In 2019 CCE-Monroe reached over 20,000 individuals with research-based information and educational programming.

VOLUNTEERS

We could not accomplish our mission without the dedication of over 200 volunteers. Thank you to each and every one who has given their time, talent, and treasure to educate and support Monroe County residents. Your contribution cannot be adequately measured. Cornell Cooperative Extension impacts Monroe County because of you!

237 Volunteers
12,188 Hours
$25.43 National Volunteer Rate
$309,941 = 7 Full Time Employees
From the Director’s Desk...

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County (CCE-Monroe) has been on a journey of growth; this year we proudly look back and see the impact on the lives of those we serve. Our growers are experiencing the impact of research-based education to help them increase their yields and avoid devastating loss. Our City is being impacted by programs geared toward landscape beautification and food growing efforts that encourage neighbors to work together. Our youth are learning skills to enable them to succeed in life and make a difference in their communities. We trust you will be inspired by the stories you read in our 2019 Annual Report.

We look forward to 2020 as we continue our journey, expanding these efforts and embarking on new initiatives to serve Monroe County. Initiatives such as a Seed to Supper program that uses gardening education to address food insecurity; nutrition education that reaches beyond our City to all corners of Monroe County; expanding urban agriculture opportunities; and providing work skills training for our youth to ensure a strong future. Just as the cover of this Annual Report suggests, life-giving impact is measured in our collective work. Thank you for partnering with us.

Andrea M. Lista
Executive Director

Our Mission
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County provides research-based information and educational programming to ensure the vitality of agriculture, strengthen families, promote health and well-being, responsibly improve home and community landscapes, and enhance our natural environment.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County believes in shared leadership through locally elected Board of Directors and active program development committees. Our dedicated staff and volunteers work with Cornell faculty, agriculture, nutrition, and 4-H youth development teams to put research to work to grow, strengthen and sustain a healthy, vibrant and economically strong Monroe County.

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.
PUBLIC SPEAKING COURSE CREATES CONFIDENCE & COMMUNITY

It is the first session of Public Speaking in the summer academic program of the Monroe Community College Upward Bound program and it is time for rising freshman and sophomore students to introduce themselves. The students look around the room nervously – no one wants to volunteer. One brave student mumbles where they go to school and their favorite activity in the summer, then sighs in relief and slumps back into their chair. A common reaction to this first foray into public speaking.

The 4-H Public Speaking program teaches students how to clearly communicate an idea to others. It is a necessary skill that helps youth reach many goals in life. Mastering this skill gives students the advantage needed to succeed in college, business, and make positive changes in their community.

Students are put in groups of three to present a demonstration topic such as “How to make a sandwich” or “How to send a snapchat.” One group chooses “How to tie a shoe” and group members are perplexed. It’s not easy explaining an action you have been doing since a young age. They discuss various shoe tying strategies and laugh as they debate the two loop (bunny ears) versus one loop method. The group creates a poster outlining the steps and gives an engaging presentation. Everyone in the class gains more knowledge on this seemingly simple process. After the group presentation, one student commented the activity was “fun and not as bad as [he] expected it to be.”

The course continues and the summer passes quickly; finally it is time to choose a topic for the final presentations. Many interesting topics are chosen. One student chooses music and the best streaming software. He introduced himself and asked his fellow students to write down which music streaming software they prefer and why. Then he split the room into groups based on student preferences and asked a representative from each group to explain their choice. The audience was hooked! This young man successfully engaged his peers and communicated his information.

The creativity of these final presentations was inspiring. Students incorporated audience participation, their own background experiences, and relevant information to communicate their ideas. Through the 4-H Public Speaking program these students find community and build their self-confidence.
**NUTRITION PROGRAM DEVELOPS YOUTH LEADERS**

Monroe County Cornell Cooperative Extension’s 4-H Youth Development Team and School without Walls in the Rochester City School District are partnering for nutrition education and leadership development. Through a state-wide grant, Monroe’s 4-H team trained 4 teens in facilitation skills and healthy living and nutrition awareness.

These teens will be volunteering at School #8 working with kindergarten and second grade students. Training consisted of ten hours of immersive preparation over the summer break. This included learning subject matter, beginning to understand child development, and practicing new skills with their peers. All of the participating youth are committed to modeling and teaching healthy living choices to younger students.

Diavonte is one of the participating youth. Each day, he rode his bike to the training, even when the weather proved difficult. This was the case during one very rainy morning – arriving soaking wet this dedicated young man was determined to complete his training so he could stay focused on his teaching goal.

