

Connections

The News of Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2018

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2018 Otsego County Fair Livestock Auction



BY KATE PRESTON

This year the Otsego County fair held the annual 4-H Livestock Auction on Saturday, August 4. All the animals that were sold in the auction had been bought, raised, and showed by 4-Hers. Throughout the year, 4-H members attend annual meetings and kept records about their animals. These records showed quantities of hay/ grain eaten per day, the costs to feed the animals, and if vaccinations were given. The 4-Hers must complete these records in order to sell their animals in the auction.

Thirteen youth participated with nineteen animals sold in the auction. Animals in the 2018 sale include: a rabbit, a turkey, sheep, goats, beef cattle, hogs, and a dairy steer. Not only were animals auctioned off, but other donated items, a breakfast basket, toy cars and tractors, and much more, were sold. Maxwell Pullis' turkey was the highest selling animal per pound in the auction; Megan Wilmot, highest selling steer; Maxwell Pullis, highest selling sheep; Nick DeBoer, highest selling goat; and Vanessa Erkson, highest selling hog.



Luke Loveland with his market lamb.



Nick DeBoer auctioning off his market goat 'Chuck'.

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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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New York State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, New York State College of Human Ecology, and New York State College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University, Cooperative Extension Associations, county governing bodies, and U.S. Department of Agriculture, cooperating.



Vanessa Erkson with her market hog.



Maxwell Pullis auctioning off his turkey.

DESIGN YOUR SUCCESSION PLAN

Empowering Farm Families / Farm Business Partners to Get Started on their Succession Plans

**How will your family farm or ranch business operate
in the future when the owner retires or is gone?**

**Are you currently working with another generation
who may be questioning their role(s) in the future
farm or ranch business, or are you yourself
questioning your current role?**



The second round of this excellent, interactive 4-day curriculum will be Thursdays, November 1, 8, 29, and December 6, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., at the Extension Center, 173 South Grand St., Cobleskill.

The cost is \$95 per farm, allowing two people per farm. Additional farm team members are \$60 each, and are encouraged to attend. All workshop materials are included.

*CREATE A
SHARED VISION
FOR YOUR
FARM BUSINESS!*

Pre-registration is required by Friday, October 25.

Space is available on a first-come, first-served basis, and may be limited. This program is offered to farms throughout the Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, including (but not limited to) Oneida, Herkimer, Otsego, Schoharie, Fulton, and Montgomery Counties.

Register online at

cceschoharie-otsego.org/agriculture/farmtransitionplanning

For more information

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Cornell Cooperative Extension | Schoharie and Otsego Counties



Schoharie County Office of
Agricultural Development

Central New York Beef Producers Organize Fall 2018 Sale



Next Tele-Auction Sale: Friday, December 7, CCE Education Center, Cooperstown

The CNY Beef Producers members recently took important step towards becoming more autonomous as CCE Program Educator, Bill Gibson (former USDA-FSA Director), announced he will be retiring (again) after this December's sale. Bill has served as the group's principle facilitator since the program's inception four years ago along with the program originator, Cornell Beef Specialist, Dr. Mike Baker.

Dr. Baker will continue as a key faculty advisor along with Ashely McFarland, Livestock Specialist with the Central New York Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Team, as the group takes steps to establish self-governance and future operating procedures. A newly elected Executive Board, well representative of the CNY region, will take responsibility of decision making and program management.

Ron Maidens from Jordanville will serve as Chair; John Vanderwerken of Central Bridge will serve as Treasurer. Kurt Lawton of Schoharie, Dave Stanton of Franklin, Dan Hammond of Otsego, and Harold Palmer of Maryland complete the Board. Contact any of these members regarding sale procedures.

HISTORY

In February 2015, Dr. Baker presented to local producers the concept of collaborative marketing

by pooling larger lots of calves of similar type, size, and quality for tele-auction sales. Beginning that December and every fall and spring since, the group has produced five tele-auction sales. Prices either matched or exceeded leading market pricing in the region. To date, sixteen producers from seven counties have sold 240 feeder-calves to ten state-wide buyers. Calves are pre-conditioned with the same first shot and booster vaccinations and a minimum weaning schedule. Precautions have been in place that assure males are properly castrated and heifers are not bred unexpectedly. Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) certification is required to participate. Chute-side and classroom sessions are held in late summer to facilitate BQA procedures.

CURRENT OBJECTIVES

- Producers working together
- Breeding and managing market-quality calves
- Consistent communications to maintain production protocol
- Increase producer participation and lot sizes for auction

POLICY & PROCEDURES (As of 8/18)

- Adhere to published vaccination and management schedule for fall 2018 (see Schedule online).



- Producers must be Beef Quality Assurance certified and administer vaccinations subcutaneously, following all label instructions.
- Calves will be graded and video-recorded approximately three weeks prior to sale for accurate description and promotion purposes.
- Steers will be properly castrated, and heifers guaranteed open.
- Dehorning and castration must be completed pre-weaning and healed at time of grading.
- Calves will be tagged with NYS “21” tags, or better, and CNY tags prior to delivery.
- Bid prices may be adjusted when the average weight of any lot sold increases above the advertised weight (as follows) to protect buyers from experiencing substantially larger-than-anticipated cash outlays. If the average weight of the entire lot offered increases by 25 to 49 pounds, the sale price will be reduced \$.04 per pound. –If the average weight of the entire lot offered increases by 50 pounds or more, the sale price will be reduced by \$.06.
- Participants will pay an annual \$50 fee per farm no later than October 15, 2018 to support activities of the group and agree to assist with set-up for delivery and tear-down, as needed.

Vaccination and Management Schedule for the December 7 sale is available online at cceschoharie-otsego.org/CNYBeef

Central New York Beef Producers:

Ron Maidens, Maidens Family Angus
315-717-6357

Dan Hammond, Round Top Meadow Farm
607-783-2230

Kurt Lawton, Boxer Ridge Farm
518-312-7774

Harold Palmer, Timberdoodle Farm
607-638-9013

Dave Stanton, Stanton Cattle Company
607-434-7570

John VanDerwerken, Central Bridge Farms
518-231-8087

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Manage Risk in Your Agritourism Business Webinars!

With Family Farm Day (FFD) still fresh and having expanded in 2018 to include Delaware County farms, FFD farmers appear to be acting on current “agritourism” trends that indicate nature and agricultural tourism are on the rise in the broader Catskills region. Bringing visitors on-farm builds customer base, creates new income streams, and adds an additional source of risk to the farm business.

Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties joins its neighboring Extension Associations to present five webinars about managing agritourism risk. Each webinar will be followed by a panel of successful agritourism operators and facilitators. Between sessions, participants will be able to develop their own risk management plans. The five areas of risk addressed are: legal, marketing, human resource, financial, and weather/production risks.

The CCE Schoharie and Otsego sessions will be held simultaneously at the Extension Center, 173 South Grand St., Cobleskill **and** the Education Center, 123 Lake St., Cooperstown on five Fridays, September 28, October 5, 12, 19, and November 2, all from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., with 30 minutes for lunch. There is **no** fee, and all materials are included. Participants may bring their own lunch, but snacks and beverages will be provided. To register or for more information, call 518-234-4303 or email schoharie@cornell.edu.

