Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties

2022 Annual Report to the Community



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Specialist

Jim Myers, Viticulture Specialist Teresa Rusinek, Vegetable Specialist Crystal Stewart-Courtens, Vegetable Specialist Maire Ullrich, Vegetable Specialist

The program is a regional Cornell Cooperative Extension program serving the educational and research needs of commercial fruit and vegetable producers in Eastern New York. To learn more about the team visit its website at www.enych.cce. cornell.edu.

Central NY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Team (serving Schoharie and Otsego Counties)

David Balbian, Area Dairy Specialist Ashley McFarland, Area Livestock Specialist Erik Smith, Area Field Crop Specialist Nicole Tommell, Area Ag Business Management Specialist

This team is a partnership between Cornell University and Cornell Cooperative Extension Associations of eight counties that provides high quality educational programs addressing the needs of dairy, livestock and field crop producers. To learn more about the team, visit its website at www.cnydfc.cce. cornell.edu.

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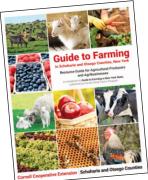
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Learn More About Us





To learn even more about us read *Connections—the News Magazine of Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties*. Sign up for our free online newsletter at **www.cce schoharie-otsego.org/connections**. The articles are chosen to meet the broad interests of community residents. Printed copies are available at our offices.

The Farm Guide, developed by CCE for Family Farm Day 2022, is a great resource, providing readers with product listings, mapping of farm locations, and contact information for area farmers' markets and local farms to visit, even after the Family Farm Day event. www.cce schoharie-otsego.org/2022FarmGuide.

CCE developed an updated resource for area farms and agribusinesses, the **Guide to Farming in Schoharie and Otsego Counties**, **New York**. This guide provides farmers, food producers and processors, and agribusinesses in Schoharie and Otsego Counties with contact information and brief descriptions of services provided by local, regional, and national organizations and agencies.



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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Family & Consumer Science Program Highlights





According to the CDC, "Most people in the United States don't eat a healthy diet and consume too much sodium, saturated fat, and sugar, increasing their risk of chronic diseases," including obesity. Obesity affects both children and adults and increases risks for other serious health conditions such as heart disease, stroke, Type 2 Diabetes, some cancers, and mental health.

Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

CCESO's Expanded Food and Nutrition Program (EFNEP) helps income eligible families and youth to shop smarter, feel better, improve their health, and learn new recipes by cooking along with peers, through nutrition education lessons. CCESO offers a lessons that provide families with children with useful hands-on knowledge in food nutrition and preparation through classes where parents/caregivers, and the children in their care, learn shopping skills and ways to make healthier choices with foods that are locally available, and expand their cooking skills. Overall, CCESO's evaluations continue to show that EFNEP participants are really motivated to improve.

In 2022, Sally* participated in CCESO's "Cooking with Kids" program series along with other parents from the Early Head Start program. At the beginning of the class, Sally stated that she would like to lose some weight and start eating and feeding her family healthier. She said, "I feel like I am always so busy that I sometimes skip meals and just pick on things that I really should not be eating." After several lessons, Sally said, "These classes have made me realize that I am not eating as healthy as I should, nor am I getting the proper exercise." At the end of the series Sally was really excited with what she learned and had put into practice at home. She said, "I am more conscious of what I am eating and serving my family and I am adding more of a variety of vegetables to our meals. I am also now making changes in my physical activity, and I am happy to say that I have lost a few pounds and inches." Sally is a wonderful example of how the EFNEP program can help positively change lives one small step at a time. *Name has been changed for confidentiality

Collaborators included: Schoharie County Department of Social Services, Schoharie and Otsego Count Head Start Programs; Middleburgh, Cobleskill, and Laurens Central Schools; and food pantries throughout Schoharie and Otsego Counties. Supported with a grant from Walmart.

Healthy Connections

Healthy Connections was created to be the sister program to the very successful and well-established Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) by working with everyone not eligible to patriciate in EFNEP, including people of any age who are not caring for minor children, and people who don't meet EFNEP's income eligibility requirements. Nutrition education programs like Healthy Connections are designed to give people the tools they need to make informed choices about food, promote physical activity, and provide a supportive atmosphere that encourages the development of healthy habits. RHENSOM (Rural Health Education Network of Schoharie, Otsego and Montgomery) funding supports CCESO's Healthy Connections Program.

