

Connections

The News Magazine of Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties

JULY/AUGUST 2020

Try What's Good	1
CCE Responds to Pandemic	3
Hands Clean, Foods Clean, NYS Clean	4
Support Your Local Farmers— Online!	6
Program Events	7
"Black Cows, Green Grass, and Blue Skies"	7
My 4-H Story—Becoming a Part of Something Bigger	8
Greetings, <i>Connections</i> Community	9
Life's Solutions— Keep It Fresh	10
Roasted Eggplant Lasagna	12
To Market, To Market— Coming this Fall!	13
Life's Solutions Blog	13
Learn New Gardening Skills— Become a Master Gardener Volunteer	14
Master Gardeners Prevail!	15
4-H Happenings	17
4-H Afterschool Program Update	19



Try What's Good

Shoppers, the WhatsGood online farmers' market is up and running, with a growing selection of local meat, fresh produce, and more for you to select from!

Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties has teamed up with area businesses and farmers to create a unique online shopping experience. This online farmers' market is hosted by WhatsGood, a web-based platform used by farmers' markets and CSAs across the country. Our community business partners have generously provided space in their facilities to host Pickup Points where producers and customers can exchange their orders.

Here's how it works:

You can shop through the WhatsGood website: <https://sourcewhatsgood.com> or download their app to your phone. The first time you visit the website, click on the Start Shopping button and create an account by providing your name, email, and password. After that, when you return to the website, you can log in using just your email and password.

Then select your preferred Pickup Point from the Market page. Each Pickup Point will have its own list of products available dependent on the farms that deliver to them. The selection of products to choose from will vary between Pickup Points and will change as the season progresses, so be sure to revisit if you didn't find what you wanted the first—and even second—time.

Continues on page 2

Try What's Good, continued from page 1

Once you choose a Pickup Point, you can shop by a list of all products, search by a more defined category, or shop at a specific farm. To shop at a specific farm, click the View All Vendors button to the right, and choose the farm you would like to shop at. When you have made all your shopping selections, complete your purchase online through the website.

Then, on the designated delivery day, you pick up your order at the location you chose from the six Pickup Points across Schoharie and Otsego Counties. These businesses offer you a place to pick up your order at no extra charge, while providing an opportunity to do additional shopping at their place of business, if you so choose.

Pickup Points, order deadlines, and customer pick-up times and days are listed below:

Wednesday deliveries—customer orders by 11:00 p.m. Mondays

Schoharie Valley Farms

5605 State Route 30, Schoharie, NY 12157
Customer Pick-up: Wednesdays, noon–5:00 p.m.

Tagua Nut Café

509 West Main Street, Cobleskill, NY 12043
Customer Pick-up: Wednesdays, noon–5:00 p.m.

Cooperstown Cheese Company

107 Oxbow Road and Route 28, Milford, NY 13807
Customer Pick-up: Wednesdays, noon–5:00 p.m.

The Green Earth Health Market

4 Market Street, Oneonta, NY 13829
Customer Pick-up: Wednesdays, noon–5:00 p.m.

Thursday deliveries—customer orders by 11:00 p.m. Tuesdays

Black Cat Café

195 Main Street, Sharon Springs, NY 13459
Customer Pick-up: Thursdays, noon–5:00 p.m.

Richfield Community Food Co-op

140 West Main Street, Richfield Springs, NY 13439
Customer Pick-up: Thursdays, noon–4:00 p.m.

We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to shop, buy, and support your local economy at WhatsGood. If you have questions, please contact Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties at 607-547-2536, ext. 231 or email us at otsego@cornell.edu.

**FARM
SOURCE
THRIVE**

Otsego.info

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Cornell Cooperative Extension and its employees assume no liability for the effectiveness or result of any product. Any reference to consumer or commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by Cooperative Extension is implied.



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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.

CCE Responds to Pandemic

In the 106 years since its beginning, Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) has provided pandemic-related assistance to farms, once in 1918, and now in 2020. “The times are different,” said **Don Smyers**, Association Executive Director, “yet the response to human health and agricultural enterprises continues as an important mission of CCE.”

CCE has implemented programs to help limit the spread of COVID-19, particularly for agricultural producers. In one very important initiative, CCE spearheaded the distribution of hand sanitizer and face coverings to very grateful ag producers in Otsego and Schoharie Counties.

CCE and NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets partnered to provide agricultural producers, food value adders, brewers, and others with hand sanitizer and face coverings to help ensure safe food, from production to harvest to distribution, and to maintain the confidence of local consumers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The response from producers has been gratifying,” said Don Smyers.

Here is how producers responded in Otsego County:

“I picked up [the hand sanitizer and face coverings] this morning—THANK YOU SO MUCH,” wrote **Josie Maroney**, Program & Market Manager of the Cooperstown Farmers’ Market. “I am overwhelmed with gratitude. We greatly appreciate this! Several vendors have swapped out the masks they have been wearing for weeks for the lighter masks you sent.”

“We have been scrambling to find supplies and are grateful that this opportunity will get products to farmers that will keep themselves and their customers safe,” **Ilyssa Berg** said, owner of Painted Goat Farm in Garrettsville.

“Thank you for coordinating the sanitizer. It really is working well here—many people are complimentary of it being placed around,” shared **Bill Michaels**, Vice President and co-owner of Fly Creek Cider Mill & Orchard.

Additional pickup sites were established by CCE to serve producers throughout Otsego County. They include Northern Eagle Beverages, Richfield Community Food Co-op, Brandow’s Feed and Seed, Otsego County Soil and Water Conservation District office, NYCAMH in Fly Creek, and Leatherstocking Veterinary Services in New Berlin.

