2018 Annual Report

Cornell Cooperative Extension | Jefferson County
Thoughts from the President…

This has been a busy year at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County.

Agriculture, one of the main economic drivers in the North Country, is a transitioning industry and is of utmost importance to CCE. Supporting producers in production agriculture, especially those in the dairy community, during challenging times continues to be a top priority within the organization. Helping educate our youth about agriculture opportunities by participating in the 4-H Dairy Bowl, or exhibiting an animal at the County or State Fair are never to be forgotten experiences, especially with the development of lifelong friendships for our youth. Crop Congress, Dairy Day, information for Women in Agriculture, Forest Pests, Bees, Gardening, and Career Tours for Veterans to explore the small farm are just a few of the many programs offered throughout the year.

Staff and board members toured the NYS Welcome Center near Binghamton in preparation for the new North Country Welcome Center at Collins Landing. CCE will oversee the “Taste New York” Store which promotes and sells local goods and food products in a retail setting.

The regional Food Hub has continued to move forward to assist local producers in marketing and selling local products. The Steering Committee is working with a consultant to determine the appropriate type of permanent ownership structure that will strategically support local producers using a sustainable business model.

CCE staff spent many hours supporting military spouses and youth at Fort Drum. As we know, if families are safe and secure, then our military can “do their job” without concern. A new form of an agreement with Fort Drum has been signed, which will expand assistance for these military families.

Our property on Millsite Lake, 4-H Camp Wabasso, has again this past year, provided an opportunity for boys and girls to experience either summer day camp or overnight camping experiences in one of the most beautiful natural settings in the North Country.

Other 4-H and youth programs have expanded our reach in youth development. The Afterschool Programs (over 900 students), the Student Space Flight Experimental Program, the Mad City Money Program (budgeting simulation geared toward 8th to 11th graders), the 4-H Outdoor Adventure Club, the Furry Friends Club, and the 4-H Teen Club have given youth of all ages and stages opportunities to investigate new interests.

As we move into 2019, Board and Staff are in the process of developing a new Strategic Plan. This will set direction and priorities for the next four years, while focusing on Extension’s mission and ensuring a strong financial future for the organization.

2018 Board of Directors

Officers:
- Sherry M. Wilson President
- Bilkey Moore, Vice President
- Rick Hafemann, Secretary
- Linda Garrett, Treasurer

Directors:
- Bruce Armstrong
- Darrel Aubertine
- Hartley Bonisteel–Schweitzer
- Jim Corriveau
- Todd Hyman
- Mike Lumbis
- Julia Robbins
- Steve Todd
- Sharon Chapel
- Carolyn Fitzpatrick

Mission Statement

Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Jefferson County educates youth, families, farmers, and communities using research-based knowledge for practical application and lifelong learning.
Expanding Our Community Partnerships

Enhancing existing partnerships and forming new ones helped leverage public resources and programs for the benefit of the community.

A sampling of the organizations we worked with this year:

- Adirondack North Country Association
- Beaver River Central School
- Belleville Henderson Central School
- Carthage Central Schools
- Copenhagen Central School
- Cornell Small Farms Program
- Cornell University
- Development Authority of the North Country
- Fort Drum Youth Services
- Fort Drum Health Regional Planning Organization
- Indian River Central Schools
- Jefferson Community College
- Jefferson County Animal Response Team
- Jefferson County Department of Social Services
- Jefferson County Economic Development
- Jefferson County Farm Bureau
- Jefferson County Youth Bureau Advisory Board
- Jefferson Lewis BOCES
- LaFargeville Central School
- Millsite Lake Association
- New York and Pennsylvania AmeriCorps VISTA
- New York State 4-H
- NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets
- North Country Prenatal/Perinatal Council
- Northern Credit Union
- Produce Safety Alliance
- Soil and Water Conservation
- St. Lawrence/Eastern Lake Ontario PRISM Network
- The Nature Conservancy
- Thompson Park Zoo & Conservancy
- Veterans Services Network
- Watertown City Schools

Our funders are some of our most important community partners. Strong community partnerships build strong community programs.

The total budget for Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Jefferson County for 2018 was $6,418,429.
Agriculture Community Outreach

2018: A Year of Agriculture Opportunity

CCE offered a full menu of educational opportunities for the Small Producer. If you wanted to learn more about the Produce Safety Rule, GAPS, Pests and Diseases, Growing Pumpkins or Sweet Corn for Profit, or creating a value-added business, CCE was there with classes and technical assistance.

Working through Agriculture Challenges

2018 continued to be another challenging year for Dairy Producers. CCE offered ongoing support and technical assistance and encouraged operating efficiencies through class and individualized farm visits. In addition, CCE facilitated discussion and networking around dynamic opportunities, transitions, and preparing our next generation.

Taste NY is in Jefferson County!

