Cornell Cooperative Extension of Madison County

2016 Annual Report

Building Strong and Vibrant Madison County Communities
The Cornell Cooperative Extension system is a truly unique organization established over 100 years ago.

The creative partnership between CCE, Madison County, and Cornell University continues to solve local challenges and build stronger communities. This unique 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 Madison 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!
Dear Friends of Extension,

Even though I am the new Interim Executive Director for CCE Madison County, I have worked for Extension since January 1991. I was first hired as a classroom aide for the Head Start program, then worked a variety of positions until January 2000 when I became the Head Start Director. When the Head Start program ended I retired from CCE (but not from working). When the opportunity to come back to work at Extension was offered to me I was extremely excited. I have always been impressed with the dedication of the volunteers, staff and Board of Directors, and the quality of programming in the county. Throughout my many years with CCE, I have seen the positive impact Extension brings to this community. Our Annual Report highlights these successes and the positive impact that our educational programs and outreach has on our Madison County residents and other participants. As Interim Executive Director, I am committed to moving Madison County Extension forward in meeting our goals that will continue to strengthen our county’s agriculture, our youth and our community. I would also like to thank the Madison County Board of Supervisors, our staff and volunteers for their continued support of our Extension.

Elizabeth Crofut, Interim Executive Director
CCE Madison County

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2016 REVENUE SOURCES

- Federal Funds 50%
- NYS Grants and Fringe Benefits 31%
- Other Grants and Contracts 2%
- County Appropriations 13%
- Program Investment and Misc. 4%

Detailed accounting is available for all CCE programs. If you are interested in financial reports, contact us at 315-684-3001.
Head Start was a grant program of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Madison County beginning in 1982. During its time under the CCE umbrella, the program served over 4500 children.

The overall goal of the program was to prepare children for school. But Head Start was much more than a preschool program, it was a multi-generational program. Head Start staff worked with parents and caregivers to assist them in establishing goals for their families, meeting these goals and supporting their child’s development. Head Start believed that the gains made by the child while in Head Start were supported by the positive changes in the family, preparing them to be successful in school and in life.

Parent involvement was the cornerstone of the program. Parents participated at all levels, from home visits and volunteering in the classroom to participating in the shared decision making. Throughout the years many parents became Head Start employees. Head Start was often such a positive experience for their families they wanted to share that experience with other children and families.

In August 2016, CCE was required to relinquish the program by CCE Administration at Cornell because it did not meet the current mission of CCE.

But the positive impact on those 4500 children, their families and communities will last for generations. Thank you to all the families, volunteers and dedicated staff who made our program a success for 34 years.
How do young people get interested in careers in agricultural and the dairy industry? One way is by participating in fun learning activities like 4-H Dairy Bowl. Dairy Bowl is a unique quiz contest that encourages 4-H’ers to learn and demonstrate their knowledge of dairy science. They learn from coaches and leaders who are often involved in the dairy industry themselves. They compete as teams and often earn a chance to go on to the NYS 4-H Dairy Bowl Contest held at Cornell University in Ithaca each spring.

In 2016, Madison County 4-H had one of it’s largest Dairy Bowl teams in recent years. At the District Contest, there was a total of 18 teams from Madison, Herkimer, Oneida, Lewis, St. Lawrence and Jefferson Counties. Madison County had a strong showing with 4-H members in the top ten individual novice division including: Lilly Mills in second place, Kim Marris in fourth place, Andrew Curtis-Szalach in sixth place, and Josh Tomcho in eighth place. In the senior division, Dylan Anderson received third place and moved on to the State Competition. In the Novice Team division, Madison Team A, with members Kim Marris, Andrew Curtis-Szalach and Logan Mills received third place. Madison Team B, with members Lily Mills, Juliana Tomcho and Josh Tomcho received fourth place. Kiera Walrath participated on the Jefferson Team and they received fifth place. In the Senior Team division, Madison earned fourth place with team members Kayla McCaulley, Erin Curtis-Szalach, Dylan Anderson and Kyra Phelps.

It’s exciting to see youth developing their dairy science knowledge and perhaps becoming the agricultural industry leaders of tomorrow!
This year our Agriculture Team put a special emphasis on expanding our programming offerings to include the growing interest in sheep and goat production in Madison County and our region. Small ruminant production is also a popular choice amongst small-scale operations. Madison County, following the trends of New York State, has seen an increase in small farms. “Small” farms, by definition, bring in less than $250,000 in annual income. Out of the 36,000 total farms in New York State, 32,700 are small farms according to the 2011 census. Madison County’s Farmland Protection Plan identifies a goal of preparing Madison County agriculture for the future, more specifically, promoting the expansion of non-dairy agriculture. Programming for sheep and goat producers meets this important goal.

