

# Connections

The News Magazine of Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties

## NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2021

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## “Food, Water, and Climate” Farm Tour for NYS Legislators

BY JIM BARBER, AG & FARMLAND IMPLEMENTATION SPECIALIST

Building connections and supporting common interests were the inspiration for the “Food, Water and Climate” Farm Tour. State legislators spent two days meeting with farmers in our area, hearing why they are committed to the work they have chosen, plus the challenges confronting them day to day and generation to generation. The tour was hosted by the Otsego County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Committee and Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties.



The common interests highlighted by the tour are the need for clean water, a secure food supply, and a desire to work together in combating climate change. The “Food, Water, and Climate” Farm Tour brought all those interests together by showcasing the diversity of agriculture in the New York City and Upper Susquehanna watersheds and the role our farms play in fulfilling those interests. Stops on the tour included: Lucky Dog Organic Farm, Chicory Creek Farm, Brick House Road Farm, Middlefield Orchard, The 607 CSA food hub, and Cooperstown Distillery.

Senate Agriculture Chair Michelle Hinchey and Assembly Agriculture Chair Donna Lupardo, along with their legislative colleagues, Senators

*Continues on page 2*



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*Kate and Ean Rice-Mitchell, owners of Chicory Creek Farm*

Brisport and May, Assemblymembers Angelino, Fitzpatrick, Miller, and Kelles, and two staff members for Senator Hoylman, heard from the NYC Watershed Agricultural Council about the work they do with farmers to protect water quality in the largest unfiltered municipal watershed in the world. Well-managed farmland is a preferred land use in the watershed: building healthy soils—which aid in carbon sequestration and do the work of providing food—and filtering rainwater runoff.

The diversity of agriculture in our region was also on display during the tour, including farmers of all ages on farms both organic and conventional, producing hundreds of varieties of fruits, vegetables, and pasture-raised beef. Steven Purcell, of Purcell Brickhouse Farm in Richfield Springs, noted that, “Paying attention to the land will inform you of the best type of agriculture suited to where the farm is located.” Whether the land is suitable for tilling and row crop production or stony, hillside pastures, farmland serves multiple functions.

Legislators heard that it is the lifestyle and passion for producing food that motivates our farmers, whether they are young farmers just starting out or farms looking to transition to another generation.

Producing the food is only half the equation of feeding communities. The legislators also heard repeatedly that the biggest challenge for many farms is marketing what they produce. Organizing, collecting, and track-

## OUR MISSION

Cornell Cooperative Extension puts knowledge to work in pursuit of economic vitality, ecological sustainability, and social well-being. We bring local experience and research-based solutions together, helping New York State families and communities thrive in our rapidly changing world.

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Steve Purcell, owner of Purcell Brickhouse Farm

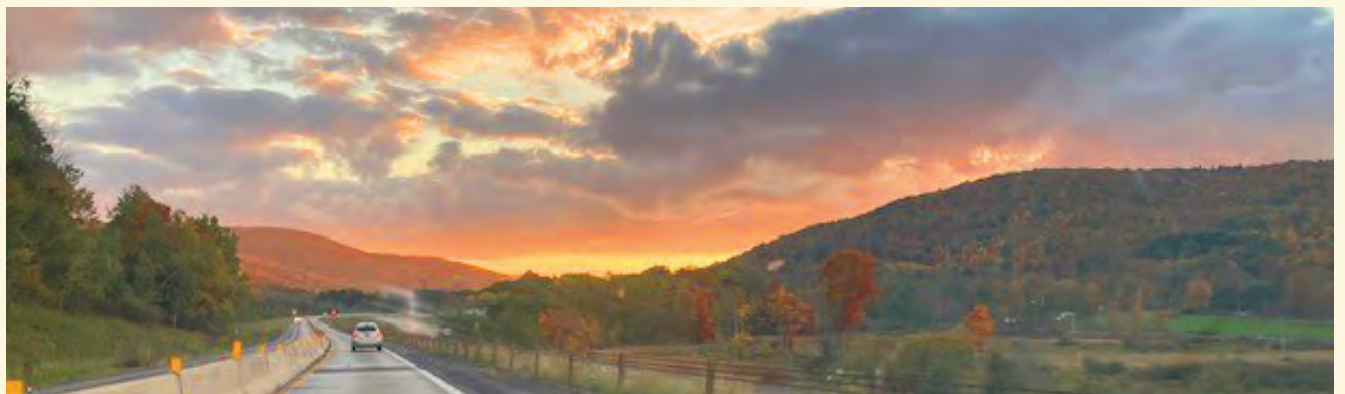
ing products from 42 local farms, then packing and delivering those products to nearly 700 customers across the region and in New York City is the crucial link The 607 CSA provides in the local food chain. The touring group observed a “pack-out” of produce at The 607 CSA, which led to discussions with growers and food-hub managers that illuminated the challenges in that process.

The legislators were also reminded of the important role that farmers in NY and organizations such as The 607 CSA play in providing access to food in underserved and economically challenged communities throughout the state. On average, farmers in New York State donate more food to the food bank system than in any other state in the country. A lot of that effort is coordinated through local organiza-

tions like The 607 CSA. The Nourish NY program—enacted in 2020—recognized the need to support this work, but it was noted that the program will need to be tailored to the size and type of farms in this part of NY.

Profitable farms will continue to protect our watersheds and partner in the fight against climate change, add to local economies, and help feed communities—both rural and urban—across the economic spectrum. To help our farms succeed and be profitable, we need to build connections with our state leaders and the communities they represent. We need them to understand our challenges, as well as the valuable service our farms provide, as we all work together toward creating a strong and sustainable regional food system. The “Food, Water, & Climate” Farm Tour was successful in making some of those connections and initiating important dialogue with legislators from around the state.

Everyone came away with a sincere appreciation for the commitment and hard work of our farmers in building a healthier future for our communities, our economies, and our environment.



## Settling In: a Brief Note from the Interim Executive Director

It has been wonderful reacquainting myself with the Cornell Cooperative Extension community this past month. Traveling between the two counties, I am inspired by the beautiful, pastoral settings I see, but also know that there are challenges our rural communities are experiencing.

CCE Schoharie and Otsego Counties is a key partner in helping our communities negotiate these trying times. While the bottom line of economic security is essential, we should not forget

the additional social capital CCE helps foster, such as nutrition instruction on healthy and economical food choices, conversations with Master Gardener volunteers to help homeowners, and the valuable experiences 4-H provides our youth. These are investments in our future, too.

I look forward to continuing my role here to facilitate the best transition for new leadership, and to keep our good work on track and moving forward.

— Marilyn Wyman

# Beekman Farm Tour

CCE Master Gardeners got to see into the world of the Beekman 1802 Farm and Store on September 22nd.

Master Gardener volunteers from Schoharie, Otsego, and Delaware counties were able to tour the farm and see the operation of their goat farm, all of their raised-bed vegetable gardens, their Proven Winners Gardens, and the goats.

