

# Connections

The News Magazine of Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties

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Otsego County Wants to Hear from YOU:  
Take the Otsego County's  
Broadband Survey Today!

## 13th Annual Family Farm Day Saturday, August 23 & Sunday, August 24

On Saturday, August 23rd and Sunday, August 24th, CCESO will present the 13th Annual Family Farm Day (FFD). The event has expanded and most farms will be open both Saturday and Sunday! This is a unique opportunity for visitors to experience engaging "open farm" tours and interactive activities at participating farms in Schoharie, Otsego, and Delaware Counties. *NOTE: Some farms will participate on Saturday only. Check the guide or visit [FamilyFarmDay.org](http://FamilyFarmDay.org) for details.*

Family Farm Day (FFD) is a fun, family-friendly event organized by CCE Schoharie-Otsego. The public is invited to explore local farms, meet farmers, and experience firsthand how food, fiber, and agricultural products are grown and made. Now in its 13th year, FFD celebrates the diversity and richness of regional agriculture as farms in Schoharie, Otsego, and Delaware counties open their gates to welcome visitors!

Family Farm Day is your chance to step behind the scenes and explore the vibrant world of local agriculture. It's more than just a day on the farm—it's a celebration of the people, passion, and purpose that drive our farming communities. Each participating farm has its own unique story to tell. It's an open invitation to learn about the diversity of farm life and the vital role agriculture plays in our region.

Well into its second decade, Family Farm Day continues to flourish. With over 45 farms welcoming visitors, there's always something new to discover—whether it's your first time participating or an annual tradition. It's a meaningful way to keep the conversation about local agriculture alive, while enjoying a day full of learning, tasting, and exploring.

Read more on page 3



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# Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties

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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.

## 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.

Subscribe to CCESO's "Connections EXTRA!" email bulletin and follow CCESO's agriculture-focused social media profiles to receive timely news about agricultural events and opportunities. CCESO's agricultural social media pages include a general agriculture profile on Facebook [@CCESchoharieandOtsegoAG](#) as well as Family Farm Day-specific Facebook and Instagram profiles [@FamilyFarmDay](#). Contact us at [schoharie-otsego@cornell.edu](mailto:schoharie-otsego@cornell.edu) or 518-234-4303 x111 to learn more about CCESO's agriculture program, or to sign up to receive the **Connections EXTRA!** email bulletin.

## 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!

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

Now in our **13TH** Year!

**NOW 2 DAYS!\***

SCHOHARIE-OTSEGO-DELAWARE  
**FAMILY FARM DAY**.ORG

SAT. & SUN., AUG. 23 & 24, 2025

★ Cornell Cooperative Extension ★

**JOIN US!**

Join us for delicious food and beverage tastings, engaging demonstrations, and guided tours, all while supporting local small businesses. Discover the unique flavors and diverse offerings from our participating farms, and enjoy a great shopping experience!

**10 AM – 4 PM**

Scan the QR code or Visit the Site For More Information

**FAMILYFARMDAY.ORG**

Cornell Cooperative Extension

Family Farm Day is organized by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schoharie & Otsego Counties in collaboration with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Delaware County. For more information about Family Farm Day: 518-234-4303 • [www.familyfarmday.org](http://www.familyfarmday.org) • [schoharie-otsego@cornelledu](mailto:schoharie-otsego@cornelledu)

**Family Farm Day, continued from page 1**

Pick up a Family Farm Day map or make the most of the day by planning your route using the interactive map that will be available in August at **FamilyFarmDay.org**. It will include links to farm websites, social media, farm GPS locations, travel directions, and further descriptions about the farms and FFD activities offered. We encourage you to visit as many farms as your schedule permits between 10am and 4pm. Be sure to bring coolers or insulated grocery bags to take home delicious, local, farm-fresh products from participating farms!

**For everyone's safety, please remember:**

- Your pets are not allowed on participating farms;
- Please remain in designated areas while on farms.
- Follow the farm's biosecurity protocols and wear appropriate footwear.

Family Farm Day is an agritourism collaboration among CCE Schoharie and Otsego Counties and CCE Delaware County, in collaboration with local farms Destination Marketing Corporation – Otsego & Schoharie County Tourism, Delaware, Otsego and Schoharie County Farm Bureaus, and loyal sponsors.



# Otsego Master Gardener Volunteers Celebrate Madelyn Sanchez Taylor

BY FRANCIE STAYTER ON BEHALF OF THE OTSEGO MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS

On June 18, 2025, the Otsego County Master Gardener Volunteers and retired CCE personnel gathered for a luncheon to pay tribute to and celebrate Madelyn Sanchez Taylor, CCESO's Association Operations Coordinator, on her retirement.

For 28 years, Madelyn has been a major support for Otsego County's Master Gardener Volunteers and 4-H Youth Development program, and she has kept things running smoothly at the Otsego Education Center. She has been our tech wizard, always learning and teaching us how to use the technology advances as they came along. She is fearless. Her ability to organize with flexibility and agility, to serve as a sounding board, to utilize new technology, and be a source of institutional history, were all central to the success of the Otsego Master Gardener Volunteers.

You know her as the friendly face that greets you at 123 Lake Street or the warm and welcoming voice on the phone, always ready to help. There is a word that captures what Madelyn has been to so many—Factotum. It traces its origins to the Latin, “facere” (to do) and “totum” (everything). It describes a knowledgeable, versatile person that anyone one in

need of assistance would hope for.

Master Gardener Mary Ellen Calta composed a tribute to Madelyn, which Master Gardener Carol Phelps read at the luncheon. Here is a portion:

*Madelyn was the wind beneath our wings, lifting us up, supporting us behind the scenes. It was her nature to support rather than seek the spotlight, and it was her quiet dedication and unwavering strength that made our successes as Master Gardeners possible.*

Through the years, including the COVID lockdown, Madelyn kept us all going, supporting us, valuing us, and caring about us. Master Gardener Ellen Alex created a magnificent photo scrapbook for Madelyn of the many ways she has been a major part of our work through the decades.