This five-county program is produced by CCE Delaware as host, CCE Schoharie and Otsego, CCE Sullivan, and CCE Ulster Counties via Zoom technology, and is sponsored by the Northeast Extension Risk Management Education Center.

Closing Your Garden Doesn't Mean Forgetting About it over Winter

BY DEBORAH BECHTOLD, SCHOHARIE COUNTY MASTER GARDENER

It seems like we were just planting seeds; how can it be fall already? So, as you begin to think about closing your garden, this is a time also to take a close look at your garden. Make a rough sketch with plant locations. Evaluate good spacing, proper plant location, tall plants in the right location, bushy plants maybe needing more space. Or, like my garden, it's time for the tomatoes to have their own space! You can also decide (and write down) if you did or didn't like the species of plants you had, e.g., plum, cherry, or round tomatoes.



Take a close look and make a plan for next year.

Now that you've decided on a rough plan for next year, it's time to prepare closing this year's garden. Once your garden is at the end (or you're at the end), begin by picking any last vegetables and clearing your plants out of the garden. Pull plants out and place them in your compost bin, unless they have disease. In that case, you'll want to bag them and dispose of them in the garbage, if possible.

If you have manure/compost that is ready to use, now is a good time to place it in the garden along with grass clippings and leaves. No need to rototill; let the frost help you through this process. It's possible to never rototill again, if you have a manageable garden. You can layer your compost, manure, grass, and leaves; then, in the spring, go ahead and plant. Be sure to keep your weeds out of the compost so you don't encourage more weeds.

Garlic loves to go in mid-September to mid-October. Take your largest garlic cloves, paper on, point



Ready for a winter's nap.

up, and plant approximately 6" apart. Cover with straw and let it grow until July when the scrapes have come up and the leaves are starting to die.



Have your soup and eat it too while catching up on your gardening reading.

Once you've closed up your garden, head inside and make a delicious pot of vegetable soup and start reading all your gardening books and magazines for next year. Oh, and don't forget to write down your ideas, cut out pictures, take notes, and make a garden notebook. You can divide your book into Vegetables and Perennials, Landscape and Hardscape. Don't limit yourself, especially if you like to write down ideas or cut them out and think outside the garden box. There's nothing like getting to spring and trying to remember where you saw or put that great garden idea from the fall.

Good luck, and remember that if you plant it, it will grow!

PROGRAM EVENTS

EFNEP—Parent & Child Hands-on Cooking Lesson Series

Join your children/child in this 6 - 8 lesson series focused on cooking healthy meals and exercising with your family. Find answers and tips about eating more fruits and vegetables affordably and enjoying being active together. The lessons will be taught by Michelle Leveski, EFNEP Nutrition Program Educator.

Thursdays from 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. – September 13, 20, 27, and October 4, 11, and 18; free.

Call Cobleskill Office at 518-234-4303 to pre-register by September 11. Class size is limited. Children 4 and older.

The Farmers' Museum Harvest Festival

The Farmers' Museum celebrates its 40th annual festival with two days of live performances, music, and family activities. If you like historical trades, you won't be disappointed at Harvest Festival. Many artisans show off their skills, such as George Olsen from GTO Woodturning. Get hands-on with rope making, coopering, and see spinning and fiber art demonstrations. You'll also find tinsmiths, woodworkers, quilters, bakers, and potters.

Sunday, September 16, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Monday, September 17, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

More information is found online; go to www.farmersmuseum.org/Harvest-Festival

Managing Agritourism Risk Webinars

Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties joins its neighboring Extension Associations to present five webinars about managing agritourism risk. Each webinar will be followed by a panel of successful agritourism operators and facilitators.

Between sessions, participants will be able to develop their own risk management plans. The five areas of risk addressed are: legal, marketing, human resource, financial, and weather/production risks. The CCE Schoharie and Otsego sessions will be held simultaneously at the Extension Center, 173 South Grand St., Cobleskill and the Education Center, 123 Lake St., Cooperstown.

Fridays, September 9, October 5, 12, 19, and November 2, from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., with 30 minutes for lunch. There is no fee; all materials included. Participants may bring their own lunch. Snacks and beverages will be provided. To register or for more information, call 518-234-4303 or email schoharie@cornell.edu.

National 4-H Week

Take advantage of this important week to recognize the remarkable 4-H youth in our communities. Look for 4-H displays, or visit our website cceschoharie-otsego.org to see the incredible experiences that 4-H offers young people. National 4-H Week is October 7-13.

Tractor Supply Paper Clover Promotion

Each spring and fall, Tractor Supply raises money for 4 H programs through the sale of Paper Clovers in their stores. In the most recent campaign they raised over \$981,000 nationwide. 90% of funds raised go back to state and local 4H programs to support scholarships for camp and leadership activities. The Paper Clover fall promotion dates are October 3, through 14, 2018. Be sure to visit your local Tractor Supply store to purchase a paper clover. The money raised by the purchasing of paper clovers will directly benefit the Schoharie and Otsego Counties' 4-H programs.

Contribute during the 2018 fundraisers by: **1) Donating in store at the register or a 4-H Club manned display, 2) Donating online at checkout when making a purchase on**

tractorsupply.com, (Donations will be assigned to states based on the shipping location), **or 3) Donating by phone when you call TSC Customer Solutions at 877-718-6750.**

Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties Annual Meeting and Dinner

You are invited to attend our 2018 Annual Meeting and Dinner being held at Templeton Hall in Cooperstown. A reception will begin at 6:00 p.m. and is followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m. The keynote speaker is Chuck Bornt, Program Leader with Cornell Cooperative Extension Eastern New York Horticulture Team. The team addresses issues that impact the vegetable, tree fruit, small fruit and grape industries, focusing on food safety, variety evaluation, market development, pest management, and cultural practices for growers and agri-business professionals. RSVP by October 15. Register online at cceschoharie-otsego.org/AnnualDinner. Cost per dinner is \$30. For additional information contact our Cobleskill Office at 518-234-4310 or our Cooperstown Office at 607-547-2536 ext. 0.

October 17, 6:00 p.m. Reception, 6:30 p.m. Dinner; Templeton Hall, Cooperstown, NY

SAVE THESE DATES

Design Your Succession Plan Workshop Series

This workshop series empowers farm families/farm business partners to start on their succession plans. The second round of this excellent, interactive 4-day curriculum will be Thursdays, November 1, 8, 29, and December 6, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., at the Extension Center, 173 South Grand St., Cobleskill. The cost is \$95 per farm, allowing two from each farm. Additional farm team members are \$60 each, and they are encouraged to attend. All workshop materials are included. This program is offered to farm owners and their families throughout the Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, including Oneida, Herkimer, Otsego, Schoharie, Fulton, Montgomery, and surrounding counties. **Pre-registration is required by Friday, October 25.** Space is available on a first-come, first-served basis, and may be limited. Register online at cceschoharie-otsego.org/agriculture/farmtransitionplanning. For more information, contact Alicia Terry at 518-295-8792, or email aliciaterry@co.schoharie.ny.us, or David Cox at 518-234-4303 (x119), dgc23@cornell.edu

EFNEP—Parent & Child Hands-on Cooking Lesson Series

Join your children/child in this 6 - 8 lesson series focused on cooking healthy meals and exercising with your family. Find answers and tips about eating more fruits and vegetables affordably and enjoying being active together. The lessons will be taught by Michelle Leveski, EFNEP Nutrition Program Educator.

