2016 Annual Report

CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
GENESEE COUNTY

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WHO WE ARE
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Genesee County is a community-based, not-for-profit, educational organization created by New York State Law as a subordinate governmental agency. As the outreach arm of Cornell University, we connect research based, university resources to identified and unmet community needs, enhancing the quality of life in Genesee County through programming efforts focused on our current strategic initiatives - support of the agriculture industry, youth development, civic engagement and support of healthy lifestyles.

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Administrative Assistant (Leadership Genesee)

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4-H Youth Development Educator

Cathy Wallace
Administrative Assistant NWNY Team

Peggy Marone
Leadership Genesee Program Coordinator
**DEPARTMENT DESCRIPTION**

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Genesee County (CCE of GC) is a subordinate government agency, not a private non-profit organization. The Morrill Act of 1862 established the land-grant universities, including Cornell University in NYS. The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 established the Cooperative Extension System associated with the land-grant institutions. NYS County Law 224 established Cooperative Extension in NYS, including a funding system that split financial support between Federal, State and County Governments and provided legal status for separate, unincorporated CCE associations in each county. CCE of GC was established in 1917.

CCE of GC functions as part of a larger state and national land-grant system that extends evidence and research-based information to local residents, families and the agricultural community. As an integrated network of campus-based faculty and extension associates, regionally deployed specialists and local county-based educators, CCE of GC has access to current research findings from across the country and the world which it puts into practice by providing high value educational programs and university-backed resources.

**LEVERAGING OF COUNTY FUNDING**

Genesee County will appropriate $376,164 to CCE of GC in 2017. It is anticipated that CCE of GC will generate $779,031 in federal & state funding, grants & contracts, and program operations (including Leadership Genesee). This represents a $2.07 match for every dollar in funding provided by the County Legislature. County funding is essential and necessary to realize the resulting additional benefit to the county.

CCE of GC funding leverages additional state and federal dollars by participation in the Regional Northwest New York Dairy, Livestock, Field Crops team and the Cornell Vegetable Team. These specialists have access to competitive funding streams for innovative research which view Extension as a key partner in research and outreach. In 2017, $90,000 in County Funding will provide access to 22 Cornell specialists to the ag businesses in Genesee County, a value in total of $1,464,300.

All programming intentionally focuses on and measures impacts of the following priority areas by aligning local needs with the resources and priorities of the land grant system, its state and federal partners, and in conjunction with components of the Genesee County Comprehensive Plan.

- **Support of the Ag Community**
- **Sustainable Energy**
- **4-H Youth Development**
- **Community and Economic Vitality**

**MISSION**

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Genesee County enables people to improve their lives and communities through educational partnerships that put experience and research knowledge to work. We help people make informed decisions.

On the web: genesee.cce.cornell.edu  
Facebook: www.facebook.com/CCEofGenesee
Agriculture

Agriculture remains the major industry in Genesee County due to the quality of the land and the strength of the farming community. Genesee County data from the 2012 Ag census indicates the market value of agricultural products sold was $236 million; 187,317 acres of land in farming. Genesee County ranks 1st in New York State for vegetables harvested, 4th in the value of agricultural products sold, with dairy and vegetables leading the way, and 4th in the state for quantity of cattle and calves. For these reasons, our programming has a priceless impact on the economy of Genesee County. Programming is provided by members of our regional teams, and also by local Genesee County CCE staff.

Regional Ag Teams of Genesee County

Our current regional teams include the Cornell Vegetable Program, NWNY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Team and Harvest New York. These 22 Cornell University specialists provide expertise throughout Genesee County. The teams actively interact with all segments of agribusiness, enhancing capacity and infrastructure. Intervention is provided in various ways, including on-site farm visits, twilight hours held at the muck, Corn and Soybean congress, newsletters and technology blasts to name a few. The purpose of all these methods is improved profitability and sustainability, while sharing the most cutting-edge research based knowledge available.

Some program highlights:

Vegetable Program (aka CVP/ Vegetable Team)

Online: cvp.cce.cornell.edu

The Cornell Vegetable team is involved in every commodity grown in our area. Here are some of this year's initiatives.

• **Partnering with RIT** – Members of the Vegetable Team are currently partnering with RIT scientists to assess improved disease management in processing snap beans through the use of digital imaging sciences. Large acreage processing vegetable fields lend themselves to digital imaging sciences via drones. Any efforts that can identify and treat diseases in the extensive local processing vegetable market can only benefit the producers as well as the economy of Genesee County.