Master Gardeners were able to spend the day with the head gardener beginning with a tour of Parsons Vegetable Farm in Sharon Springs. It was followed by a history of Sharon Springs, lunch at the town park, a visit to the Beekman 1802 Store, and ended with a tour of the Beekman 1802 Farm.



## Annual Meeting

**Thursday, November 18, 2021 • 6:30-8:00 p.m.**

You are cordially invited to attend our Annual Meeting.

Because of COVID-19, we will again be holding it via Zoom.

Register at [reg.cce.cornell.edu/2021AnnualMeeting\\_243](https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/2021AnnualMeeting_243)  
to receive the Zoom link.

We look forward to seeing you then!

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*Lavender Manor Farms, Cobleskill*

## Family Farm Day a Success

On August 28, 2021, forty-two farms in Schoharie, Otsego, and Delaware counties participated in the ninth annual Family Farm Day (FFD). Thankfully, the weather was on our side, and more than 3,000 people came out to visit their local family farms.

Everyone was excited to participate in an in-person event following a year of cancellations. The pandemic also brought the threat of food insecurity to the public's attention, creating an increased interest in local foods.

Staff worked hard to ensure Family Farm Day was a success. Approximately 300 signs dotted roadsides and street corners throughout the three counties, while news articles, radio ads, flyers, rack cards, and a social media campaign helped spread the word prior to the event.

Visitors had the opportunity to take a peek behind the scenes of various local farms, and to revisit farms they enjoyed in previous years. Many of the participating farms have been involved with FFD for years, but we were also glad to welcome several new farms to our tour this year.

There were hands-on activities, demonstrations, and tours at farms specializing in maple products, dairy production, beekeeping, vegetable and fruit production, and more. The farmers were happy to discuss their operations with prospective farmers and other interested folks and to showcase the products that they worked so hard to produce.



*Wayward Lane Brewing & Hop House, Schoharie*

Family Farm Day would not have been possible without the farmers and contributions from CCE Schoharie and Otsego Counties, CCE Delaware County, the Delaware County Chamber of Commerce, Great Western Catskills, Destination Marketing for Otsego County Tourism and Schoharie County Tourism, Otsego County Government, and our participating sponsors.



# INVASIVE SPECIES FOR HOMEOWNERS

## ASIAN JUMPING WORM

*Amyntas agrestis*, *A. tokioensis*, and *Metaphire hilgendorfi*. Family Megascolecidae

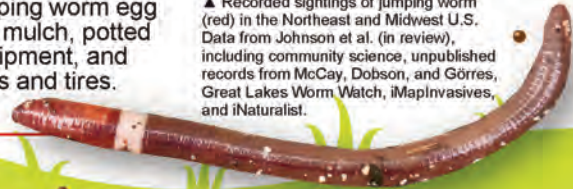
### BACKGROUND

Earthworms might be a friendly sight in gardens or your favorite tool for catching fish, but almost all earthworms in the northeast U.S. are non-native. Jumping worms, a group of species originally from Asia, are invasive species that alter soil qualities and make it inhospitable for some plants and animals. They do this by consuming the upper organic

layer of soil, which leaches nutrients and erodes the ground. This makes it hard for many plants (including garden plants) to grow and threatens even the most well-tended lawns. What's worse—humans spread worms without realizing it, carrying jumping worm egg cases (cocoons) in soil, mulch, potted plants, landscaping equipment, and even the treads of shoes and tires.



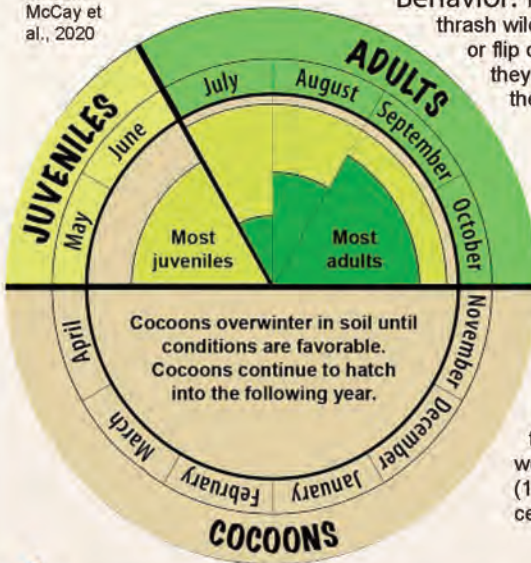
▲ Recorded sightings of jumping worm (red) in the Northeast and Midwest U.S. Data from Johnson et al. (in review), including community science, unpublished records from McCay, Dobson, and Görres, Great Lakes Worm Watch, iMapInvasives, and iNaturalist.



### KNOW THE WORM

**Life Cycle:** Most jumping worms have an annual life cycle. In the spring they hatch from poppy-seed-sized cocoons and after 70-90 days become mature and can produce new cocoons. In the late fall, adults die but the cocoons over-winter to start the next generation.

▼ From McCay et al., 2020



**Behavior:** These worms thrash wildly and often jump or flip over. Sometimes they cast off the end of their tail.

### IN A NUTSHELL

When jumping worms invade, they consume and degrade soil which threatens the future of gardens, forests, and lawns.

Jumping worms are often spread by people through mulch, compost, gardening tools, and treads.

Stop the spread! Use our checklist (pg. 2) to be worm-smart.

**Castings:** Their castings (feces) appear like coarse coffee grounds that create a loose layer between leaf litter and mineral soil beneath. ▶



**Look-alikes:** Jumping worms might be confused with another invasive worm, the nightcrawler (*Lumbricus* spp.); both can be large with dark coloring. Jumping worm adults have a smooth milky-white collar (clitellum) close to the head end (14-16 segments away), whereas nightcrawlers have a raised pink-red collar more central along the worm's body.

▲ Jumping worms hold their eggs in cocoons the size of a poppy seed, like this. Can you find the 7 other cocoons?

### JUMPING WORM



### NIGHTCRAWLER



▲ Note the collar's color and its distance from the head. Credit: UW Madison Arboretum





# CHECKLIST



Jumping worms present on your property: Focus on preventing spread





No jumping worms present on your property: Focus on monitoring and preventing introductions





Before Planting: Act before planting to prevent jumping worm introductions

## MINIMIZE THE SPREAD



### Be a worm-wise buyer

  Do not buy or use jumping worms for bait, vermi-composting, or gardening. Purchased earthworms may also be mislabeled, so learn to identify jumping worms by their look and behavior.

  **Scout the Soil:** Check new soil, compost, and mulch for jumping worms and inquire with providers if measures have been taken to reduce the spread of jumping worms.

Use mulch, soil and compost that are free of jumping worms and cocoons.



If you can't confirm the source is jumping worm-free, only purchase or trade mulch, compost, and soil that has been heated to appropriate temperatures and duration following protocols for reducing pathogens (104 - 130° F for three days is sufficient).