Wednesdays, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. on November 7, 14, 21, 28, and December 5, and 12; free.

Call Cobleskill Office at 518-234-4303 to pre-register by November 5, for the Wednesday classes. Class size is limited. Children should be age 4 and older.

Central New York Beef Producers Tele-Auction Sale Date

Participating producers must follow established and procedures described in the article on page 4 of this issue of Connections.

Tele-Auction takes place Friday December 7, at 2:00 p.m. online and by telephone.

Go to our website <http://cceschoharie-otsego.org> to see additional events not listed.

Freeze It Right



Whether you're reaping the harvest of your garden or enjoying the buys from a farmer's market, you may face the question of how to best preserve the bounty. Freezing can be the answer. It is also the simplest method of food preservation. Freezing fruits and vegetables at home is a fast, safe, and convenient way to preserve foods at their peak flavor and nutritive quality. Always pick produce at the peak of maturity, since freezing does not improve flavor or texture.

Food stored at 0°F will always be safe, so the recommended shelf lives of frozen foods are based on quality, not food safety, as only quality suffers with lengthy storage. Food is safe in its frozen state because freezing slows the activity of microbes, which cause food spoilage or food borne illness, thus inactivating bacteria, yeast, and molds. Once thawed these microbes become active again, so always practice one of three safe thawing methods: thaw food in the refrigerator, in cold water, or in the microwave. Another alternative is to cook food from a frozen state by adding additional cooking time. There can be other challenges to deal with when freezing, including the natural enzyme activity in food, browning, and freezer burn, or the possibility of power outages.

Enzyme activity leads to the deterioration of food. Enzymes present in fruits and vegetables drive chemical reactions before and after harvest, such as ripening. Freezing does not stop enzyme activity, it just slows it. Enzyme activity is neutralized by acids in frozen fruit, but most vegetables that freeze well are low acid, so another method, partial cooking or blanching, is used to prevent deterioration. Water blanching is the preferred method. You immerse produce in boiling water for the time recommended for the specific vegetable, beginning timing when water returns to a boil. Then you rapidly cool produce in ice water, draining before you package for freezing. Steam blanching is another method, but is only recommended for certain vegetables and the method takes longer. Microwave blanching is not recommended as research shows that some enzymes may remain activated, resulting in off flavors and loss of texture



Blanching time is crucial; under blanching is worse than no blanching and over blanching causes loss of flavor, color, vitamins, and minerals.



Vegetables need to be cooled quickly and thoroughly to stop the cooking process, so change the cooling ice water bath frequently.

and color. For more detailed instructions on blanching, refer to the **Handy Reference for Freezing Vegetables** found on our website at cceschoharie-otsego.org/connections. Articles for reference are listed in the left menu.

Some fruits, peaches, apples, pears, and apricots, for example, darken quickly when exposed to air while freezing. They may also lose flavor when thawed. Ascorbic acid or vitamin C is effective in preventing discoloration in most fruits. Ascorbic acid can be added by the following methods when freezing fruit. When using syrup or liquid packs, add ascorbic acid to cold liquid, stirring gently to avoid air and refrigerating until use. With sugar or dry packs, dissolve the ascorbic acid in two to three tablespoons of cold water and sprinkle dissolved ascorbic acid over fruit just before adding sugar. Ascorbic acid can be added directly to

crushed fruits, fruit pulses, and fruit juices. Citric Acid or lemon juice can be used in place of ascorbic acid, but they are not as effective and can mask natural fruit flavors. For more information on the different ways to pack fruit and the type of pack recommended for specific fruits, refer to the **Handy Reference for Freezing Fruits** found on our website at cceschoharie-otsego.org/connections in left menu. The dry and tray pack described in this handout is also appropriate to use in freezing blanched and drained vegetables.

Moisture loss, or ice crystals evaporating from the surface area, produces freezer burn. The freeze dried surface area is very likely to develop off flavors. It can be removed and food can be safely consumed, but if it covers too great of an area, the product may not be salvageable. The best guard against freezer burn is to use proper packaging when freezing produce. The packaging materials need to be moisture and vapor resistant, durable, leak-proof, not brittle at low temperatures, and easy to seal and mark. There are two types of packaging materials for home use, rigid containers and flexible bags or wrappings. Be sure to use packaging labeled suitable for freezer temperatures. For example plastic bags that are labeled storage bags are not appropriate to use for freezing. It is also important to date and label packages before freezing; what seems obvious when you put it in the freezer can become a mystery months later.

Maintain deep freezers at 0°F or colder for top-quality fruits and vegetables. Higher temperatures shorten the shelf life of frozen foods. Because of this a refrigerator freezing compartment that can't maintain 0°F or if the door is opened often should only be used for short-term storage. The best way to determine the actual temperature of your freezer is to use a freezer thermometer. It is also important to freeze produce quickly. The maximum amount of unfrozen product that should be frozen at one time



Be sure to label and date packages.

is 2-3 pounds for each cubic foot of freezer space in 24 hours. Depending on the size of your freezer this can limit the amount of produce you can put up at one time, so plan accordingly especially if you are purchasing the produce. Smaller, more frequently prepared batches are better than large quantities that overwhelm the freezing capacity.

If there is a power disruption, foods will remain frozen longer if the freezer is left unopened, is full, is in a cool place, and is well insulated. Food in a loaded freezer will usually stay frozen for two to four days depending on the size of the freezer. A half-filled freezer will keep food frozen about twenty-four hours only. As long as food is only partially thawed, has ice crystals, and has been kept below 40°F it is safe to refreeze.

All in all, freezing is a quick and convenient way to preserve fruits and vegetables at home. It is the method of food preservation that preserves the greatest quantity of nutrients. To maintain top nutritional quality in frozen fruits and vegetables select fresh, firm-ripe produce, blanch vegetables as directed, store the frozen product at 0°F or colder, and use within suggested storage times.

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION

To subscribe to "CONNECTIONS," the bi-monthly e-newsletter of Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties, visit our website, cceschoharie-otsego.org. Click on "Connections," then click on the button in the upper right corner, and complete the registration. It's free, and by subscribing you are assured of receiving future issues, without missing any news or programs of the Association. Printed copies are also available at the Association offices in Cobleskill, Cooperstown, and Oneonta. Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties does not share reader's personal information with third parties. Our emails are to keep you up to date with current events. If you do not wish to receive our notices, you can unsubscribe at anytime.