Madelyn, we hope you know how much you have meant to all of us, and we wish you the very best as you begin a new era in your journey.



## Welcome New Staff Members



Hi everyone, my name is **Carlotta Batchelder**, and I am happy to join the CCE team as the new Community Energy Educator for Otsego County! I have always been passionate about protecting natural resources and I am excited to do so in this new role, while simultaneously giving back to the community.

I grew up in rural Saratoga County and spent a lot of time hiking, fishing, and hunting with my father. I gained a deep love and respect for the natural world which led me to pursue a bachelor's degree in environmental sustainability with a minor in geography from SUNY Oneonta. After graduation,

I spent a year working for the same college I graduated from as a Volunteer Coordinator, connecting SUNY Oneonta students with a variety of different fun and fulfilling local volunteer opportunities, as well as coordinating the brand new Empire State Service Corps program. In this position, I gained a newfound love for community engagement.

Outside of work, I like to go hiking and spend time outdoors, go to concerts and festivals (I love music!), and play video games. I am so excited to begin my journey here at the CCE, and I am even more excited to get to know all of you. It already feels so great to be around so many lovely people who work so hard to make a positive impact on their community. Please feel free to reach out to me at [cmb529@cornell.edu](mailto:cmb529@cornell.edu).



Hello all, my name is **Mariah Goodwin** and I am the new Special Projects Educator for Schoharie and Otsego Counties! I am ecstatic to be working on the Farm-to-School programs and cannot wait to start working with everyone on this initiative.

I grew up here in Otsego County on my family's dairy farm, where I was a member of 4-H for many years. I then went to Cornell University where I received a degree in Animal Science and concentrated in Dairy Science. And for the last six years I have been in Vermont where I was lucky enough to work for Hildene, The Lincoln Family Home, on their working farm. There is a magnificent relation-

ship between the local schools and the farm at Hildene that allowed me to learn so much and be able to feed my passion of teaching others about agriculture and food systems.

While I am grateful for my time in Vermont, I am very glad to be back home and taking on this new challenge. I have always loved educating people on anything agriculture related, and now I can't help but be excited that I finally get to make it my main focus.

As you get to know me, you'll find out that I love to garden, make just about any kind of baked goods, and to spend time with my family and friends.

I hope that I'll be able to connect with many of you soon as I step into this new role and that we can work together to make a great program! Please feel free to reach out to me at [mog27@cornell.edu](mailto:mog27@cornell.edu).

Hello all! I'm **Carol Kennedy**. I've joined the CCE Schoharie Otsego team to support the demonstration garden and operations at CCESO's Otsego Education Center. This past year I relocated to Cooperstown, New York from Fort Myers, Florida to support ageing and disabled family members. I am retired and just getting to know the Cooperstown community. To help with that process I became a member of the Town of Middlefield Planning Board, I work part time as an educator at the Fenimore Farm and Country Village, and I am helping with CCESO's "Seed to Supper" pilot project.



and maintained the Schomburg Satellite Community Garden in the south Bronx for over 15 years. Before teaching I worked as a research and clinical laboratory technologist for Albany Medical Center, New York State Health Department, and Cornell University's Microbiology Department.

I have done a few things since graduating from Cornell's Ag School in 1981 and working there as a research assistant a decade or so later. I look forward to meeting everyone, learning your names (probably multiple times), working together, and being part of the Cornell family once again in a new role with CCE. You can reach me at [cmk88@cornell.edu](mailto:cmk88@cornell.edu).

Previously, I was as an adjunct instructor teaching introductory Biology at Florida Southwestern State College. While in Fort Myers I also worked part time for the Health and Safety Department at Florida Gulf Coast University, creating and maintaining a chef's garden for their dining services. In this position I wrote a Garden Safety and Management Plan and developed educational and safety videos and resources for new volunteers. Before that, I was a science educator, managed a science laboratory, taught conflict mediation, science (Chemistry, Biology, Earth Science, Physical Science and Environmental Science), health, nutrition, community gardening, outdoor education, and civic ecology in New York State for over 25 years. I also, with the help of many community members, designed, built

**MOHAWK VALLEY GIVES**  
POWERED BY THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION AND UPHOUBLY FOUNDATION

**JOIN OUR GIVING DAY!**  
Support us and give back on September 19, 2025  
For more information, go to [GIVEMV.ORG](http://GIVEMV.ORG)



# Master Gardener Volunteers



## Master Gardener Volunteers Grow for You!

This very rainy spring brought both the Otsego and Schoharie County Master Gardener Volunteer plant sales inside this year. Thanks to our wonderful hosts, SUNY Cobleskill and the Fenimore Farm and Country Village, both sales came together without a hitch. Thousands of plants lovingly grown by Master Gardener Volunteers were sold to raise money for garden-based learning programs in Otsego and Schoharie Counties.



*Schoharie Master Gardener Volunteers, Diane Mills and Paula Sinatra, set up perennials at SUNY Cobleskill.*



*Otsego Master Gardener Volunteer Plant Sale was held at the Fenimore Farm and Country Village this year.*



*Otsego Master Gardener Volunteer Darleen Fournier helps some youngsters plant sunflower seeds.*



*Otsego Master Gardener Volunteer Ellen Alex tabling at Earth Festival.*

## What is Heliotropism? Otsego Master Gardener Volunteers Celebrate Sunflowers at Earth Festival

Light from the sun provides the solar energy used by plants for photosynthesis. Heliotropism, or solar tracking, is when a plant follows the movement of the sun during the day. Rooted in ancient Greek, “helio” refers to the sun and “tropism” means a turning or movement of a living organism toward or away from an external stimulus, such as light, heat or gravity.

The sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*) is the best example of a plant that displays this phenomenon. Young sunflower plants follow the sun from east to west during the day and then reorient themselves during the night to face east in anticipation of the sunrise.

Heliotropism optimizes light interception of young sunflower plants, increasing it by 10% or more. Increased light capture improves plant performance with more leaf area and increased biomass.

Sunflowers perform their daily dance from east to west by the coordinated action of two mechanisms. Light-signaling pathways set a basic rate of growth for the plant, based on available light. The apex of the plant is the most sensitive to light. The circadian or internal clock of the plant is influenced by the direction of light and causes the stem to grow more on one side than the other.

At the final stage of flower development, called anthesis, sunflowers conclude their solar tracking ways and turn their flowerheads eastward. These east-facing sunflowers heat up more quickly in the morning, making them more attractive to pollinating insects, such as honeybees. (<https://extension.wvu.edu/lawn-gardening-pests/news/2021/06/01/what-is-heliotropism>)





## 2025 Cultural Roots of the African Diaspora: Vegetable Varieties Trial Garden Highlights

Otsego and Schoharie County Master Gardener Volunteers are once again participating in the Cornell Vegetable Varieties for Gardeners citizen science project to plant and maintain the trial vegetables and demonstrate techniques for ecological gardening. The information collected from the trial is used to update the “Selected List of Vegetable Varieties for Gardeners in NYS,” a resource from Cornell Garden Based Learning that gardeners can use to learn about the varieties that have been shown to do well in varying conditions across NYS.

The 2025 trial theme is Cultural Roots of the African Diaspora with seeds provided by Truelove Seeds. Plants include the following:

- ‘White Velvet’ Okra
- ‘Plate de Haiti’ Tomato
- ‘Moses Smith’ Yellow Cabbage Collard
- ‘Sea Island Red Pea’
- ‘Scent Leaf’ Basil
- ‘Intore’ Afrian Eggplant
- ‘Thelma Sanders’ Sweet Potato Squash
- ‘Fish’ and ‘Buena Mulata’ Peppers
- ‘Sugar Baby’ Watermelon

The Vegetable Trial Gardens can be viewed at the Otsego County Demonstration Garden (at CCESO’s Education Center, 123 Lake Street, Cooperstown) and the Schoharie County CCE Demonstration Garden (at CCESO’s Extension Center, 173 S. Grand Street, Cobleskill), where educational signage about each plant will be on display. A guided tour of the Vegetable Trial Garden is scheduled for August 20 at the Otsego Demonstration Garden at 123 Lake Street, Cooperstown.



*Schoharie Master Gardeners after planting the Trial Garden Plants in front of CCESO’s Cobleskill Extension Center.*



*Otsego Trial Garden is maintained by Otsego Master Garden Volunteers, Celia Oxley and Tina McGurrian.*

## Seed-to-Supper PILOT Programs Launched in Otsego and Schoharie Counties

NYS Seed-to-Supper (S2S) is a gardening experience that provides novice gardeners with the tools they need to connect with other people, grow in confidence, and successfully grow a portion of their own food on a limited budget. Originating with the Oregon Food Bank, we offer this program in partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension educators and community-based host agencies throughout New York State.

Thanks to funding from Cornell Garden Based Learning, CCESO was able to launch this program in both Schoharie and Otsego Counties this spring in collaboration with the Milford Come!Unity Garden and the Cobleskill Campus Child Care Center. Volunteer educators were trained to facilitate this program in 5 classes that focus on topics such as garden planning, healthy soil, planting and caring for gardens, and harvesting your bounty.

CCESO plans to partner with other host agencies to continue this program into the future.



*Seed-to-Supper educator, Carol Kennedy, teaches participants about beneficial and non-beneficial insects in the garden.*

**Continues on page 8**





In Schoharie County, Master Gardener Volunteers and Seed-to-Supper educators Theresa Kaya and Berni Dooley teach the first module on Garden Planning.



CCESO Nutrition Educator Nelta Miller shares information about healthy snacks and eating habits at the Seed-to-Supper program.

### Horticulture Program and 4-H Join Forces for Youth Gardening Programs

Master Gardener Volunteers in Schoharie and Otsego County collaborated with 4-H to teach gardening programs.



Schoharie Master Gardener Volunteer, Liz Brown, guides Schoharie 4-H members on garden planning.



In week 1, Otsego 4-H group plans their garden before planting.



Week 2, Otsego 4-H planted their garden. There will be two more sessions in June to teach the kids about caring for the garden and harvesting.

### Cooperstown Elementary School Celebrates Spring Garden Day!

CCESO staff joined the Cooperstown Elementary School on their Spring Garden Day. The entire school rotated through the School Garden and participated in garden themed activities. To celebrate each student's contribution to the garden, flags were painted and hung around the garden.



Cooperstown fifth graders decorate their flags.



Flags on display around the garden



### ***Invasive Species in the Garden Program***

Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties in partnership with the Catskill Regional Invasive Species Partnership (CRISP) held an evening program about invasives species in the garden.

Dan Snider-Nerp, Terrestrial Invasive Species Manager at CRISP, spoke about the common and uncommon invasives species that you may find in your garden, and what you can do about it.

This program is part of the Evenings in the Garden series held from May to September featuring different gardening themes and topics such as invasive species, All America Selection Display Garden, Tomato Tasting, and Seed Saving. The demonstration garden is designed to educate the community in horticulture. Maintained by Otsego Master Gardener Volunteers, it's open to the public and free to use for self-guided tours, or join us for one of our evening programs this summer.