Schoharie County producers echoed similar sentiments:

Stephanie Forsyth of Hickory Knoll Thoroughbreds on Hubb Shutts Road was enthusiastic of CCE’s distribution of sanitizer. “We have many people coming on our farm regularly, including veterinarians, farriers, shippers, and of course farm staff. We move horses using shippers to tracks in Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and within the state, such as the Finger Lakes. Hand sanitizer and masks are critical to the health of people and to the racing industry.” She summed it up by saying, “Oh my goodness, the county support with this project is essential for agriculture in the county.”

Vladimir Kotov and his partner operate Alex Tomato Farm in Schoharie County. They grow tomatoes and other vegetables for 20 markets they serve weekly in Queens, the Bronx, and New Rochelle, among others. “We have some staff now on the farm. We need hand sanitizer not only for our staff on the farm, but for staff and customers at our green market booths.”

“Hand sanitizer is nearly impossible to find,” said **Becky Shaul** of Shaul Farms, when she picked up sanitizer and face coverings at a recent distribution conducted by Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties. “It is a scary time trying to figure this all out,” she added.

In four days, CCE distributed more than **1500** gallons of hand sanitizer and **3600** reusable face coverings—all at no cost to producers in Otsego and Schoharie counties.

“We are planning additional distribution of hand sanitizer and face coverings,” said **David Cox**, CCE Ag Program leader. “We have more sanitizer, but face

Continues on page 4

CCE Responds to Pandemic, continued from page 3

coverings are in short supply. We are trying to procure another 20,000 for the two counties,” he included.

Hand sanitizer and face coverings are two examples. The Phase 2 reopening of New York was yet another instance where CCE was able to step in and assist local farmers with critical information and resources. When New York released “**Interim Guidance for Prevention and Response of COVID-19 at Farms**,” CCE was present.

Nicole Tommell, Farm Business Specialist with the Central New York Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Team, has reported Cornell Cooperative Extension’s engagement in assisting farm operators with completing the required **Reopening New York Safety Plans**. CCE has also utilized **Cornell Agricultural Workforce Development** faculty to lead agricultural businesses into reopening. A webpage with resources has been created for users. In addition, videos are planned that will help producers understand some of the technical aspects unique to agricultural operations. For more information, visit the Center’s website at <https://agworkforce.cals.cornell.edu>.

“While farms never closed during the pandemic, they are required, like all businesses, to complete and execute the state’s business COVID-19 reopening safety plan. The safety plan requires every farm business operator to examine and implement appropriate safety procedures to protect the health of farm workers, visitors, and customers in its daily operation. I am pleased that Nicole will bring her expertise along with others from the **Cornell**

Agricultural Workforce Development Center to help Otsego and Schoharie County farms and agribusinesses,” said Don Smyers.

“The pandemic has impacted every element of CCE program delivery. Our nutrition programming could no longer be delivered face to face. Even traditional 4-H programming had to be altered. 4-H clubs could not meet, regional events were canceled, and even county fairs were postponed until 2021. Due to the hands-on aspect of our nutrition program lessons and 4-H, a whole new way of program delivery had to be developed. I’m proud of the way our association was able to meet these challenges,” commented Don Smyers.

Otsego County 4-H educator, **Teresa Adell** increased our social media presence by creating videos of 4-H projects for 4-Hers to do while home, connected 4-Hers to statewide events being offered online, and supported 4-H clubs meeting virtually.

Michelle Leveski, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education (EFNEP) program educator, also strengthened our social media presence. She developed the Life’s Solutions blog to share helpful nutrition tips to make some of the challenges faced during pandemic and beyond more manageable, began meeting participants virtually, and started offering group lessons online.

As CCE moves through the re-opening process within our region, we are happy to see a return to normal, albeit a “new” normal, one where offices are reopened and programs offered again.

Hands Clean, Foods Clean, NYS Clean



One-gallon bottle of NYS CLEAN hand sanitizer

CCE Schoharie and Otsego Counties, along with most County Extension Associations statewide, partnered with NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets to provide NYS Clean hand sanitizer and face coverings at no cost to farms and agribusinesses, helping ensure clean, safe food production, harvesting, and distribution. Our sincere thanks to Jim Saddleire and his brother David,

Hole-in-the-Wall Farm in Schoharie, for transporting a full flatbed tractor-trailer load of sanitizer, split between Northern Eagle Beverages in Oneonta for Otsego County farms and Sunshine Fairgrounds in Cobleskill for Schoharie County farms.

As of June 15, nearly 1,900 gallons of hand sanitizer, 1,000 (2 oz.) spray bottles, and 4,300 face covers have been acquired by farms and farm businesses. Remaining supplies have been redistributed to five locations in each county to facilitate proximal access and pick-up times during normal business hours. Following is a list of businesses and hours of operation. Ample supplies of hand



CCE Ag Program Leader, David Cox, shows supplies for farm at distribution from Northern Eagle Beverages. Photo by Jim Carrabba, NYCAMH

sanitizer are available in one-gallon containers with a hand pump; 2-oz. refillable spray bottles, and face coverings in packages of five.

Please call your preferred pick-up site in advance to ensure product availability. Be prepared to complete a short registration form of basic farm information and quantities of supplies taken. People picking up supplies are expected to wear their own face coverings.

Many thanks to the pick-up sites and to the following entities that are helping with this endeavor: NY Center for Agricultural Health & Medicine (NYCAMH); Otsego County Soil & Water Conservation District; Schoharie County Soil & Water Conservation District; Northern Eagle Beverages; and the Cobleskill Ag Society (Sunshine Fair).

