

# Connections

The News Magazine of Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties

## JANUARY-MARCH 2024

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## Meet the Staff



The Association's staff who were present at the 2023 Annual Meeting took a moment to gather together for a photograph. Top row: Catherine Roberts, Susan Salisbury, Nancy Brumaghim, Sharon Sears, Michelle Leveski, Liz Callahan, Kimberly Ferstler, and Teresa Adell. Bottom row: Mayra Richter, Marcie Foster, Erich Keena, and Nicole Thompson.

## 4-H Happenings



### Schoharie & Otsego 4-H Happenings

With the start of the new 4-H year, member enrollment has been in full swing with the addition of new youth members, adult volunteers, and 4-H clubs. In celebration of National 4-H Week, our county 4-H offices have held 4-H informational meetings for new 4-H families, while 4-H Clubs promoted 4-H throughout the community. Over the last couple

# SEED SWAP

National Seed Swap Day is designed to conserve and promote crop diversity in local communities. Every year, neighbors gather together to exchange seeds and chat about their plans for the upcoming growing season.

**Saturday, January 27, 2024**

Attendees are encouraged (but not required) to bring seeds to swap. Participation is **FREE!**

In Schoharie County: 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the Middleburgh Library, 323 Main St, Middleburgh	In Otsego County: 9:00 to Noon at the Oneonta Farmers' Market 24 Market St, Oneonta (Peachbills Performing Arts & Civic Center)
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Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties



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ies, and U.S. Department of Agriculture, cooperating.

## 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.

## SEND YOUR COMMENTS

CCE Schoharie Otsego offers unbiased, research-based education and outreach to improve the lives of all residents of both counties. We want to hear how CCESO's resources have helped you, and we welcome feedback about how we can improve. Please send your comments to the CCESO offices in either county, or contact Executive Director Liz Callahan at [eac283@cornell.edu](mailto:eac283@cornell.edu). Thank you!

## FIND US ONLINE

Visit us at [cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://cceschoharie-otsego.org)

Like us on **Facebook**:

**Main association news:** CCEschoharieOtsego  
**Nutrition education:** EFNEPCCESchoharieOtsego;  
HeathyConnectionsCCEschoharieOtsego  
**Master Gardeners:** CCEOtsegoMG; CCEschoharieMG  
**4-H:** schohariecounty4H; otsegocounty4H  
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CCEschoharieandOtsegoAG; AnniesProjectNYS;  
FamilyFarmDay  
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[blogs.cornell.edu/efnep-schoharie-otsego](http://blogs.cornell.edu/efnep-schoharie-otsego)



## NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION

To subscribe to **Connections**, the e-newsletter of Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties, visit our website, [www.cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org). Click on the red "Subscribe to Connections" button in the right-hand column, and fill out and submit your subscription. 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 readers' 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 any time.



### 4-H Happenings continued from page 1



months, educators have been busy enrolling members and conducting club leader meetings and volunteer trainings.

The Tractor Supply Company Fall Paper Clover Sale was held from October 4th-15th. With the support of Tractor Supply Company in Cobleskill and Oneonta, Paper Clover donations were collected to help provide program scholarships for youth enrolled in Schoharie and Otsego County 4-H. Scholarships will be available to youth who are interested in attending 4-H camps and other leadership events throughout the year.

The annual New York State 4-H Agribusiness Career Conference, which is held in collaboration with the State University of New York (SUNY) at Cobleskill and co-sponsored by the New York State Farm Bureau Foundation for Education was held October 19-20th. 4-H youth from across New York State gathered at SUNY Cobleskill to learn more about career opportunities within agriculture and the academic requirements for professional positions available. This year's two-day conference featured mini-tours of farms and businesses in the local area as well as seminars, guest speakers, and guided tours of the SUNY Cobleskill agriculture facilities.

In November, NYS 4-H offered a day-long Dog Training program for youth participants from across New York State and their canine partners. Youth gained knowledge and skills surrounding



canine good citizen, tricks, and sport foundations including obedience, rally, agility and scent work. Multiple youth from both Schoharie and Otsego Counties

participated. Special thank you to Senator Peter Oberacker and his family for hosting this event at their farm.

In early 2024 the 4-H programs in each county will conduct 4-H Officer Trainings, re-starting the Earn-an-Animal and Livestock Auction programs, hold Sewing and Cooking Clinics, and begin to prepare for 4-H Quiz-Bowl and 4-H Public Presentations programs. There will also be multiple animal-focused workshops taking place as well. Please see the next *Connections* article for an update on Schoharie and Otsego County 4-H Happenings!

### Schoharie 4-H Happenings



Continues on page 4





Schoharie County 4-H Achievement Night is one of those special events where Cornell Cooperative Extension gets to recognize youth ages 5-19 who are enrolled in the 4-H program. Acknowledging youth accomplishments is important on many levels, as it supports positive youth development. It helps to maintain motivation and commitment to continuous hard work, strengthens self-esteem, encourages positive behavior, and builds lasting memories. In addition, when accomplishments are acknowledged, it shows that youth efforts and hard work are seen and appreciated.