  **Scan the Plants:** Check the soil and roots of potted plants and trees for jumping worms or castings before planting them in your yard.



When the option exists, choose bare-root plants over potted plants, ensuring no soil remains affixed.



*If you find jumping worms in materials you bring in, dispose of all contaminated soil and castings in the trash and kill worms by freezing or leaving in a bag out in the sun, then discard.*

### Clean boots, gear, and even roots



  Clean compost, soil and debris from vehicles, personal gear (clothing and boot treads), equipment, and gardening tools before moving to and from sites. Anything larger than a poppy seed could contain jumping worm cocoons.


  When working with logging and landscaping companies, request equipment arrive and leave clear of soil— and encourage your neighbors and local government to do the same


  If jumping worms are present on your property, minimize the sharing and moving of plants where possible. If you do move or share plants, wash roots and share them either bare-root or re-pot in sterile potting soil.



  When sharing or moving seedlings and small plants, rinse roots to minimize jumping worm spread when possible: gently massage roots in a basin of water to remove soil clumps, until no soil remains affixed. Afterwards, strain the water and place any solids larger than a poppy seed in a trash bag in the sun before disposing.

## TAKE INITIATIVE


  Check your property periodically for jumping worms by raking leaf layer, checking underneath.


 Use mustard to count the earthworms on your property: Mix 1 gallon of water with 1/3 cup of ground yellow mustard seed and pour slowly into the soil. When worms come to the surface, look for jumping worms. Please note: this method 1) is unlikely to harm most plants, and 2) only detects jumping worm presence and will not control them.


 Report jumping worm observations to your state department of natural resources or your local cooperative extension.

  Help advance jumping worm research by taking part in citizen science, a bioblitz, or use recording apps like iMapInvasives.

## KNOW THE SIGNS

 Educate yourself and others to recognize jumping worms

 Educate yourself and others about the life cycle of jumping worms

 Learn to recognize the soil signature of jumping worms

### Jumping Worm Outreach, Research, & Management Working Group, 2021

Abby Bezruczyk, Audrey Bowe, Carrie Brown-Lima, Andrea Dávalos, Annise Dobson, Brad Herrick, Timothy McCay, Kyle Wickings

#### Questions?

Visit: <http://www.nyisri.org/research/jworm-2/>

Email: [nyisri@cornell.edu](mailto:nyisri@cornell.edu)

### Report your sightings

Go to [www.nyimapinvasives.org](http://www.nyimapinvasives.org) to record any sightings of jumping worms.

*We actively use this data for early detection and understanding the invasion*





## Christmas is Coming!

What is the first thing that comes to mind when it's time to decorate your home for the holidays?

Each year, more than 95 million people in the U.S. put up Christmas trees, while only 17.9% are real. Artificial trees do have perks: they are hypoallergenic, less expensive over the course of a few years, and often come with less mess. However, by getting a real Christmas tree you can support your local tree farms, benefit the environment, and enjoy a family outing to choose one.

According to the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, the Christmas tree industry in New York is worth almost 14 million dollars, and there are about 750 farms in the state. These farms work hard to produce these trees, which take an average of seven years to grow. For every tree that is harvested, typically one to three seedlings are replanted to replenish the crop.

### **Pre-cut or U-pick?**

Before purchasing your tree, think of the space that you have available. Most homes have ceiling heights between eight and ten feet. Remember, you will be putting it in a stand and might have a decoration on the top of the tree. For the average person, a six- to seven-foot tree is the perfect size. If you are looking for a smaller tree that could be easier to manage, such as for a smaller space or on top



*Farmers trim and shape Christmas trees. Photo courtesy of USDA*

of a table, you can get trees as small as two to three feet.

**Tip:** when you are looking at trees outdoors, they always look a lot smaller in the field!

Some trees will have been cut several weeks before selling—sometimes as early as October—from different parts of the country or Canada. This is something to watch for when you are not going to a U-pick, unless the seller cuts their own trees.

When choosing a Christmas tree that is pre-cut, there are a few things you should do before bringing it home: make sure the tree has minimal brown needles, and perform a bounce test. This is when



you lift the tree up a few inches and bounce the trunk lightly on the ground to see how many needles fall off. If there is minimal needle drop, the tree is fresh and perfect to take home.

### **Tree Types to Consider**

You will also need to determine which type of tree to purchase.

- Fraser fir is a very popular tree that has blue-green needles, strong branches for heavy ornaments, a strong scent, and great needle retention.
- Douglas fir has very light branches that can't hold heavy decorations, and the needles are soft. They are more budget friendly—Fraser firs can be one of the more expensive trees.
- Balsam trees are also budget friendly and have dark green needles and a strong scent.
- Blue spruce is used as Christmas trees, as well, due to its bright blue color. The branches are very strong, but the needles are sharp.
- Concolor fir and Canaan fir are growing in popularity, as well. The Concolor has a very strong scent and long needles with a blue tint. The Canaan fir is almost like a combination of a balsam and a Fraser. It has great needle retention and a great scent.
- Also frequently available are: Black Hills spruce (also known as White spruce), White pine, Scots pine, and Korean fir.

### **Making the Most of your Tree**

When you get home with a pre-cut tree, you will want to make sure you recut the bottom, or have the seller cut it before taking it home. In order to maximize water uptake, you will need to put the tree in water within eight or so hours from making the cut.

Make sure to check the tree daily, as it will use water quickly, especially when first bringing it home after making the cut. By keeping the moisture levels up in the tree, you will reduce needle loss. If possible, it is best to keep your tree away from heat sources, which can dry the tree out.

When the holidays have passed and you're ready to take the tree out of the house, don't bring it to the dump. If you leave it outside in or near the woods, many animals such as birds can use it as shelter. They can also be mulched down and composted or used in an outdoor fire. Many goat and sheep farmers will also take them off your hands so the animals can eat them, but they must be free from tinsel, fake snow, etc.

This winter, consider a real tree for your home. Enjoy the experience and the joy of a fragrant evergreen while giving back to our environment and local farmers. If you have any questions regarding evergreen trees, please contact Ag & Horticulture Resource Educator Jessica Holmes at [jmh452@cornell.edu](mailto:jmh452@cornell.edu) or 518-234-4303 ext. 119.



*Fraser fir. Photo by Bert Cregg and Jill O'Donnell, MSU*



*Balsam fir. Photo by Bert Cregg and Jill O'Donnell, MSU*



*Concolor fir. Photo by Jill O'Donnell, MSU*





## You're Not Alone if You're Cooking for One

Single-person households have been on the rise for decades. According to the United States Census Bureau, in 1969 the number of one-person households was 16.7%. By 1979, it jumped to 22.2%, and in 2019 it had increased to 28.4%. These statistics include adults of all ages, and the trend is worldwide: in 2012 in Stockholm, Sweden, 60% of households consisted of one person!