CURRENT DISTRIBUTION/ PICK-UP SITES

Schoharie County:

- **CCE Schoharie and Otsego Counties**, 173 South Grand Street, Cobleskill, NY 12043. Contact: David Cox at 518-234-4303, ext. 119; or email us at schoharie-otsego@cornell.edu

- **Sharon Springs Garage**, 1375 State Highway 20, Sharon Springs, NY 13459. Hours: Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.; Saturday, 7:30 a.m.–3:00 p.m. Contact: Dave Handy at 518-284-2346

- **MacFadden & Sons, Inc.**, 1457 State Highway 20, Sharon Springs, NY 13459. Hours: Monday–

Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.; Saturday, 8:00 a.m.–noon. Contact: Jim MacFadden at 518-284-2090

- **Schoharie Valley Farms**, 5605 State Highway 30, Schoharie, NY 12157. Hours: Daily, 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. Contact: Ethan Ball at 518-295-7139

- **Barber's Farm**, 3617 State Highway 30, Middleburgh, NY 12122. Hours: Saturday, 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. Contact: Cindy Barber at 518-827-5454

Otsego County:

- **Richfield Community Food Co-op**, 140 West Main Street, Richfield Springs, NY 13439. Hours: Monday–Friday, 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.; Saturday, 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. Contact: Dan Sullivan at 315-858-7023

- **Brandow's Feed & Seed**, 4119 State Highway 7, Oneonta, NY 13820. Hours: Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.; Saturday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.; Sunday 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. Contact: Tracy Brandow at 607-432-3884

- **Otsego Soil & Water Conservation District**, 967 County Highway 33 West, Cooperstown, NY 13326. Hours: Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Contact: Jordon Clements at 607-547-8337, ext. 4

- **NY Center for Agricultural Medicine & Health (NYCAMH)**, 6160 State Highway 28, Fly Creek, NY 13337. Hours: Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Contact: Kathy Smith at 607-547-6023

- **Leatherstocking Veterinary Services**, 117 County Highway 17, New Berlin, NY 13411. Hours: Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.; Saturday, 8:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. Contact: Rachael Fraser at 607-847-9990

Delaware County:

- **CCE Delaware County**, 34570 State Highway 10, Hamden, NY 13782. Hours: Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. Contact: Mariane Kiraly at 607-865-6531



Support Your Local Farmers—Online!



The Family Farm Day (FFD) Planning Committee decided that holding FFD in 2020 is not feasible due to ongoing concerns about the pandemic. Therefore, unfortunately, FFD 2020 as we know it is cancelled, but will be back in 2021!

Interest in local foods continues. Our local farms and farmers' markets are gearing up to sell their products throughout the season. Family Farm Day in recent years has been an important event for ag producers, **so here's what we are going to do:** Instead of a printed Farm

Guide, we are offering **an online Farm Listing** of area farms looking to continue to build awareness of agriculture and the amazing food supply in our region. This farm listing will include enough information for potential customers to make contact independently with farms to purchase their products.

If you are a farm in Schoharie, Otsego, or Delaware County and want to be included in this listing, **contact us as soon as possible**, as turn-around time will be short. Indeed, the season is just getting underway, and we expect the farm listings to be accessible soon.

David Cox, FFD Coordinator, 518-234-4303, ext. 119; dgc23@cornell.edu

Lauren Anderson, Administrative Assistant, 518-234-4303, ext. 111; lina23@cornell.edu



Master Gardener Training

BECOME A MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER!

Join us for Master Gardener Training - Fall 2020

The CCE Master Gardener Volunteer Program is accepting applications for new volunteers through August 14, 2020. Our next training begins on September 21, 2020.

Feel free to contact us anytime!

What is the Master Gardener Program?

- An integral component of Extension's outreach program, educating home gardeners, consumers of horticultural products, youths in after-school programs, physically and mentally challenged individuals, and senior residents.
- Neighbors teaching neighbors about landscapes, vegetables and fruits, herbs, houseplants, beneficial and harmful insects, plant diseases, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), native plants and pollinators, soils, composting, invasive species, and more.
 - A corps of volunteers trained by Cornell Cooperative Extension in the horticultural sciences and the art of gardening.

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Schoharie and Otsego Counties

Find us on Facebook!



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PROGRAM EVENTS

Due to New York State's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, our programming has become more fluid and is being brought to you primarily online. Go to our website cceschoharie-otsego.org to see the most up-to-date listings offered. Check us out on Facebook: [cce schoharie-otsego](https://www.facebook.com/cceschoharie-otsego)

Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties – July Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, July 9, 6:30–9:00 p.m. Meetings are open to the public. If interested in attending, please check with the office at 518-234-4303 to confirm the day and location of the meeting.

SAVE THESE DATES

At the time of this publication, these events remain scheduled; any changes will be noted on our website; be sure to check prior to the events.

Master Gardener Volunteer Training 2020

September 21–November 16, 2020

Want to become a Master Gardener Volunteer? Plan to attend the Fall 2020 training to be held on Mondays, 9:00 a.m.–

3:00 p.m., for nine consecutive weeks, starting September 21. Cost is \$150 per person. Applications are being accepted through August 21. The schedule of classes and locations will be posted soon. For more information, contact David Cox, Agriculture–Horticulture Program Leader, 518-234-4303, ext. 119, or visit our website at <http://cceschoharie-otsego.org/gardening/master-gardener-volunteer-training>.

To Market, To Market Lesson Series

Tuesdays, October 6, 13, 20, 27; November 3 and 10, 9:00 a.m.–noon

To Market, To Market is a six-part series; choose to attend virtually or in person at locations in Hamden, Cooperstown, Cobleskill, and Norwich, if health regulations allow. A logical, process-oriented curriculum will lead to dynamic business plans that create new economic opportunities in the region.

The cost is \$25 per person for entire series. Pre-registration is required at <http://cceschoharie-otsego.org/ToMarket>. For more information, contact David Cox, 518-234-4303, ext. 119, dgc23@cornell.edu; or Jim Barber, 607-547-2536, ext. 227, jrb248@cornell.edu.

Visit our website, cceschoharie-otsego.org, to see additional events not listed.