### ***Upcoming Evening in the Garden Programs:***

July 23: All-American Selections Tour

August 20: Tomato Tasting & Vegetable Varieties  
Trian Garden of the Africa Diaspora

September 24: Seed Saving Demonstration & Harvesting Potatoes

*\*See Program Events on page 19 for details.*

## **Otsego County Wants to Hear from YOU: Take Otsego County's Broadband Survey Today!**



Otsego County wants to hear from YOU: Take Otsego County's Broadband Survey Today!

Otsego County is collecting feedback from residents to identify internet service gaps. Is your internet too slow, unreliable, or too expensive? Not everyone in Otsego County has access to fast, affordable internet. We're working to change that! Let's close the digital divide together.

Your voice matters. Help shape the future of broadband in Otsego County by telling us about your experience. Fill out the 5-minute broadband survey today (the survey will be open until August 1st): <https://shorturl.at/bk79q>.

No personal info required. Just honest feedback that will drive real solutions.

- Takes less than 5 minutes
- No login required
- Helps shape local solutions

Long URL for the link: [https://forms.cloud.microsoft/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=Ca1Vb\\_QzHUmMzvWGRaxFTfHSSIO9f75ArJdqs14ubGhUOVoxREI3QjhFS1JSMFRaM1JIVFE3NIIUSiQIQCN0PWcu](https://forms.cloud.microsoft/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=Ca1Vb_QzHUmMzvWGRaxFTfHSSIO9f75ArJdqs14ubGhUOVoxREI3QjhFS1JSMFRaM1JIVFE3NIIUSiQIQCN0PWcu)



# Decreasing Your Energy Bill (Part 2)

Summer is finally here, and we are all enjoying those long sunny days. Memories of the cold winter nights are a thing of the past, and it's tempting to think that winter will never come again. But as we all know, it will! So in between swimming, gardening, hikes, or whatever you do to enjoy this time of year, let's make a little space to take steps to improve our homes for when extreme temperatures come knocking again!

You can make some small changes that will help you save energy in your home. All of these are DIY but just remember to take your time and be safe. Read on for three ways to improve your home's energy usage!

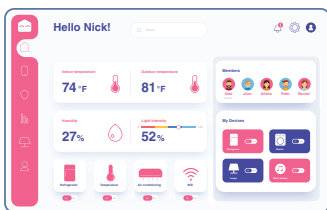
## 1. LED Bulbs

Light Emitting Diode (LED) bulbs are incredibly efficient compared to traditional incandescent bulbs. LEDs can use 90% less electricity and last up to 25x longer than an incandescent light bulb, making them a great choice for your home. If you have a bulb stop working in your home, think about replacing it with an LED!



## 2. Programmable Thermostat

Investing in a programmable thermostat can be a huge energy saver. These types of thermostats can be set to automatically change temperatures throughout the day even if you are not home. The US Department of Energy says you can save as much as 10% a year on heating and cooling by simply turning your thermostat back 7°-10°F for 8 hours a day from its normal setting. It can be helpful in the summer too if you have a central cooling system! For example, you might program the thermostat to cease the AC when you're not home and at work, and program it to come on a half hour before you arrive back home.



## 3. Outlet Insulators

Have you ever thought to look behind your outlet covers in your home? If you did, you would discover a rather significant space between your outlets and the wall- a perfect space for conditioned air to leave your home. The solution to this are outlet insulators. These inexpensive foam covers help keep conditioned air from escaping to the outside through these empty spaces. Consider installing these outlet insulators on all exterior attached walls, but just remember to first turn off your breaker to avoid accidental electrical issues.



All three of these items can be purchased in hardware and general stores at a low cost to the homeowner. For more tips and to learn other ways to make your home more energy efficient, contact Michaela, your resident energy advisor, either by phone or email: 518-234-4304 ext. 114 or maf396@cornell.edu.

**Schoharie County  
Farmer's Market Community  
Listening Sessions**

Come hear the (455!) results from the County-wide Farmers' Market survey, share your feedback, and get involved!

*Farmers/vendors and interested community members encouraged to attend!*

**WHAT DOES A SCHOHARIE MARKET LOOK LIKE TO YOU?**

<b>SCHOHARIE</b> Schoharie Firehouse Thursday, July 10, 6PM	<b>BLenheim-GILBOA</b> New York Power Authority Visitor Center, Saturday, July 19, 10AM
<b>COBLESKILL</b> CCE Extension Center Tuesday, July 15, 6:30PM	<b>CARLISLE</b> Carlisle Town Hall Thursday, July 24, 6PM

To register go to <https://forms.office.com/g/yJZ1ye3wkn> or call Ag Dev at 518-295-8785

Hosted in partnership by Schoharie County Agricultural Development, Department of Health, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and the Institute of Rural Vitality



## REMINDER: Canning Season is Fast Approaching!

Dial gauges should be tested annually to ensure accuracy and therefore safety of pressure canned products! CCE can help! Contact Maegan at [mef265@cornell.edu](mailto:mef265@cornell.edu) or 716-816-6019 to arrange a time and location to have your dial gauge tested!



## Save the Date! Mohawk Valley Gives Day

CCESO is participating in Mohawk Valley Gives Day, an online fundraising campaign to benefit nonprofit organizations throughout the region on Friday, September 19th. 100% of all donations will directly support CCESO's operations in Otsego County. Mark your calendar and visit CCESO's page at [GIVEMV.ORG](http://GIVEMV.ORG) beginning in mid-September to donate. To donate sooner visit [cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://cceschoharie-otsego.org) or mail your donation to CCESO, 123 Lake Street, Cooperstown, NY 13326.



Learn more about CCE Schoharie & Otsego's education and outreach programs and Annual Meeting!



Donate to CCE Schoharie & Otsego today!

