OUR MISSION

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Nassau County is committed to building healthy lifestyles and healthy communities by conducting educational programs that connect Cornell University resources to community needs for all people in the county.

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MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Dear Cornell Cooperative Extension Supporters, Colleagues and Friends,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Staff and Volunteers of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Nassau County (CCE-NC) we would like to thank you for a very successful 2019! Over the past year, in partnership with professionals in environmental science, horticulture, 4-H youth development, and food/nutrition, as well as dedicated staff, we have had a tremendous impact on many communities across Nassau County. As you peruse this Annual Report you will be able to learn about our unique programs and the success we have enjoyed this past year.

CCE-NC is a unique partnership with Cornell University along with federal, state and local governments. Our support is leveraged from all facets of government to create a dynamic and vibrant educational Association. For over 100 years our mission has been to connect Cornell University resources, research and knowledge directly to residents of Nassau County through world class educational programs. We would like to thank the Nassau County Executive, Nassau County Legislature, Nassau County Department of Parks, Recreation & Museums, Nassau County Office of Youth Services, and many other County Departments for their on-going support. We also would like to thank our other federal, state and local partners. We could not do all of our important work without all of your support!

In 2019 CCE-NC continued to offer quality educational programs at East Meadow Farm (EMF) where we have our diagnostic program, our community farm stand, operate over 60 community gardens and seven “hands-on” demonstration gardens, and host hundreds of Master Gardener Volunteers (MGV’s). At EMF, we also continued our partnership with the US Forest Service/NYS DEC to continue to offer our Community Urban Forestry Program. This past year we also continued to partner with the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYS DAM) contributing to the statewide success (over $20 million in total sales) of the Taste NY initiative. Taste NY promotes local small scale producers and farmers and allows them to showcase their products at our LI Taste NY Market at the LI Welcome Center. This exciting agricultural venture showcases our commitment to the local food economy and sustainable food systems. Our CCE-NC Nutrition Programs, which include ESNY/SNAP-Ed (partnering with CCE-Suffolk and FREE), EFNEP, and Senior Program where we work with over 100 community centers throughout Nassau County, provide hands on nutrition education and recommendations for healthier living. Our ESNY wrapped up in September of 2019. And finally, our commitment to 4-H Youth Development has been unwavering for over 100 years as we continue to operate our Dorothy P. Flint Nassau County 4-H Camp in Riverhead, NY and have expanded our 4-H presence at the LI Fair by operating the 4-H Livestock Pavilion.

In closing, we would like to thank our CCE-NC Board Members, Staff and MGV Volunteers for their on-going support and commitment to our mission. We are grateful for all of your hard work! Our talented and professional CCE-NC staff are the backbone of our Association and their dedication allows us to continue to grow and deliver high impact programs throughout Nassau County. As we begin a new year we look forward to continuing to serve the community that we so proudly call our own and want to say “thank you” to you, our supporters. We truly appreciate your commitment to CCE-NC!

Gregory Sandor
Executive Director

David Rolnick
Board President
Our Community Gardens are a wonderful way to bring horticulture and gardening to a community that may have limited space. The Community Gardens at the East Meadow Farm consist of 60 beds that are leased to schools, families, individuals and community groups. Most gardeners grow produce for their families, and school/youth groups utilize the space to learn about botany, as well as plant and soil science.

At the East Meadow Farm we have various Demonstration Gardens that are maintained by Master Gardeners. Admission is free and they are open every day from dawn to dusk. Our demonstration gardens include a Rose Garden, Dahlia Garden, Pollinator Garden, Herb Garden, Vegetable Garden, Compost Demonstration, Small Space Garden, Mini Arboretum, Fruit and Berry Garden and Cut Flower Garden.

Our Community Farm Stand is run by the CCE-NC Farm Stand Manager and interns with the help of Master Gardener volunteers. Our produce is grown at East Meadow Farm and at our 4-H Camp Farm in Riverhead. Produce is grown using sustainable farming methods without the use of harmful pesticides. East Meadow Farm is deeply rooted in our dedication and commitment to provide the highest quality produce to our customers. The farm stand accepts FMNP coupons, allowing consumers access to affordable nutritious fresh vegetables. The CCE-NC Nutrition Department is on hand at the farm stand to educate the community about the available produce, its nutritional value, and ways to prepare the food they purchase.