Even some people not living alone find themselves in a situation where they are cooking dinner for themselves: if you're living with roommates who don't share food/cooking responsibilities, have partners or spouses that work late, and teens who are busy with sports after school, all of whom may choose to eat away from home.

So, if you find yourself cooking for one, you are not alone.

### **Benefits and Barriers**

The biggest benefit of cooking for yourself is that you can choose to cook what YOU like, without anyone else's tastes to worry about. Want banana in with your whole wheat pasta? Go for it. No one is there to yuck your yum.

The barrier reported most often is that it feels like too much work. Planning a meal, shopping for ingredients, taking the time to cook (especially if you're lacking in the cooking skills area or just don't enjoy it), and then the clean-up involved—it's no wonder some people are just not inspired.

But we know that eating out all the time can get expensive, and that being in control of the ingredients making up your plate can result in a healthier meal with appropriate portion sizes.

I'd like to encourage the hesitant solo cook to embrace the challenge, so let's explore some tips and ideas related to cooking for one on a budget.

### **Idea #1: Make the Meal an Occasion**

Show yourself some love. You might find inspiration if you break out your best tableware and glasses, even if you're by yourself. Dust off that fine china if you've got it.

For some, it's difficult because they feel lonely. The most direct answer to that problem is to reach out to friends, family, or neighbors, and invite them to share a meal with you. Your invitation will likely brighten someone else's day in addition to yours.

In this age of Zoom, it's not impossible to "share" a meal with distant (or socially distant) friends and family, as well. It might be fun to plan ahead and agree to cook the same dish, and even cook along with each other.

### **Idea #2: Cook Once, Eat Twice!**

It's true that most recipes are for families, and make four (or more) servings. It's also true that, for smaller households, leftovers that are saved properly mean you can reheat instead of cook some other night!



If you don't mind having the same meal again in a day or two, keeping your leftovers in the refrigerator works just fine. Consider keeping a specific spot in the refrigerator for them so they don't get easily forgotten, and be sure to label and date them just in case they do get pushed to the back and forgotten.

Alternatively, choose a dish you'd prefer to have once a week that is also freezer friendly. Many kinds of dishes do freeze well: chili, broth-based soups and stews, muffins, egg bites, lasagna, meatballs, cooked veggies. Some don't: cream- or mayonnaise-based dishes (soups, sauces, salads), fried foods (they tend to get soggy), hard-boiled eggs or egg whites (like meringues), and pasta or rice by itself. Need some inspiration? Try these recipes: [www.spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipe-category/freeze-well](http://www.spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipe-category/freeze-well).

When freezing, use containers appropriate to individual portions, and be sure to follow the safe freezing rules: use only freezer-safe containers; let the dish cool before placing in the freezer; put only as much as will freeze within a few hours (2-3 pounds per cubic foot); leave a little head space for expansion in rigid containers; take out as much air as possible in freezer bags; and label and date the food so you eat it in a timely manner.

### **Idea #2a: Cook Once, because you Did the Math**

Ok, so you don't love leftovers. Learn to cut recipes in half (or even thirds). Most dishes (except baked goods) respond well. There are a number of sites online that provide charts for halving recipe amounts; halving 1 cup is easy, but did you know that half of 1/3 cup = 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons?

Here are some other tips:

- On the stovetop, keep the time and temperature the same, but use a smaller pan—makes for easier cleanup, too!
- In the oven, keep the temperature the same, but size down the pan (try to keep it the same depth), and reduce the time by about 1/3.
- Baked goods usually have fairly scientific recipes, and cannot easily be cut in half. However, most freeze very well, so make the full recipe, and plan to freeze the extras.
- Herbs and spices might not need to be halved; start with half and taste.

### **Idea #2b: Cook Once, then Make a "Kitchen Sink" Dish (aka "Planned-overs")**

Your leftovers from multiple meals can also make a new quick, easy meal. Leftover veggies and meats can be added into very basic recipes to fill them out: think casseroles, stir-fries, pasta salads, and omelets.

How about a homemade pizza? Top an English muffin or pita bread with some jarred sauce and cheese; this is a great time to use the leftover veggies from other meals, or take some help from frozen broccoli.

And did I mention grain bowls? They are a great way to use up a variety of leftovers. In a bowl, gather a grain of your choice, some bite-size protein, chopped veggies (cooked or raw), a dressing for flavor (pesto, yogurt green goddess, or hummus are all good choices), and maybe some toppings to make it a little less like leftovers (nuts, herbs, hot sauce). Voilà!

### **Idea #3: Snack + Snack + Snack = a Meal**

If you just don't have the energy to cook a whole meal, there is nothing wrong with making a meal out of healthy snacks. Actually, that kind of meal can be especially handy for packing lunch or when you're in a rush.

Take a little help from lightly processed foods, like canned/frozen veggies or fruit, store-bought breads, and jars of peanut butter or hummus. Just try to include at least three of the five food groups, and keep them in MyPlate proportions.

It's also helpful to have easy-to-use, easy clean-up cooking tools like a toaster oven, microwave, and stick blender.

Here are some menu ideas:

- Part-skim cheese chunks, whole wheat crackers, and a sliced apple with peanut butter
- Bagged salad mix topped with hard-boiled eggs, plus a plain low-fat yogurt with some fruit canned in its own juice
- Toaster oven "quesadilla": top a tortilla with a layer of hummus, a handful of black beans, and a sprinkling of cheese. Toast until the cheese melts, and serve with salsa.
- Scrambled eggs or an omelet with whole wheat English muffin, plus some baby carrots on the side.

*Continues on page 12*



## **Cooking for One, continued from page 11**

- Oatmeal with half a sliced banana, plus some cottage cheese with the rest of the sliced banana. Please note: oatmeal is super simple to make in the microwave, and there's less cleanup than making it on the stove.
- Microwave a potato, add a sprinkling of grated cheese, plus some canned baked beans.
- Have some sliced deli turkey on a whole wheat bun, plus canned yams with dried cranberries added.

### **Idea #4: Perk up Store-bought Basics**

There are other ready-made ingredients or meals that you can add to in simple ways to make a wholesome meal.

**Frozen pizza:** get the plain cheese pizza and add your favorite cooked veggies and lean meats to the top in the last five minutes of heating in the oven.

**Rotisserie chicken:** many supermarkets carry them, and they are so versatile. Have it hot the first day as part of your meal and use the leftovers as part of a salad, sandwich, soup, or on that pizza.

### **Idea #5: Keep Ingredients on Hand**

None of these meals will happen unless you have the ingredients at home. Planning and shopping for your weekly meals is ideal. Even if you don't plan every meal, keeping your pantry and freezer stocked with your healthy favorites will help. Keep a master list for the pantry and freezer in the kitchen to help you remember what you have.