### Join Cornell Cooperative Extension's Nutrition Programs EFNEP, Healthy Connections and SNAP Ed



*Where adults and youth learn by doing!*



- ✓ Building habits of healthy eating and activity for a lifetime
- ✓ Learn to make meals that save time and money
- ✓ Try out new dishes and skills
- ✓ Practice food safety and reduce food waste when selecting, prepping and storing food

Whether participating in a group class, one-on-one lesson, or a nutrition event, either online or in person, these programs can make a difference for you and your family!

**To learn more about these programs or to sign up, contact our Nutrition Program Educators:**



**Michelle Leveski**  
EFNEP Nutrition Program  
Educator  
518-234-4303 Ext. 115  
[mml39@cornell.edu](mailto:mml39@cornell.edu)



**Nelta Miller**  
Healthy Connections  
Nutrition Program  
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518-234-4303 Ext. 120  
[nbm53@cornell.edu](mailto:nbm53@cornell.edu)



**Maegan Freeman**  
SNAP Ed Nutrition Program  
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716-816-6019  
[mef265@cornell.edu](mailto:mef265@cornell.edu)

# Schoharie and Otsego County 4-H Happenings



In March, 4-H youth eagerly showcased their knowledge of the dairy & horse species by participating in their district 4-H quiz bowl team style competitions. In April, youth from both Otsego and Schoharie Counties who placed as top individuals at their district events, attended the NYS Dairy Quiz Bowl competition at Cornell University. In addition, top 4-H individuals who gave outstanding 4-H public presentations at their county level events in March, attended the South-Central District and Capital District Public Presentations events. Congratulations to all youth participants for their 2025 Quiz Bowl and Public Presentations achievements!

The Tractor Supply Company Spring 4-H Paper Clover Sale began on April 18 and ran through May 5. With the support of Tractor Supply Company, Paper Clover donations were collected to help provide program scholarships for 4-H youth interested in attending 4-H camps and other leadership events. Thank you to all who donated and who helped make the Spring Paper Clover Sale possible!

In early May, youth from both Schoharie & Otsego Counties attended Cornell University's Animal Crackers "All Creatures Great and Small" event. Youth participants were provided with fun, hands-on, science-oriented learning experiences from Cornell University faculty, staff, students, professional producers and industry experts. This year, the program highlighted dairy, goats, rabbits, cavy, and poultry species.

Both Otsego and Schoharie County 4-H programs participated in their district Livestock Skill-A-Thon contests in late April and May. The Livestock Skill-A-Thon contest tests a 4-H member's knowledge and



*4-H Livestock Skillathon & Livestock Judging Schoharie County Participants*

comprehension of animal science and livestock management practices. It provides an opportunity for youth to gain and develop production livestock skills and life skills through a competitive environment. In addition to the district level contests, 4-H youth will have the opportunity to participate in the state level contest at the Great New York State Fair.

## **Schoharie County 4-H Happenings**

In May, Schoharie County 4-H youth participated in "Digging Deep: Gardens of the Diaspora." This unique gardening program, presented by the Schoharie County Master Gardener Volunteers, introduced youth to the cultural significance of plants tied to African Diaspora traditions. Although it was too cold to plant, youth practiced planning and laying out a garden using placeholders that represented the final size of the crops. This hands-on activity taught the importance of spacing and design when starting a garden, blending cultural education with practical skills.



*4-H Livestock Skillathon & Livestock Judging Schoharie County Participants*





*Schoharie County 4-H Gardening Program held in partnership with the Schoharie Master Gardeners at the Cobleskill Extension Center*

That same month the Clover Bunnies 4-H Club leaders invited all Schoharie County 4-H youth to their Rabbit Showmanship Clinic held at the Schoharie County Sunshine Fairgrounds. Youth practiced proper handling, posing, and basic rabbit showmanship techniques. This clinic helped youth build confidence and prepare for competition at the County Fair.



*Schoharie County 4-H Rabbit Showmanship Clinic at the Schoharie County Fairgrounds*



In June, Schoharie County 4-H took part in many other animal species-specific showmanship clinic opportunities. Youth brushed up on their grooming, stacking and showing skills at the 4-H Dog Fitting and

Showmanship Workshop held at the Hessian Hill Farm Canine Center. A couple of days later, Hessian Hill Farm also hosted a 4-H Swine, Beef Cattle, and Sheep Clinic which covered the basics of showmanship, fitting, and preparation for competition. The following week, 4-H youth also participated in a 4-H Dairy Goat Showmanship clinic held at the Schoharie County Sunshine Fairgrounds. These events gave participants the chance to work directly with animals, sharpen their showmanship skills, and receive guidance from knowledgeable volunteers, which helped them build confidence and prepare for upcoming animal shows and fairs!



*Schoharie County 4-H Dog Showmanship Clinic at Hessian Hill Farm Canine Center*



*Schoharie County 4-H Beef Cattle Showmanship Clinic at Hessian Hill Farm*



*Schoharie County 4-H Swine Showmanship Clinic at Hessian Hill Farm*



*Schoharie County 4-H Sheep Showmanship Clinic at Hessian Hill Farm*



*ABOVE AND BOTTOM LEFT: Schoharie County 4-H Dairy Goat Showmanship Clinic at the Schoharie County Fairgrounds*



*Continues on page 14*



#### 4-H Happenings, continued from page 13

4-H members and volunteers demonstrated community spirit during a Fairgrounds Workday in June, helping to sweep, paint, and prepare the Schoharie County Sunshine Fairgrounds for fair. This effort not only supported the local fairgrounds but also gave youth a meaningful way to give back to their community.