To prepare for Achievement Night, CCESO's 4-H staff collected 4-H records from youth participants at the end of the 2022-2023 year including portfolios, project completion sheets, and achievement books. 4-H members received year-end participation or completion recognition based on their efforts. Exceptional youth efforts were recognized with Outstanding 4-H Member certificates, Outstanding Club Officer certificates, and Individual Awards and certificates. There were 207 youth participants in 4-H for the 2022-2023 year. It is our hope that by having this in-person celebration for 4-H members, youth will feel proud of their accomplishments and be invested in continuing to participate in 4-H projects and club events.



In December, the Schoharie County 4-H office held county-wide 4-H Fine Arts workshops under the direction of 4-H Program Coordinator, Nancy Brumaghim. During the Fine Arts painting workshop, 4-H youth participants of all ages chose one of three different winter-themed 'Polar Pals' scenes to paint. The Polar Pals' theme included arctic friends the narwhale, seal, penguin, polar bear, arctic fox, and walrus. During the Fine Arts crafting workshop, youth participants were provided multiple crafting materials, supplies, and tools to create holiday-themed crafts including; a fabric tie wreath, a beaded tree ornament, and a fabric tree shelf sitter.



Schoharie County 4-H is starting the 4-H year with many new clubs. Three new clubs have already formed that support youth interested in arts and crafts, outdoor and environmental education, Cloverbud focused activities, and more! Schoharie County 4-H looks forward to the possibility of a horse focused 4-H club and a crafting/animal club this year, as well.



## Otsego County 4-H Happenings



*America's Funniest 4-Hers*



*... and made fall centerpieces.*

4-H members across the county have been working on a variety of 4-H projects. The America's Funniest 4-Hers have been enjoying the outdoors and hiking at Willy's Farm in Schenevus. The Gilbertsville Dairy 4-H Club has been busy working on recycling projects and making fall centerpieces.



*The Gilbertsville Dairy 4-H Club worked on recycling projects ...*



*"All Things Apple"*

The Helping Hands 4-H Club met to experience some apple goodness in an "All Things Apple" meeting. They started with seven different apple varieties and chose their favorite. They then made apple soap and finished by making yummy caramel apples decorated with their favorite toppings. Everyone left with at least one piece of apple knowledge they didn't have at the start of the meeting.

*Continues on page 6*





### Otsego County 4-H Youth Participate in 4-H National Livestock Events



Justin Wolfe, a member of the Springfield High Meadows 4-H Club participated on the NY State 4-H Dairy Judging team that competed at the National Youth Dairy Judging Contest in Madison, WI in October. The team finished 6th overall and had a great learning experience.



Evelyn Kersmanc, a 4-H member of the Otsego Firecrackers, and Julia Vunk an Independent 4-H member, both participated on the NY State 4-H Dairy Challenge team that competed at the Junior Dairy Management Contest in Harrisburg, PA in September. The team did great, finishing 2nd overall.

### NYS 4-H Livestock Youth Participate in NAILE



The New York State 4-H Livestock Program was represented by two teams at the 2023 North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville, Ky. The teams participated in the Livestock Skill-a-thon and Livestock Judging Competition.

Twenty-two teams from across the country participated in the Skill-a-thon, the largest number of teams ever! The Livestock Skill-a-thon consisted of both individual and team questions. Teams had to answer questions on quality assurance, livestock nutrition, animal performance, and marketing. During the individual portion of the Skill-a-thon, 4-H



members had to participate in six stations including hay evaluation, wool evaluation, breeds of livestock, equipment used in the livestock industry, meat cut identification, and a quality assurance problem. Local youth who participated in the Livestock Skill-a-thon included Evelyn Kersmanc from Otsego County, Olivia Maslyn, Anikka Parshall, and Wyatt Wadams from Ontario County. The team was coached by Amy Pyra, 4-H Program Coordinator at CCE Ontario County. Congratulations to Evelyn Kersmanc on placing 6th in individual in Quality Assurance, and to Annika Parshall on placing 10th in individual in Evaluation.

Thirty-four state teams participated in the Livestock Judging Competition, which involved 11 classes of animals including beef, sheep, swine, and meat goats. While judging, each youth had to give four sets of reasons for justifying their placings. Local youth who participated in the Livestock Judging Competition included Max Pullis and Evelyn Kersmanc from Otsego County, Anna Hawkes and Laken Dyn from Herkimer County. The team was coached by Kate Preston, an Otsego County 4-H alum who is now the Ag in the Classroom Educator at CCE Madison County.

Congratulations to all these NYS 4-H members!

## Estate Planning Practicum



Cornell Law School is pleased to announce the return of our Estate Planning Practicum in the Spring of 2024. As in the past, the course will assist those who do not have access to an estate planning attorney and will provide clients with a basic estate plan that includes a last will and testament, a living will, a health care proxy, and power of attorney, all tailored according to the client's wishes. Law students will prepare and finalize these documents under the supervision of attorneys who specialize in trusts and estates.