In 2022 CCESO's Healthy Connections nutrition education programs reached families, adults, seniors, kids and teens throughout Schoharie and Otsego Counties, including the clients and staff of the Homer Folks Day Hab and Next Step Day Hab programs in Oneonta. Clients of both facilities range widely in their physical, emotional, and mental abilities. CCESO's nutrition educator worked with Homer Folks clients and staff at both programs on a weekly basis for six weeks each. William Erario, the Director of Homer Folks, noted how wonderful it was to have programming that included appropriate hands-on cooking opportunities for the clients and staff. One staff member, who frequently eats fast food, jokingly remarked during the visual of the Blubber Burger, "Why did you have to show that to us?" Clearly, she will remember that visual as she makes her daily food choices.

Farm-To-School

CCESO works with community partners, the students and staff of local school districts, and New York State (NYS) agricultural producers, to develop the capacity of schools increase the volume and variety of New York State (NYS) farm products procured by local school districts for school food service programs. CCESO's Farm-to-School Program efforts include implementing "Harvest of the Month" programming to introduce students to NYS produced-food, increasing the quantity and variety of NYS products available to students through school food service programs, and helping local schools to achieve and maintain the "30% NYS Initiative." Supported by a grant from NYS Agriculture and Markets, these activities benefit students and their families, and NYS agricultural producers.

NYS farm products are featured in "Harvest of the Month" tastings where students are encouraged to try (potentially) new foods that are prepared in healthy and appealing ways. In 2022, CCESO Farm-To-School Coordinator worked with five school districts (Cobleskill-Richmondville School District, Schoharie Central School, Duanesburg Central School, Sharon Springs Central School and Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School). 2022 HOTM tastings included: 650 Cobleskill-Richmondville High School students tried whole wheat pancakes with scratch whipped cream made with NYS heavy cream and topped with local strawberries; students participated in a blind taste test between factory made syrup and local maple syrup — with an overwhelming response to the local syrup; and at Sharon Springs Central School 300 students tried lettuce from a near-by farm.

Agriculture and Horticulture Program Highlights



Family Farm Day

On August 27, 2022, CCESO held the 10th Annual Family Farm Day (FFD) in collaboration with CCE Delaware County. Throughout the past decade, FFD has been a very successful in achieving its two main goals: to increase public awareness of agriculture; and to provide an opportunity for participating farms to expand their customer bases.

FFD responds to the challenges small farmers face building local, economically feasible markets for their diversified products. And FFD responds to interest in increasing access to local farm products, and to agri-tourism opportunities that expand the public's knowledge of local farms. FFD continues to engage visitors in the important role that farms play in CCESO's rural communities, and many FFD farms have been able to convert FFD visitors into consistent clientele.

The survey feedback we received from visitors and participating farms indicates that more than 2,500 farm visitors came from surrounding counties, the NYC metropolitan area, and neighboring states; FFD continues to be a high-revenue event, presenting farms with a unique opportunity to build their customer bases.

Collaborators included participating farms, CCE Delaware County, the Delaware County Chamber of Commerce, Great Western Catskills, Otsego and Schoharie County's Destination Marketing programs, Otsego County Government, the Watershed Agricultural Council, and generous sponsors.

Invasive Species Outreach

What do jumping worms, wild parsnip, spotted lantern fly, emerald ash borer and Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed, Asian longhorn beetle, and the hemlock wooly adelgid have in common? They are all examples of the Invasive Species (IS) that are impacting our communities, and present a growing need for IS public awareness and citizen science. CRISP (Catskill Regional Invasive Species Program) works closely with CCE's educators to develop and implement IS programming and outreach. In 2022 CCESO provided IS identification services free of charge and developed a web page: http://cceschoharie-otsego.org/invasive-species.

Master Gardener Volunteer Plant Sales

The Otsego Master Gardeners Volunteers (MGVs) embarked on plant propagation initiative that produced both the most successful plant sale ever and an exceptional professional development experience for participating MGVs. During the winter months, workshops were made available, covering multiple topics such as plant selection, seed propagation, handling, equipment, lighting, etc. These efforts enhanced the quantity, quality and selection of plants sold at the 2022 Otsego MGVs annual plant sale, generating almost \$10,000 in sales in one day, the highest ever in this program's history. These funds will be used to enhance and expand educational and outreach programming, and on-site as the garden facilities are developed in Otsego County. The propagation initiative worked as intended and the cycle continues: more MGVs experience hands-on professional development; program capacity increases; more constituents are reached. Otsego MGVs will share the plant sale lessons they have learned with Schoharie MGVs and the groups are collaborating in anticipation of expanding and implementing fundraising to support innovative educational programming and community outreach in both counties.