#### Otsego County 4-H Happenings

Otsego County 4-H Clubs have been busy meeting and working on 4-H projects. Members of the Gilbertsville Dairy Club gathered for a fun and productive sewing project. The No Goats, No Glory 4-H Club held a presentation on how to show chickens, and the Springfield High Meadows 4-H Club cleaned up the gardens at the Springfield Community Center and took part in the 2025 Hoard's Dairyman Judging Contest, where they gained hands-on experience evaluating five classes of dairy cattle. Ewes and Friends 4-H Club had a sweet March at Smitty's Maple, learning about syrup, and in April they learned about fiber picking, carding, and a close look at barbed wool fibers. Fields and Flats 4-H Club members helped clean up their community and toured Hickling Fish Farm to learn about how fish are raised.



*No Goat, No Glory 4-H Club learning about showing chickens.*



*Fields and Flats 4-H Club tour Hickling Fish Farm*

The Otsego Firecrackers built their skills with a fun woodworking project and explored trout farming during a visit to Skytop Springs Trout Farm. The Gar rattsville Gray Wolves 4-H Club brought their blueprints to life, building structures they designed themselves. The Crafty Chipmunks 4-H Club was all about making cupcakes and perfecting their decorating skills, including mixing icing colors and using turmeric for a vibrant yellow. They also became creative with t-shirt yarn, making keychains and crocheting mini bags with help from Betsy Foster.

4-H members recently participated in a hands-on Tractor Safety Program, where they learned essential skills for operating a tractor safely and responsibly. From understanding machinery parts to practicing safe driving techniques, participants gained valuable knowledge to keep themselves and others safe around farm equipment.



*2025 4-H Tractor Safety Program participants and instructors*

Otsego County 4-H members and 4-H members from surrounding counties visited the AJ Read Science Discovery Center of SUNY Oneonta for 4-H Science Day to explore anthropology through hands-on activities. They dug for artifacts, examined replica skulls, and explored interactive exhibits that brought science to life.

4-H youth gathered for a hands-on Beef Showmanship Clinic, where they gained valuable experience preparing and presenting their project animals. Participants learned the essentials of clipping, fitting, judging, and showing beef cattle, all key skills for success in the show ring. Guided by knowledgeable instructors, youth had the chance to practice techniques, ask questions, and build confidence with their animals.





4-H Science Day at AJ Read Discovery Center at SUNY Oneonta



Otsego County 4-H Dog Program



4-H Beef Clinic at the Otsego County Fairgrounds

As 4-H activities move into summer the Otsego County 4-H Dog & Handler Skills Class will teach fundamental skills that build communication techniques that are clear and kind and use positive reinforcement through fun activities.

## Thank You!



"Miss Sue" (Salisbury) and "Miss Valentina" (Conway) have worked with CCESO's 4-H After School Program (ASP) students for many years. As the Schoharie Central School 4-H ASP program winds down, the students thanked them for their dedication! We will miss Sue, Valentina, and all of our partners at the Schoharie Central School. We appreciate the effort of all our staff and partners on behalf of students in the 4-H ASP. Many students have benefitted from their great work on behalf of CCESO's 4-H ASP.





# Spring Quick Tips

## June 2025

Cornell  
Cooperative  
Extension



### ► June is for Farmer's Markets!

The beginning of June marks the opening month for many farmer's markets. There are several benefits to shopping at farmer's markets:

- Farmer's markets provide access to produce that is at its peak of flavor and ripeness.
- Buying local keeps money within the community and supports small businesses.
- The focus on fresh, local produce can inspire healthier eating and educate shoppers about food choices.
- Farmer's markets feature diverse products, including specialty items, herbs, and spices that may not be found in supermarkets.
- Farmer's markets may have lower prices for produce than supermarkets.



### ► Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)

This program is available for eligible WIC participants. Those who are eligible receive FMNP coupons in addition to their regular WIC benefits. The coupons can be used to buy eligible food from farmers, farmer's markets or roadside stands that have been approved to accept FMNP coupons.

To find markets that accept FMNP, SNAP, or FCC click on this link and to search by county: <https://agriculture.ny.gov/farmers-markets-county>

This material is funded by Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program





# Building Healthy Habits Recipe

## Black-eyed Pea Salad

Makes 6 cups, serving size  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup

### Ingredients

2 cans (15 ounce each) black-eyed peas, drained and rinsed

1 cup diced cucumber

1 cup diced red bell pepper

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped onion (try red, white, or shallot)

2 tablespoons diced jalapeno pepper (optional)

2 tablespoons chopped cilantro or parsley (optional)

2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

2 tablespoon lime juice

1 teaspoon mustard (try Dijon)

1 teaspoon honey\* or brown sugar

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup vegetable oil

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon cumin

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon cayenne pepper

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt

$\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon black pepper

### Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Rinse and chop cucumber, bell pepper, jalapeno and cilantro or parsley.
3. In a large bowl, stir together black-eyed peas, onion, cucumber, and bell pepper. Add jalapeno and cilantro, if desired.
4. In a small bowl or jar with lid, combine vinegar, lime juice, mustard, honey, oil, cumin, cayenne, salt and pepper. Stir or shake to combine.
5. Pour vinegar mixture over the vegetable mixture and stir to combine. Refrigerate to chill before serving. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.



**Nutrition Facts:** Serving size:  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup, calories 150; total fat: 7g; saturated fat: .5g; sodium: 170mg; total carbohydrate: 18g; added sugars: 1g; Protein: 3g; Calcium: 99mg; Potassium: 383mg, Vitamin C: 28mg  
Source: FoodHero.org

\*Notes: Honey is not recommended for children under 1 year old. Try adding other vegetables such as summer squash, tomato or corn. Add shrimp or another protein.



### Kids' Book Nook

With your child, visit your local library and borrow "Bravo, Avocado!" by Chana Stiefel. Read the book together and talk about what makes them feel special! Then ask what makes vegetables and fruits special.