In 2016 we offered programming for 2 different audiences. We worked towards fostering the growth of new, and small-scale sheep and goat production by providing hands-on and introductory lessons of basic animal care and management. We also focused on providing existing sheep and goat producers with assistance in improving their management and productivity with the most up-to-date nutrition research and parasite management training. Over the course of the year, we hosted five workshops focused on different aspects of sheep and goat production. These workshops were made possible through partnerships with Morrisville State College, Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District, CCE Oneida County, the Northern NY CCE Livestock team, and Cornell University. Programs covered everything from business planning, marketing, and record keeping to grazing, nutrition, and health issues. We focused primarily on planning and protocol, giving producers the tools and knowledge necessary for a successful season and profitable year.
More Access to Healthy Foods with Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program

Submitted by Debbie Seguin, FMNP Coordinator

Enhancing the food security of low-income families and seniors and strengthening local farmers’ markets are the goals of the Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program (FMNP). A partnership between NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, NYS Department of Health, NYS Office for Aging and Cornell Cooperative Extension, provides education, resources and support to market managers, vendors, WIC participants and low-income seniors. Individuals receive checks to purchase vegetables and fruits at farmers markets. They also learn to select, store and prepare fresh NY-grown produce, ultimately improving their own and their families health. Vendors sell more of their fresh produce which benefits their business and the local economy.

Madison County staff provide education and support throughout the central NY region. In 2016, staff visited 40 markets and community events with education and outreach. Staff also developed an educational video that promotes FMNP and educates consumers about getting the most from their FMNP checks. The video will be distributed to agencies and organizations statewide in spring 2017.
Farm Business Management—Strengthening Farms

Submitted by Bonnie Collins, Senior Resource Educator

Strong farms contribute to the local economy and the quality of life in Madison County. Farm Business Management staff deliver educational programs to help strengthen these farms and related businesses, and to increase public awareness and support for the role of farms in our communities. Staff meet clients on the farm, in the office, over the phone and by email, as well as in face-to-face group workshops and online webinars. Sharing new research and in-depth resources through the CCE website and social media helps to reach a wide audience with important information.

Some 2016 activities included:

- Responding to the challenges of increasing financial knowledge to strengthen management decisions, several QuickBooks workshops were held. In addition, one-on-one farm visits were made to over 12 farms with guidance on how to use this financial management tool.
- To reach out to our military community interested in farming, staff provided educational presentations locally as well state-wide to honor and support these individuals.
- Out of Annie’s Project, came the development of the Women in Ag Discussion Group. This group meets monthly and helps women address issues and concerns important to their farms and families and identify local resources.
- The staff delivered relevant and practical programming on topics such as business planning, human resource management, risk management, marketing, and taxes.
Promoting Agri-tourism in Madison County

Submitted by Jenn Farwell, AED Specialist

Open Farm Day 2016 was our most successful year ever! With 38 farms participating, it was an increase of ten farms from 2015. Despite the rain, about 5,000 people visited the beautiful farms of Madison County.

Open Farm Day was created 8 years ago to promote agri-tourism in Madison County and allow the people of the community to visit the farms and see the way their food and livestock are raised. This program also provides farms with opportunities to market their business and expand their customer base. On this one day, most farmers report a spike in sales (some farmers do not sell product on Open Farm Day), with the majority reporting a boost of sales over $600.

Participants surveyed had rave reviews and often become repeat attendees. This event has time and time again proven to be a great family activity for all ages. One participant said that “Open Farm Day is an excellent opportunity to really feel good about local farms”. Another said “Open Farm Day is great because we get to see and feel the farms up close”.

"Country Pride, County Wide" Echoed Through the Madison County Fairground

Submitted by Katherine Brosnan, Agriculture Educator

The theme for this year’s fair resonated with each event and display in the Larkin Building at the Madison County Fair. The building, sponsored by CCE Madison County, was bustling with great educational displays and demonstrations throughout the fair. In partnership with 16 other local organizations and government offices, the Larkin Building offered families an area to relax and learn more about their community. With everything from fish tanks constructed by Morrisville State College and the Affiliated Conservation Clubs of Madison County to a lost child tag booth staffed by the Madison County Sheriff Department; there was a little something to learn and do for everyone.

The fair was kicked off with the First Annual Agriculture Appreciation Breakfast. Farmers, Agri-service Professionals, and Local Officials joined together for a delicious breakfast of locally produced dishes. Eat Smart NY staff provided visitors with healthy cooking demonstrations on Seniors Day. For the first time this year, Madison County 4-H hosted Youth Day with a tent and building full of free educational activities for children. Sunday marked Local Agriculture Day which included the “Meet Your Farmers” Event.

The Madison County Fair serves as a special opportunity for our community. It is a time for our agricultural and 4-H communities to join together to celebrate the diversity of our county’s agricultural industry. The fair also serves as an opportunity to connect with our greater community as fairgoers of all walks of life roam through the Larkin Building learning and having fun at the same time.
Empowering Women in Agriculture

Submitted by Bonnie Collins, Senior Resource Educator

Women involved in agriculture in Madison County play diverse and varied roles from managing family farms to owning their own operations to working in industry. The number of woman-owned farms tends to be small, but this number is expected to increase in the future.