Here are some ideas of what to keep on hand:

- Veggies and fruit: a can or frozen bag of each of your five favorite vegetables and five favorite fruits. Remember to choose ones that are packaged without added salt or sugar. People often

hear that “fresh is best,” but in smaller households it can be challenging to eat perishables before they go bad, so know that frozen and canned are also nutritious.

- Grains: whole wheat bread, tortillas, flour, brown rice, quinoa. Quinoa is small and cooks quickly; parboiled brown rice will also cook fast. Keep your grains in the refrigerator or freezer to extend their life.
- Protein: eggs; a jar of peanut butter/almond butter/sunflower seed butter; cans of beans or chickpeas; frozen ground beef and/or chicken breasts. A note here: when you buy fresh meat you can sometimes save by buying in bulk; portion them out and freeze whatever you won't eat that week.
- Dairy: skim or low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese. Bagged shredded cheese is a convenience you might be willing to pay for, but keep in mind it might mold before brick cheese.
- Other: a variety of spices and herbs—if you're not sure where to start, onion powder, granulated garlic, and black pepper are musts, plus spice blends like Italian seasonings, lemon pepper, taco seasonings, and garam masala can be helpful; refrigerator- and freezer-safe bags and containers.

### **Idea #6: Take One of our Cooking Classes**

Cook a delicious, healthy, easy, quick dish along with your peers in a group setting as part of our nutrition education series, online or in person! Contact our nutrition educators to learn more—Michelle Leveski, [mml39@cornell.edu](mailto:mml39@cornell.edu), 518-234-4303 ext. 115 or Kimberly Ferstler, [kmf239@cornell.edu](mailto:kmf239@cornell.edu), 518-234-4303 ext. 120—or visit our website [cceschoharie-otgo.org/nutrition-health](http://cceschoharie-otgo.org/nutrition-health).

## **FIND US ONLINE**

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blogs.cornell.edu/efnep-schoharie-otsego](http://Life'sSolutionsblogs.cornell.edu/efnep-schoharie-otsego)







# Is Managing “Backyard” Horses for You?

BY LAUREN ANDERSON

*Lauren Anderson is an administrative assistant at CCE Schoharie and Otsego Counties. She has a bachelor's degree in animal science and has three horses of her own: two thoroughbreds and an Appaloosa.*

Keeping horses on your own property is incredibly rewarding, but takes a lot of time, work, and sacrifice.

## **The Benefits of Boarding**

Boarding your horse at a commercial stable affords peace of mind that your equine companion's needs are always met, even on days when you can't make it to the barn. Horses require care and attention multiple times every day and boarding is a great option for those with limited time, physical restrictions, or other obligations at home or work. You are also paying for the use of shared facilities, the convenience of daily labor provided by farm staff, and the knowledge and skill of an experienced property owner or barn manager.

A good relationship with a trusted, knowledgeable horse person can be invaluable, especially for



a new horse owner. Is your horse acting up due to discomfort, or is it a learned behavior? Will this cut heal after a good cleaning, or should you call the vet out? Is he rolling because he's shedding, or could it be colic!? Ask the barn manager for a second opinion; they see your horse every day and probably know him nearly as well as you do!

Boarding also offers a social environment for both horse and human. With many equines on the property, finding the perfect buddy for your horse shouldn't be hard, and you will likely have friends with whom to ride.

## **Why (or Why Not) Keep Backyard Horses?**

Often, horse enthusiasts look forward to taking over their horse's daily care. If time is short in the evenings after work, it's easier to squeeze in a ride

*Continues on page 14*



## **“Backyard” Horses, continued from page 13**

before dark when your horse lives at home with you. It’s great to be able to run outside and change blankets in the winter if the weather changes unexpectedly. Plus, having horses in your back yard is a great way to get to know your animals’ individual personalities. You can observe the herd dynamic and how horses communicate, then use this knowledge to refine your communication with them. When you are the one feeding every meal, it also affords some unique training opportunities. For example, every time I feed my horses, I whistle to call them. Now when I need to catch a horse, all I need to do is whistle and they all come running!

Sometimes finding a boarding facility close to home that will meet your and your horse’s needs isn’t possible. Many stables are full or have waiting lists, especially going into winter. Some also have limited hours, limited arena time, or rules which restrict or prohibit certain activities—for example, no jumping outside of lessons is common due to liability concerns.

On the other hand, if you have horses at home and want to take a vacation, you’ll need to plan for—and possibly pay—someone to care for your animals while you are away.



*Who doesn't love spring?*



but the bill is up front and regular. Barring any medical emergencies, you generally know what you’re in for financially each month. Keeping horses at home can be cheaper than boarding, but that isn’t always the case. In the summer when pastures are growing well and the horses are outside most of the time, your feed and bedding bills will be minimal. Before winter, though, you will need to purchase hay (my largest lump-sum expense of the year) and

You can expect to feed 2-3 times a day, every day, regardless of the weather, and there will always be something in need of repair. There will be no shortage of mud and ice, no end to the manual labor, and, by necessity, you will come up with creative ways to thaw a frozen hose or dislodge a piece of equipment stuck in the mud. It’s certainly not all fun and games!

### **Financial Considerations**

The cost of boarding is a big monthly investment, especially if you own more than one horse,





other expenses like bedding and utilities will rise as the weather changes, often dramatically.

Horses can rack up unexpected expenses in an instant, and in my experience, they like to get creative about how they do so! For example, I have a gelding who occasionally tries to fit his 1000-pound body in the 100-gallon water trough in the pasture, often breaking them. His antics have also broken sections of fencing, shredded blankets, destroyed multiple halters and fly masks, and ruined two water heaters.



When planning your budget be sure to consider the following costs:

- Feed: hay, grain, supplements, treats, etc.
- Bedding
- Routine medical expenses: yearly vaccines and Coggins testing, deworming, first-aid supplies, dental care, farrier care, bodywork, etc.
- Emergency vet care fund: colic surgery can cost \$10,000!
- Utilities: water, electricity (lights, water pumps, heat, water heaters, fans)
- Property: fencing, driveway, shelters/barn, mats, gates, mud control
- Small equipment: buckets, shovels, pitchforks, grooming tools, etc.
- Insurance: liability, vehicle, medical, mortality
- Truck & trailer, tractor: purchase and maintenance
- Tack and equipment: halters, leads, saddles, etc.
- Lessons and showing fees
- Time: how much is your time worth?

## Property Preparation & Maintenance

Even before the horses arrive, you will need to invest a good deal of time and money into property maintenance. This includes establishing pastures with safe, secure fencing and erecting a barn or shelter suitable for the climate. Ongoing, hay must be sourced, purchased, transported, and stored in a dry location; pastures must be mowed; water needs to be kept clean and filled (and thawed/heated in winter); and you will need a system to manage manure to reduce flies, parasites, and odors.