He maintained his positive attitude throughout the training despite his less than ideal start to the day. He was curious to learn. 4-H Educator Susan Coyle stated: “If any youth had a reason to be in a bad mood, it would have been Diavonte after arriving at school wet and cold from his long bike ride. He was responsible and committed to being at training and was a joy to work with while he was there.”

Through this leadership program Diavonte is expressing a sense of belonging, developing mastery of the subject matter and facilitation skills, and gaining independence by learning life skills.
In addition to business skills, CCE-Monroe’s Agritourism Farmer Training provided Linda with motivation, focus, and inspiration to trust herself and her ideas. And believing in yourself is sometimes more important than all the business savvy in the world!

**AGRITOURISM TRAINING FUELS A DREAM**

Linda, an army veteran, moved to the Town of Hilton eight years ago. Hilton is where she grew up and where her mother lived at the time. Growing up she watched her mom teach others the art of gardening and food growing while caring for her own garden. With a love of nature and farming, Linda decided she too would become a farmer one day and share her knowledge of farming and growing food with others, just like her mom.

Farming requires a lot of hard work, time and knowledge. Undaunted by the challenges of extensive travel, child care, financial difficulties and her mother’s terminal illness, Linda worked towards achieving her dream. She pursued a Master’s Degree in school administration and education. While in the classroom at Churchville-Chili High School her conviction of developing a teaching farm grew stronger. She observed many students lacking knowledge of farming, food growing and agriculture. Linda wanted to fill this gap by starting her own business, creating an opportunity for children to rediscover nature as she once did.

With an army-acquired tenacity, Linda continued to work on her dream. She purchased 53 acres of agriculturally zoned land and one red barn – the perfect spot for “Marilyn’s Learning Farm & Garden” named after her late mother. But she soon found out that her plant and animal biology knowledge wasn’t enough. She needed to be more business savvy to succeed.

She began to develop her skills by joining CCE-Monroe’s Agritourism Farmer Training. Funded by the Genesee Valley Regional Market Authority and developed by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County, this training aims to strengthen agritourism in our region.

By learning marketing, social media, and target audience skills, she increased the visibility of her summer camp: a youth program focused on experiential, science based teaching while applying STEM principles in a farm setting.

With the help of the program advisors, Linda tripled the camp’s registration and strengthened its educational component. She joined the new GVRMA Agritourism group Facebook page to increase the visibility of her business. The Agritourism advisors provided her with a list of the community sites for future advertising to grow this unique business. Dream achieved!

---

**Cornell Vegetable Program (CVP)** – a team of vegetable specialists providing educational programs and information to growers, processors and agri-business professionals, arming them with the knowledge to profitably produce and market safe and healthful vegetable crops.

**Northwest New York Diary, Livestock & Field Crops (NWNY)** – Serving a 10-county region in the western part of the state, this team’s specialists work together with Cornell faculty and extension educators statewide to provide service to the farms large and small, whether dairy, livestock, hay, corn, wheat or soybean focused.

**CCE-Monroe partners with Regional Ag Teams to support our growers.**

---

Georgina & Clover getting acquainted.  
*Photo: Susan Casciani*
NWNY – WHY I PURSUED A CAREER IN DAIRY

I have always had a passion for large animals, but it was not until an internship during my junior year of college at the University of Vermont, where I met and interviewed dairy farmers, that I decided I wanted to have a career that involved the people and community of the dairy industry. From there, I became more immersed in the dairy industry – attending workshops, conferences, classes and events that had anything to do with bovine beauties and farming systems.

In 2013, I completed a herd management internship at the William H. Miner Agricultural Research Institute in Chazy, NY where I learned hands-on skills in the areas of cow, crop, and people management, which set a solid foundation for my career in the industry. This led me to other opportunities in dairy research, nutrition, teaching, and management; I have gained a unique experience and perspective of the industry from each.

The main reason I got into the dairy industry was the genuine hard-working people, and my love of dairy cows and their amazing capabilities to use and recycle resources (that we are unable to use as people) and turn them into highly valued and nutritious products for our families and communities. While working alongside and managing farms in other parts of the country and state, I have learned that the coolest part about dairy farms is that they can operate in all types of ways with different management systems and resources.

Farmers in the area benefit from and attend Dairy Skills Trainings put on by the NWNY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Team such as Hoof Trimming and Artificial Insemination Workshops, Young Farmer Discussion Groups, and Corn Silage Pre-Harvest Meetings. We also collaborate with local county extension programs to bring the larger community closer to cows, help them understand the benefits of dairy in their lives and communities, and get them involved. I really enjoy visiting farms and serving many Monroe County dairy farms.