Clients must meet income eligibility guidelines, as this service is free of charge. The income limits are as follows: *Single - less than \$27,500 annually, Family - less than \$55,000 annually.*

Clients should be aware that this service requires at least two meetings with students which

may be done remotely, such as by Zoom, as appropriate. In addition, once chosen to participate, clients will be expected to commit to follow through with appointments, giving at least 24 hours notice if an appointment will be missed.

*Spots are limited so if you are interested and meet the income guidelines, please email [clinicalprograms@cornell.edu](mailto:clinicalprograms@cornell.edu), put Estate Planning in the subject line, and you will be placed on a list. Please include your full name, contact information including email address and telephone number(s) and a brief description of your planning needs (examples are: "I have children that I want to leave my property to" or "I am caring for a disabled sibling that will need to be provided for"). Notification of client selection will begin in February of 2024.*

# The 4-H Afterschool Newspaper Club Report



I made a Volcano in 4H. in club. I had to used bakingsoda and Vinegar. It EXPLODED! And it was soooo COOL! and also they took a picture... and my water bottle. and I was soooo surprised!

The End

I Built volcanoe it was wet they were on plates in was fun they there on plates ms. savannah and Audrey cut up paper for the volcanoes.

The End

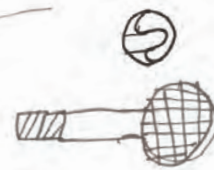




4H is very fun. In 4H we learn about tennis. In tennis we have a coach  
 His name is Coach Face. He teaches us things about tennis like how we hold the  
 racket, how we swing the racket, and how we hit the tennis ball with the racket.  
 He also teaches us how to do some tricks like how to hit the ball  
 of the wall, and how to bounce the ball on the floor and hit it  
 and also he teaches us how to hit back and forth. He comes for  
 the fall months and in the spring he comes for winter and comes back  
 in the spring we are very excited to see him soon in the ~~spring~~ spring!  
 Thank you!!

As you can see coach is teaching them how to play  
 tennis. One of the things ~~about~~ I love  
 about 4H is tennis it is so fun. Because you get  
 to learn how to play tennis. And coach is so patient  
 with us he ~~does~~ not yell at us. In conclusion  
**TENNIS IS SO FUN!**

Love, Kara





# 4-H DOG TRAINING PROGRAM

Obedience 🐾 Agility 🐾 Tricks  
🐾 Therapy 🐾 Scent Work



## Dog Agility Workshop Saturday, January 27, 2024

Cost is \$15  
per youth or  
\$25 per family

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**Hosted by Hessian Hill Farm, 576 Treadlemire Rd. Berne, NY 12023**

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### Beginner and Novice (limit of 10 teams) 9AM—12PM

If you are interested in agility, this is the place to start. You will learn the foundations in agility to be able to successfully advanced to sequencing obstacles. For teams who are brand new to the sport or have just started sequencing obstacles.

**Lunch will be provided 12PM—1PM**

### Experienced and Advanced (limit of 10 teams) 1PM—3PM

Designed to help you to learn more about safely advancing to contacts and other obstacles. Teams should be able to sequence at least 6 obstacles. Experienced teams will have the opportunity to be evaluated for their AKC ACT Title.

### AKC ACT 1 Title Evaluation 3PM—4PM

Designed to have the handler and their dog demonstrate basic agility sequences. Obstacles used include: tunnels, jumps, A frame, table.

*Note: Morning session is welcomed to stay and watch the more experienced handlers in the afternoon session. The building is heated but please dress warm.*

**Open to 4-H youth ages 8 and older with 4-H eligible dog 15 months and older**

**What to bring:** collar, leash, lots of treats, favorite toy, water & water bowl

### **REGISTRATION REQUIRED by January 16**

**Contact Nancy at the 4-H Office, [nb622@cornell.edu](mailto:nb622@cornell.edu) or 518-234-4303 x117  
\*\*\*Proof of Rabies Vaccination will be REQUIRED\*\*\***