*Barbed wire is not a safe fencing choice for horses*

Your initial site selection will affect how you maintain your pastures and manage conditions. Consider drainage from the beginning to stay on top of mud, ice, and runoff! Think about which driveways and paths will need to be accessible to trucks and trailers, tractors, mowers, and, potentially, emergency vehicles. Take your time laying out the property on paper. Plan locations for barns, shelters, pastures, sacrifice turnout areas/dry lots, riding arenas, bathing areas, trails, etc.

## Manure Management

One horse can produce approximately 50 pounds of manure each day. You will need a plan to compost or remove manure, particularly if you will be managing horses on small acreage. Pastures must be picked or dragged regularly to break up piles. Failure to manage manure contributes to excessive fly populations, increased internal parasite loads, and offensive odors.

Learn more about managing manure in the stable: Horse Stable Manure Management ([www.cce.schoharie-otsego.org/Horse-Stable-Manure-Management](http://www.cce.schoharie-otsego.org/Horse-Stable-Manure-Management))

*Continues on page 16*

## “Backyard” Horses, continued from page 15

For more information about composting manure into useable fertilizer for your garden:

Composting Horse Manure ([www.cceschoharie-otsego.org/Composting-Horse-Manure](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org/Composting-Horse-Manure))



## Companionship

Horses are herd animals that require companionship, they should not be kept alone. Many would say that the best companion for a horse is another horse, but this isn't always possible. Miniature horses can make great companions and are much more cost effective to feed than your average riding horse. Goats tend to bond well with horses with some added benefits; goats will eat pasture weeds that horses leave, and goats do not share most common internal parasites with horses. There have been reports of goats eating horses' tails, though, much to their owner's dismay!



Another option to consider is boarding a friend's horse on your property with your horse. The shared labor and expenses can benefit everyone, but liability is a serious concern in case anything goes wrong. Insurance and a clearly-written, signed agreement between everyone involved can help keep things running smoothly.

## Alternatives to Horse Ownership

Would you like to spend time around horses without the commitment of ownership?

Taking lessons at a riding stable is a great way to advance your skills under the supervision of an experienced instructor. Utilize the opportunity to ride different horses; each one will have something different to teach you! Try out different disciplines. See what different facilities have to offer. Find an instructor who works best for you. Plus, ride when your schedule allows.

If you prefer to ride one horse long term, consider a lease or part lease. When you lease a horse, you negotiate the terms with the horse owner, which often includes how many times per week the horse may be ridden/worked, which party is responsible for routine and emergency expenses, etc. The cost to lease can vary greatly. A horse with little training may be available for a free lease where you may ride for free or only pay expenses, while a safe, proven, competitive show horse can cost thousands per month.

Seek out summer camps for children for an immersive experience catered to young ones. If they're ready for more, local 4-H clubs are a great way to safely introduce your child(ren) to horsemanship without investing in ownership. Contact your county 4-H educator to find a club near you.



Riding stables, particularly therapeutic riding facilities, are often in need of volunteers. There is a ton of behind-the-scenes work to do and farm managers appreciate an extra set of helpful hands, allowing you to gain experience and socialize with the animals.

Seek out working student/work-to-ride opportunities. These are often reserved for mature teens and adults with some experience who can work more independently around the farm, but can yield great rewards in terms of experience and skill.



# PASTA FAGIOLI

Serves 6

A classic Italian soup that is the ultimate comfort food!



## Ingredients

- ½ lb. elbow or bowtie pasta
- 6 cups water (save for soup)
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 (15.5-oz.) cans cannellini beans, undrained
- 1 (28-oz.) can crushed tomatoes
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. pepper
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. basil
- 1 tsp. parsley

## Directions

1. In a medium pot bring water to a boil. Add pasta to boiling water and cook until al dente (chewy). Drain, **reserving water and pasta separately for soup.**
2. In a large pot add olive oil, onion, and garlic. Sauté until lightly brown.
3. Add beans, tomatoes, and the rest of ingredients to onions and garlic.
4. Add the **reserved pasta and water** to the rest of the ingredients.
5. Let simmer on very low heat for approximately 30 minutes.

## Know the facts . . .

- *Pasta e fagioli* is a traditional Italian soup that means “pasta and beans.” It is also referred to as “Pasta Fazool” in the U.S.
- Recipes can vary depending on the region or town in which it is prepared. It is most commonly made using cannellini beans, great northern beans, or borlotti beans, and a small version of pasta like elbow macaroni, bowtie, or ditalini.
- Versions of the dish may vary from soupy to a much thicker consistency.
- Try adding cooked ground beef, turkey, or sausage.
- Cannellini beans are also known as “white kidney beans.”
- Beans are high in minerals and fiber without the saturated fat found in some animal proteins. Plus, they are gluten free.
- Eating beans as part of a heart-healthy diet and lifestyle may help improve your blood cholesterol, a leading cause of heart disease.
- Adding beans to your diet may help keep you feeling full longer.
- Legumes are a good source of B-group vitamins (especially folate), iron, zinc, calcium, and magnesium.

Nutrition Facts	
6 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>1.5 cups</b>
<b>Amount Per Serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>310</b>
<small>% Daily Value*</small>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 4g	<b>5%</b>
Saturated Fat 0.5g	<b>3%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 650mg	<b>28%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 57g	<b>21%</b>
Dietary Fiber 9g	<b>32%</b>
Total Sugars 2g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	<b>0%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 13g	<b>26%</b>
Vitamin D 0mcg	<b>0%</b>
Calcium 130mg	<b>10%</b>
Iron 4.5mg	<b>25%</b>
Potassium 0mg	<b>0%</b>
Vitamin A	<b>20%</b>
Vitamin C	<b>25%</b>

\*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

## Notes:

- Try our companion recipe, **Cucumber-and-Mint Infused Water**. Go to [cceschoharie-otsego.org/connections](http://cceschoharie-otsego.org/connections) and find the recipe link in the left menu, plus watch this video on how to prepare it: [youtu.be/J0DJFlq03nw](https://youtu.be/J0DJFlq03nw)





## Lives Entwined in Love—and a Love for 4-H

BY COLLEEN BADGER, 4-H ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

*If Otsego County 4-H held a prom, Doug and Deb Dutcher would easily be crowned king and queen. In this, the 100th Anniversary year of 4-H in Otsego County, it is fitting to highlight this wonderful couple, who have contributed a combined 110 years to the 4-H program. Theirs is a story woven with threads of 4-H from the very beginning.*

Doug was raised on DutchAyr Farms in Otsego County and was involved in 4-H even as a toddler! His parents were leaders of a 4-H club, so Doug was brought along to all the events. His first official project began when he received a packet of seeds and started a small garden . . . he was hooked.

Meanwhile, Deb was growing up on Braewynd Farm, a Holstein dairy farm in Cortland County. As a disabled child in the 1960s, Deb recalls having limited choices when it came to extracurricular activities. 4-H, however, saw no handicaps: she was able to participate in any and all events through her 4-H club.