The Taste NY store in the North Country Welcome Center at the base of the Thousand Islands Bridge opened in November. The store features New York State products ranging from cheese to maple syrup. 81 producers are featured in the store, with 40 of them being from our local tri-county area. CCE Jefferson is taking the lead on working with local producers to get local products in the store.

Veteran Farmers Program

Outreach in 2018 continued to support the Farm Ops initiative for connecting military and agriculture, two of Jefferson County’s most prominent features, whether that be access to local farms or career opportunities. Over 140 connections were made via farm tours and career fairs on Fort Drum. Information table outreach reached 95 individuals within the Soldier for Life - Transition Assistance Program.

The North Star Food Hub is Growing New Markets for Producers!

This past year, local producers found new markets for local products, both in and outside the four county region. Through continued collaboration, the goal is to form a stand-alone, sustainable food hub organization that aggregates, markets, and distributes locally grown and processed products to support local producers. A food hub steering committee helped set priorities and direction for the project over the past year.

Community Outreach Events

CCE Jefferson’s Ag staff are present at a variety of community based events such as Workforce 20/20, Career Jam, Dairyland Festival and Parade, Farm and Home Safety Day, and the Veteran Services Network.
Agricultural Youth Education

5,419 youth in Jefferson County were provided agriculture-related programs and education with the help of Cooperative Extension this past year.

500 children attended Outdoor Adventure Day. They enjoyed educational activities that centered around the topic of natural resources -- where they come from, how we use them, and why sustainability is important.

1,300 youth of all ages celebrated dairy at the 2018 Dairy Festival. They learned about dairy production, dairy processing, and farm livestock.

677 students participated in Agricultural Literacy Day. This national event was held over one week in the month of March to educate students on various agricultural topics. This year, Jefferson County students learned about farm to table through the book Before We Eat.

735 youth at Ag Extravaganza got an up close experience at several mini-workshops, including cows and their calves, honey bees, chickens, local produce, maple syrup, alpacas, and making apple cider!
Growing up the 4-H way...
provides youth with a broad range of activities and programs
designed to prepare them for success at any age.

Attendance at 4-H programs exceeded 15,000 youth last year!

STEM Activities
- Computer Coding
- Robotics
- Drones
- Rocketry

Diversity Programs
- Anti-bullying
- Understanding People with Different Abilities
- Exploring Foreign Cuisines

Leadership Programs
- Teen Council
- Teen Leadership Camp
- Teambuilding Activities
- Community Service

Technology
- Phoenix Engraver
- Heat Press
- 3D Printer
- Augmented Reality Sandbox

4-H Student’s Partnership with the International Space Station

In Fall of 2018, Jefferson County 4-H participated in the Student Spaceflight Experiments Program, an initiative organized by the National Center for Earth and Space Science Education. A competition was implemented where over 50 teams and 250 youth designed experiments that could theoretically be run on the International Space Station, with the outcome of one experiment being selected for full implementation. The competition has concluded and a finalist team comprised of 5th and 6th grade 4-H participants from H.T. Wiley Intermediate School was selected to implement their experiment on the International Space Station in late spring/early summer of 2019.

The experiment will determine if rust removal takes the same amount of time on the ISS as on Earth. The students are hopeful that the data provided by their experiment will be beneficial for the safety of long term space flights and even space colonization.
Helping Improve the Lives of Our Residents

Nutrition & Life Skills
Our educators provide workshops and classes at multiple locations to help residents manage stress, understand nutrition, cook delicious and healthy meals, increase their daily physical activity, and take control of their health through food and exercise.

Comprehensive Programming for Schools
- Support for school gardens where the produce is used in backpack programs and in cafeterias
- Transforming cafeterias to make “smarter lunchrooms” and healthy choices easier
- Food demonstrations and tastings related to local produce
- Recipes and other resources shared with parents

Environmental Awareness Day
650 youth, including 371 military youth, celebrated Environmental Awareness Day. Youth learned about taking care of our environment, invasive species, firearm safety for hunting, the mining and maple industries, composting, and what they can do at home to help save our Earth!

Supporting our Military
CCE Jefferson and Fort Drum entered into a new form of an agreement that will enhance support for our military families. It is a new agreement continuing a long-standing partnership.

Master Gardeners - Making a Difference in Our Community!
In collaboration with the Urban Mission, DPAO, Asbury UMC, and Chapin Living Waters, CCE Master Gardeners championed over 400 hours of volunteer time and almost 1600 pounds of garden fresh vegetables. This healthy bounty was donated to the Urban Mission food pantry. Master Gardeners are found throughout our community adding beauty to our landscape, nurturing our pollinators, supporting environmentally healthy practices, and educating Jefferson County growers.
Thank you...

to all our Extension supporters who help us to better serve the residents of Jefferson County throughout the year by donating funds and/or generously volunteering their time.

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