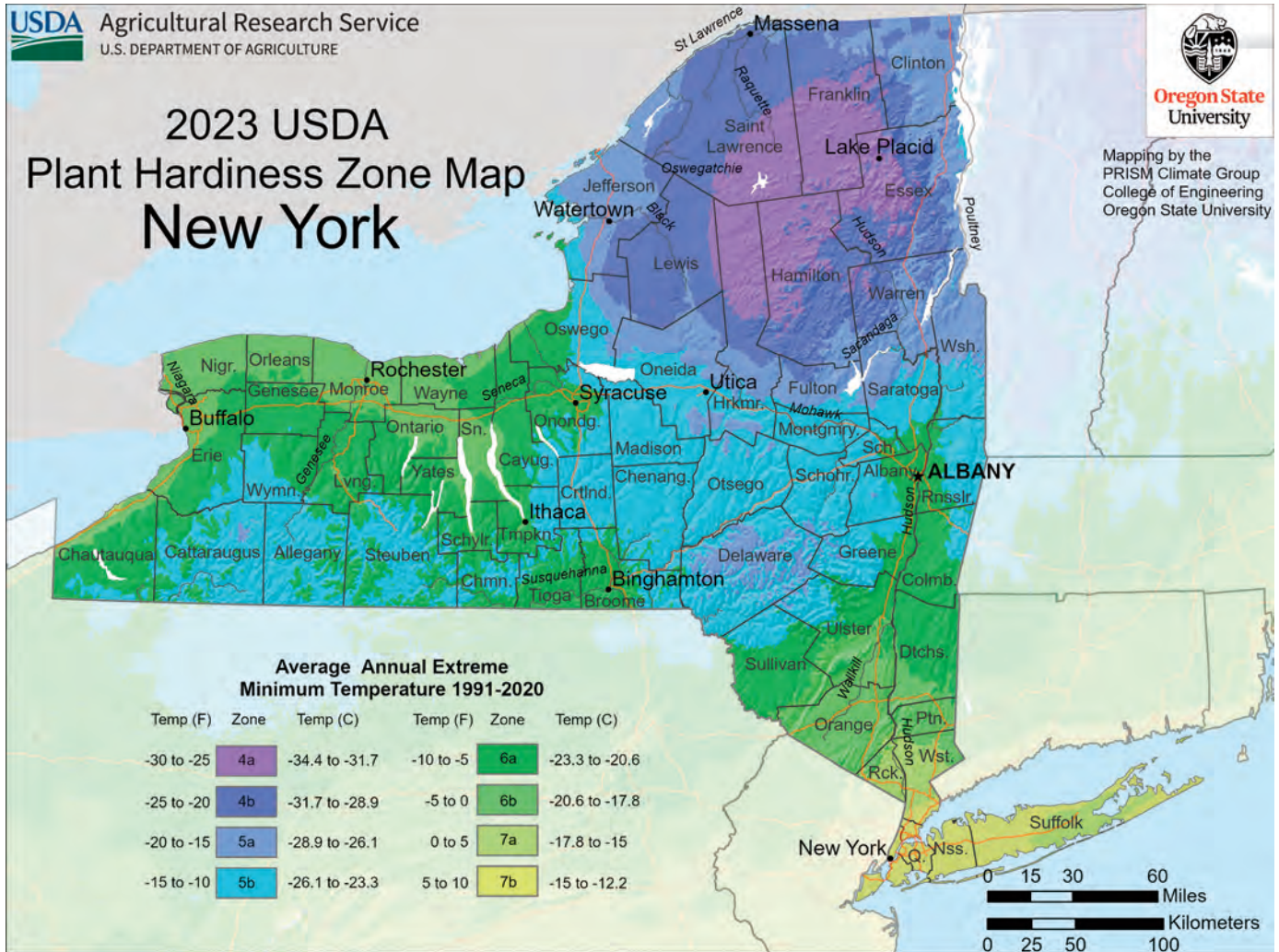


Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and educator recognized for valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities and provides equal program and employment opportunities. Please contact the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schoharie and Otsego Counties office if you require an accommodation.

**Cornell Cooperative Extension** | Schoharie and Otsego Counties



# USDA Updates Plant Hardiness Zone Map



USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map, 2023. Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Accessed from <https://planhardiness.ars.usda.gov/>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently updated a new version of its Plant Hardiness Zone Map (PHZM) for the first time since 2012. Gardeners across the United States use the PHZM to determine which plants are most likely to thrive in a given location.

According to the USDA press release, the new map is more accurate and contains greater detail than prior versions. It is based on a 30-year average of the lowest annual winter temperatures at

specific locations, is divided into 10-degree Fahrenheit zones and further divided into 5-degree Fahrenheit half-zones. The new map incorporates data from 13,412 weather stations compared to the 7,983 that were used for the 2012 map.

An interactive map can be found online at <https://planhardiness.ars.usda.gov/>.

## USDA Unveils Updated Plant Hardiness Zone Map : USDA ARS



# Highlights of CCE SO's Agriculture Program Resources



CCE Schoharie Otsego's Agriculture Program provides reliable, current research-based information and resources to the local agricultural community through a variety of platforms. Take a moment to explore Cornell Cooperative Extension's resources to support farm energy efficiency, expanding access to agricultural products, and agritourism. CCE's unbiased resources can also help landowners and rural communities navigate solar energy development.

CCE SO's Central NY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops (CNYDLFC) team and Eastern NY Commercial Horticulture (ENYCH) team provide relevant programs and outreach, including informational updates, farm visits, workshops, and more. Both teams offer programs on farm business planning and succession planning, including ENYCH's current "Farm Business Plan Writing" course and CNYDLFC's upcoming "Farm Asset Protection Strategies" workshop. A "Farm Asset Protection Strategies" will be held on February 7, 2024, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at CCE SO's Cobleskill Extension Center. For information and to register visit <https://cceschoharie-otsego.org/events/2024/02/07/farm-s-protection-strategies-safeguarding-agricultural-legacies-for-future-generations>.