• **‘Special Permit’ Pesticide Course** – This is a course developed and implemented by the Cornell Vegetable Program for the last 16 years. This course allows pesticide handlers to legally apply federal restricted use pesticides without supervision of a certified applicator. In Western NY, Special Permit Training is highly valued; over 80 farms send workers to this training annually. Early this year, the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation concluded that the Special Permit Training program would not be approved for 2016. Following active intervention by members of the Vegetable Team, a revised training program was approved and offered in April, resulting in 142 attendees participating. Training was available in English and Spanish.

• **Bird Repellent Tools researched** – Bird damage is a persistent problem for vegetable producers. Wildlife damage leads to rapid yield loss and the possibility of microbial contamination, posing a huge food safety issue. The Vegetable Team evaluated bird repellents on four farms. Their evaluation resulted in successfully dissuading birds at all four farms, increasing yield 1% to 19% ($22 to $418 per acre). This research will be expanded to further develop Best Management Practices to diminish loss, increase profitability for producers and explore their use on other crops and wildlife.

• **Supporting Growth of the New York Table Beet Industry** – There is a new generation of beet consumers. While traditional sliced and whole beets in cans or jars remain a steady commodity in NY, locally grown beets and beet products are on the rise. Approximately 3,000 acres are grown annually for processing by Seneca Foods. Most of the processing beets are grown in Genesee, Livingston and Wyoming Counties in Western NY. Cornell Vegetable Program Specialists are an integral part of Cornell's table beet research team, aimed at helping local growers meet the demand of traditional and emerging markets. Research trials were conducted to address weed and disease management, with the focus ensuring that our growers have the best management tools available to increase profitability.

• **Unravelling New Puzzling Leaf Disease of Onions** – Large-scale muck onion growers have been seeing an aggressive disease blight causing plants to die prematurely. Cornell Vegetable Program Onion Specialist Christy Hoepting was involved in ascertaining the cause of this new affliction. Several on-farm small-plot fungicides trials were conducted identifying that certain fungicides were much more effective at controlling the disease.
Northwest New York Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops Team
Online: nwnyteam.cce.cornell.edu
The Northwest New York Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops team is extensively active throughout Genesee County, including two specialists being housed at CCE Genesee. Extensive programming occurs throughout the year. Here are just a few:

- **Corn Congress** – Focus continued on Corn because of the 55,226 acres in production in Genesee County. Corn Congress was held again this year, nearly 600 producers, consultants and agri-business representatives attended the two-day event. Growers commented on the quality of the program and speakers, the timeliness of the topics, and beneficial advice in a year of low grain prices.

- **Soybean and Small Grains Congress** – As more producers’ plant soybeans, dedicating 13,327 acres locally, the interest in this topic and other small grains continues to grow. Soybean Congress was held again, drawing more than 400 people, providing the latest information on soybean and small grains production.

- **Calf and Heifer Congress** – With a population of 63,949 cattle and calves in Genesee County, the Calf and Heifer Congress continues. The two day event, which began here in 2011, connects nationally recognized university researchers, industry experts and dairy producers, providing 180 people a ‘one stop’ source of updates on newer technology and products.

- **On-Farm Education for Corn Growers** – With 55,226 Genesee County acres in corn production, corn growers need to keep up to date on the latest in management techniques and agronomic research to be successful. Production, Pests and Profitability (PPP), a new program, was introduced. Participants completed ten hours on in-field and classroom training learning how to correctly identify, sample, assess and apply different management tools on potential corn pests. Pre and post-test results indicated participant collective knowledge increased by almost 36%.

- **Dairy Farm Business Summary (DFBS)** – Owners of 45 dairy farm businesses worked with regional specialists learning about the strengths and weaknesses of their businesses, and how to apply financial management skills accordingly. Research concludes that producers using DFBS with analysis achieve greater levels of profit compared to producers that do not.

Harvest New York
Online: harvestny.cce.cornell.edu
The goal of this team is to expand and enhance Cornell Cooperative Extension's regional agriculture programs to spur agricultural economic development. The team began in 2012 in Western New York.