### Meet Your Educator



Michelle Leveski  
(518) 234-4303  
ext 115  
mml39@cornell.edu

Sign up for a FREE class today!  
Fun, interactive, supportive nutrition education classes.

Building Healthy Habits BHH



# Let's Talk about Water and How it Does the Body Good!



## *What does water do to keep the body healthy?*

- Water hydrates the body
- Water helps with delivering oxygen throughout the body
- Water protects organs and tissue
- Water helps regulate body temperature through sweat and respiration
- Water moisturizes the air in your lungs
- Water reduces the burden on kidneys and liver by flushing out waste products
- Water lubricates and cushions your joints
- Water moistens mucous membranes including your mouth, nose, and eyes
- Water hydrates and moisturizes your skin and reduces the appearance of wrinkles
- Water plays a major role in the digestion of food
- Water helps prevent constipation
- Water removes waste
- Water aids in converting food to energy
- Water enhances cognitive function

## *Signs of dehydration in adults*

- Thirst
- Difficulty breathing tiredness
- Irritability
- Dizziness
- Urinating less and urine is dark in color
- Nausea/vomiting
- Muscle Cramps
- Headache
- Brain fog

## *Signs that a child or baby maybe dehydrated*

- Dizziness
- Mouth is dry or sticky
- Sleepy
- Few tears while crying
- Urinating less and urine is dark in color
- Sunken eyes

## *The most common causes of dehydration are...*

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Blood loss
- Failure to replenish liquids lost from sweating

## *How much water do I need a day to stay hydrated?*

- The amount of water a person needs per day is different for everyone. If a person is active in the sun they will sweat more, and therefore they need to drink more water than say someone sitting in an air-conditioned area.
- The general guideline for men is 15.5 8-oz. glasses of water.
- The general guideline for women is 11.5 8-oz. glasses of water.
- Don't wait until you are thirsty to start drinking water. At this point dehydration has already started.
- Don't rely on caffeinated drinks to hydrate your body. Caffeine can have a diuretic effect, causing the kidneys to excrete more water, therefore leading to dehydration.

## *Eat foods that help hydrate the body*

- |              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| • Apples     | • Grapefruit   |
| • Watermelon | • Asparagus    |
| • Oranges    | • Bell pepper  |
| • Cucumbers  | • Cabbage      |
| • Lettuce    | • Spinach      |
| • Coconut    | • Strawberries |

## *Add a little flavor to your water*

- Top it with lemon or lime
- Splash in cranberry juice
- Add pineapple
- Float some blueberries
- Try carbonated water

## *Start new hydration habits today*

- Drink water when you wake in the morning
- Buy an awesome water bottle and carry it with you wherever you go
- Drink water throughout the day - take a drink every 15 to 20 minutes
- Enjoy how good you feel!

**Water is essential! Hydration is key to overall health. Did you know . . . A person can survive about a month without food, but only about a week without water.**



# PROGRAM EVENTS

Visit [cceshoharie-otsego.org](https://cceshoharie-otsego.org) to see the most up-to-date listings offered.

## **Independence Day (offices closed) Friday, July 4, 2025**

### **Fenimore Farm 77th Annual Junior Livestock Show**

Sunday, July 6 through Tuesday, July 8  
Iroquois Farm Showgrounds, River Road, Cooperstown, NY  
More than 200 youth handlers and 500 animals from a nine-county region will be included in this year's shows. The event is a celebration of youth in agriculture as it tests the skills of youth handlers ages eight to eighteen who present animals (dairy cattle, beef cattle, swine, dairy goats, meat goats, and sheep of various breeds) that they own, care for, and have prepared for competition. Registration is now closed. For more information about the Show, please visit [www.fenimorefarm.org/junior-livestock-show](https://www.fenimorefarm.org/junior-livestock-show)

### **Schoharie County Sunshine Fair Jr. Department Entry Deadline**

Monday, July 7  
All entries must be submitted to the Cobleskill Fair Office. Entries cannot be submitted to the 4-H Office.

### **Otsego County Fair Entry Workshop**

Saturday, July 12, 10 am  
Martin Hall, Otsego County Fairgrounds, Morris, NY  
Learn how to fill out fair entries. For more information contact 4-H Educator, Teresa Adell [tlad47@cornell.edu](mailto:tlad47@cornell.edu)

### **4-H Poultry Showmanship Clinic**

Sunday, July 13, 9 - 11 am  
Show Barn, Schoharie County Sunshine Fairgrounds, Cobleskill, NY.  
Pre-registration required by July 10. For more information or to register, contact Kat at [kc2299@cornell.edu](mailto:kc2299@cornell.edu) or 518-234-4303 ext. 117.

### **Otsego County Fairgrounds Clean-Up Day**

Saturday, July 19, 10 am  
Martin Hall, Otsego County Fairgrounds, Morris, NY  
Help clean up Martin Hall and the animal barns in preparation for the Otsego County Fair. Potluck lunch.

### **CNYDLFCT Cobleskill Field Day: Integrated Pest Management Strategies to Protect Corn and Soybean Seed in New York State—Cobleskill Meeting**

July 22, 10 am - 1:30 pm at SUNY Cobleskill (Champlin Hall and field plots, parking instructions will be shared after registration). To make information about the Birds and Bees Protection Act and ongoing research accessible to growers, Cornell IPM and project partners from Cornell University and Cornell Cooperative Extension are hosting a series of informational meetings for growers, crop consultants, certified crop advisors, industry representatives, crop managers and policymakers at locations across the state.