And CCE SO's regular "Connections EXTRA!" email bulletin, which notifies our farming communities of timely agricultural news and events, serves as another important resource for farmers in our region. If you would like to learn more about CCE Schoharie Otsego's agriculture program, or sign up to receive the Connections EXTRA! email bulletin, please contact Erich Keena at [ejk247@cornell.edu](mailto:ejk247@cornell.edu), 518-234-4303 x119, or 607-547-2536 x226.

**Farm Energy Efficiency:** Ag Energy NY, a CCE program provides information to improve farm energy efficiency, is expanding the guidance currently available for farms, including field crop, vegetable, livestock, and maple producers. Ag Energy NY will soon release additional sector-specific guidance for grain processing, orchards and vineyards, and poultry and eggs. The latest Ag Energy NY's resources are

available on the program's website, [agenergyny.org](http://agenergyny.org). Energy efficiency guidance specific to dairy and greenhouse operations is provided by EnSave and available at <https://tinyurl.com/mr2c43xz>. Ag Energy NY will also begin publishing a newsletter that will include updates to the program, provide guidance to help farmers better understand energy use, connect farmers with service providers who can provide site-specific expert advice, and aggregate energy efficiency grants, loans, and rebates. Ag Energy NY's Program Manager, Gabriel Gurley, encourages farmers to visit the website periodically, and subscribe to the newsletter, to get the latest information available about the program.

**Agritourism:** CCE's new Agritourism Program Work Team webpage (<https://cals.cornell.edu/cornell-cooperative-extension/work-teams/agritourism>) includes resources and materials to supplement its 2023 webinar series (available at [www.youtube.com/@cceagritourism](http://www.youtube.com/@cceagritourism)) and details about the 2024 webinar series.

**Meat Marketing:** MeatSuite ([meatsuite.com](http://meatsuite.com)) connects customers with local meat from nearby farms. If you're a consumer, "find your farmer, fill your freezer." Recent improvements to the MeatSuite website display search results by product and proximity, emulating how many online shopping platforms display search results. If you are a farmer, MeatSuite's new build-a-bundle feature allows producers to combine meat products into a bundle for sale on the platform.

**Solar Energy Development:** This fall, CCE Herkimer collaborated to host a series of webinars on navigating complex, evolving information related to solar development in agricultural communities. The five-part series addresses the topic from the perspectives of researchers, solar development companies, farmers, and communities. These perspectives include the opportunities and challenges, and current best practices for considering the economic and community aspects of solar energy development. The recordings and presentation slides are available at <https://tinyurl.com/mr2cs36x>.



# Woodlot Owners Helping Woodlot Owners: 2024 Master Forest Owner Volunteer Training



Online sessions are 6:30–7:30 p.m. Tuesdays, March 21 through May 2. Topics include: woodland ecology and health, wildlife and habitat, interfering vegetation management, silviculture, and agroforestry.

All woodland owners in NY are welcome. The fee is \$35 per person and \$50 per couple which includes the full training and supplies and resources provided at the field session. Previously trained volunteers are also welcome at \$18/person and \$25/couple.

Applications for this Master Forest Owner Volunteer Training will be accepted until March 14. The application is available at <http://CornellMFO.info>.

Be alert to an email from your regional director to meet via Zoom after completing your application.

Payment made via a secure online link provided to you after you talk with your regional director.

If you have questions about the MFO program, you can learn more at <http://CornellMFO.info> or from Program Director Peter Smallidge at [pjs23@cornell.edu](mailto:pjs23@cornell.edu) or 607-592-3640.

Have you ever thought about using your knowledge and skill to help your neighbor woodland owners? Join the hundreds of woodland owners who have served their neighbors since 1991.

As a woodland owner you have a unique perspective and status that allows you to serve as a peer-to-peer counselor to help other woodland owners in your area. You are invited to the annual training for Cornell's Master Forest Owner (MFO) volunteers. This training is open for new volunteers and previously trained volunteers seeking a refresher.

Applicants selected to participate will join in seven weekly online sessions via Zoom, and subsequently meet in person in May-June for a one-day field session at one of multiple locations within the state.





# SEED

# SWAP

**National Seed Swap Day** is designed to conserve and promote crop diversity in local communities. Every year, neighbors gather together to exchange seeds and chat about their plans for the upcoming growing season.

**Saturday, January 27, 2024**

Attendees are encouraged (but not required) to bring seeds to swap. Participation is **FREE!**

**In Schoharie County:**

10:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the  
Middleburgh Library,  
323 Main St, Middleburgh

**In Otsego County:**

9:00 to Noon at the  
Oneonta Farmers' Market  
24 Market St, Oneonta  
(Foothills Performing Arts & Civic Center)



**Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties**



# PROGRAM EVENTS

Go to our website [cceschoharie-otsego.org](https://cceschoharie-otsego.org) to see the most up-to-date listings offered.

## **Martin Luther King Day (offices closed)**

Monday, January 15, 2024

## **Otsego County 4-H Cooking Clinic**

Saturday, January 20, 10 a.m.

This hands-on workshop covers kitchen and food safety, basic food preparation, and nutrition.