“Black Cows, Green Grass, and Blue Skies”

Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties and staff wish to pay tribute to Ron Maidens of Maidens Family Angus in Jordansville, NY, upon learning of his passing on May 31, 2020. The above words were Ron's motto. He was a well-known livestock producer who worked closely with retired CCE Educator, Bill Gibson in the development of the Central New York Beef Producers' program that launched a tele-auction initiative for feeder-calves in our region. Ron's obituary may be found at <https://chapmanmoser.com/tribute/details/4512/Ronald-temaidens/obituary.html>. Our sincere condolences to his wife and family.





Here is Catie with her North County Cheviot “Terry” who won Grand Champion at their county fair 4-H show.

Becoming a Part of Something Bigger

BY CATHERINE ROBERTS

When I was younger and an active member in 4-H, I thought 4-H was all about getting to have fun with my friends, but it ended up being much more than that.

Back then, my interests within the club focused mostly around farm animals, because I didn't have them at home. I gained so much responsibly working with the animals, because first and foremost, I had to help care for them. I also had to act responsibly around them in order to stay safe. I learned how to be self-aware of my safety within my environment.

I was also a member who did public presentations EVERY year (mostly because my mom wanted me to). I will say that even though presentations made me nervous, they were still fun because the whole club participated, and we got to present at the fair. The more times I practiced my presentations, the more confidence I gained, and the less nervous I became.

Looking back on my 4-H experiences, I can definitely say that my 4-H club gave me opportunities throughout my childhood that I wouldn't have otherwise had.

Some of my favorite memories as a child are 4-H-related experiences. I truly believe that my experi-

ences in 4-H over the course of these many years had a role in the development of the person I am today. I am sure that public presentations had something to do with my current ability and confidence to go into a room filled with people and talk comfortably. The skills I've obtained have helped me lead within my classroom and with how I choose to teach young people. They have helped me determine how I want to live my life, and how I am going to involve myself within my community. They have helped push me through my own education, which, by the way, will be lifelong for me. I have obtained certain skills that started in 4-H that have helped me excel through life and certain interests that have brought me to where I am today.

I have lived it. I know what 4-H is capable of doing for a child, and I would love the opportunity to help give young people something that they can take with them for life. That isn't just knowledge, it's a memory, it's a skill, it's a passion, it's an experience that will enhance their development and help them progress through life.

I believe 4-H is about fun experiences that will have a lifelong impact on a young person. These experiences will help them to develop their interests, empower them to be role models within their communities, while, at the same time, providing them

skills that will stay with them. 4-H helps young people grow as individuals, allowing them to understand who they are, what they care about, and how they are going to be a part of something bigger.

This is certainly coming true for Catie, the 4-H alum who wrote this story and 4-Hers in Schoharie County. On June 8, 2020 Catherine ‘Catie’ Roberts joined the staff of Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties as the new 4-H Educator for Schoharie County. We look forward to exciting times as she continues to support and grow an already strong youth leadership program in this county as it goes forward to becoming something bigger.

Share Your 4-H Story

“4-H taught me to not give up when things get too hard.”

These words from a 4-Her reflect the deep impact that the 4-H program has had and continues to have on individuals who participate. For every experience, there is a story...

In that spirit, we invite you as a 4-H alumnus to share your story, your childhood memories of experiences, people, and activities that became your 4-H life. We want to share your story by featuring it in an upcoming issue of *Connections*. We are calling the series, My 4-H Story. For more information, please contact Jan Ryder, Associate Editor, at 518-234-4303, ext. 112. Leave a message or email her at jrc28@cornell.edu.

Greetings, *Connections* Community



My name is Catherine Roberts, and I am very excited to announce myself as your new 4-H Resource Educator for Schoharie County! It is an honor to be able to work with this association, as well as the 4-H youth, families, volunteers, and leaders within this county.

As you may have read in “My 4-H Story—Becoming a Part of Something Bigger,” I grew up a 4-Her who participated in many 4-H-sponsored educational programs, field trips, public presentations, and youth shows, including county and state fairs. I rode horses competitively and owned/showed North Country Cheviot sheep. As a young person, 4-H was a huge part of my life, and has certainly made a lasting impact on me. The skills I learned and the passions I obtained have influenced me to have a love of animals and confidence as a public speaker.

Outside of 4-H, I have a Bachelor’s degree from SUNY Cobleskill in Environmental Energy Technologies and Master’s from the University at Albany in Curriculum Development and Instructional Technology. My previous employment was as an Instructor at SUNY Cobleskill within the department of Agricultural Engineering. There I worked with hundreds of students over the years, predominantly teaching agricultural technology and electrical science. My love of animals and my memories of working with horses during my time in 4-H has more recently caused me to pursue professional educa-

tion in equine science, as well as get back into the saddle.

I believe that this 4-H Resource Educator position uniquely brings together all the things I truly enjoy in life and am qualified to do. I am very excited for the opportunity to incorporate so many of my interests into one career!

I am looking forward to helping our youth in their development as they realize their strengths, embrace their desires, and build their skills to grow as individuals. I have a range of knowledge that I plan to incorporate into the current 4-H program and many interests that I am excited to grow my own knowledge in, so that I can provide our young people with a diverse variety of education. My plan is to provide our youth with experiences that will engage their minds, spark their interests, and teach them valuable life skills, while at the same time supporting their development as they work toward their futures.

I am excited to be here and look forward to what the future has in store!

Sincerely,

Catherine Roberts
4-H Resource Educator, Schoharie County
cmr336@cornell.edu



Life's Solutions—Keep It Fresh



Regina Tillman/TBG

Healthy-connections.us Nutrition Educator Allyson Wyman sharing samples of Healthy Corn Dip and nutrition information on a sunny day at Festival Farmers' Market, July 2019 in Cobleskill. Photo by Regina Tillman/TBG

You've probably heard it all your life—eating fruits and vegetables is important for good health, however, the experts say most of us still aren't getting enough.