The Diagnostic Information Center at East Meadow Farm is a place for residents to get assistance with plants and lawn care, insects, growing fruits and vegetables, and much more. CCE Staff and trained Master Gardeners have assisted with over 840 counter visits, over 230 soil pH tests, and over 890 phone calls. We also receive hundreds of emails requesting horticulture assistance. We have over 1,000 visits to East Meadow Farm on our Farm Stand Days, Family Fun Day, or just residents walking the gardens.
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Our Environmental Preschool Program has entered its third year in the Fall of 2019. Through hands-on experience in a natural setting the children explore the seasonal changes and yearly evolution of the environment around them. During their time at East Meadow Farm they have fun investigating, participating in hands-on activities, reading and growing. Through this class we bring an awareness of the wonders of the natural world.

Our Community Outreach consisted of providing presentations to the community and held more than 240 free Environmental Horticulture Gardening lectures and workshops at East Meadow Farm. More than 1,700 people attended. Staff and Volunteers provided Community Outreach at more than 22 locations, including Fairs and Exhibits, and reached more than 2,200 residents.

Our annual East Meadow Farm Family Fun Day welcomes parents and children to explore the farm, participate in hands on activities, attend educational workshops in a fun setting and grow their interest in horticulture and science.

Our feathered friends are an integral part of East Meadow Farm. We currently have 3 Pekin ducks, 1 Crested Magpie duck and 3 Cinnamon Queen chickens. The chickens and ducks are pasture raised in our demonstration garden. Children and parents delight in their antics. They perform needed chores, eating pests, mulching leaves & compost and tilling soil, not to mention their nutritional egg supply.

Entering its third season, Rudy’s Kitchen continues to be an important part of the community and mission of CCE. Rudy’s is a 1966 Airstream that has been customized as a food truck that resides at East Meadow Farm. The mission of Rudy’s is to source local produce for creating their salads and sandwiches. The menu also includes smoothies, cold brew coffee, drink of the day, and for kids delicious grilled cheese and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. Customers walk the gardens, sit, relax and enjoy good food. Rudy’s has been a big success and has a diverse and dedicated following.

The week of March 18th was designated as NY Agriculture in the Classroom Week, coordinating the thirteenth annual NY Agricultural Literacy Week. This literacy program was offered to second grade students throughout New York State. The book selection this year was On the Farm, At the Market by Brian Karas. Students were taken on the journey from farm to table to understand different aspects of agriculture and learn about niche agriculture and direct to consumer selling. This is a captivating glimpse on what it takes to bring the food we eat to us and how farmer’s markets effect the local economy. Last year over 60,000 students across New York State participated in the New York Agriculture in the Classroom Program. In 2019 CCE-NC read to over 110 classes throughout Nassau County. Once again the program was a phenomenal success for all involved.
At the Manorhaven Preserve, a neglected, invasive-covered greenspace has been replaced by an inviting, educational native garden. Peggy Maslow, President of the North Shore Audubon Society, visited the Manorhaven Preserve and conferred its ‘Certified Bird Friendly Habitat’ award to the LI Native Plant Garden. The garden was evaluated on a number of criteria which included butterfly friendliness, percentage of scrubs and flowers native to the area, natural pruning and other conservation practices. CCE NC Master Gardeners Pat Valente and Barbara Mallon pointed out the native magnolia trees, buttonbush, blueberry bushes, white turtleheads, red cardinal flowers and the very impressive NY Ironweed which were in bloom. This garden continues to show the many benefits that grow when Master Gardeners partner with local villages, community sponsors and volunteers. Impressed by the considerable knowledge and skills offered at East Meadow Farm, the Village of Manorhaven reached out to CCE-Nassau for guidance about the process of becoming a Tree City.

On November 7th, CCE-NC, in conjunction with Cornell University, conducted our second field planting demonstrations at Eisenhower Park of the “in-grass bulb planting machine” that Dr. William Miller and the Cornell Flower Bulb Research Program has been testing. This simple, tractor mounted machine plants bulbs under the sod with minimal disturbance. It lifts the sod, drops bulbs under, and replaces it all in one pass (and with no digging!). It can plant mixtures of bulbs to provide long-lived color blends, or can create swaths of mono-color plantings for bright accents. This kind of planting is unique and is highly appropriate for large commercial or municipal landscapes where color and pollinator-friendly habitats are desired. The machine greatly reduces the labor involved with bulb plantings. There is no bed preparation and no handling of individual bulbs!