To: New York Farmers
From: Daniel Welch, Assistant Director, NY FarmNet
Date: June 2018

New York State farm families are experiencing high levels of financial and emotional stress, due in part to several years of low commodity prices. This is an especially difficult time for dairy farmers because regional conditions in dairy markets have further reduced farm revenues.

For farmers who may need support at this time, NY FarmNet consultants are located across NY State and can meet directly on-farm with the farm family. Our services are **free** and **confidential**. NY FarmNet consultants work on teams comprised of one farm-family consultant and one financial consultant. They both have the same objective to help farmers identify problems, outline possible solutions, and develop a plan.

NY FarmNet's Helpline, 1-800-547-3276 (FARM), is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Farm families can also go to www.nyfarmnet.org to fill out a form requesting assistance. They can expect a follow-up call from a consultant to set up a meeting within 24 hours. Other publications can be found at www.nyfarmnet.org/resources.

NY FarmNet is always willing to assist with local programs focusing on stress management, effective communication, farm business management, and business and succession planning. For more information, or to request programming, call 1-800-547-3276 (FARM).



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FARM SOURCE THRIVE

Otsego.info

Advancing the goals of the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan, adopted by Otsego County Board of Representatives, September 2017

AN INITIATIVE OF

- Otsego Board of Representatives and the Ag and Farmland Plan Implementation Committee
- Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties
- Center for Agricultural Development and Entrepreneurship
- Otsego County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Otsego County Conservation Association
- Otsego 2000
- Otsego Land Trust
- Otsego County farmers and other agencies and organizations

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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FARM

Improving access to farmland and the development of new educational programs attract new and beginning farmers to the area. Agricultural organizations, non-profits, municipalities, and other government entities provide educational opportunities, networking tools, and farm-friendly public policy to ensure the success of local farms. A robust support network for farmers, including efforts to preserve farmland, is essential for growing the agricultural sector.

SOURCE

Consumers, restaurants, and markets source their agricultural, food, and value-added products from Otsego County farms and businesses, improving demand for local foods and products. The ease for people, markets, and institutions to access Otsego County foods and agricultural products is a principal goal, whether from local or regional farmers' markets, farm direct, food processors, or through innovative programs like Farm-to-School.

THRIVE

Thriving farms and agribusinesses create a ripple effect throughout the region. Local farms which produce high quality foods and other products increase opportunities for special events, community groups, related businesses, and agri-tourism attractions. These new features contribute to the quality of life of local residents, attract new visitors, and increase overall revenue in the county.



Otsego County Fair 2018

BY KATE PRESTON



Supreme Showman Contest (l-r) : Hannah Audette, Karly Miller, Carson Dutcher, Ashley McFarland, Judge; Garrett Proskine, Nick DeBoer, Joleen Lusk

The annual Otsego County Fair was held July 29 - August 5. Approximately 150 4-Hers entered at the fair with about 250 animals. 4-Hers were busy showing all week, as well as volunteering their time at the 4-H snack bar and activities in Martin Hall. Listed below are some of the animal science winners:

Dairy Cattle: Master Showman, Megan Wilmot; Reserve Master Showman, Carson Dutcher; Supreme Junior Animal, Alyssa Grocott with her Brown Swiss heifer; Supreme Senior Animal, Carson Dutcher with his Ayrshire cow.

Beef Cattle: Master Showman went to Meredith Hammond; Reserve Master Showman went to Nicholas DeBoer; Supreme & Reserve Female and Supreme Beef

went to Nicholas DeBoer with his Simmental heifer; Grand Champion Market Steer went to Megan Wilmot; Champion Bull Calf went to Nicholas DeBoer; Best Bred and Owned went to Nicholas DeBoer.

Swine: Master Showman went to Garrett Proskine; Champion Female went to Garrett Proskine with 'Tinker'; Reserve Champion Female went to Emily Hammond; Champion Market Hog went to Trent DeBoer; Reserve Champion Market Hog went to Megan Wilmot; Best Bred and Owned went to Garrett Proskine; Supreme Hog went to Garrett Proskine.

Dairy Goat: Master Showman went to Megan Wilmot; Reserve Master Showman went to Hannah Audette; Best Junior Doe went to Cameron Jones



(l-r) Dairy Reserve Master Showman Carson Dutcher, Master showman Megan Wilmot, and Austin Ainslie 2017 Dairy Master Showman



Jack Vunk in the Parade of Champions



Garrett Proskine with his supreme swine 'Tinker'

with his Nigerian Dwarf; Best Doe in Show went to Braydon Hascup with his Recorded Grade.

Sheep: Master Showman went to Karly Miller; Reserve Master Showman went to Maddie Coleman; Supreme Ewe went to Connor Kane; Reserve



Sheep Master Showman, Karly Miller

Supreme Ewe went to Kylie Tophoven; Grand Champion Market Lamb went to Maxwell Pullis; Reserve Champion Market Lamb went to Luke Loveland; Best Bred and Owned went to Connor Kane; Champion Ram went to Connor Kane and Reserve went to Kassidy Miller; Champion and Reserve Natural Colored Wool went to Grace Wing.

Rabbit: Master Showman went to Megan Perrine; Best of Breed Mini Rex Otter went to Megan Perrine; Mini Rex Broken went to Melanie Lyons; Neth. Dwarf Shaded went to Lillian Perrine; New Zealand went to Summer Mayne; Dutch AOV, Izaiah Conklin; Dutch Tort, Izaiah Conklin; Holland Lop Broken, Megan Perrine.

Poultry: Grand Champion Bantam went to Arianna Bresee; Reserve Champion Bantam went to Alyssa Grocott; Overall Champion went to Rosa Dangca.

Fourteen of these 4-H exhibitors plan to attend the New York State Fair. Approximately forty-six animals were entered from Otsego County exhibitors. Species represented were dairy and meat goat, dairy cattle, sheep, swine, rabbits and beef cattle. Also some exhibits from Martin Hall will be sent to State Fair to be exhibited at the Otsego County booth.



Trevor, Nick, and Trent preparing for Meat Goat Showmanship

71st Junior Livestock Show

BY KATE PRESTON



The 71st Junior Livestock Show, sponsored by The Farmers' Museum and conducted in cooperation with Cornell Cooperative Extension, County 4-H educators, and clubs, was held July 8, 9, and 10 at the Iroquois Grounds in Cooperstown. The Junior Livestock show had youth participating from nine different counties across Central New York. Approximately 230 exhibitors and 500 animals were exhibited at the second largest livestock show in New York State.

Otsego County

Otsego County 4-H held their own as they had many champions at the 71st Junior Livestock Show. The Otsego County award winners are as follows:

Showmanship Awards: Otsego County exhibitors a won big in the showmanship category. Showmanship is based on how the exhibitor handles the animal, knowledge of their animal as well as the fitting job they have done. Megan Wilmot won reserve master showman in the Dairy Goats category and Connor Kane won Master Showman in the Sheep category.