One solution to this problem is to buy flavorful produce fresh picked at the peak of season at your local or online farmers' market. To find a market near you, go to the National Farmers' Market Directory at <https://www.ams.usda.gov/local-food-directories/farmersmarkets> and do a search. If you want to try an online market shopping experience, check out Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and

Otsego Counties' new Online Farmers' Market through the Source WhatsGood website at <https://sourcewhatsgood.com> or the Schoharie Fresh Online Farmers' Market at <https://schohariefresh.com>.

Beware, though, this solution to the challenge of eating enough fruits and vegetables can create yet another unforeseen challenge. Many times we visit the market and see all the beautiful, fresh fruits and veggies in season and on sale, and we overbuy. We gather gorgeous greens, radiant reds, and yummy yellows, then bring them home, stick them in the refrigerator, or leave them out on the counter, only to toss them in a few days because they've wilted or become moldy. The life's solution to this is to keep it fresh. Here are a few tips on keeping produce fresh:

- In general, avoid washing fruits or vegetables until you are ready to eat them, because it removes the plant's natural protective coating, making produce more susceptible to damage and degradation on your counter or in your fridge. The exception to the rule is the leafy salad greens like spinach and different varieties of lettuce. They will keep better and longer if you wash and dry them completely before storing.

- Some fruits and vegetables emit ethylene gas as they ripen, which can hasten the overripening of other produce. It is a good practice to store ethylene emitters away from other produce. Some examples of these 'emitters' are apples, apricots, blueberries, cantaloupe, grapes, honeydew, unripe bananas, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, and tomatoes.

- You can slow the evaporation from your refrigerated fruits and vegetables by placing them in the crisper drawers, which are typically humidity controlled. Also, do not place fruits and veggies in airtight plastic bags, this will actually speed up decay. You can store produce in plastic bags with holes punched in them (the University of California at Davis has done the math: 20 pin-sized holes in a medium bag should do the trick).

Knowing how long produce will last and where and how to store it for maximum shelf life is the key. There are fruits and vegetables that need to be eaten right away; others have a slightly longer consumption window, and some can be stored for weeks and even months. For more information on storing pro-

duce, check out the factsheet on Storing Fresh Fruits and Vegetables for Best Flavor at cceschoharie-otsego.org/storing-fruits-and-veggies.

If your fresh produce is ripening too fast, and you can't consume it all before nature's expiration date, your freezer can extend that date for certain fruits and vegetables. For tips on freezing your produce in the nick of time or before, check out these Handy References for freezing produce at <http://ccetompkins.org/resources/handy-reference-for-freezing-vegetables> and <http://ccetompkins.org/resources/handy-reference-for-freezing-fruits>.

Before that happens though, try Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties' recipe for this tasty vegetable treat to use more of that fresh farmers' market produce before it expires or needs to be frozen.

HEALTHY CORN DIP

Makes 32 (¼-cup) servings

Ingredients

- ¼ cup olive oil
- ½ cup balsamic vinegar
- 4 cups of fresh cooked corn, cut off the cob (approx. 4–5 large ears)
- 1 (15-ounce) can black beans, drained
- 1 large red pepper, chopped
- 1 large green pepper, chopped
- 1 large red onion, chopped
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped

Instructions

1. Shuck 4–5 large ears of corn, remove silk. Fill a large pot halfway with unsalted water and bring to a rolling boil. Add the ears of corn to the boiling water. Let the water return to a full boil, and cook 10 minutes. Remove from water, allow to cool, cut off cob using a sharp knife or corn cutter. Include corn milk in measured 4 cups for recipe.
2. In a large bowl add all ingredients; mix well.
3. For best results prepare the day before, storing in the refrigerator. If desired set out at room temperature for 1 hour before serving, allowing dip to temper.

Notes:

- Serve with tortilla chips, lettuce, tossed salad, celery sticks, etc.
- Instead of fresh corn, use corn on the cob leftovers—cut off the cob the night before or use 3 (11-ounce) cans of Shoepeg white corn, undrained.

Nutrition facts (per serving): Calories: 60, Total Fat: 2g, Saturated Fat: 0g, Cholesterol: 0g, Sodium: 125g, Total Carbohydrate: 9g, Dietary fiber: 1 g, Sugars: 2g, Protein: 2g, Vitamin A: 40 RE, Vitamin C: 15 g, Calcium: 0 g, Iron: .36 mg

If you are interested in more recipes, nutritional information, or classes, visit our website at www.cceschoharie-otsego.org or contact Michelle Leveski, Nutrition Program Educator by calling 518-234-4303, ext. 115 (please leave a message), or emailing her at mml39@cornell.edu.

To read more articles like this, subscribe to the “Life’s Solutions” blog at <http://blogs.cornell.edu/efnep-schoharie-otsego>.



ROASTED EGGPLANT LASAGNA

Serves 6

Summer vegetables take on traditional lasagna sans noodles . . .

Source: allrecipes.com by KEERROX



Nutrition Facts	
6 servings per container	
Serving size	
Amount Per Serving	430
Calories	
<small>% Daily Value*</small>	
Total Fat 27g	35%
Saturated Fat 14g	70%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 100mg	33%
Sodium 1180mg	51%
Total Carbohydrate 22g	8%
Dietary Fiber 7g	25%
Total Sugars 8g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 30g	60%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 822mg	60%
Iron 3mg	15%
Potassium 950mg	20%

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

Ingredients

1 to 2 large eggplant(s), peeled or unpeeled and cut lengthwise into ¼-inch slices

Salt

2–3 tablespoons olive oil

1 (16-ounce) container ricotta cheese

2 cups Italian blend shredded cheese

1 egg

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 teaspoon Italian seasoning

¼ teaspoon black pepper

2½–3 cups marinara sauce

1 (10-ounce) package frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained

6 slices part-skim mozzarella cheese

Vegetable oil spray

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 450°F.
2. Place eggplant slices on a wire rack; sprinkle with salt. Let sit until some liquid starts beading up on the slices, about 20 minutes. Rinse salt off eggplant slices and pat dry. Brush olive oil over both sides of each slice. Arrange eggplant slices on a baking sheet.
3. Roast in the preheated oven for 10 to 15 minutes. Flip eggplant slices and continue roasting until slices are tender and lightly browned, 15 to 20 minutes more. Remove eggplant from oven. Set aside.
4. Mix ricotta cheese, Italian blend cheese, egg, garlic, Italian seasoning, and black pepper together in a medium bowl. Set aside.
5. Prepare a 9x11-inch baking dish with vegetable oil spray. Coat the bottom of the dish with about ½ cup tomato sauce;

top with half of the reserved roasted eggplant slices. Layer eggplant slices with half of the spinach, half of the ricotta mixture, and half of the remaining tomato sauce. Continue layering with remaining ingredients, ending with sauce. Top with mozzarella slices.

6. Bake in 350°F oven for 35 to 45 minutes, until cheese is brown and bubbling. Serve hot.

Notes:

- Additional roasted sliced vegetables (sweet potato, cauliflower, peppers, onion, etc.) can be added to the eggplant-spinach layers.
- One tablespoon of chopped fresh herbs (basil, oregano, thyme) can be used in place of the teaspoon of Italian seasoning.
- Fresh spinach par cooked to wilt can be substituted for the frozen spinach.

Know the facts . . .

- An eggplant, a.k.a. aubergine, is considered a vegetable but is actually the berry of the plant and therefore a fruit.
- The best place to store eggplant is not in the refrigerator, but at room temperature. Keep eggplant in a cool spot, away from direct sunlight, and use it as soon as possible after harvesting or buying. Eggplant is also highly sensitive to ethylene, a natural gas that causes certain foods to ripen (and eventually spoil) very quickly. So it's best to keep eggplant stored separately from bananas, tomatoes, and melons, which are all high ethylene producers.
- The act of salting and rinsing eggplant to reduce bitterness is called “degorging.” Salting eggplant will also reduce moisture content and the amount of oil absorbed in cooking.
- When using frozen spinach, let thaw and squeeze excess water out of spinach before adding to a recipe to avoid adding excessive moisture to the dish.
- Ricotta cheese is made from whey protein that has been acidified and heated. It has a soft texture and mild flavor that works well in both sweet and savory recipes.
- If you would like to make your own sauce, try our companion recipe for **Marinara Sauce**. Go to cceschoharie-otsego.org/connections, and find the recipe link in the left menu. Leftover sauce can be frozen to use for another meal.
- For practical nutrition information and to subscribe to the “Life’s Solutions” blog, visit <http://blogs.cornell.edu/efnep-schoharie-otsego>. If you are interested in even more nutrition information, helpful tips, or classes, you can contact Michelle Leveski, EFNEP Nutrition Program Educator by calling 518-234-4303, ext. 115. Please leave a message, email her at mml39@cornell.edu, or join us on Facebook: EFNEP CCE Schoharie and Otsego Counties.





Get a jump start on making a good idea a reality by participating in the To Market, To Market six week class this Fall.

To Market, To Market—Coming this Fall!

This exciting six-week class will help you develop a product or service from start to finish! CCE Agriculture Educators David Cox and Jim Barber have partnered with area Farm Business Management Specialists Mariane Kiraly and Nicole Tommell to offer “To Market, To Market,” a six-part series virtually and in-person at four regional locations to make your learning experience comfortable, safe, and flexible.

Participants will learn how to develop and screen an idea, analyze current trends, determine pricing, manage marketing and distribution, access funding, test a prototype, consider legalities, manage risk, navigate regulations, and much more. A logical, process-oriented curriculum will lead to dynamic business plans that create new economic opportunities in the region.

This series will run Tuesdays, Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27 and Nov. 3 and 10, 9:00 a.m.–noon. Choose to attend virtually or in person at locations in Hamden,

Cooperstown, Cobleskill, and Norwich, if health regulations allow. The cost is \$25 per person for entire series. Pre-registration is required at <http://cceschoharie-otsego.org/ToMarketToMarket>.

For more information, contact David Cox, 518-234-4303, ext. 119, dgc23@cornell.edu; or Jim Barber, 607-547-2536, ext. 227, jrb248@cornell.edu. “To Market, To Market” is supported by the 2019 Chobani Community Impact Fund.



Life’s Solutions Blog



Michelle Leveski,
EFNEP Nutrition
Educator

This blog was started by our EFNEP Nutrition Educator Michelle Leveski to offer practical tips for some of the everyday nutrition challenges we all deal with. It offers up those little gems of knowledge that might make a difference in your day-to-day life.

- You can substitute double-acting baking powder for the yeast in your bread recipes with a one-to-one ratio (one packet of yeast contains 2¼ teaspoons).
- All eggs are nutrient rich regardless of shell color or the way the eggs were farmed.

- You can amp up the health factor in meals by adding extra vegetables—fresh, frozen, or canned—to pasta, pizza, omelets, or smoothies.

- Storing fruits and veggies in airtight plastic bags will actually speed up decay. Produce can be stored in plastic bags with holes punched in them (the University of California at Davis has done the math: 20 pin-sized holes in a medium bag should do the trick).

Tips like these with recipes that exemplify them are what you will find if you subscribe to the “Life’s Solutions” blog. Interested? Please follow this link <http://blogs.cornell.edu/efnep-schoharie-otsego>.



Learn New Gardening Skills—Become a Master Gardener Volunteer



Did you know sunflowers are composite flowers and that each sunflower is actually thousands of teeny tiny flowers called florets grouped together making up the massive bloom?

Interested in becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer? Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Chenango, Delaware, Herkimer, and Schoharie and Otsego Counties are accepting applications from area residents looking to participate in this popular statewide (and national) public-service program. The Master Gardener Program is open to anyone with a genuine interest in floral and food gardening and a willingness to share knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm with constituents in your local community.