Menu for the Day: Healthy Snacks

Workshop fee \$5

The Rowe House, 31 Maple Street, Oneonta

Pre-registration required by January 12

## **Cervical Cancer Awareness Month**

Thursday, January 25, 2024, 2-6 p.m.

Foxcare, 1 Foxcare Drive, Oneonta, NY

Nutrition Educator Kimberly Ferstler will be tabling at this LGBTQ+ friendly event in addition to presenting a quick, healthy recipe everyone is welcome to taste. Other agencies attending this event include the NAACP, the Gender Wellness Center, the Otsego County Health Department, YMCA Specialty Fitness, Family Planning of SCNY, Tobacco Free Communities, and a Bassett Healthcare Navigator. Join us and take the opportunity to enter your name in the free raffle giveaways while you also get a chance to learn more about many of the resources and services available to the public in our area.

## **Otsego County 4-H Information Night**

Thursday, January 25, 5:30 p.m.

Find out information on how to join and/or start a 4-H club for youth ages 5-19.

The Rowe House, 31 Maple Street, Oneonta

Pre-registration required by January 24

## **4-H Dog Agility Workshop**

January 27 (More info on page 10)

Registration required by January 16

## **Seed Swap**

January 27 (More info on page 14)

## **Farm Asset Protection Strategies: Safeguarding Agricultural Legacies for Future Generations**

Wednesday, February 7, 2024, 10:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

CCESO Cobleskill office (173 S. Grand St., Cobleskill NY 12043).

More info: <https://cceschoharie-otsego.org/events/2024/02/07/farm-asset-protection-strategies-safeguarding-agricultural-legacies-for-future-generations>

## **Otsego County 4-H Public Presentation Workshop**

Saturday, February 10, 9 a.m.

This is an interactive workshop for youth to learn the basics of public presentations.

The Rowe House, 31 Maple Street, Oneonta

Pre-registration required by February 2

## **Otsego County 4-H Information Night—Cooperstown**

Thursday, February 15, 5:30 p.m.

Find out information on how to join and/or start a 4-H club for youth ages 5-19.

CCE Education Center, 123 Lake Street, Cooperstown

Pre-registration required by February 14

## **President's Day (offices closed)**

Monday, February 19, 2024

## **Corn Day 2024**

Wednesday, February 21, 2024, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

The Otesaga Resort (60 Lake St., Cooperstown, NY 13326). More

info: <https://cceschoharie-otsego.org/events/2024/02/21/corn-day-2024>. Registration required by NOON on January 24, 2024

## **Otsego County 4-H Sewing Camp—February 20 to 23**

4-H youth will learn parts of the sewing machine, basic sewing skills and tools, and how to use a pattern.

Tuesday, February 20, 10 a.m.-noon—Pet Mat

Wednesday, February 21, 10 a.m.-noon—Hot Dish Holder

Thursday, February 22, 10 a.m.-noon—Pillow

Friday, February 23, 10 a.m.-noon—Drawstring Bag

\$5 material fee for each project

CCE Education Center, 123 Lake Street, Cooperstown

Pre-registration required by February 9

## **Schoharie County 4-H Sow Grow & Show gardening series**

Begins February 21. Please check the website or call 518-234-4303, ext. 117.

## **Otsego County 4-H Public Presentations**

Saturday, February 24, 9 a.m.

4-H members will give public presentations to a panel of evaluators on the following categories: demonstrations, illustrated talks, speech, recitation, and dramatic interpretation.

Morris Central School, 65 W. Main St., Morris, NY 13808

4-H members should register with their club leaders; independent members should register with the 4-H office, Teresa Adell, [tl447@cornell.edu](mailto:tl447@cornell.edu), 607-547-2536, ext 225. Pre-registration is required by February 16.

## **Schoharie County 4-H Public Presentations Workshop**

February (date TBD)

## **Schoharie County 4-H Public Presentations Event**

March (date TBD)

## **Dairy Day 2024**

Wednesday, April 3, 2024, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. – The Otesaga Resort (60 Lake St., Cooperstown, NY 13326).

More info: <https://cceschoharie-otsego.org/events/2024/04/03/dairy-day-2024>. Registration required by NOON on March 20, 2024

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Board of Directors Meetings and Program Advisory Committee**

Meeting dates TBD; please check the website or call 518-234-4303.

### **Cooking With Kids**

This series is offered regularly both in person and via Zoom; contact Michelle for specific dates.

Join us after school for a six-week series of interactive, hands-on fun. Bring the kids and come prepare a dish with us while learning practical nutrition information you can use at home. This series is free for income-eligible families. Each family will receive a kid's knife set and cookbook upon completing six classes. Registration is required. If interested in upcoming classes, please contact Michelle Leveski at 518-234-4303, ext. 115 or [mml39@cornell.edu](mailto:mml39@cornell.edu).

### **What's For Dinner?**

This series is offered regularly both in person and via Zoom; contact Kimberly for specific dates.

