Dear Friends of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Allegany County,

The Cornell Cooperative Extension system is a truly unique organization established over 100 years ago.

The created partnership between Cooperative Extension, Allegany County, and Cornell University continues to solve local challenges and build stronger communities. This idea recognizes that local knowledge must inform research and in return research can guide us as we tackle some of society’s greatest challenges. This participatory approach creates a co-learning environment where the community and University faculty learn and create solutions together. You will see examples of this dynamic playing out throughout Allegany County by the examples highlighted in this report. Cooperative Extension is in an exciting time of dynamic change both locally and across the state. We will change and adapt to our rapidly changing environment over time. However, we will remain true to our foundation, as without this distinctive partnership, we are not Cooperative Extension!

We appreciate the outstanding local support we have received which is essential to assure we can carry out our mission. Our communities are fortunate to share in the tremendous resources we have as part of the Cooperative Extension land grant system, a partnership between our County, State, and Federal governments that is administered through Cornell University. Our ability to bring this knowledge and expertise to our local communities and combine it with the unparalleled commitment, hard work and local knowledge of Allegany County residents, creates a structure for community-wide achievement and shared outcomes.

This was a year of launching new endeavors and partnerships, while continuing our ongoing educational programs aimed at fulfilling our mission to strengthen families and communities, protect and enhance our environment, foster economic development and promote sustainable agriculture. Educators from our four program areas—Agriculture, Family Health and Wellness, and 4-H Youth Development—work directly with community leaders, families, and professionals.

CCE staff and volunteers partner with all levels of government, Cornell University, non-profit and community groups to make a difference for the next generation. Thank you to the dedicated and knowledgeable staff, volunteers, elected officials and each of you that supports what we do every day by caring for our community, our environment and each other.

Sincerely,

Lesley Gooch-Christman
President, Board of Directors

Laura K. Hunsberger
Executive Director
Regional Agricultural Teams

CCE is the liaison between Cornell University faculty, researchers, and Regional Teams and the general public; whether they are commercial or residential in nature.

Harvest NY team members are helping to coordinate and deliver training in Basic Dairy Science and Sanitation, Food Safety and Preventive Controls for Human Food, Foreign Supplier Verification, Ice Cream Making, and Craft Hard Cider Marketing and Development, and much more.

Hands-on workshops assisting livestock producers navigate the world of meat processing. It's no secret that sales of locally grown and processed meat have accelerated at a rapid pace in recent years. For many current and prospective meat producers, raising the animals is the easy part. Knowing how the meat is cut and processed is not always as instinctive.

As part of the Cornell Vegetable Program, producers receive weekly crop reports, pest alerts and timely growing information. They also can participate in educational trainings offered throughout the 12 county region.

Locally hosted monthly meetings were held for vegetable growers focused on season extension through the use of high tunnel, selection of vegetable varieties, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices, and food safety issues. This contributes to the viability of farms and the economic well-being of NYS.

Food safety is addressed with vegetable producers through trainings and hands-on workshops geared to assist farm with implementation of Good Agricultural Practices. GAP training and certification of farms expands marketing channels for fresh fruits and vegetables.

Regional Specialists—Harvest New York:

Samuel Anderson
Urban Agriculture Specialist

Yolanda Gonzalez
Urban Agriculture Specialist

Carl Moody
Regional Dairy Processing Specialist

Lindsey Pashow
Ag Business Marketing Specialist

Judson Reid
Extension Vegetable Specialist

Timothy Terry
Farm Strategic Planning Specialist

Cheryl Thayer
Local Food Distribution & Marketing Specialist

MacKenzie Waro
Livestock Processing & Marketing Specialist

Anika Zuber
Regional Dairy Processing & Marketing Specialist

Regional Educators—Cornell Vegetable Program:

Julie Kikkert
Processing Vegetables, Team Leader

Robert Hadad
Food Safety, Fresh Market Vegetables

Christy Hoepting
Pesticide Training, Field Research

Judson Reid
High Tunnel/Greenhouse Production

Darcy Talenko
Weed Management, Soil Health
As agriculture evolves in Allegany County, Cornell Cooperative Extension continues to strive to meet the changing needs. The department has been rich in its variety of programming to all ages; from pre-school to the elderly. Each category has different needs and through evaluations and surveys those needs while continuously changing are met with a variety of program types/events.