The Master Gardener Program at CCE Nassau is designed to both expand the educational level of volunteers with accurate, unbiased horticulture information and to provide the volunteers with an opportunity to share this information with the community. We currently have over 120 Master Gardeners that work and learn in our Demonstration Gardens and volunteer their horticultural expertise throughout Nassau County. Our Master Gardeners volunteered over 6,000 hours. We also provided a new series of Master Gardener meetings and Master Gardener Professional Development for volunteers.
In front of the steps of the Theodore Roosevelt Executive and Legislative Building, Nassau County Executive Laura Curran hosted an official County tree planting ceremony to celebrate Arbor Day. Joined by Nassau County Legislators Ellen Birnbaum, Debra Mulé, and Denise Ford, and members of Nassau County Tree Advisory Board, the County Executive planted a tree and issued an official proclamation to the citizens of Nassau on behalf of the Arbor Day Foundation. The tree planted, a River Birch, was planted in front of the Legislature Building.

In August, East Meadow Farm held tours of our Arboretum and Gold Medal Plant Garden. Visitors had an opportunity to see which trees, shrubs, perennials, vines, groundcovers, grasses, and annuals thrive in the Long Island home landscape. The tours were presented by Master Gardeners and lasted approximately 30-45 minutes.

The Urban Forestry Department at CCE-NC held a series of Urban Forestry Education Workshops in the fall for professionals, municipality staff, garden club members and residents. These informative workshops provided the necessary tools to become stewards of your urban trees. Continuing Education Credits were available. The topics were presented by experts from private tree companies, CCE Suffolk, NYS Parks and the NYS DEC. Some of the workshops offered were: Tree Liability and Laws, with Laura Ayers, Laura Ayers Law; Why Use Pervious Pavement, with Henri B. Hillmann, Tri State Flexi Pave; Intro to Invasive Plants and Trees, with Dr. Jonathan Lehrer, Farmingdale State College; Species Selection and ID, with Vincent Simeone, Planting Fields Arboretum; Management Plans, Tree Assessments, and Urban Forestry Safety and Laws, with Diana Cristiano, USDA and many more.
Dorothy P. Flint 4-H Camp in Riverhead, NY provides unending opportunities for youth to try new things, step out of their comfort zone, find strength in their independence, and explore interests they may not otherwise have opportunity or exposure to outside of our camp setting. Programming is guided by National 4-H Principles, focused on youth development, and skill-building through experiential learning and emergent curriculum models. In short, “learning by doing”!

During the 2019 summer camp season, which offers 8 weeks, our 4-H Farm and Agriculture programs continued to expand our teaching and growing spaces, and successfully incorporated themes of food systems, farm to table, animal science and sustainability through agricultural learning experiences in our every day camp lifestyle.

In 2019 we expanded our livestock education program focusing on chickens, sheep, rabbits and goats. This gives our campers the opportunity to learn hands on. This program is also expanding more into Nassau County with our 4H programming.

We also continued to focus on high quality education programs offering fashion design, sewing and a variety of sports programs. This year we added additional class periods into our camp schedule which ensured that all campers got to partake in many of our staple programs at camp including farm, ODL, archery, arts and crafts, beach and nature.

Our High Ropes Climbing Adventure empowers campers to challenge themselves to complete our high ropes course, with a 35-foot rock climbing and rappelling tower, zip line and platforms, and gain self-awareness and self-confidence as they increase skills that enable success at each station. The tower includes a moveable “vertical playpen” allowing climbers to work in pairs as they improve their teamwork skills to cooperate, communicate, and work together to navigate obstacles and reach the top.

Our Youth Development Programming in the “off-season” has expanded, keeping our 4-H Youth Leaders connected to 4-H programs throughout the school year. Our Youth Leadership Weekend Programming encourages youth leaders to support our camp community by assisting with big tasks on camp grounds that require teamwork (and implement STEAM skills and understanding), trains our leaders to speak publicly with guests and tour visitors through out camp grounds, and practice our hosting skills. Leadership Weekends incorporate many reflective activities, themes and group lessons to encourage growth, self-confidence, and to better prepare our future leaders to improve their skills in a friendly, open-minded atmosphere.
August was filled with preparations for our expanded presence at the 2019 Long Island Fair at Old Bethpage Restoration Village. This year we occupied the entire Livestock Barn, and also set up the ‘Farmer For A Day’ barn which was an interactive exhibit for younger children. Staff from EMF worked closely with the staff from our DPF 4-H Camp, reclaiming and decorating both barns. It was quite an impressive job!