- **Dairy Food Processing and Marketing** - Focuses on dairy and food processing, with emphasis on dairy processing manufacturers making artisan cheeses, ice cream, yogurt, and other value-added dairy products. This year saw Tristan Zuber leave the team, and Carl Moody join. Carl has presented several Cheese Production Process workshops in Genesee County (pictured right). The goals of the programs are to educate the community on the wide range of local and regionally produced dairy products, as well as an opportunity to discuss potential educational and career options related to dairy food production in our area. Carl is already very active in dairy processing efforts and career awareness opportunities in the community, including collaborating with GCC, GVEP, and GCEDC. Carl taught 330 students in Workforce Development trainings this year.

- **Local Food Distribution and Marketing** – Cheryl Thayer is the team member focusing on increasing investment and jobs in agricultural and food systems to enhance the viability of farms through expansion, value-added production, diversification, and distribution of locally produced fruits and vegetables. While there is an increasing demand from wholesale markets to include institutions, grocery stores, food hubs, schools, state agencies and restaurants to source New York State grown and raised farm goods, two programs will be offered to help mitigate the steep learning curve required of farmers that want to sell through these markets.

- **Farm Strategic Planning** – Tim Terry provides assistance to producers with farmstead development, facility layout, and environmental planning to optimize production on dairy, crop and livestock farms. Tim has completed several site surveys, including short and long-range plans for dairy and livestock operations. These farmstead development plans have been created with the farm owner's desire for growth and efficiency while remaining sensitive to environmental regulations. Harvest NY partners with agencies including Soil and Water Conservation and NRCS whenever appropriate.
The following efforts by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Genesee County local staff and volunteers intentionally target enhancement of the agriculture industry (including workforce development and STEM education):

**Incubation and Embryology** - 718 students (16% increase from prior year)

**Ag Literacy Week** - 1,021 students experienced The Apple Orchard Riddle

**Kinderfarmin’** - held at Grassland Dairy Farm in Pavilion – 625 students (22% increase from prior year)

**Public Presentations** - 74 students

**YWCA Summer Youth Programs**

**Junior Master Gardeners**

**Tractor Safety**

**CDL Training for Agribusiness** - 30 participants (largest class to date)

**Dairy Advisory Committee participation**

**Water Hookup Advisory Committee participation**

**Ag Farmland Protection Committee participation**

**Farmland Protection Plan Committee participation**

**4-H Youth Development/ Children, Youth & Families**

http://genesee.cce.cornell.edu/genesee4h

Youth participating in 4-H build valuable life skills, increasing leadership, citizenship and community service interests, helping them positively contribute to communities as responsible citizens and willing public servants. In addition to the Ag programming efforts mentioned earlier, here are some additional highlights:

- **Current enrollment statistics** include 188 youth, 13 clubs, 60 leaders/volunteers. (The current value of the volunteer time, investing approximately 30,800 hours in a year, $849,772 at $27.59 per hour)

- One of our 2016 goals was to enhance our ability to return to our ‘core’ purpose of providing education to Genesee County youth. As of May 2016, the 4-H program was restructured to a contracted service with CCE Wyoming to provide 4-H program leadership. CCE Wyoming has the largest and best 4-H program in New York State.

More than 100 attended the 2016 4-H Achievement Night, held in late September

Members of the Genesee County 4-H Horse Program at the Genesee County Fair.

The Family Consumer Science Club conducts a program at Richmond Memorial Library

Energy Bike in action at the Genesee County Fair

Led by CCE of GC 4-H Educator Charles “Chip” Malone and funded by several external funding streams, Genesee County 4-H STEM programs focused on Sustainable and Renewable Energy, Climate Change, and Geospatial Science. Some STEM highlights include:

- **Building capacity for local 4-H STEM Energy Education and Geospatial Science programs** Completed workshops on sustainable energy. This year’s focus has been on efficiency using biofuels.

- **Science Day at the Genesee County Fair** - Featured Bio Fuels and Energy Bike activities.

- **4-H Sustainable Polymers program** - Continuing to work with Cornell State 4-H Office (STEM Coordinator) and Cornell Chemistry Department, to implement/pilot the first level of 4-H Sustainable Polymers project.