Join us for a 6-week, in-person series of classes to learn about both the "why" of eating healthy and the "how." One hour a week includes a nutrition lesson and time for participants to create a dish—together in person, which they can then sample or have for dinner if at home via Zoom. All ages are welcome (basic reading skills and the ability to help create the dish will make it a more satisfying event for the participating children). The classes are free for all participants. Registration required. Please let us know in advance if you have any food allergies. If interested, contact Kimberly Ferstler at [kmf239@cornell.edu](mailto:kmf239@cornell.edu) or 518-234-4303, ext. 120.

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





Give Them More  
of the  
Good Stuff!

# Winter Squash Basics



## Shop and Save

- Choose squash that are firm and heavy for their size. Avoid squash with soft spots or broken skin.
- Winter squash is often available year round but may cost less and taste better in fall and winter. Find Oregon-grown winter squash at local markets August through November.
- Canned and frozen winter squash are available year round. They may be a good buy when you need a small amount or want to save cooking time.

Winter squash is an excellent source of vitamin A and also provides many minerals.



## Store Well Waste Less

- Store whole squash in a dark, dry and cool place (50 to 55 degrees F).
- Rinse squash under running water before peeling or cutting.
- Wrap cut squash and refrigerate for up to 1 week.
- Freeze cooked squash for longer storage. Pack recipe-sized amounts in airtight containers and use within 8 to 12 months.

## Some Types of Winter Squash

Most types can be used in any recipe calling for winter squash.



Butternut



Pumpkin



Kabocha



Spaghetti



Hubbard



Acorn



Delicata



## Keep Seeds for Roasting

Toss 1 cup dry seeds with 2 teaspoons vegetable oil and seasonings of your choice.

**Microwave** on HIGH for 6 to 8 minutes, stirring every 2 minutes, until golden.

**Or Bake** at 350 degrees F for 15 to 25 minutes, stirring several times, until golden.



This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. SNAP can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact Oregon Safe Net at 211. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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# SPAGHETTI SQUASH WITH TOMATO SAUCE

Serves 4

*A golden delight*

Source: *Just Say Yes to Fruits And Vegetables*



Photo credit: "Spaghetti Squash Marinara by Scott Veg / CC by 2.0

Nutrition Facts	
4 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>1 cup</b>
<b>Amount Per Serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>130</b>
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 4g	<b>5%</b>
Saturated Fat 1.5g	<b>8%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 5mg	<b>2%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 250mg	<b>11%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 21g	<b>8%</b>
Dietary Fiber 5g	<b>18%</b>
Total Sugars 9g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	<b>0%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 4g	<b>8%</b>
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 158mg	10%
Iron 1mg	6%
Potassium 460mg	10%

\*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 spaghetti squash, about 2 pounds
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 2 minced garlic cloves
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) diced tomatoes
- 1 small onion
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning (optional)
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese

## Directions

1. Cut squash in half and scoop out seeds.
2. Place in baking dish, cut side down. Bake at 350° F for 30 minutes, or until tender.
3. In medium sauce pan, heat oil, onion and garlic on medium-high heat. Cook for 5 minutes or until onions are soft.
4. Add canned tomatoes and seasoning. Bring to a boil.
5. Reduce heat to low and cook for 5 minutes. Stir often.
6. When the squash is done, remove from the oven. Use a fork to scrape spaghetti-like strings into a large bowl.
7. Add sauce and serve with Parmesan cheese. Enjoy!
8. Refrigerate leftovers.

## Fun facts . . .

- Spaghetti squash is a popular winter squash cultivar in the **cucurbita** (gourd) family of vegetables. The spaghetti stands out from other squash varieties for its thick, pasta-like fibers and for the same reason often referred to as “**vegetable-spaghetti**.”
- Spaghetti squash can be cooked in a variety of ways, including baking, boiling, steaming, air frying, or microwaving. Once cooked the flesh, can be prepared in a way that its “strands” look like and are as long as traditional spaghetti noodles. It can be served with or without sauce as a substitute for pasta.
- Its low carbohydrate, nutrition-rich thicker strands are a suitable alternative to cereal noodles, especially in people with gluten sensitivity.
- Like other winter squashes, spaghetti is also a very low-calorie vegetable.
- Spaghetti squash contains vitamin A, folate, folic acid, beta-carotene, and potassium, and is also an excellent source of fiber.
- Its flesh, along with its strands, contains a good amount of dietary fiber. Fiber helps with digestion, weight management, regulates blood sugar, and can help lower cholesterol.
- When you prepare spaghetti squash, don't throw away the seeds! You can turn them into a crunchy, healthy snack to enjoy on their own or sprinkled over a salad.





# October 2020: What a Crock . . . of Sauerkraut!

BY **BARB BRENNER**, CERTIFIED CCE MASTER FOOD PRESERVER  
REVIEWED BY **KATHERINE HUMPHREY** AND **DIANE WHITTEN**

A large crock of sauerkraut sat in our basement when I was growing up, a round wooden board was placed in the mouth of the crock holding the kraut below the brine level and a towel covered the top of the crock. How cabbage became sauerkraut was a mystery to me, why didn't it just rot as time passed? When sauerkraut was on the dinner menu, my mom would head to the basement and return with a bowl of delicious firm kraut.