Master Gardener Volunteer Training

The biennial Master Gardener Volunteer Training (MGVT) celebrates its eleventh multi-county training in partnership developed among CCEs Schoharie, Otsego, Herkimer, Chenango and Delaware. The 43 participant 2022-23 MGVT class is the largest since this multi-county training was established, when they complete the MGVT the Master Gardeners in training will join the corps of the CCESO Master Gardener Volunteers who can help current MGVs in both counties respond to the increased interest in vegetable gardening, native plants, plants for pollinators, consumer horticulture, and promoting sustainable gardening practices, through the MGV helplines, outreach efforts, and programs.

Collaborators include: the Eastern NY Commercial Horticulture Program; Central NY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Team; Community IPM; Catskill Regional Invasive Species Program; SUNY Cobleskill; SUNY Delhi; and the School of Integrative Plant Science.

Annie's Project

The NYS "Inspired by Annie's" collaborative initiative enhanced the capacity for community organizing among women in agriculture. CCESO's staff participated in, and helped to teach, a workshop series, contributed to the efforts of the NYS Annie's Project to streamline statewide communications, and participated in Annie's Project facilitator meetings. CCESO collaborated with Annie's Project to train 16 new CCE program facilitators. These facilitators are qualified by Annie's Project (Iowa) to teach the Annie's Project curriculum. The NYS "Inspired by Annie's" offered a workshop series that addressed Business Development, Marketing Agriculture Products, Farmland Evaluation and Agriculture Mediation. Collaborators included: CCE Oneida, CCE Broome, and Annie's Project Iowa State.

4-H Youth Development Program Highlights





4-H connects youth to hands-on opportunities that help them grow into competent, caring and contributing members of society, all while making friends and having fun. Through programming, youth work to develop their HEAD, HEART, HANDS and HEALTH. Youth are encouraged to use their HEAD to develop clearer thinking, decision-making, and knowledge that is useful throughout their life. Youth use their HEART for greater loyalty and to acquire strong personal values, positive selfawareness, and concern for others. Youth use their HANDS for larger service, workforce preparedness and to develop useful skills and science technology literacy. Youth also work toward their HEALTH through a healthy lifestyle. Program areas include civic engagement, STEM, agriculture and more, and 4-H project work is designed to teach youth life skills through hands-on activities that help them grow confidence, independence, resilience, and compassion. Animal projects help 4-H youth build important life skills including hard work, responsibility, critical thinking and decision-making.

4-H Earn-an-Animal Program

In Schoharie and Otsego County, there are multiple program opportunities for youth interested in working with project animals. The 4-H Earn-an-Animal (EAA) Program gives Schoharie and Otsego County youth ages 8–18 to apply for the opportunity to earn funding toward a project animal (meat poultry, laying hens, rabbits, sheep, swine, goats, dairy calf or beef calf) to raise and show as their own.

Under the supervision of an adult, the 4-H'ers accepted into the EAA program are responsible for providing feed, water, shelter, daily care and socialization. Youth learn to research, select, and purchase the animal; and develop their planning, time management, organization, and record keeping skills. Through the record keeping process, youth track animal nutrition and feeding, growth, health, costs, goals, participation, achievements, and reflections. Youth participate in speciesspecific county-wide 4-H animal clinics, and attend 4-H shows with their project animals to be evaluated on their fitting and showmanship skills. They show the animal through 4-H at the county fair; create an educational poster about the project for display at the county fair; and complete the EAA Project Record to document their experiences, goals and achievements. As the animal grows, 4-H'ers can take pride in knowing that they helped raise a healthy animal in a compassionate way. The Earn-an-Animal program gives youth participants experiences

that will engage their minds, spark their interests, and teach them valuable life skills.

One EAA participant was an 11-year-old boy who has always wanted to learn about cattle but has never had the opportunity to raise a calf. He researched and selected the animal he would purchase and took responsibility of finding an adult mentor to help educate him on how to care for and raise his animal. Throughout the program, this youth attended all the countywide 4-H cattle clinics, along with multiple district and statelevel clinics as well. Since this youth had never raised or handled a cow before this program, he took advantage of every opportunity to learn. When it came time to show his calf at the livestock shows, his hard work and perseverance paid off in the show ring; he placed top three in his showmanship class. His beef calf also placed at the top of her class, winning overall reserve champion commercial heifer at one show and grand champion best of show at another. He plans to continue to raise and show his heifer, and to grow his herd.

This program is made possible through the generous financial donations of past recipients, area businesses, and individuals who wish to support this specific 4-H program.