Through his 4-H years, Doug showed dairy cattle—mainly Ayrshires—at many venues: the Otsego County Fair, the Farmer’s Museum Junior Livestock Show, and the New York State Fair, to name just a

few. He participated via the Five Junior Dairymen 4-H Club. Doug was a camper at Camp Shankitunk in Delhi many summers and participated in 4-H Congress events. Club Congress was held at Cornell University and was an opportunity for youth to experience how government works by running for various offices and forming a government. He attended this at least three times. He also attended District Congress. This weekend event allowed delegates from the clubs in that 4-H district to come together, share ideas, and come up with youth-directed programming.

As a young 4-H’er, Deb was a member of the Beaver Meadow Girls 4-H Club. They focused on cooking, sewing, and home improvement projects. The boys participated in the Beaver Meadow Boys 4-H Club and focused on dairy, livestock, wood-working, and electrical projects. Eventually, the two clubs merged, becoming the Beaver Meadow 4-H Club. This gave each youth the opportunity to participate in varied project areas. Deb showed her Holsteins at county fair, Junior Livestock Show, and other events. Giving a Public Presentation each year was an important experience, as well.



She participated in Teen Council where she had the chance to organize fundraising events, be involved in community projects, and meet youth and adults from outside her small community. As the Chairman of the Teen Council Fundraising committee, she was responsible for the running of the 4-H Food Booth. This position entailed ordering provisions, managing 4-H youth, and overseeing finances, among other duties; the skills Deb developed were invaluable.

Doug participated in the 4-H Exchange Program, traveling to Canada one summer and hosting a Canadian youth the next. Deb also participated in the 4-H Exchange Program, staying with a farm family in Virginia and hosting their 4-H youth the following summer. She fondly recalls riding with a carload of 4-H youth, each being deposited with a different exchange family.

This multiracial opportunity was a unique and wonderful experience for Deb. Many of the 4-H youth that Doug and Deb interacted with are life-long friends, remaining close and supportive over the years. That is a common sentiment among 4-H alumni and a terrific testament to the 4-H legacy.

After high school, Doug attended SUNY Cobleskill, then transferred to Oneonta where he earned a teaching degree. He taught at Schoharie Central School for 32 years and then supervised student teachers. All the while, he was the club leader—along with Deb—of their two daughters' 4-H club. Through that, the couple continued traveling to sheep and dairy cattle shows, influencing a whole new generation of 4-H youth. That tradition continues as they encourage their grandchildren in their 4-H endeavors.

Deb's post-high-school career choice was influenced by her 4-H experience. She studied to become a Home Economics teacher. During the summer between her sophomore and junior years in college, she was an assistant at the Chenango County Fair and happened to meet Doug, who was showing Ayrshire cows. Ten years later, as the 4-H agent for Broome County Cooperative Extension, she remembers bringing a carload of 4-H folks to the Chenango County Fair and becoming reacquainted with Doug Dutcher. This time, it stuck!

Deb taught Home Economics for many years in public school. She was active with her family, show-

ing sheep and dairy cattle. Deb has been volunteering for Otsego County 4-H for her entire married life, both as a co-leader of her daughters' 4-H club and on various committees, plus every summer at the Otsego County Fair. Deb was a long-standing member of the Advisory Committee and was especially supportive during the Otsego-Schoharie counties merger process. Deb feels strongly that it is important for teens to have relationships with adults outside of their family with whom to talk and learn from. 4-H provides that by way of leaders, county educators, Public Presentation evaluators, and more.

Doug volunteered on the county level in many capacities and is still the Chairman of the Otsego County Earn-an-Animal committee. His continued involvement and support of 4-H speaks volumes about his strong belief in 4-H's positive influence. He believes that 4-H builds strong connections with people outside of the family unit, encourages family time, and builds important life skills. Doug was always able to tell which of his high school students and student teachers had 4-H experience from their ease and proficiency in front of a group.

An important memory Deb recounted was being in the show ring at the Cortland County Fair with her Holstein, placing lower than first place, and being okay with it. 4-H encourages youth to accept criticism with a healthy attitude and then to act on it.

A particularly special memory for Doug comes from 1966. It had been a difficult year for his family, but attending the Junior Livestock Show was a must. Doug won the Farmer's Museum Dairy Cup with his prize cow. It was a sweet victory. Fast forward 32 years when their daughter was awarded the Farmers' Museum Livestock Cup. Needless to say, Junior Livestock Show is dear to their hearts!

*Doug and Deb Dutcher are wonderful examples of folks who benefitted from 4-H as children and then chose to give back to the program as adults. They have influenced youth through the many programs they have led, supported, and encouraged. They have humbly, selflessly, and enthusiastically represented 4-H for decades. The Otsego County 4-H program is better for having them.*

# 4-H Afterschool Happenings



The 4-H Afterschool program in Schoharie started up again this semester. We are happy to be back, and the participating students have been enjoying themselves, too.



*The Halloween bulletin board*

The children have been working on a Halloween bulletin board and other art projects related to Halloween. They have also been doing Lego challenges: building Lego homes for the Lego people, and making furniture for them.

The plans for the upcoming months include more holiday artwork plus bulletin board displays for the seasons. We also plan to continue with Lego challenges, and add science projects, such as making slime, playdough, sink-and-float objects, and doing experiments. Stay tuned for the results of our experiments in the next issue.



*Lego challenge: a creative house with furniture, ready for a Lego person to move in.*



*Making scarecrows*



*Haunted house artwork display*



*Safety is priority #1! Having fun while social distancing.*

**DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN  
IN THE SCHOHARIE  
SCHOOL DISTRICT?**

The 4-H Afterschool program still has openings for children in the Schoharie school district. If interested, contact the 4-H Afterschool Coordinator, Susan Salisbury, at [sms248@cornell.edu](mailto:sms248@cornell.edu) or 518-234-4303 ext. 211.



# 4-H Happenings

## Otsego Happenings

Otsego County 4-H members spent the summer preparing for and showing at the Otsego County Fair. 4-H youth showed their hard work and learning skills by exhibiting projects in Martin Hall, from table settings to 3-D chess sets. The animal show rings were bustling with the sounds and smells of livestock and horses being showcased in front of judges.



The Fields and Flats 4-H Club, from Edmeston, took fourth place in the 91st Annual Hoard's Dairyman Cow Judging Contest in 4-H Club Division. The club has participated each year for 10 years.

The Junior Livestock Show's Chobani Agricultural Leader Scholarships essay contest recognizes young agricultural leaders in our region. Abbie Ainslie and Sean Kersmanc both received \$350 from the Senior Scholarship division. The Terra Jackson Award for overall winner went to Evelyn Kersmanc, who received \$500.00. Congratulations to all three!