Dairy Cattle Awards: Grand Champion Guernsey went to Julia Vunk with Rocky Leoge Laredo Star; Grand Champion Milking Shorthorn went to Julia Vunk with Weissmann Belero Bonnie; best bred and owned milking Shorthorn went to Jack Vunk with Gray Goose McCoy Roseanne;

Supreme Junior Animal went to Ashlyn Wolfe with Ovaltop Sid Kracker; Junior Champion Brown Swiss went to Alyssa Grocott with On-A-Whim Purple Fawn; Reserve Junior Champion Guernsey went to Raleigh Mumbulo with Goldenbell Latimer Baby; Holstein Junior Champion went to Ashlyn Wolfe and Reserve Junior Champion went to Alexis Wolfe; Reserve Junior Champion Milking Shorthorn went to Megan Wilmot with Speckled Acres Scarlett.

Dairy Goat Awards: Grand Champion and Best Udder Nigerian Dwarf went to Cameron Jones with Enchanted Acres Sarah and Reserve Champion went to Cameron Jones with Enchanted Acres Sadie; Reserve Junior Champion Recorded Grade went to Chase Burkhart with Hill View Acres Trixie.

Beef Cattle Awards: Champion Hereford went to Hannah Bonczkowski with Lieli 94 Holly

Sheep Awards: Champion Ewe-Connor Kane with Chenoa; Champion Jacob, Luke Loveland with Sashay; Champion Oxford, Karley Miller with Crescenta; Champion Shropshire Connor Kane with Zenyatta.

Swine Awards: Champion Yorkshire, Emily Hammond with RRF8 Brenda; Champion Crossbred and Hampshire went to Garrett Proskine with Tinker and Sabina; Champion other breeds went to Meredith Hammond; Reserve Champion Market Hog went to Vincent Bellacicco with Colby Bob;



Otsego County 4-H members at the 2018 Jr. Livestock Show!

Champion Female went to Emily Hammond with Brenda and Reserve Champion Female went to Garrett Proskine with Tinker.

The last and final award, is the good sportsmanship award. The good sportsmanship is given to an exhibitor, volunteer or parent that throughout the three days have showed exemplary sportsmanship qualities. This year the award was awarded to graduating 4-H member, Tom Aiken!

Schoharie County

Schoharie County 4-H also had a good showing with 21 youth exhibitors winning awards in the following categories.

Awards for Dairy Cattle: Grand Champion in the Ayrshire Division went to Sean Shuls with Heiview JT Lochinvar Eloise. Grand Champion in the Jersey Division went to Gus Mason with DJF Premier Gummybear.

An Award in the Best Bred and Owned Division: Award in the Ayrshire category went to Sean

Shults with Heiview Lochinvar Twitter, award in the Jersey category went to Gus Mason with DJF Premier Gummybear, and the award in the Beef category went to Nathan Hay with Jewels Jack.

Other Dairy Awards: In the Ayrshire Division both Junior and Grand Champion went to Sean Shults with Heiview JT Lochinvar Eloise. In the Jersey Division Sr. Champion went to Gus Mason with DJF Premier Gummybear.

Dairy Goat Awards: Senior Champion, Grand Champion, and Best Udder went to Levi Blood-Szentmiklosy with Loverknot's Crest Cara Bella

Other Livestock Awards: In the Beef Division- Champion Steer went to Nathan Hay with Jewels Jack. In the Sheep Division- Natural Color and best Fleece went to Emma Lacko with Chuck, and Romney went to Devin Lacko with C Sheep 143608.

An excellent showing by all the 4-Her's in both counties representing hours of work with their 4-H project animals.



Schoharie County 4-H members at the 2018 Jr. Livestock Show!

Afterschool 4-H Connection

Our licensed three-hour 4-H Afterschool program is unique, because it links our 4-H Youth development program with Afterschool, allowing students to experience 4-H in action. 4-H Afterschool clubs are designed for youth to gain knowledge, self-confidence, self-esteem, and master skills through a hands-on learning approach.



Through activities such as show-n-tell, leading peers in the 4-H pledge, and reading the daily schedule; youth experience the beginning of public speaking, they may further expand this skill by participating in the yearly 4-H Public Presentations event.

Gaining skill in the performing arts all the children in the Schoharie site performed a talent show for their peers, families, and school personnel. Some talents the children performed were: reciting original poetry that they had written, performing magic, singing both established songs and some songs they had written, performing an original cheer, and some physical activities such as hula hooping, jumping rope, and performing dance. In addition to performing, some students used their fine arts and fine craft skills while painting scenery and creating props, sewing and knitting hats, even turning recyclables into props.

Hobby and home environment was a way for the children to explore many different activities and make gifts for their families for different occasions. The children learned how to weave fabric to create pot holders. They learned table setting while creat-

ing placemats showing the placement of cups, glasses, plates, bowls, napkins, and silverware. The children took cans and recycled them into plant holders. They painted the cans and decorated them to look like bees and then planted flowers into the cans. The older children decorated slate slabs, added a picture of themselves and gave as gifts for mother's day. These are just a few examples of the many items the children created.



Community service is an important aspect of the 4-H experience. The home economics crochet club made hats that were donated to a children's cancer ward, while other the children have assisted teachers in creating and designing bulletin boards, and also participating in decorating various areas of the school for special visitors and events, for example, veterans' day, father/daughter dances, mother/son breakfasts and other occasions.

Another aspect of 4-H is agriculture. Children gain knowledge of different animals, their habitats, how to identify various body parts, and what judges are looking for when showing animals at the fairs, through participation in animal club. Children learned about gardening when they participated in planting various plants including vegetables and flowers that they took home to transplant or give



as gifts. The children assisted the grounds personnel at the Schoharie School with the garden at the entrance to the elementary school. The children planted annuals, added mulch, and until the end of school would go out weekly to pull weeds making sure plants had been properly watered.

In the writer's club, children explored creative writing by sharing stories they had written with family and friends. Comic books were another form of written expression they experienced, illustrating with their own pictures as well as writing the story in a collaborative manner with everyone in the club contributing something.

Our bug club put their entomology knowledge in action when they rescued a dragonfly. An After-school youth, who was not a bug club member, noticed a dragonfly stuck in a ceiling tile at the Schoharie site and went to bug club members to figure a way to release the dragonfly. The members of the bug club recognized the segment of the dragonfly which was stuck in the ceiling tile and were able to figure out the pressure that would need to be applied when lifting the ceiling tile allowing dragon fly to be freed, and then directed the custodian which side of the tile to lift to free the dragonfly with minimal harm. The dragonfly was successfully released and flew away.

You can begin to see the value of the learning experiences offered to the afterschool children through 4-H and its only begun. Each year some clubs stay while others are put aside as new interests arise. Just imagine where your child or children might go if they join 4-H Afterschool and experience where 4-H can take them while receiving quality afterschool care by a trained and caring staff.



Give 4-H a Try

A Baker's Dozen Schoharie and Otsego Counties 4-H Club Experiences!