4-H Afterschool Program

The goals of the 4-H Afterschool Program (ASP) are to enhance a child's desire to learn, to provide experiences for all aspects of the child's development, and to provide an environment that is relaxed and enjoyable. The program includes indoor/outdoor recreation, arts, crafts, games, homework help, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) content, and the 4-H skills of leadership, public speaking, problem solving, and listening and following directions. CCESO, in partnership with Schoharie Central School, provides an afterschool program for students in grades K–6.

The 4-H ASP follows the 4-H philosophy of learning by doing, and many of these experiences have both short- and long-term impacts. A former ASP participant, who is now a high school, recently noted "I didn't know you were teaching us public speaking in the Afterschool Program. Part of my English class required us to do public speaking and I wasn't sure if I could do it. But, as I was preparing, I realized I had been doing this in the 4-H ASP. I was able to get in front of the class with no fears and make my presentation. And I got an 'A' for my class!"

Eastern New York Commercial Horticulture Program Highlights

The Eastern New York Commercial Horticulture Program (ENYCHP) serves the educational and research needs of the commercial small fruit, vegetable, grape and tree fruit industries in 17 counties, including Schoharie. In 2022 8,684 people attended ENYCHP 199 trainings/meetings, including:

"Spray Safe, Spray Well" Project: ENYCHP vegetable specialists helped beginning, organic and Spanish-speaking growers to manage risks related to pesticide use. Recordings of the workshops in both Spanish and English can be found on the ENYCHP YouTube channel.

Next Generation Program: Targets farmers in multi-generational farm operations with the goal of helping them move into a leadership or ownership position on the farm, offering the next generation of farmers opportunities to gain production and business skills while networking with peers in the region.

Helping Farmers Make Better Business Decisions: Farmers receive technical assistance and online training, and participate in regular group meetings, to improve decision making, and learn best practices in farm financial management and how to use their financial data to make informed business decisions.

NY's Ag Overtime Laws and Eastern NY Farmers: ENYCHP staff worked with Cornell faculty to examine the economic effects of the Farm Laborer Fair Labor Practices Act (FLFLPA) regulating New York farm employers. The report was used to help inform the NYS Wage Board hearings.

Pesticide Sprayer Calibration and Education: Workshops focusing on improving pesticide application efficacy and applicator safety reached over 150 growers and training programs helped over 50 growers and workers prepare to take the DEC pesticide applicator test to become licensed applicators.

Tackling Bird Problems: Over 50 growers joined an educational webinar to learn about using Laser Scarecrow technology to manage increasing bird damage on farms. The inexpensive, portable units fit eastern NY's small field scale much better resulting in skyrocketing grower adoption in 2022.

Mite Mitigation: ENYCHP research focused on managing microscopic Eriophyid mites that damage garlic in storage. Information gathered will help farmers reduce storage losses and increase profitability.

Sustainability on Small Scale Farms: ENYCHP staff are using on-farm trials to develop best practices to in the use of tarps to helps increase climate resilience and enhance nutrient cycling on small farms.

Cover Crops: Vegetable and field crops growers and agricultural service providers learned how to choose, plant, manage and utilize cold-tolerant fall cover crops that produce a large quantity of biomass.

Honeycrisp Projects: ENYCHP staff conducted field surveys for Bitter Pit prior to harvest that helped growers to make informed decisions about Honeycrisp harvest and fruit storage and research focusing on returning trees to balanced production.

Reducing Labor Costs with Robotics: Interest in robot weeders on large farms is growing as farm labor expenses rise. Carbon Robotics representatives are working with growers and CCE staff to tailor equipment that will better suit the weeds, soil and cultural practices here in New York.

Ultraviolet-C Disease Control: ENYCH staff are working with researchers and vegetable growers to evaluate light in the Ultraviolet-C (UVC) spectrum for control of plant pathogens in squash. UVC does not have any of the harvest limitations that pesticides have and could be an organic production tool.

Digital Tools to Assist with Decision Making: Mapping and analyzing weather across eastern NY and at individual vineyards helps growers understand climate variability across the region. Daily information provides tools to helps growers mitigate climate risks.

5th Annual Fruit & Vegetable Conference: Included sessions on climate change, fruits, and vegetables.



Central New York Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Team

Over the course of 2022, the Central New York Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Team (CNYDLFC) team was busy writing grants to complement their field visits. Identifying areas where research can be used to assess a need is part of the work done in the region. The Team recognized areas of importance and submitted proposals to various agencies to garner funds for further research opportunities.

Ashley McFarland, David Balbian and Erik Smith submitted and subsequently were awarded from NY Farm Viability Institute (NYFVI) "Precision Feed Management for Beef Cattle." This project will begin November 2022 and continue through September 2023. Cattle will be monitored from weaning to finish to determine optimal feeding requirements throughout all stages of the feeding period.