Training for new volunteers will begin Monday, September 21, and will continue for nine consecutive Mondays through November 16, except Columbus Day (Monday), when classes will be held Tuesday, October 13. Educators are preparing classes for three scenarios—in person, online, or a combination of the two. For in person, classes will rotate among three locations in Cooperstown, Cobleskill, and Hamden. If online, participants will need computer access with audio and visual (camera) components for interactive presentations and discussions. The cost of the program training is \$150 per person. Applications are accepted through Friday, August 21, followed by personal interviews either in person or online.

The CCE Master Gardener Volunteer Program is a public-service program that provides hands-on

training for volunteers to serve their communities through comprehensive horticulture, garden-based learning, invasive species, and other pest management issues. Volunteers participate in a series of science-based educational sessions taught by well-known educators/industry professionals that include multiple aspects of horticulture and related topics. In return for this training, volunteers work with CCE educators to provide outreach education and information programs to respective county constituents. Many volunteers address home-gardening questions, while others participate in community gardening projects, educational workshops, and annual plant sales.

For details about the 2020 Master Gardener Volunteer Training or to receive an application, contact your county CCE association office: CCE Chenango County, 607-334-5841, ext. 20; CCE Delaware County, 607-865-6531, ceh27@cornell.edu; CCE Herkimer County, 315-866-7920, herkimer@cornell.edu; CCE Schoharie and Otsego Counties, 518-234-4303, ext. 111, schoharie@cornell.edu. Or visit <http://cceschoharie-otsego.org/gardening/master-gardener-volunteer-training> for a position description and application. CCE provides equal program and employment opportunities. Accommodations for persons with special needs may be requested by contacting Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties by Friday, August 21, 2020.



Did you know dragonflies don't sting and generally don't bite people, because adult dragonflies only eat when flying?



Schoharie Master Gardener Scott Mills waters in new plants in the Extension Center's main entrance planter.

Master Gardeners Prevail!

Master Gardeners have their plans in place when the new year starts. Both of our Master Gardener Programs had presented their workshop and outreach plans for all of 2020 before the pandemic hit, and everything quickly unraveled, resulting in cancellations, isolation, and offices being shut down. One answer for prevailing was the adjustment to predominately online programming shared via Zoom—the new household “buzz” word. It became a way to stay connected, allowing us to navigate work that still needed to be done.

A resurgence of interest in home gardening became evident. “Essential” businesses that carried garden supplies and seeds were selling everything on their shelves. Gardening blogs and social media posts sprang up everywhere, soon to be joined by proven sources from state Extensions nationally and our own CCEs around the state. Our good friend Carla Crim, CCE Delaware County, hosted a series of online workshops on a variety of topics—large and small fruits, permaculture, building soil health, heirloom gardening, and more. Her quick response to this need helped us all adjust to a new normal of programming. Alexis Woodcock, CCE Chenango, presented a four-part series on Beginning Gardening in April and again in May that was well attended by listeners locally. Social media blogs gave Master Gardeners a chance to address questions informally, surely helpful for so many

novice gardeners. What a good challenge to have—a larger populace interested in growing food.

The heartbreaker, however, was the ultimate decision to cancel our annual plant sales. Otsego Master Gardeners in particular were propagating numerous varieties of flowers and vegetables in their homes for their sale, as well as special varieties from seed provided by the All American Selections program and seeds for Cornell’s Vegetable Variety Garden Trials. The latter two would be used at the Education Center grounds. Many vegetable seedlings would be used for community garden projects, but the remainders had to find a home... which they did. Our good friends at Carefree Gardens, Mary and Kristin Leonard, purchased the plants for their nursery business. With that plus revenue from a quick sale to family and friends, the Otsego master gardeners were able to cover their costs for the season. Following COVID-19 protocols, all their plants were delivered, re-arranged, and labeled in time for Mother’s Day weekend—a monumental effort by all!

Not to despair, both Master Gardener programs endured to create respective displays that can be viewed by the public while keeping social distancing in mind. At the Extension Center in Cobleskill, Schoharie Master Gardeners constructed two Straw Bale Garden displays, each caged for protection from critters and placed on the east and south sides

Continues on page 16

Master Gardeners Prevail!, continued from page 15



Master Gardener, Ellen Alex, places signage on Master Gardener plants at Carefree Gardens.

of the building, providing an opportunity to observe plant growth from different degrees of sunlight. With straw-bale gardening becoming a popular home-gardening technique, we encourage readers to visit the display and take home print information about straw-bale gardening available outside with the front display, and/or view this link for an excellent slide presentation by Carl Crim, Horticulture Educator at CCE Delaware County at <http://cceschoharie-otsego.org/straw-bale-gardening>.



Schoharie Master Gardener Pam Hart waters the newly planted straw-bale display. How-to handouts to the right of the display (not in picture) are available for the public to take.

At the Education Center in Cooperstown, Otsego Master Gardeners created displays of both the All American Selections flowers and the Vegetable Variety Garden Trials annual and vegetable plants, all labeled respectively and accompanied with laminated color photos for the public to access during a self-guided tour—in lieu of the popular All American Selections Open House that is usually held in mid-July. We look forward to more photos of mature plants for the September/October issue of *Connections*.

To quote Teddy Roosevelt, “Do what you can, with what you got, from where you are.” In spite of the impairments to programming during the



Otsego Master Gardener's prepare garden beds for self-guided tours.