4-H is a program of Cornell Cooperative Extension, which helps youth gain knowledge, self-confidence, self-esteem, and mastery of skills through hands-on learning. 4-H youth are guided through projects by adult volunteers. The experiential approach to learning used in the 4-H program involves real-life problem solving, so 4-H offers the ideal opportunity for intensive learning.

The four H's (head, heart, hands and health) represent four basic human needs: independence, belonging, generosity and mastery. Youth who belong to 4-H clubs build social skills, form lasting friendships, and learn from other youth and adults in an informal setting. Clubs can have formal meetings with parliamentary



Crafts & Critters



Green Tree



Diehard Dairy



Jefferson Generals



Food Friends



Kool Kats



Happy Hoofsters



Unadilla Bits and Bridles

procedures or informal meetings where youth and adults share knowledge and practice skills. By combining project activities with opportunities to go to camp, publicly show their work, travel, meet other youth and adults. 4-H provides a framework on which young people can build self-confidence, responsibility and generosity. Club members and youth who are individual members are also encouraged to participate in county-wide, state or regional 4-H activities. There are no membership fees to become a 4-H member or Cloverbud.

4-H volunteer leaders are the backbone the program. Without leaders there is no 4-H. To become a 4-H club leader is a simple process. Foremost is the desire to have a positive effect on the lives of young people. Volunteers are interviewed, background checked, and supported by the 4-H staff throughout the club year. The 4-H volunteer commitment can be as little as a one-day workshop guiding youth or leaders in special project activities or as much as a yearlong commitment as a club leader. There are also seasonal workshops, events, and special projects that need volunteers.

Current 4-H clubs in Schoharie and Otsego Counties held their 4-H club reorganization meeting in August gearing up for a year of fun, friends, and learning in the 2018-2019 4-H program year beginning October

1, 2018. It is also time for new 4-H clubs to start. The 4-H programs in both Schoharie and Otsego Counties are open to new members aged 5-19 and adult volunteers who are interested in joining or starting a 4-H club. If you want to join or just need more information, check out our website: cceschoharie-otsego.org in early September for date and times of 4-H Information Nights in Schoharie and Otsego County, as pre-registration is required. You can also contact our 4-H Educators, in Schoharie County Teresa Adell at 518-234-4303-Ext.113, tla47@cornell.edu, or in Otsego County, Patti Zellmer at 607-547-2536-Ext.225, psz2@cornell.edu for more information.



The Rider's Club



Thundering Hooves



Rainbow Warriors



Firecrackers



Animal Aggies

Schoharie County Sunshine Fair

4-H Highlights 2018



After a busy year of projects, events, and competitions, 4-Hers in Schoharie County shined at the 2018 Schoharie County Sunshine Fair. This year's 128 exhibitors had 247 animal entries and 417 non-animal entries. Eight entries were chosen for Best in Show, and twenty-five exhibitors with thirty-five projects were chosen for the 2018 Great NY State Fair. Show results from the Parade of Champions are listed here.

Horse:

Showmanship Grand Champion- Savannah Traverse, and Showmanship Reserve Champion- Krista Ryder

English Jr. Champion- Claudia Walrath, English Sr. Champion- Makayla Ryder

English Grand Champion- Makayla Ryder

Western Walk/Jog Champion- Chloe Armstrong, Western Jr. Champion- Hannah Vedder, Western Sr. Champion- Makayla Ryder

Gymkhana Walk/Jog Champion- Adam Hockman, Gymkhana Jr. Champion- Julianna Perillo, Gymkhana Sr. Champion- Kathryn Santoro

Ranch Horse Jr. Champion- Hannah Vedder, Ranch Horse Sr. Champion- Kathryn Santoro

Dairy:

Showmanship Grand Champion- Allen Graulich, Showmanship Reserve Champion- Jenna Warner
Holstein Grand Champion- Stephen Ullman

Jersey Grand Champion- Stephen Ullman

Ayrshire Grand Champion- Sean Shults

Brown Swiss Grand Champion- Sean Shults

Other breeds Grand Champion- Levi Blood-Szentmiklosy

Best of Show Jr. Champion- Tyler Lloyd, Best of Show Sr. Champion- Stephen Ullman, and

Best of Show Supreme Champion- Stephen Ullman

Beef:

Showmanship Master Champion- Nathan Hay

Showmanship Reserve Champion- Anna King

Heifer Grand Champion- Nathan Hay

Cross Breed Champion- Stella Van Zutphen

Cross Breed Cow and Calf Grand Champion- Anna King

Other Breeds Champion- Nathan Hay

Aberdeen and Red Angus Champion- Anna King

Market Animal Grand Champion- Nathan Hay

Best Of Show Grand Champion- Nathan Hay

Swine:

Showmanship Master Champion- Nathan Hay

Showmanship Reserve Champion- Luke Enyart

Purebred Grand Champion- Nathan Hay

Grade/Crossbred Grand Champion- Luke Enyart

Bred and Owned Champion- Nathan Hay

Best of Show Grand Champion- Luke Enyart



Some of the Western and English 4-H Horse Show riders with their judge Jason Goldberg after their daylong show on Thursday.

Dairy Goat:

Showmanship Grand Champion- Kelsey Campbell
Showmanship Reserve Champion- Alex Badger
Best Udder- Brooke Lincoln
Champion Oberhasli- Levi Blood-Szentmiklosy
Champion Nigerian Dwarf- Booke Lincoln
Champion Toggenburg- Olivia Van Evera
Champion Recorded Grade- Alex Badger
Best Bred and Owned- Olivia Van Evera
Best of Show- Brooke Lincoln

Meat Goat:

Showmanship Grand Champion- Shawna Whiteman
Showmanship Reserve Champion- Case Yacobucci
Best of Show- Case Yacobucci

Sheep:

Showmanship Grand Champion- Devin Lacko
Champion Wool Breed- Devin Lacko
Champion Ewe- Emma Lacko
Best Fleece- Ellie Shaul
Champion Ram- Devin Lacko
Best of Show Champion- Emma Lacko

Rabbit:

Showmanship Grand Champion- Alexandria Lincoln
Showmanship Reserve Champion- Brooke Lincoln
Champion Wool Breeds- Shawna Whiteman
Champion Six Class- Savanna Traverse
Champion Four Class- Alexandria Lincoln



4-H Youth with rabbits and ribbons after the show at the 4-H animal barns.

Best of Show Grand Champion- Alexandria Lincoln
Best of Show Reserve Champion- Brooke Lincoln

Poultry:

Showmanship Grand Champion- Jacob Fagnani
Showmanship Reserve Champion- Kathryn Santoro
Best of Show Production Champion- Anika Falco
Best of Show Exhibition Champion- Jacob Fagnani

Dog:

Showmanship Grand Champion- Westin Patchen
Showmanship Reserve Champion- Mason Patchen
Tricks and Demonstration Champion- Michael Stoesser
Rally Obedience Champion- Mason Patchen
Best of Show Champion- Westin Patchen



Some of the 4-H animal exhibitors at the 2018 Schoharie County Sunshine Fair.



