Assessment of the Use and Development of Precision Agriculture in New York State

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Project Scope:
The New York State Senate passed legislation (2015) introduced by Sen. Catherine Young on behalf of the Commission on Rural Resources with the following mandate:

“to direct the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets to issue a report assessing the use and development of precision agriculture in the state with recommendations pertaining to rural broadband accessibility, use and support for the farmers, as well as cost savings and higher crop yield.

The report shall include, but not be limited to:
   a) definitions of precision agriculture and site-specific farming;
   b) statistics of use by farmers in the state;
   c) statistics of crop yields with the use of precision agriculture as compared to traditional methods;
   d) statistics of rural broadband availability, with particular emphasis on agricultural land;
   e) availability of suitable global positioning services;
   f) environmental impacts of precision agriculture;
   g) cost analyses of the use of precision agriculture, including start-up costs and affordability;
   h) recommendations regarding technology support including, but not limited to, technological delivery and broadband access to remote and underrepresented geographic areas;
   i) recommendations for regulatory review pertaining to precision agriculture and the encouragement for the use thereof;
   j) addressing barriers to the implementation of precision agriculture systems in the state; and
   k) recommendations related to farmer privacy and the sharing of electronic information.

Therefore we will be conducting the following activities:
   (1) Collection of information and data related to the Senate directive, including statistics on availability of enabling technologies, and the estimated impact of precision agriculture adoption in New York State on farm income, employment opportunities, etc. (2) a survey among members of New York State Farm Bureau and grower associations on their perspectives related to the adoption of precision agriculture in New York (3) an analysis of current infrastructure related to precision agriculture, including available enabling technologies, consulting services, educational offerings and needs, required infrastructure investments (e.g., related to broadband and mobile technologies), agribusiness services, environmental implications of adoption, etc. (4) the development of recommendations associated with the adoption of precision agriculture in New York State, including the promotion of such activities, as well as possible state investments in enabling technologies, business development, education, and research. (5) a NYS Precision Agriculture Summit to discuss current and proposed PA activities and receive community feedback on a draft report (6) the development of a report to the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets, to be completed in early 2016.