Nicole Tommell teamed up with Katelyn Walley-Stoll of the Southwest Team to CO-PI two grants. The first "Identifying Regional Land Rental Rates and Custom Harvest Rates" was based from work done back in 2020. This was awarded by NYFVI. The second grant was through NERME or Northeast Risk Management Education. This grant is designed to introduce benchmarking, partial budgeting and financial management to small livestock producers.

Although the results will not be known for some time, the team was invited to submit a full proposal on "Altering Livestock Parturition to Ease the Slaughterhouse Squeeze" to the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE). This grant will review traditional animal husbandry/parturition in the Northeast and work with regional processing facilities for changes that have potential to be mutually beneficial.

Virtual sessions offered included: Farmer Tax School Series; Annie's Project; Net Zero for NY Dairy; Field Crop Weed ID & Control; FSA Fridays; The Business of Making Hay; Corn Day; Implementing Practical Genetics for the Commercial Dairy; How to Obtain a Pesticide applicator License; Dairy Day; Field Nitrogen & GHC; Cornell Meat Price Calculator; Foot Health for Your Dairy Herd; Managing Colostrum Supply; "Talk Saves Lives" training.



In-person workshops offered included: Profitable Meat Marketing; Alfalfa 1st Cutting Forage Quality & IPM Training; Growing Great People: Training Skills for Dairy; Beef Quality Assurance; Milk Quality, understanding that PPD & a Peek into Future Prices; Feeder School; Mental Health First Aid Training; Labor Roadshow; Manure Management & CAFO Permit workshops; Artificial Insemination Training; First Responder Training (focusing on agricultural confined spaces).

The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy unveiled the **Net Zero Initiative** in October 2020. It is an industry-wide effort that will help U.S. dairy farms of all sizes and geographies implement new technologies and adopt economically viable practices that will bring the dairy industry to a Net Zero Carbon Emissions by 2050. Cornell Cooperative Regional Dairy Specialists and Cornell CALS PRO-Dairy held a webinar (Net Zero for NY Dairy) to explain what Net Zero means and to bring in some expertise to describe some examples of practices that will bring the industry closer to the 2050 goal. Although this topic is not a short-term immediate decision-making subject, it is something that local dairy producers need to be thinking about and making decisions about as the next few decades come along.













Committed Volunteers

Thank you all for saying yes to making a difference. Your time, talents, and dedication enable us to offer more to the communities we serve. You have our appreciation. Our board and advisory committee members are listed in a separate section. If we have missed your name, please know we value your effort as well.

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WHB Automotive Collision

Deni Wicks

Marilyn & Richard Wyman

Your contribution can assist us in outreach and programs that help area families and communities thrive in our changing world. Donate online at www.cceschoharie-otsego.org/donate.



Association Funding

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schoharie and Otsego Counties is financially supported by county, state, and federal funds. This cooperative funding partnership links local residents and communities to Cornell University and the nationwide land-grant university system of research and education. Our core governmental funding is augmented with grants, contracts, program fees, and private contributions. Following is an estimate of the financial support received between 10/01/21 through 09/30/22.

2022 1 111111121111 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2	,, _0
County	
Funding Appropriation	447,624
County Contracts	22,329
Total County Support	469,953
State	
County Law 224 Funds	173,354
OCFS & AG & Markets	82,850
Direct Aid, University Resources, Fringe Benefits	341,118
Total State Support	597,322
Federal	
Smith-Lever	31,994
EFNEP (nutrition education program)	54,989
CACFP (free & reduced reimbursements)	4,385
Total Federal Support	91,368
Other Sources	,
Program Participation Fees	38,420
Grants, Contracts, Special Projects	33,384
Contributions, Fundraising	276,284
Interest Income, Rental Income, Misc Income	37,842
Total Other Sources of Support	385,930
Total Giner Sources of Support	000,500
Total Support to Association	\$1,544,573
	County 30%
Other 25%_	
Factorial COV	
Federal 6%_	

Funding Source Definitions:

County Appropriations – represent funds from Schoharie and Otsego Counties to support the work of the Association. **Direct Aid** – represents fringe benefits paid on behalf of the association through Cornell University.

State 39% ____

Federal Smith-Lever Funds – support through the federal enabling legislation for Cooperative Extension, administered by state land-grant institutions.

State 224 Funds – represent legislative support from NYS for operation of county cooperative extension associations.

CCE in Action!

























Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your contribution is tax deductible to the extent provided by law.

Cornell Cooperative Extension | Schoharie and Otsego Counties