- DEC Pesticide Applicator Credits: Cat. 1A, 4, 10, 21 = 1.5 recertification credits
  - Certified Crop Advisor Credits: 1.5 Credits, category TBD
- This is a FREE event, to help us plan on-site parking, transportation, and lunch, please pre-register here: <https://cals.cornell.edu/integrated-pest-management/outreach-education/events/ipmstrategies-protect-corn-and-soybean-seed-new-york-state-informational-meetings/cobleskill-event-registration>

### **4-H Woodworking Workshop**

Tuesday, July 22, 5:30-7:30 pm  
Progressland Building, Schoharie County Sunshine Fairgrounds, Cobleskill, NY.  
Pre-registration required by July 14. For more information or to register, contact Kat at [kc2299@cornell.edu](mailto:kc2299@cornell.edu) or 518-234-4303 ext. 117.

### **Board of Directors Meeting**

Tuesday, July 22, 2025, 6:30-8:30 pm  
CCESO's Otsego Education Center, 123 Lake Street, Cooperstown, NY.  
Meetings are open to the public.

### **All-American Selections Open House**

Wednesday, July 23, 4:30-6:30 pm, with a 5 pm tour of the garden.  
CCESO's Otsego Education Center, 123 Lake Street, Cooperstown, NY.  
See new plant varieties that had the distinction of being designated as All-America Selections (AAS). Presented by Otsego Master Gardener Volunteers, the FREE program and garden tour are open to the public and will be held rain or shine.

### **Pre-Fair Dog Show Evaluations**

Thursday, July 24, 5:00-7:00 pm  
Hessian Hill Farm Canine Center, Berne, NY  
All youth exhibitors who plan to show their dog at the Schoharie County Sunshine Fair Junior Department Dog Show must attend and pass Pre-Fair Evaluations. Pre-registration required by July 2. For more information or to pre-register, contact Catherine at [cmr336@cornell.edu](mailto:cmr336@cornell.edu) or 518-234-4303 ext. 113.

### **Otsego County Fair, Morris, NY**

Tuesday July 29 through Sunday, August 3  
The first day will be an agriculture day featuring harness racing, agriculture exhibits in the barn areas, open karaoke, vendors, and free admission. The midway will open at 2:00 pm on Wednesday, July 30.

### **Schoharie County Sunshine Fair**

Tuesday, August 5 through Sunday, August 10  
Schoharie County Sunshine Fairgrounds, Sunshine Drive, Cobleskill, NY

### **Cornell Vegetable Variety Trial Garden Tour of African Roots & Tomato Tasting**

Wednesday, August 20, 2025, 4:30-6:30 pm, the guided presentation will start at 5:00 pm. Join Otsego Master Gardener Volunteers for a delicious evening of tasting dozens of tomato varieties and learn about this year's Vegetable Varieties Trial Garden (VVTG) which features African root vegetables such as white velvet okra, yellow cabbage, collard, cowpeas, eggplant, and many more. The FREE program is presented by Otsego Master Gardener Volunteers and everyone is welcome! Held in the garden at CCESO's Otsego Education Center, 123 Lake Street, Cooperstown, NY.

### **The Great New York State Fair**

Wednesday, August 20 through Monday, September 1  
State Fair Blvd., Syracuse, NY

### **Family Farm Day**

Saturday and Sunday, August 23 and 24, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm  
Visit participating farms across Schoharie, Otsego, and Delaware Counties! Plan your visit online using the interactive map at [FamilyFarmDay.org](https://FamilyFarmDay.org) or pick-up the 2025 FFD Farm Guide at your local CCE office or brochure rack. Be sure to bring coolers or insulated grocery bags to take home delicious, local, farm-fresh products purchased throughout the day!

### **Labor Day (offices closed) Monday, September 1, 2025**

### **Mohawk Valley Gives**

Friday, September 19

### **Board of Directors Meeting**

Tuesday, September 23, 6:30-8:30 pm.  
Meeting will be held synchronously at the Extension Center in Cobleskill and at the Education Center in Cooperstown at 6:30 pm. Held on the 4th Tuesday of odd months, Board meetings are open to the public in person and via Zoom.

### **Seed Saving - The Art and Science**

Wednesday, September 24, 4:30- 6:30 pm. Check-in will begin at 4:30 pm, and the presentation will start at 5 pm.  
CCESO's Otsego Education Center, 123 Lake Street, Cooperstown, NY.  
Seed saving is an ancient practice that has found new meaning as more people appreciate the benefits to the health and well-being that gardening provides. Otsego Master Gardeners will guide participants in the identification and collection of seeds from the demonstration gardens.

CCESO's Annual Meeting will be held in Cobleskill in October. Please use this QR code, or visit [cceshoharie-otsego.org](https://cceshoharie-otsego.org) for updated information!



# CCE in Action!



**Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program** – Michelle Leveski, [mml39@cornell.edu](mailto:mml39@cornell.edu)

**Healthy Connections Nutrition Education** – Nelta Miller, [nbm53@cornell.edu](mailto:nbm53@cornell.edu)

**SNAP-Ed** – Maegan Freedman, [mef265@cornell.edu](mailto:mef265@cornell.edu)

**4-H Youth Development Program** – Catherine Roberts, [cmr336@cornell.edu](mailto:cmr336@cornell.edu); Teresa Adell, [tla47@cornell.edu](mailto:tla47@cornell.edu)

**Horticulture & Natural Resource Educator** – Marcie Foster, [mkf48@cornell.edu](mailto:mkf48@cornell.edu)

**Agriculture & Food Systems Educator** – Kelley Doolin, [kmd322@cornell.edu](mailto:kmd322@cornell.edu)

**Community Energy Educator** – Michaela Fisher, [maf396@cornell.edu](mailto:maf396@cornell.edu); Carlotta Batchelder, [cmb529@cornell.edu](mailto:cmb529@cornell.edu)

**Farm to School** – Mariah Goodman, [mog27@cornell.edu](mailto:mog27@cornell.edu)