A new agriculture initiative for 2017 was the Baskets or Pallets course, designed for farmers of all enterprises, beginners or seasoned producers which covered building relationships with buyers, customer management and record keeping, pricing, grading and packaging, uniformity/consistency, and food safety, among many other topics! This fun course included plenty of hands-on activities and opportunities for peer learning and small group discussion follow by a series of field days. The program prepared farms in New York to enter new markets.

The Annual Farmer Neighbor Dinner featured local products from over a dozen farms showcasing the abundant variety of agriculture within the county. Keynote speaker, Dr. Allison Chatrchyan presented on Climate Smart Farming - A look at resources available to enhance adaptability to more extreme and variable weather, increasing resiliency and sustainability. A timely topic given the storm damages experienced during our 2017 growing season and an opportunity for farmers and community members to express their interest in learning more about tools for planning and reduce risks.

Agri-forestry, a growing segment of our agriculture economy includes products as maple syrup, ginseng, and mushroom production in addition to timber. The Rural Landowners Workshop is a daylong seminar continues to be a popular annual event. This year’s opening session addressed the growing of medicinal herbs which may offer rural land owners addition opportunities to general revenue. A follow up workshop Growing Ginseng in WNY allowed landowners to get a field perspective on site selection and identifying indicator plants for successful production.

Local government, business groups, and economic developers understand the potential value that agricultural resources can bring to a community. A healthy local food economy — one where multiple and various sizes of entrepreneurial agricultural businesses profitably produce and trade production resources and consumer products within a community — can maintain rural character and working lands, create jobs for rural residents, and spark a culture of business entrepreneurship for activities as various as value-added agri-foods to agritourism.
Master Gardener Volunteer Program – 2017 we welcomed two new Master Gardener Volunteers. Steve Jakobi and Joyce Ziembo completed a 7 week (2X a week) training this spring. They have already done presentations to the public, articles for the paper, pH clinics, and “Ask A Master Gardener” events at local Farmers Markets. Joyce and Steve are great additions to our vibrant program.

Ag Literacy Week - Agricultural Literacy Week is growing strong in Allegany County. CCE Allegany has participated in this program from its inception 13 years ago! All the schools in Allegany County participated with readers going into 2nd grade classrooms and teaching children about a different agricultural topic each year. This year we talked about growing, harvesting, and making grapes into products for public consumption. The children loved the book and especially trying out the different grape juices.

Horticulture Events – Horticulture “hot” topics change from year to year and our Horticulture Department offers many varied workshops and events to meet the needs and requests of our local residents. This year we offered a plethora of subjects from: mushroom growing, cooking your garden crops, spring planting, growing herbs, herbal remedies, rain gardens, native plants, ferns, spring bulbs, xeric plants, Kombucha making, natural centerpieces, pH soil clinics, Ask a Master Gardener clinics, open houses and many more!

SAVING MONEY THROUGH HOME GARDENING

Extension professionals are commonly asked about the costs and benefits of home vegetable gardens. Home vegetable gardens are often promoted as a way to cut household expenses by providing low-cost access to fruits and vegetables. According to Gail Ann Langellotto at Oregon State University, home vegetable gardens produce on average $677 worth of fruits and vegetables, beyond the cost of $238 worth of materials and supplies. Extension home horticulture professionals often recommend vegetable gardens as a way to access fresh, healthy foods at a relatively low cost.
The CCE-AC 4-H program has had an exciting year, with 220 youth enrolled and 14 clubs!

Our collaborations with Allegany County public schools has encouraged diverse...
The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) is a federally funded nutrition education program for limited-resource youth and families delivered through the Cooperative Extension Service in every state and U.S. territory.