Did you know Monroe County represents over a third of the total acreage for strawberries (34.8%) in the Lake Ontario Fruit Region?

Lake Ontario Fruit Team (LOF) – We partner with Cornell University Cooperative Extension and faculty to provide educational programs for the commercial fruit industry, using research-based information to help the tree fruit and berry industries in New York compete in the world market and provide safe, high-quality produce for consumers.

Harvest NY – An innovative Cornell Cooperative Extension team that focuses on workforce development and business expansion projects that increase profitability and investment in key sectors of NY’s agriculture industry.
TIMELY, ACCURATE PEST IDENTIFICATION SAVES CROPS & PROFITS

Proper management of diseases, insects and weeds are important for all vegetable growers. For large farms with crops that are grown on hundreds or thousands of acres in the region, costs for pest control quickly add up to tens of thousands of dollars. Proper farm management requires the ability to make quick decisions and to prioritize which fields need immediate attention.

This year’s extended cool, wet spring brought on widespread bacterial leaf blight which threatened crops. The Cornell Vegetable Program (CVP) had growers on alert through newsletter articles and personal contacts, noting the weather was a ‘perfect storm’ for the disease.

Growers seeing their beet fields becoming purple and getting spotted leaves were ready to start spraying with a fungicide against a more common disease, Cercospora leaf spot (CLS). However, Cornell research and scouting provided the knowledge that CLS was not present. CVP Processing Vegetable Specialist Julie Kikkert identified the disease as bacterial leaf spot, not CLS. The industry was alerted and advised that the priority was to treat young plants with copper sprays while older plantings would grow out of the leaf spotting as the weather became warm and dry. A fungicide spray was not required.

Similarly, in early June, an unusually large number of late planted vegetable crops were in the ground when black cutworm caterpillars were very active. The CVP received several calls on a variety of crops. In an extreme case, one grower lost 50+ acres of young table beet seedlings – the cutworm caterpillars were feeding voraciously. CVP assisted in diagnosing the problem, consulted with Cornell entomologists, and sent out a timely pest alert to broad acre table beet growers with information on how to scout the fields and treatment options. This action saved growers thousands of dollars in lost crops and replanting costs.

NYS Integrated Pest Management

The IPM program is community choice for solid science and sound solutions in dealing with pests. This team promotes safe, least-toxic solutions to both pest and pesticide problems. IPM helps communities deal with pests – insects, plant diseases, weeds, and more – with methods that help keep health and environmental risks as low as possible while saving money. IPM is integrated because it brings together, or integrates, a range of biological, organic, cultural, mechanical, and chemical options for pest problems. And it’s about management because we can only manage pests – we can’t eliminate them, no matter what people say.

Although IPM used to focus on insect pests, the range now includes fungi, bacteria, viruses, weeds, wildlife, and more. Integrated pest management rarely relies on just one tactic – it integrates tactics to prevent pests entirely or reduce them to levels we can live with. Good science. Good sense. IPM.
MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE!

Liz Berkeley’s job as Horticulture Lab Diagnostician is science mixed with some unique interactions. She helps people deal with pests that have invaded their homes or landscape plants, problem lawns, dropping tree leaves, invasive weeds and insects inside a home. Helping people comes naturally for Liz.

Laurie needed Liz’s expertise this summer when she came to the CCE office distressed and requesting help. Laurie brought in sandwich bags containing dozens of bugs that she found in her home. Laurie sought help from exterminators but no one was familiar with the “bugs.”

As she listened to Laurie’s story, Liz suspected where the problem was coming from. She explained the bugs were larder beetles that feed on dead insects and animals trapped in building voids. Laurie looked uncomfortable and explained that she realized the bugs were most likely a result of her difficulty in disposing of a cherished pet who had recently died. Liz gave her some print information and she departed vowing to do a thorough cleanup.

A few days later, Laurie returned and Liz explained the infestation was excessive and it would take time to break the lifecycle of the insect. Laurie called back several times for reassurance. During a recent follow up call, Laurie confirmed she was having success and there were fewer beetles.

Laurie’s quality of life was enhanced through the availability and sensitivity of a Horticulture educator who approaches people’s needs with care and concern.

Finger Lakes Eat Smart New York (FLESNY)

The Cornell Cooperative Extension Nutrition Program offers several varieties of cooking and nutrition education workshops that are available to qualifying residents in the City of Rochester.