- **Introduced and implemented 4-H STEM programs in Sustainable Energy and Spatial Science** to new and nontraditional audiences/organizations within Genesee County including Summer Day Camp Program at the YWCA; Save Energy Save Dollars program to Seniors at OACS school (first in NYS)

- Five lighter weight **energy bikes** were built with technical assistance by Genesee Valley Educational Partnership (GVEP) Welding and Fabrication. The bikes have been distributed around NYS.
Master Gardeners—Consumer Horticulture
http://genesee.cce.cornell.edu/gardening/master-gardeners

Our programs provide research based information to our community in various ways. Over 500 people took advantage of free diagnostic services by using the Master Gardener Help Line. The top 3 categories of questions are: problems with trees & shrubs, pest control (inside and out) and vegetable gardening. These frequently involve either plant disease diagnosis or pest identification and how to solve the problem.

Some programming highlights include:
- 70 Master Gardener volunteers donated 4,975 hours, worth $137,260 at current NYS value $27.59 per hour, to CCE of GC. Volunteers spent 1,118 hours on the Helpline, 113 hours spent on the CCE Garden, Over 700 hours in other community gardens, more than 600 hours for education and 4-H activities, and Master Gardeners spent 542 hours advancing their education.
- 747 plants were donated and sold at our Spring Gala this year. This is the first time our entire selection of plants sold out. Funds generated by this event further training and enhance the gardens surrounding our building.
- The Master Gardeners offer spring gardening classes which are open to the public. Garden photography, using color in the garden, urban forestry, invasive plants and plant disease identification were just some of the topics presented.
- Bounty of Genesee County – For the past 6 years, the Master Gardeners have generously donated the funds to print this popular resource for the community.
- Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD) monitoring project with New York State Integrated Pest Management – This is our second year of working with the NYS IPM program. This monitoring effort helps anyone (especially farmers) growing small fruits such as raspberries and blueberries, know when SWD is active in our county and that it is time to take control measures to minimize economic loss to crop.

Leadership Genesee
http://genesee.cce.cornell.edu/leadership-genesee

A Community and Economic Vitality program of CCE of GC, Leadership Genesee develops community stewards for Genesee County. Currently in year 16, this year-long program features monthly sessions educating participants on all components of Genesee County. Some highlights include:
- 80 Leadership Genesee Alumni volunteers donated 1,500 hours working on committees, design teams and special events, all in support of the Leadership Genesee program (value of $41,385 at $27.59 per hour).
- 97% of participants felt strongly that their awareness of issues and systems within the Genesee region were expanded and 93% felt strongly that they gained an understanding of and action toward community trusteeship through civic responsibility.
- This year’s class has 32 with alumni totaling 385. Almost 1/4 are actively engaged in continuation of the program. Tuition covers direct cost of the program only (indirect costs such as insurance, admin support, office space, etc. are currently covered by CCE Genesee)
- Leadership Genesee developed the Barry Miller Lifetime Achievement Award in honor of Barry Miller, LG Class of 2008. Barry was scheduled to be a panelist at the September day session when he was killed in the line of duty in his role as an EMT with the Bergen Fire Department while responding to a medical emergency. Charlie Cook, LG Class of 2003 & CEO of Liberty Pumps was the first recipient.

Top- LG Class of 2016. Bottom Two- LG Alumni stay engaged with the program and learn about current developments in the county through a variety of alumni events including “Morning Coffee” events and “Magical Mystery Alumni Tour”

Left: MG Volunteer David “The Crazy Bug Guy” Russell has help while checking SWD traps in Genesee County. Top Right: Barb Shine, MG Volunteer, shares with students at the YWCA in Genesee County. Bottom Right: Our beautiful garden, maintained by the Genesee County Master Gardeners.
Summary of FTE’s, County and State funding over the past several years:

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Local FTE’s</th>
<th>County Funding</th>
<th>State Funding</th>
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<th>Proposed 2017</th>
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"Cornell Cooperative Extension actively supports equal educational and employment opportunities. No person shall be denied admission to any educational program or activity or be denied employment on the basis of any legally prohibited discrimination involving, but not limited to, such factors as race, color, religion, political beliefs, national or ethnic origin, sex, gender/gender identity, transgender status, sexual orientation, age, marital or family status, protected veterans and individuals with disabilities. Cornell Cooperative Extension is committed to the maintenance of affirmative action programs that will assure the continuation of such equality of opportunity."

Annual Report also available online at http://genesee.cce.cornell.edu/about-us