4-Her Sydney Seegers smiling while showing at the 4-H Model Horse Show in Progressland.

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4-H Educator Teresa Adell showing NY Congressman Fasso many of the accomplishments of 4-H youth in Schoharie County.

Progressland:

Best of Show Food and Nutrition- Thomas McConnelee

Best of Show Communication and Expressive Arts- Krista Ryder

Best of Show Fine Arts and Fine Crafts- Savannah Traverse

Best of Show Photography- Jenna Warner

Best of Show Clothing and Textiles- Shawna Whiteman



Cloverbud display in Progressland showcasing their ninety-one entries.

Best of Show Hobby Crafts- Savannah Traverse

Best of Show Horticulture- Andrew McConelee

Best of Show Science and Technology- Adam Hockman

Cloverbuds earned Rainbow Awards for their 91 project entries.

Congratulations to all the exhibitors for all the awards received for showing the results of their yearlong 4-H project work.

Simply Spiced

BY VERONICA PITT

During my internship at Cornell Cooperative Extension one of my many experiences was to assist Michelle Leveski, EFNEP Nutrition Program educator, with her Parent and Child hands-on nutrition classes. After working with her and the families, I began to think about how I wished I had the chance to be a part of a cooking class like this when I was growing up. If I was, maybe I would have formed a love for cooking sooner than I did.

Within the last 4 or 5 years I have developed a passion for cooking, which is something I never thought I would enjoy because I never liked to help my mom cook or bake growing up. Cooking can be creative, it allows you to throw things together and still have it taste delicious. The best part about cooking in my opinion is experimenting with spices to create different flavors. Figuring out which spices go best together is the exciting part of the experience for me.



My favorite spices to work with are garlic powder, onion powder, dried minced onion, and of course the basic salt and pepper. When I want to spice it up a little more I use red pepper flakes or Cajun seasoning. These common spices are available in most

local supermarkets- Walmart, Hannaford, Price Chopper, and even sometimes Dollar General depending on what your store carries. McCormick™ is my favorite brand to use because they have a ton of options for everyone, and I haven't had a spice yet that didn't have great flavor. On those nights when you just don't know which spices to put together or you just want to try something different, I would recommend their line called Grill Mates™. These are premixed spices which are a time saver, and although often labeled meat specific, they are universal, and can be used in many different dishes.

Ninety-five percent of the time these are the spices I use to cook my favorite meals like chicken-bacon-ranch penne, grilled chicken and zucchini parmesan, and seasoned steak on the grill. Cooking with spices is all about trial and error. In my opinion it takes a few times of making a dish to get the right blend of spices. With this in mind I recommend you start with a base recipe and tailor it to your tastes using your favorite spices. These experiments may lead you to the same love of cooking I have developed over the last several years. Enjoy!

BUTTERNUT SQUASH AND APPLE SOUP

A feast of fall flavors

Serves 10

Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 medium butternut squash (about 3 lbs.) peeled, seeded, and cut into 1-inch cubes
- 6 cups chicken broth, low sodium
- 4 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, and chopped
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
- 2 cups evaporated skim milk
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons packed brown sugar (optional)

Directions

1. Over medium heat, melt butter in a large pot.
2. Add chopped onion and sauté, stirring occasionally until tender and translucent (4 to 6 minutes).
3. Add butternut squash and chicken broth. Bring to boil, reduce heat to medium low. Simmer, stirring occasionally until squash is tender (about 20 minutes).
4. Add apples and nutmeg. Simmer, stirring occasionally until apples are tender (about 15 minutes).
5. Using a blender or food processor puree soup in batches until smooth.
6. Return soup to the pot, stir in evaporated milk and season with salt, pepper, and brown sugar. Keep soup hot at all times.



Notes:

- Other varieties of apples may be substituted.
- You may freeze and store soup up to 1-2 months.

Know the facts . . .

- Butternut squash is a winter squash, so called because it is picked when ripe and the skin has hardened. It stores up to 2-3 months.
- One cup of winter squash contains about 80 calories and is low in fat and sodium while high in fiber, vitamins A and C, and magnesium and potassium.
- Apples are members of the rose family. More than 2500 varieties are grown in the United States and more than 7500 worldwide.
- Store ripe apples in the refrigerator; apples stored at room temperature ripen 10 times faster.
- For our companion recipe, **Apple Bread Pudding**, go to cceschoharie-otsego.org/connections. Find the recipe link in left menu.
- Join our Expanded Food and Nutrition Program (EFNEP) and cook with your kids at Cornell Cooperative Extension or in the privacy of your own home. Contact us or join us on Facebook, EFNEP CCE Schoharie and Otsego Counties.



Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 1/2 cup
Servings Per Container 10

Amount Per Serving

Calories 200 Calories from Fat 35

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 4g 6%

Saturated Fat 2.5g 13%

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 15mg 5%

Sodium 450mg 19%

Total Carbohydrate 39g 13%

Dietary Fiber 5g 20%

Sugars 22g

Protein 7g

Vitamin A 300% Vitamin C 60%

Calcium 25% Iron 6%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

Calories: 2,000 2,500

Total Fat Less than 65g 80g

Saturated Fat Less than 20g 25g

Cholesterol Less than 300mg 300mg

Sodium Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg

Total Carbohydrate 300g 375g

Dietary Fiber 25g 30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

The label tells a story.



New York State's agriculture industry is one of our great assets. Keeping it growing and thriving is one of the most important things we can do.



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To qualify, producers must meet certification criteria:

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- Farms participate in a third-party food safety verification program, if applicable
- Producers participate in an environmental management program

New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets has provided funding to assist producers to meet the obligations to participate or remain in the NYS Grown & Certified program. Producers may apply for up to \$50,000 per farm; applicants are required to contribute 10% of the total project cost in the form of cash equity.

For more information

Schoharie and Otsego County producers should contact:

David Cox, Ag/Hort Program Leader, 518-234-4303 (x119), dgc23@cornell.edu or
Shannon Kirch, Otsego Ag Implementation Specialist, 607-547-2536 (x227), swk38@cornell.edu

For application materials, contact Linda Wightman, CCE Oneida County at
315-736-3394 (x124), lw343@cornell.edu

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Show the World Your Point of View!

BY MARY BALLARD



How often do you hear people say “I just wish you saw things the way I do!” Well Photography is a sure way to make others see what you see. It can often be surprising how two different people can take a photo of the same image and yet they will come out so differently. This is because we each bring our own experiences to exactly how we see the world.

This year youth that belonged to both the Schoharie and Otsego County 4-Hs were able to do just that by participating in photo clinics. In these clinics the 4-H members were given a chance to learn some basic photography skills. From the results (their photos!) it looks like they had a lot to say!