Nutrition Educator Iluminada Vilca was selected as a NYS Wellness Champion by the WELL Campaign from Columbia University. “Iluminada changed the culture of School 17 – salad bars are now acceptable. The kids are popping salad in their mouths because they love it. Without all the food tastings Iluminada has done in the cafeteria, the kids wouldn’t be eating veggies if they didn’t have the chance to try them.”

Healthy Schools Coordinator from Common Ground Health
WHAT IS A MASTER GARDENER?

What do Master Gardeners do? Quite simply, the Master Gardener Program is a national program of trained volunteers who extend gardening information to the local community. Master Gardeners often work with a community of seniors and youth, teaching them about the value of agriculture and, in the process, help others.

Master Gardener Jurij Kushner and his wife Marie, who works at a local YMCA, wanted to establish a vegetable garden program that demonstrates how easy it is to grow vegetables in raised beds, show how garden grown produce tastes better than store bought, and most importantly, partner seniors with children to pass garden information to future generations. Bringing a gardening program to the YMCA was a natural fit within the Y's healthy living focus.

The Kushners helped establish a garden bed program at four suburban YMCAs and one YMCA in the City of Rochester. At the Westside Family Branch 4-year olds are taught about seeds and how to plant them. The class starts vegetable seeds indoors and are thrilled when they see the plants shooting out of the soil. The children care for the seedlings and eagerly wait for the time to go outside and plant them in the garden beds. Beans, squash, carrots, beets, Swiss chard – all get planted. A community group of 20 volunteers including seniors, teenagers, and the children work together to care for the garden during the growing season.

As the gardens have grown and more people are involved, the YMCAs introduced a friendly competition to see which location could grow the greatest volume of vegetable harvest. Most years the Westside Family Branch donates 600-900 pounds of vegetables to St. Theodore's Food Cupboard, Cameron Ministries and the Southwest YMCA, all located in lower income neighborhoods.

What is a Master Gardener? What do they do? They teach and extend knowledge. They establish programs that model healthy practices and provide citizenship to our youth. They help others. They lead the way and they transform lives. They are AWESOME!
HEALTHY FUNDING PROVIDES THE ROOT SYSTEM IN WHICH CCE-MONROE GROWS

CCE-Monroe is a subordinate governmental agency with an education mission that operates under a form of organization and administration approved by Cornell University as an agent for the State of New York. It is tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The CCE-Monroe Association is part of the national cooperative extension system. As New York’s land grant university, Cornell administers the system in this state. Each Cornell Cooperative Extension Association is an independent employer that is governed by an elected Board of Directors with general oversight from Cornell. CCE-Monroe is supported by public and private funding. We acknowledge the County of Monroe as a primary partner.

2019 REVENUE SOURCES
$934,222 TOTAL

![Pie chart showing revenue sources]

- Federal 6%
- State 37%
- Grants/Contracts 15%
- County 26%
- Contributions/Sponsors 2%
- Program Revenue 7%
- Fundraising 7%

CCE Monroe Revenue Comparison 2017-2019

The Foundation, also known as Friends of Extension, is a separate 501(c)(3) established to support the work of CCE-Monroe. This dedicated group seeks to ensure long term sustainability of CCE-Monroe’s impact on Monroe County.

Jim Farr – Chairperson
Rachel Pickering Bonsignore – Co-chair
Gerald Kral
Audry Liao
Dan Scheid
Cornell Cooperative Extension
Monroe County

Staff & Cornell Teams

Executive Director
Andrea Lista

Administration
Sharon Hancock

Agriculture
Jarmila Haseler

4-H Youth Development
Susan Coyle
Michael Dondorfer,
  *AmeriCorps VISTA*
Lori Koenick
Jessica Reid
Michele Schepisi-Ritchie

Horticulture
Elizabeth Berkeley
Theresa Lippa
Susanne Magee

Nutrition – FLESNY
Allison Hyman
Jessica Kouzan
Maggie McHugh
Iluminada Vilca
Michelle Weiler

Cornell Vegetable Program
Robert Hadad

Northwest NY Dairy, Livestock,
Field Crops
Ali Nafchi

Integrated Pest Management
Lynn Braband
Brian Eshenaur

Western Shared Business
Network (WSBN)
Kimberly Amey – HR
Harold Coller – Finance
Donna James – Finance
Jenn Matthews – IT
Christi Smith - IT

2449 St. Paul Boulevard
Rochester, NY 14617
585-753-2550
Monroe.cce.cornell.edu
www.facebook.com/ccemonroe
www.twitter.com/ccemonroe