We installed several exhibit booths at one end of the barn, while the other end was populated with a stunning variety of farm animals from DPF 4-H Camp and the Suffolk County Farm.

Our DPF 4-H Camp booth contained an array of animals, reptiles and fish, which delighted the visitors who got to interact with them in a meaningful way under the guidance of our terrific camp staff. In the ‘Farmer For A Day’ barn the little ones got to meander through a beautifully displayed collection of old farm implements, saddlery, and even a lighted observation beehive. The ‘corn table’, constructed by our Camp staff, was a huge hit for children and adults alike—what a thrill for the senses!

The Homemaker’s Council of Nassau County, Inc., generously donates money towards “Camperships” for deserving kids in Nassau County to enjoy the lifetime memories of a camping experience. In addition, there are many other individuals who support our camp with generous donations. Contact us at nassau@cornell.edu to make your tax-deductible donation to help our community’s kids realize their true potential.
FOOD AND NUTRITION

Our Eat Smart New York! (ESNY) And Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) enhance the health of residents by helping them establish healthy eating habits and a physically active lifestyle. We work closely with various community partners to provide education to youth, families, adults and senior citizens.

We provide free nutrition classes for low-income families and youth. By participating in these programs, adults and youth learn how to: plan and cook easy, tasty, healthy meals; use the Nutrition Facts label on food packages to choose healthier foods; drink fewer sweetened beverages; shop smart and save money on food; keep their food safe; and be more physically active. Funding is provided by USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-Ed) and Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).

EFNEP is a community outreach program that currently operates through the 1862 and 1890 Land-Grant Universities (LGUs) in every state, the District of Columbia, and the six U.S. territories – American Samoa, Guam, Micronesia, Northern Marianas, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA/NIFA), EFNEP uses education to support participants’ efforts toward self-sufficiency, nutritional health, and well-being. EFNEP combines hands-on learning, applied science, and program data to ensure program effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability.

Our Senior Nutrition Education Program provides free nutrition presentations for senior citizens at designated senior sites. This program is funded by the Nassau County Office for the Aging.

Our Community Nutrition Education Program provides workshops for youth and adults which are offered at various community locations. A fee is charged for these workshops. We conducted over 20 programs and reached 179 adults and 156 youth.

In 2019 our educators conducted 1,707 classes for 25,010 adults and youth. They participated in one class or a series of classes to increase their knowledge, and develop the skills needed to choose and prepare nutritious foods and be more physically active.

We partnered with over 100 community organizations, some of which are located in the following communities: Elmont, Freeport, Glen Cove, Great Neck, Hempstead, Lawrence, Long Beach, Port Washington, Rockville Centre, Roosevelt, Uniondale, and Westbury.
PROGRAM SUCCESS STORIES

CHILDREN CHANGING THE WAY PARENTS COOK

One issue for children in low income school districts is they often do not have access to healthy foods and snacks. Often parents are unfamiliar with healthy food preparation.

As a result of this education opportunity we provide, we see children teaching their parents.

One school-aged participant had been in previous classes with one of our educators. She stated that her mother was so happy that she was coming home with new and healthy recipes. The student asked if the educator could come to the school weekly.

Prior to this interaction, the student would not always eat what her mother prepared for her. The student told the educator that she and her mother were using the recipes provided in the education session to prepare easy and healthy meals together. The student said that every night she would pick a new recipe that the educator had provided and she and her mother would prepare it together. If there were any leftovers, she would have them as a snack. The student was able to learn, cook and share the healthy recipes with her mother and sister.

GRAINS COME TO LIFE

Including whole grains in the diet can often be challenging for low income families.

For many years, our educators have provided both one-time and series of classes to low-income school districts. We have been working closely with the West Hempstead district for some time teaching cooking skills.

West Hempstead High School participates in the SNAP-Ed program. All classes in grades 9–12 participate in this program with monthly education sessions. As a result of the close work of our educators, the students are now working in the kitchen and sampling the foods they cook. We received pictures from one of the teachers showing the students cooking and sampling white rice and whole grain brown rice. You can see their excitement as they prepare their own foods and taste test them.

CHILDREN REALLY DO PAY ATTENTION

Often children have short attention spans and educators, including those from the classroom, are trying to get the kids to cooperate.