A photo clinic, class, or workshop is a great way to start your adventure in photography, but not



Schoharie County 4-H Photo Clinic

completely necessary. From a very early age I have had a passion for photography. I can still remember getting my first camera (a 110 film camera) and the excitement it brought me. Immediately I was walking around snap-



A 4-Her's perspective

ping photos of everyone and everything. There was so much pleasure planning each shot and then (sometimes impatiently) waiting to see how the photos printed out. It was probably this joy of photography that led me to studying computer arts in college. Being able to concentrate on photography and then learn all the ways that I could use those photos brought back that excitement. And while I personally had the chance to study this great topic in school I'd like to let everyone know that with just a few basic hints, anyone with any camera can create photos that not only they can enjoy but that those around them can enjoy.

With autumn approaching we all have a fantastic chance to get some really eye-catching pictures. So no matter what your photography experience or what kind of camera you have (I have taken many good photos with my cell phone so if you have no other camera give yours a try) get out there and take those photos. Following my hints below will surely help you along the way!

Hint #1 - Keep your Camera Steady – Many great photographs are ruined just because the camera moved at the wrong time. If this happens to you don't be discouraged, often when we are trying to take a picture we are excited about what we are seeing and that means we often allow our cameras to shake a bit. So the next time you try to take a picture take a deep breath and let it out slowly. Holding your camera so that your arms are close to the center of your body can help you to steady. Also use your surroundings, are you near some trees or may a fence? Leaning on a tree or pole or even propping just one of your elbows can help ease the camera shake. If you are in a setting where you require an

continued on page 26

even steadier hand try a tripod or a monopod (decent ones can often be bought inexpensively). Tripods are most often necessary to take good photos in low-light or dark settings, the human body just isn't built to hold a camera steady enough when the camera shutter has to stay open longer to get in enough light in these settings. As monopod is often handy for someone who is going to be hiking a lot (they are often lighter and less bulky than tripods), and some can even be used as a walking stick and/or a selfie stick (I know selfie sticks get a lot of bad press today, however when used in an appropriate setting they can be an amazing tool, especially for those of us who are vertically challenged.)



Hold it steady!

Hint #2 - Get the best light that you can – Lighting can really make or break a fantastic photo. For instance do you want an outdoor photo that looks a bit mysterious? Getting up early is going to be your best time to try this, as the sun comes up you can catch mist rising which can create an eerie beautiful effect. On a gray rainy day you can really make bright colors pop. If you are taking a photo where you need to use artificial lighting move the light around your subject to see how different angles can affect the image you are viewing (if you can't move the lighting move yourself around the subject, the movement will give you a feel of how the light will play on what you are photographing) your lighting doesn't need to be something specific to photography you can achieve a lot with a good lamp, if you can try different light bulbs to see if one creates an effect on your photos that you particularly like.

Hint #3 - Try out your flash – Sometimes you are stuck in a situation where the lighting just isn't sufficient to take the photo you want. During these times you might have to try using the built-in flash on your camera. I often recommend trying out your flash before this happens so that you have an idea of what it will do. The light can often be harsh so sometimes you will need to "soften" it. Online you can find tools that will attach to your camera and create a "soft box" over your flash. This will diffuse the light that comes from the flash and often make a picture taken with flash much better. If you can't afford one of these tools don't worry you can often create the same effect by holding a piece of tissue paper over your flash, it will be light enough to let most of the light through, but still soften it. In a real pinch I have even cupped my hand around the flash to limit the light.

Hint #4 - "Play" with your camera – This may seem like a silly statement, but it is often how I learn my new cameras (or even the cameras built-in to my cell phone). Today's cameras have come a long way from the very first film cameras. Often the capabilities built into each camera are amazing. I often love taking panoramas with my cellphone, a feat that previously I had to do with a tripod and then a photo editing program to "knit" them together. The cellphone however just does it like magic, hold it steady and then slowly move horizontally or even vertically.

Hint #5 - Be Persistent – Not many photographers can say that the first photo they ever took was award-winning. More often than not these people have dedicated a good amount of time learning their equipment and the techniques that they need to create the particular photos that are their style. Try making sure you take some photos



Persistence pays off.

every day, remember practice makes perfect. One of my favorite photos is of a beautiful blue butterfly that took me quite some effort. I went to a local butterfly conservatory and spent a couple of hours

chasing this butterfly around, all too often it would move at the exact time I had the perfect shot. At last it did finally land and I was rewarded with a beautiful photo on it on some purple flowers that still makes me smile to this day. So if at first your photos don't make you happy, keep trying, they will yet.

Hint #6 - Set yourself assignments – Often when I learn about a new technique I set myself “assignment” that will help me learn about the technique. For example I decided one time that I wanted to learn how to use Christmas tree lights as my light source. So my assignment was to take a week to shoot photos using Christmas tree lights as the only light source. I learned a lot about that light source and wound up with some pretty cool photos. I also did the same thing to learn the light from the flash built into my camera. If you come up with something you would like to photograph then set yourself an assignment on it and shoot only that for a portion of time. It will help you learn it and often give you hints of how to take future photos.

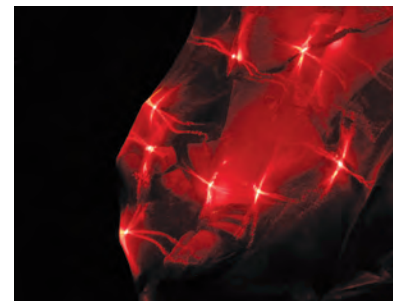


Christmas lights and sheer fabric.

Hint #7 - Shoot what you love – When you photograph something that you personally find pleasing and really care about it shows. This is often a great way to let someone else see the beauty in something that you do. Often when you are not passionate about your subject it will come out and be a much duller photo than if you had chosen the subject that you really like. So whether its cats, horses, flowers, or anything else that takes your fancy – shoot what you love!

Hint #8 - Share Your Photos – A great way to see how you are doing with your photos is to share

them. Often we are more critical on ourselves than others will be. Many times I will take a photo and see several things that I might have wanted to do differently with it, but then



What do you see, can you find the hidden image?

have another person look at it and they love it. Most often I keep trying to get the photo just the way I want it, but after hearing how they like it I have a little ray of sunshine, that yes I am heading in the right direction. There is almost nothing more rewarding than hearing how someone else enjoyed your photo. So share your photos, after all, a photo that is never seen almost doesn't exist at all!



Passionate about pollinators!

I hope that these hints will help you to take better photos and that using them will bring you as much joy as they have brought me. And remember: Get out there and show others your point of view!

Mary Ballard is our Finance and HR Assistant. When not working at the Cobleskill office, she can be found behind the lens of her favorite camera. Mary studied photography at SUNY Oneonta.



How am I doing?

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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.

LET US HELP YOU PUT KNOWLEDGE TO WORK!

To subscribe to the CCE newsletter *Connections* or to support local Extension programs with a contribution, please visit cceschoharie-otsego.org

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That's all for this issue of Connections!

Be sure to read our last issue of the year, coming out in November. We'll let you know how our 4-Hers did at the Great NY State Fair in 2018, share highlights from the 6th annual Family Farm Day—now a tri-county event (Schoharie, Otsego and Delaware Counties), introduce new recipes from our EFNEP program for your family to try, and more...