As an adult, I wanted to continue the tradition of fermenting sauerkraut in the basement as my mother and grandmother had done. I was amazed to learn the ingredients are only cabbage and salt, a mixture that will create its brine (salt water). The foundation of the process is to keep the sauerkraut below the brine level and to allow time for the lacto-fermentation process to happen.

The list of ingredients in the basic sauerkraut recipe is 5 pounds of cabbage and 3 tablespoons of canning salt (canning salt does not contain iodine or anti-caking agents). Using a recently harvested head of cabbage is best as the moisture in the fresh cabbage, with the help of the salt, will create a generous amount of brine. Slice the cabbage thinly using a mandolin slicer or a knife (or if you are making large quantities like my mom and grandmother did, use a large 3-blade cabbage shredder). Weigh out 5 pounds of the shredded cabbage, add 3 tablespoons of canning/pickling salt and mix thoroughly.

Five pounds of cabbage and 3 tablespoons of salt is the perfect amount for a 1-gallon container. You can scale up for a larger container by repeating the 5 pounds cabbage/3 tablespoons salt mixture. If you don't have a crock, a 1-gallon glass jar works great. You may know someone who buys their pickles in 1-gallon glass jars or who works in a cafeteria or restaurant. The glass jar has an advantage over a crock as you can see the sauerkraut through the glass sides of the jar. If 5 pounds is too large a quantity for your needs, you can scale down the recipe and use a 1- or 2-quart canning jar. Just divide the 5 pounds cabbage/3 tablespoons salt per gallon recipe to determine the new amounts (i.e. for a 1-quart jar use 1¼ pounds of cabbage and 2¼ teaspoons of salt).



*A one-gallon glass jar works well for fermenting sauerkraut. Photo credit: Barb Brenner, author.*

Pack the cabbage/salt mixture firmly into your container ensuring that all of the cabbage is fully below the brine level. Using your hand to do the packing works great. The mixing and packing will create the brine needed to create a healthy ferment and to inhibit any unwanted microorganisms. Pack your container no fuller than 2/3 full, leaving room for the brine level to rise and room for your method of keeping the kraut submerged.

Making sauerkraut is simple but the last step in the process is important: the salted cabbage must remain submerged below the brine level. This can be accomplished by placing a weight on top of the salted cabbage, hence the wooden board my mom put on top of the kraut. I use a different technique. My weight consists of 2 food grade bags, one inside of the other to create a double-layered bag (in case of leakage) which I insert into the mouth of the jar. I fill the inside bag with water or brine, pressing the bags against the inside sides of the jar. Filling the bag with brine made from 1½ tablespoons salt to 1 quart water is best, in case the bag tears in the process. I use a twist tie to close each bag separately. I then place a canning jar full of water on top of the sealed bags to ensure the bags remain fitted along the sides of the jar. There are many ways to keep your kraut submerged, pick the one you like. Finally, cover the container with a cloth and put a

tray or dish below it in case the brine overflows the container during the early stage of fermentation.

How long should you wait for the fermentation process to occur? That depends on the temperature of your storage area: 3 to 4 weeks at 70-75°F, 4 to 6 weeks at 60-65°F, below 60°F it may not ferment and above 80°F the sauerkraut will become soft and spoil.

Mystery solved, delicious sauerkraut is made from a simple recipe of cabbage and salt. Last year I made 5 one gallon jars of sauerkraut for a total of 25

pounds. In our household our favorite uses of sauerkraut are 1) pork loin with sauerkraut and baked potatoes and 2) adding it to our breakfast omelets.

For more information on fermenting your own sauerkraut check out the National Center for Home Food Preservation website at: [https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can\\_06/sauerkraut.html](https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can_06/sauerkraut.html).

Barb Brenner has been preserving food for years and is a Cornell Cooperative Extension Certified Master Food Preserver. With thanks to Katherine J.T. Humphrey, Cornell Cooperative Extension Home Food Preservation Expert, for her review of this article.

## Let's Swap!



Celebrate National Seed Swap Day with the Master Gardener Volunteers from CCE Schoharie and Otsego Counties on January 27, 2024. This is the perfect time of year to start thinking about spring and honor this great tradition of swapping seeds with neighbors.

Master Gardener Volunteers will be in two locations with FREE seeds generously donated by several local businesses. No registration is necessary, just show up at either of these two locations:

### **Schoharie County**

Middleburgh Library  
323 Main Street, Middleburgh, NY  
10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

### **Otsego County**

Oneonta Farmers' Market  
24 Market Street, Oneonta, NY  
(Foothills Performing Arts & Civic Center)  
9:00 a.m. to noon

In addition to the seed swap, Master Gardener Volunteers will be on hand with a gardening demonstration and will be available to answer gardening questions. Attendees are encouraged (but not required) to bring seeds to swap.

For more information, visit [www.cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org) or call the CCE Office in Otsego County at 607-547-2536 or the CCE Office in Schoharie County at 518-234-4303. See you at the Swap!



# 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 [www.cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org) and clicking this button:



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