A 13 year-old male participated in a series at his school. Though most of the participants were engaged, this particular boy was very chatty and did not participate in the lessons. He often tried to get others around him to laugh and not pay attention as well. The educator and the staff would try to quiet this group throughout the classes. At the conclusion of the series, this boy was the first to thank the educator. In his thank you note, he stated that he learned that he has to eat vegetables and that he and his mother were now shopping for vegetables in their local market. He also drew a picture of MyPlate and showed all the different vegetables in his garden. This experience of our educators has reinforced that we really do make an impact, even if we can’t see it at the time.
2019 was a very busy year at Taste NY at the Long Island Welcome Center. We had a presence at Family Fun Day at East Meadow Farm, and also at the LI Fair at Old Bethpage Village Restoration. Our booth had many local products that were sampled and sold.

Taste NY at the Long Island Welcome Center had the privilege of hosting Dr. Bruno Xavier, Food Engineer and Processing Authority from the Cornell Food Venture Center, for an incredible workshop on September 11th. The Cornell Food Venture Center applies food science knowledge, expertise, and resources to help food entrepreneurs to succeed when bringing new products to the market. Dr. Xavier shared his knowledge on product development, food safety, and regulatory compliance with local business owners and food entrepreneurs. Cynthia Colón, Program Manager from the Manufacturing & Technology Resource Consortium (MTRC) at Stony Brook University, attended the event and commented, “[Dr. Xavier] is a great speaker and was not only knowledgeable but very personable and engaging.” We want to thank everyone who attended and made the event a success!

As part of the Taste NY mission to promote local agriculture, Taste NY at Penn Station has transformed into a Farmer’s Market. We have introduced new market products such as honey, syrup, pancake mix, grapes, apples, carrots, locally roasted coffee and many other high quality goods produced in our great state. We show pride in showcasing these products which represent several regions throughout New York State, from the North Country to the Finger Lakes, from the Capital District to the Hudson Valley, to New York City and Long Island regions. Our work with the public starts shortly after we open our tent, with customers approaching us and asking questions about our products, and travelers seeking train information or directions to landmarks. The reaction from the local community has been positive, including from vendors, one of which came to Penn Station all the way from upstate NY to check out our operations and to promote us on their popular Instagram Page. Another vendor agreed to do samplings our opening week. By educating the community we serve, and sharing knowledge about our local agriculture, we are planting the seeds for continued economic development and support for our farmers and producers. You know it’s from New York, if its Taste NY.
2019 FUNDING OVERVIEW

Nassau County began its Cooperative Extension program in 1914, pursuant to the Smith-Lever Act and NYS County Law 224, under the auspices of community leaders who formed the first board of directors. For over a century, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Nassau County has been a trusted steward and accessible resource for university research-based information and education with deep local connections to multiple stakeholder constituencies—adept at creating and working in partnerships while making Cornell knowledge, resources and programs useful and readily available, addressing an array of issues of interest and/or concern, typically at little or no direct cost to Nassau County residents.

Federal
- Federal Grants / Contracts .......................................................... $356,751.80
- Smith Lever .............................................................................. 137,348.85
- Total Federal Support ................................................................. $494,100.65

State
- State Grants / Contracts ............................................................ $836,361.76
- State 224 ................................................................................. 61,893.01
- Fringe Benefits ........................................................................ 1,098,974.38
- Total State Support ................................................................. $1,997,229.15

County
- County Appropriation ................................................................. $200,000.00
- County Buildings .................................................................. 90,675.00
- County Agreements / Contracts Federal ................................ 25,322.20
- County Agreements / Contracts County .................................. 55,662.71
- Total County Support ............................................................... $371,659.91

Other
- Other Grants / Contracts ............................................................ $22,571.00
- Contributions ........................................................................... 9,915.10
- Program / Operating Revenues .............................................. 976,638.47
- Total Other Support ................................................................. $1,009,124.57

GRAND TOTAL OF ALL SUPPORT .............................................. $3,872,114.28

2019 Cornell Cooperative Extension of Nassau County programs were made possible via funding from:

- Nassau County Executive and Legislature
- Nassau County Department of Parks, Recreation, and Museums
- Nassau County Department of Health and Human Services
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets
- New York State Office of Temporary Disability and Assistance
- United States Department of Agriculture
- US Forest Service / APHIS

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2019 Nassau County, County Executive
Laura Curran

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#1 Kevan Abrahams #11 Delia DeRiggi-Whitton
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