In September, the NYS Dairy Quiz Bowl was held at Cornell University. Maxwell Pullis came in first place in the Junior Division. Also in September, the



Junior Dairy Management contest was held in Pennsylvania; both Sean and Evelyn Kersmanc were a part of the team that took first place honors,

with Sean Kersmanc coming in second place in the individual overall category. The NYS 4-H Dairy Judging team competed in Madison, Wisconsin, at the National 4-H Dairy Judging contest and placed third overall. Team member Aidan Ainslie also placed eighth in the individual category.

4-H Clubs in Otsego County have been busy re-enrolling for the new 4-H year—which began October 1st—while celebrating 4-H week, which ran October 3-9, 2021. The 4-H Dog Training classes have returned for the fall season; participants are busy learning and practicing new and old dog-training tips and tricks, led by 4-H volunteer Sonja Galley.

## Schoharie Happenings

With fall in the air and winter just around the corner, it is a pleasure to look back at the warm memories of our 2021 4-H summer season.

Topping the list of "Back by Popular Demand" events was the Schoharie County Sunshine Fair. This year, 89 4-H youth participated in the varied events offered throughout the week. The fair ran from August 10 through 15 and was the hottest ticket around . . . literally! The heat and humidity were but a small roadblock for the 4-H'ers, who were simply thrilled to be back.

*Continues on page 22*



## 4-H Happenings, continued from page 21



The fair officially began on August 8th for many 4-H members, when they presented their non-animal projects to be judged at the Progressland building. Wonderful evaluators encouraged, critiqued and judged each of the approximately 500 items entered by our hardworking and talented youth. The projects ranged from sewing, food, fine arts, and photography to engineering, forging, and woodworking. Along with ribbon awards, each youth received constructive criticism and ideas for improvement concerning the project area, which is one of the unique and important aspects of 4-H. Our evaluators all had 4-H experience and a true teaching heart. This was a wonderful afternoon for all involved.

All youth non-animal projects were then arranged by discipline in the 4-H portion of Progressland. The finished product was a colorful and eclectic display of all things 4-H.



There was no shortage of youth animal shows during the week, but two events stood out: the culmination of our 4-H Earn-an-Animal and Livestock Auction programs.

Earn-an-Animal participants purchased breeding or market animals early in the spring, kept track of expenses and growth of their project animals, and created educational posters to be displayed for fairgoers to peruse. After the fair, the three participants completed financial and growth information, turned it in to our committee, and received a monetary award to help defer the past costs of raising the animal.

The 4-H Livestock Auction occurred on the last day of the fair. Participants registered animals into this program early in the spring with the intention of auctioning them off for profit. They also kept track of expenses as a way of learning the business side of agriculture; they submitted a profit-and-loss statement to the committee after the fair in order to make improvements to their process in the future. Each of these 4-H youth were committed to providing excellent products raised with best practices to auction participants.

Now that the fair is a fond memory, it is time to forge ahead with the 2021-2022 4-H year. Enrollment is in full swing, with the addition of two new clubs. Events are beginning to pop up on our calendar and create excitement for our 4-H'ers.

First on the docket is the annual NYS 4-H Agribusiness Career Conference co-sponsored by NYS 4-H, SUNY Cobleskill, and the NYS Farm Bureau Foundation for Education. 4-H youth across the state are invited to become more aware of opportunities within agriculture and also the academic requirements for professional positions available in various agri-businesses. It will feature seminars, guest speakers, and guided tours of the SUNY Cobleskill campus and agriculture facilities.

Schoharie County 4-H is also beginning to prepare for clinics that will highlight food and nutrition, sewing, fine arts, and STEM projects. Through our programs, we are determined to continue to provide hands-on, learn-by-doing educational experiences for youth within our community.



# PROGRAM EVENTS

Go to our website [cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://cceschoharie-otsego.org) to see the most up-to-date listings offered. Due to New York State's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, our programming has become more fluid, and some is being brought to you online.

## Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties Annual Meeting

You are invited to attend our Annual Meeting. Because of COVID-19, we will again be holding it via Zoom. If interested in attending, you can register at [reg.cce.cornell.edu/2021AnnualMeeting\\_243](http://reg.cce.cornell.edu/2021AnnualMeeting_243).

## What's For Dinner?

Monday, November 22, 2021, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Additional sessions in the series: November 29, December 6, 13, 20 & 27

Join our nutrition educator, Kimberly, for a 6-week virtual series of classes to learn about both the "why" of eating healthy and the "how." One hour a week includes a nutrition lesson and time for a cook-along dish. All ages are welcome! In each class, you can choose to cook-along and prepare something for dinner. Each recipe will be easy to prepare using typical kitchen tools. The recipe for each week will be shared about a week in advance so you'll have plenty of time to purchase ingredients and gather equipment. The recipes generally make 4-6 servings. Companion recipes will also be sent. Please note that the companion recipes may NOT be part of the cook-along. The classes are free for all participants, but you need to provide the ingredients and kitchen. A reliable WI-FI connection is recommended. Registration required. Register online or contact Kimberly Ferstler at [kmf239@cornell.edu](mailto:kmf239@cornell.edu) or 518-234-4303 ext. 120.

## Christmas Tree Varieties

Thursday, December 2, 2021, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Have you ever stepped on a tree farm and been overwhelmed by the varieties of Christmas tree types and not sure what would be best for your own? Join Jessica Holmes, Agriculture and Horticulture Educator, to learn about different types of evergreen trees, needle retention, scent, and more. There will be cuttings of different trees to see and feel in person. This

will be a hybrid meeting with the choice of in person or Zoom. Register online, or contact Jessica at 518-234-4303 ext. 119 or [jmh452@cornell.edu](mailto:jmh452@cornell.edu).

## Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schoharie and Otsego Counties - December Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, December 9, 2021, 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Meetings are open to the public. If interested in attending, please check with the office at 518-234-4303 to confirm the day and location of the meeting.

## Budget Bites

*This series is offered regularly; contact Michelle for specific dates.*

This nutrition education series focuses on recipes using fruits and vegetables and is free to income-eligible families. Learn budget-friendly recipes and receive a \$40 gift certificate to the Shoe Department upon completion of the series. Stipend for certificate awarded by Bassett 5210 Initiative. For more information or to register, contact Michelle Leveski at 518-234-4303 ext. 115 or email [mml39@cornell.edu](mailto:mml39@cornell.edu).

## Cooking With Kids

*This series is offered regularly; contact Michelle for specific dates.*

Home with the kids? Try out new recipes while having fun with the family. Just gather some ingredients and come prepare a meal with us! This fun, interactive series of virtual cooking lessons is free to income-eligible families. Receive a \$40 gift certificate to the Shoe Department upon completion of 6 lessons. Stipend for the certificate awarded by Bassett 5210 initiative. If interested please contact Michelle Leveski at 518-234-4303 ext. 115 or email [mml39@cornell.edu](mailto:mml39@cornell.edu).

***At the time of this publication, these events had not been canceled. Any changes will be noted on our website; be sure to check prior to the events.***

***Visit our website, [www.cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org), to see additional events not listed.***



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