We are helping women across our county to raise their confidence, develop skills, adopt best management practices, and plant the seeds for the next generation, by offering programs that address critical issues.

One of these programs was Annie’s Project. This was an introductory course in risk management delivered to over 30 local and over 300 New York State farm women and their families.
Shout, Share and Support Madison County 4-H!
Submitted by Alycia Schick, 4-H Educator

The month of October kicks off the new 4-H year. For this reason we celebrate with 4-H Spirit Day. This event is a rallying point and opportunity to promote 4-H. 2016 was the third annual 4-H Spirit Day at Morrisville State College. Almost 100 4-H members and their families celebrated the 4-H program. This was an opportunity for all of our members to come together and share what

The 4-H’s represent four personal development areas: head, hands, heart, and health. 4-H Spirit Day focused on each of these areas by creating variety of activity learning stations. The stations included: Minute to Win It Game, Barnyard Olympics, Make a New Friend, Create a Club Poster, Decorate a Pumpkin, Create a 4-H T-shirt, a Monday Mile scavenger hunt. 4-H teaches life skills, working with others, responsibility and self-discipline. Clubs have the opportunity to strengthen family ties and create good citizens. Each member is valuable and every person has great qualities and skills which they can share with others. The 4-H experience is proven to grow leaders who are active members in their community. Madison County is home to many talented 4-H’ers and I am excited to work with them.

4-H Grows
Leaders
Head
Heart
Hands
Health

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SNAP – Ed ESNY Finding New Ways to Help People Adopt Healthy Habits

Submitted by Betty Clark, Resource Educator

Making changes towards a healthier lifestyle isn’t easy but Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education’s Eat Smart NY (SNAP – Ed ESNY) is finding new ways to help Madison County residents do just that. Here are a few examples:

In one new project, a successful partnership with the Oneida Housing Authority lead to a new community garden at the Brewer Apartments Housing complex in Oneida. A garden full of fresh vegetables at your doorstep makes it much easier to fill your diet with healthy produce. Several families from the apartment complex, FFA volunteers from Madison Central School and SNAP-Ed staff worked together to plant and care for the garden. Through a series of nutrition and cooking lessons with ESNY staff, families learned how to prepare the garden’s bounty. Participating families were able to use the harvested produce all season long.

Regular physical activity is another important part of a healthy lifestyle, and another project involved creating a new walking trail in the village of Morrisville. ESNY staff and CCE Madison staff, worked with the village of Morrisville and the Madison County Rural Health Council to promote it’s new Monday Mile Campaign. The goals of this campaign are to motivate people to be physically active by providing accessible, safe and interesting places for people to walk and to encourage people to start the week with the healthy habit of taking a walk. The Morrisville Mile, was one of several walking trails that were developed throughout Madison County. Other partners that made the trail possible included the Lerner Center for Public Health Promotion at Syracuse University and the Village of Morrisville.
Hops Are Once Again Being Grown in Madison County
Submitted by Steve Miller, Hops Program Specialist

You may have tasted hops in beer but have you ever seen or smelled them up close? There are hundreds of varieties of hops and each offer unique bittering compounds and oils that help make your favorite style stand out. The burgeoning craft beer industry relies on these unique flavors to tempt consumers and differentiate their products. There are over 200 breweries in New York and many farmers are planting hops to be part of the supply chain.

Since the CCE Hops program began in 2011, the number of acres in the state has grown from 15 to over 400, with more than $8 million invested by growers. There are now 17 farms in Madison County currently growing hops. In the hop program we provide consultation, newsletters and events for hop farmer continuing education. On December 3, 2016 we held our fifth Hops Conference at Morrisville College and the Colgate Inn. Over 250 people attended with a trade show for brewers and growers. This event brings in about $50,000 in economic activity to Madison County on that weekend.

In 2016 we were awarded funds from Empire State Development and the NY Farm Viability Institute. Sarah Ficken, the hops program assistant was awarded these to work on some promotional and organizational projects that will benefit the Northeast Hop Alliance and the hop industry in NY.

As part of this suite of projects we held a hop showcase and evaluation with the Master Brewers Association meeting held at the new Empire Farmstead Brewery in Cazenovia. 80 brewers from around New York came to see and smell 90 hop samples grown in New York. Growers submitted samples after having them analyzed for quality, mainly bitterness and aromatic oil content. Hops are dried after harvest and these brewers were able to source local hops as dried whole cones, and pellets. Each brewer went home with a greater understanding of the range of varieties and quality of hops available to them. They each were given a booklet of contact Information for the 33 growers who submitted samples for the event. Many brewers said they were surprised how far the hop industry had come in the last 5 years.
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Mission Statement

“The Cornell Cooperative Extension educational system enables people to improve their lives and communities through partnerships that put experience and research based knowledge to work.”

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