EFNEP offers hands-on interactive workshops to help participants improve food and physical activity behaviors, food resource management, food safety and security. Programs serve income eligible parents, caregivers and expecting parents, as well as children and teens.

Adult participants learn how to make food choices to improve the nutritional quality of the meals they serve their families. Through an experiential learning process, they increase their ability to select and buy food; gain skills in food preparation storage and sanitation; and learn to better manage their food budgets and related resources.

Teri Violet, Nutrition Program Educator, delivers a series of 6-9 classes to enrolled participants. There are 5 curricula that she utilizes depending upon the goals of the participants: Being Smart Being Active; Healthy Children, Healthy Families; Eating Smart Being Active; Healthy Cents; and Finding a Balance.

EFNEP PROGRAM SAVED ALLEGANY COUNTY $560,000 IN HEALTHCARE COSTS

Each $1 IN NEW YORK STATE’S NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM REAPS $10 BENEFIT, STUDY FINDS

For every dollar invested in teaching low-income adults in New York state about healthy food choices, the benefit is about $10 in reduced healthcare costs and improved productivity, finds a new Cornell study. Jamie Dollahite, associate professor of nutritional sciences, and her colleagues assessed the costs and benefits of the New York State Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), which gives low-income adults information and skills to improve their family’s diet and nutritional well-being. The study is published in the May/June 2016 issue of the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior.
School & Community Gardens

Our AmeriCorps VISTA, Cassandra Bull

Volunteers In Service To America is a national service program designed to alleviate poverty. VISTAs support the community through indirect engagement, capacity building, and program development. This year, Cornell Cooperative Extension is partnering with Alfred State College to host our very own VISTA. Her work is multifaceted, and includes:

- Partnering with Bolivar-Richburg High School to build curriculum for a new upper level elective, Sustainable Agriculture and Relative Careers. This class introduces students to food systems and its relevance in society. Students meet local farmers and are encouraged to become knowledgeable consumers, active citizens, and responsible stewards of the Earth.

- Working with school and community gardens throughout the county to help build their capacity and effectiveness. This is done by recruiting volunteers, leveraging donations, resource development, and creating strategic partnerships.

- Conducting local food demonstrations at farmers markets to promote the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)’s WIC and senior checks. Engaging residents in conversation healthy lifestyles, SNAP, and other government programs for low-income households while promoting local producers at the markets.

- Teaching botany workshops in schools through hands-on, garden based learning.

Community Gardens add to the beauty of their communities and heighten the sense of ownership and stewardship wherever they are. Gardens have been shown to foster the development of a community’s identity and are even recognized by many police departments as an effective crime prevention strategy. Community gardens are unique spaces to teach youth about where food comes from, environmental sustainability, and practical job and life skills.
Board of Directors

Lesley Gooch-Christman
President

Dawn Hermann
Vice President

Lisa Shay
Treasurer

Chuck Deichmann
At-Large Member

Meghan Snyder
At-Large Member

Sue Fontaine
At-Large Member

Nora Carnes
At-Large Member

David Pullen, Esq.
At-Large Member

Judy Hopkins
Allegany County Legislator

Kevin S. LaForge
Allegany County Legislator

Cornell Cooperative Extension Issue Committees

Agriculture and Food Systems

Andy Baker
Lisa Shay
Danelle Mascho
Larry Kamiski
Fred Sinclair
Suzanne Krull

Family, Youth and Communities

Liz Burrows
Christian Lewis
Meghan Snyder
Nora Carnes
Chris Foster

STAFF

Laura Hunsberger, Executive Director

Debbie Collins, Finance and HR Manager

Ag Economic Development

Lynn Bliven, Issue Leader

4-H and Youth Development

Krista Humbert, Issue Leader

Tricia Heary, Program Coordinator

Horticulture and Master Gardener Coordinator

Colleen Cavagna, Subject Educator

Family, Health and Well-Being

Teri Violet, EFNEP Program Educator

Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and educator recognized for valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities and that provides equal program and employment opportunities.
**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.