COVID-19 shutdown and into the re-opening period, the Master Gardeners in both counties were able to attend to the Helplines and social-media inquiries, prepare soil samples, perform pH tests, and prepare for their outreach season with COVID-19 protocols. The GROW program, for example, established new projects and renewed past projects that include the much-enhanced Oneonta Community Gardens, through a \$25K grant from the City of Oneonta, Nader Towers, Oneonta Heights, the Chestnut Park Nursing Home, and recently the Family Resource Network. The Goal-oriented Rural Outreach Work (GROW) initiative is a mini-grant project that partners Master Gardeners with organizations in Otsego County who desire to develop and implement a project that promotes and extends horticultural and environmental practices consistent with Cornell Cooperative Extension. Successful proposals briefly identify purpose, intent, project timeline, and the community partners with whom Master Gardeners will collaborate. Look for our next issue of *Connections* for an update on these worthy projects, pictures included, because we know one says a thousand words. Stay tuned as more education and outreach evolves!

4-H Happenings

Otsego County Happenings

Otsego County welcomed back one of its own in May when 4-H Educator Teresa Adell moved back to the Otsego County 4-H program after three years of leading the Schoharie County 4-H program. As long-time resident of and former 4-H leader in Otsego County, Teresa now brings her experience as an educator back home. Teresa had been busy covering both counties' 4-H programs until the Schoharie County 4-H educator Catherine Roberts was hired in June. She has also been working during this time to create an online platform to deliver 4-H project activities for youth to do at home (search for 'Schoharie County 4-H' on [Youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)), collaborating as part of a statewide team of educators providing 4-H programming, all the while getting to know 4-H leaders and clubs in Otsego County.

One group Teresa worked with was the Cornell Youth Nature and Outdoor Program Work team, made up of 4-H Educators from around the state. This joint effort created the "NYS 4-H Virtual Forestry Series." More than 60 4-H youth from across the state joined in for the 2020 NYS 4-H Virtual Forestry Series during the months of May and June, learning about tree identification, maps and compasses, invasive species and pests, as well as forest ecology. 4-H members, families, and 4-H Educators attended each event every Saturday night at 6:30 p.m., gathering around their computers, engaging in games, and learning about their environment. Emily Gross, 4-H member in Otsego County, enjoyed playing games and learning about the different types of trees.

Teresa also brought to the attention of 4-Hers other statewide events and activities in other counties they could take advantage of. In May and June, the New York 4-H Statewide Virtual Hour of Code Building events were held. Computer Science encourages youth to solve problems and use critical thinking skills. Learning to code can help youth gain skills that will help them succeed in a career no matter what industry they decide to enter. For more information on computer science go to the NYS 4-H STEM Projects at <https://nys4h.org/projects/#computer-science>. Also in June 4-Hers in both

counties had the opportunity to take part in a virtual hiking workshop hosted by CCE of Fulton and Montgomery counties.

Schoharie County Happenings

Schoharie County 4-H welcomes Catherine Roberts as our 4-H Resource educator! Some clubs have been meeting virtually. The Rider's Club reports they just held their third Zoom meeting of the year. 4-H youth from all the clubs have been busy working on their projects from Hen Hotels to project animals and everything in between while at home. Here is a sample of what some of them have been busy doing.



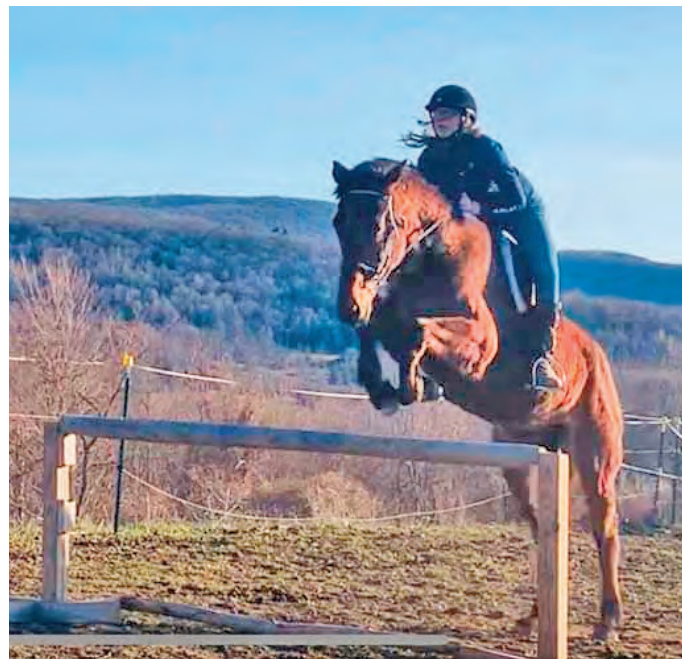
Sierra Carr built a Hen Hotel for her flock of laying hens.



Makayla Ryder tried her first garden, and is watching it grow.

Continues on page 18

4-H Happenings, continued from page 17



Kayla and Rocco making the jump as a team.



Alex Badger built planters and filled them with annuals.



Olivia and Logan VanEvera work together to clip their Toggenburg dairy goat.



A Happy Hoofster and her partner working the barrels.



Ben Walrath with his Barred Rock chicken.

4-H Afterschool Program Update

The 4-H Afterschool Program is committed to re-opening when our local schools resume regular classes. We are currently taking applications for enrollment in the 2020–2021 school year for our Cobleskill-Richmondville and Schoharie sites. Application forms can be found at this link <http://cceschoharie-otsego.org/4HAfterschool> by choosing Afterschool Forms from the left-hand column.

“When the 4-H Afterschool Program reopens, we will be following all the guidelines of NY State Education, Office of Family and Children Services, Department of Health, and Centers for Disease Control have put in place due to the COVID-19 virus,” assured Susan Salisbury, 4-H Afterschool Program Coordinator. “We are looking forward to a new and exciting school year.”

Go to our 4-H Afterschool web page at <http://cceschoharie-otsego.org/4HAfterschool> for additional updates as time progresses.



Mason Yacobucci starting seeds

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION

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CCE in Action!



ANNIE'S PROJECT
EMPOWERING WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE



Here is how you can support CCE outreach:

Making a donation is as simple as going to cceschoharie-otsego.org and clicking this button:



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