lactalis, emphasizes that "sustainability is a strategic imperative and part of their culture." Their commitment encompasses various aspects such as energy and environment, transport and logistics, carbon footprint, circular economy and packaging, and food waste.



Tops Local Partner  
Amos Zittel & Sons / Eden, NY

Eden Valley Growers is another Tops local partner that has dedicated decades to minimizing their environmental impact. They implement practices like crop rotation to replenish soil nutrients and integrated pest management, which targets pests individually rather than using widespread spraying. "We look at various areas of our business including drip irrigation which feeds the root of a plant directly," said Dave Walczak, Operations Manager, Eden Valley Growers, Inc. "This conserves water and allows us to get the most production out of a plant while not overly stressing it."

#### CONSIDERATION FOR THE COWS

When it comes to milk, Tops ensures that it reaches the shelves within 48 hours, whether sourced from Unc Brock Farms near the Hoosic River or Chaffee Farms LLC in Chaffee, NY. The farmers Tops partners with prioritize the living environment of their cows, as it directly impacts the quality of the end product. From maintaining proper temperature through curtains to having specialized nutritionists monitor feed and implementing careful tilling practices, these farmers are meticulous in ensuring the well-being of their cattle and the quality of the milk.

"Soil health is really important to us," said Carolyn Almeter of Breezyhill Dairy. One way to manage soil health is by planting cover crops. These help with erosion as they absorb the nutrients and keep them in the soil for the next crop."



More than its duty, Tops