Dear Friends and Supporters of Cornell Cooperative Extension,

On behalf of the Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Putnam County Board of Directors and staff, we are pleased to present the 2017 Annual Report. This report provides a glimpse into the active role of our staff and volunteers in the community. It illustrates the diversity of our programs, resources and educational experiences. It also spotlights some of the year’s accomplishments and their positive impacts on the local economy, environment and social well-being of Putnam County residents.

For 74 years, Cornell Cooperative Extension has maintained a unique partnership with Putnam County government, linking our residents to the research and knowledge of Cornell University, New York’s land-grant university and a world renowned research institution.

It is our commitment to assist Putnam County government by helping our residents and communities find practical solutions to problems and improve the quality of life. Putnam families, businesses and communities deal with a variety of issues, from simple to complex. Our educational programs and services help our residents respond in a positive manner by providing them with reliable, unbiased, research-based knowledge.

Our slogan, “Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities,” reflects what we do to make Putnam County a better place to live, work and raise a family. In this report you will learn how our community-based education programs respond to local needs:

- Strengthening community capacity & fostering economic vitality
- Protecting and enhancing our environment
- Promoting sustainable agriculture
- Improving individual and community health
- Preparing youth for the future
- Strengthening families
- Providing and enhancing volunteer opportunities

Our professional educators and staff, along with a skilled corps of 328 volunteers, are passionate about what they do and eager to help residents, youth, business people, educators and decision makers in making informed decisions and developing important leadership and life skills. Through our daily efforts, we provide custom-tailored educational experiences that provide opportunities for permanent change. We use a variety of methods to create learning partnerships and disseminate university-based knowledge, including workshops, webinars, publications, mass media, websites, individual consultations, 4-H clubs, youth activities and special events such as the Putnam County 4-H Fair.

Thank you for the continued financial support we have received from Putnam County, New York State and Federal partners, private foundations and community supporters. Our dedicated and knowledgeable staff and volunteers will continue delivering high-impact, results-oriented educational programs and services that meet the needs of Putnam residents and communities as well as state and national goals. We look forward to serving you in 2018.

Sincerely,

Marjorie L. Nichols Keith
Executive Director

Cornell Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities
Mission
Cornell Cooperative Extension puts knowledge to work in pursuit of economic vitality, ecological sustainability and social well-being. We bring local experience and research based solutions together, helping New York State families and communities thrive in our rapidly changing world.

Values
Since 1944, Putnam County's Cornell Cooperative Extension has linked university research, knowledge and experiential learning to the needs and issues facing Putnam County residents. We are committed to the following:

Excellence
We build on individual competence, credibility and integrity to deliver innovative programs of the highest quality.

Responsiveness
We respond in a timely, efficient and resourceful manner.

Collaboration
We optimize resources through partnerships.

Learner-Centered Lifelong Education
We help people adapt to a changing environment.

Results-Oriented Programming
We deliver successful programs that are valued by people.

The Future
We anticipate future needs and develop appropriate funding.

Volunteerism
We respect and depend upon volunteers to multiply program efforts and help provide organizational leadership.

Inclusiveness
We embrace diversity in faculty, staff and learners. We respect diversity of opinion and take pride in the variety of our programming.

Initiatives

Strengthening Community and Economic Vitality
To strengthen the social and economic vitality of communities by helping to create a shared vision of the future and by working with government and other agencies to deliver programs that have significant impact.

Enhancing the Environment
To improve the quality and sustainability of the environment and natural resources by promoting environmental stewardship, sound decision-making and best management practices.

Strengthening Youth and Families
To empower youth and families to reach their fullest potential through 4-H Youth Development. These experiential learning opportunities develop critical life skills, foster civic responsibility and strengthen the community.
Putnam County’s Community and Economic Well-Being Is Dependent Upon a Vibrant Local Economy, Local Job Opportunities, Quality Community and Human Services and Financially Secure Families.

As community builders, Cornell Cooperative Extension educators help create strong, vital, healthy communities. We work with a broad range of participants, including government, business leaders, service-provider professionals and citizens to develop and deliver programs that have significant impact on the social and economic well-being of families, businesses and community organizations.

We Take Leadership Roles in Strengthening Putnam’s Economic Vitality and Community Well-Being.

Our Extension educators provided leadership to promote business development and preserve open space. During the year we served on: the Putnam County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board, implementing the County’s Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan; the Cornell University Sustainable Landscape Commercial Horticulture Program Work Team, providing technical training and assistance to the County’s commercial horticulture industry; the Clearpool Model Forest Steering Committee, to help Putnam landowners understand the shared benefits of properly managed forests; the Cornell Eastern New York Commercial Horticulture Program Administrative Management Group, providing technical training and assistance to the County’s agricultural growers.

We provide leadership and resources to facilitate the delivery of quality, cost-efficient community services that address local needs. During the year we served on committees and boards such as: the Lower Hudson Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM) assisting NYSDEC with strategic management and integrating relevant information to prevent and minimize the harm caused by invasive species; Live Healthy Putnam Coalition assisting the Putnam County Department of Health in their efforts to encourage residents of all ages to eat right and stay fit; and Putnam County Youth Board assisting the Putnam County Youth Bureau in developing and implementing their comprehensive plan for youth services.

We Help Build Stronger and More Vibrant Communities.

The Putnam Community Service Network (PCSN), a Cornell Cooperative Extension program, provides networking opportunities for Putnam County’s nonprofit and public agencies.

The 32nd PCSN Community Awards Breakfast, held in October at the Putnam County Golf Course, had 145 community leaders in attendance and recognized 15 Putnam County organizations, professionals, volunteers and youth for their outstanding service and contributions to improving the quality of life in our local communities throughout the County.

Left: St. John the Evangelist Food Pantry volunteers (center & right) accept the 2017 PCSN Distinguish Service Organization Award presented in recognition of more than 25 years of providing food to the neediest members of the Putnam community.

Right: John Bourges, Coordinator of the Putnam Joseph P. Dwyer Vet2Vet Program, received the Norman Vincent Peale Outstanding Service Award in recognition of his work with Putnam County veterans of all ages and eras of military service.
We help Putnam Residents Make Healthier Food and Lifestyle Choices.

Eat Smart New York - Hudson Valley (ESNY) and Cornell Cooperative Extension expanded their nutrition education and obesity prevention outreach in Putnam, targeting low-income and limited resource individuals, families, youth, schools and communities. The ESNY program collaborates with local organizations to create systematic change through policy, practice and environmental approaches.

ESNY’s bilingual nutrition educator partnered with Green Chimneys, Kent Public Library, Patterson Library and Catholic Charities offering nutrition education experiences in various venues. These sessions emphasize: eating more fruits and vegetables; drinking less sugar-sweetened beverages, exercising more and balancing calories eaten as part of a healthy lifestyle. ESNY continued its outreach in the Village of Brewster offering free bilingual classes on: planning and preparing easy and healthy, good-tasting, low-cost meals and snacks; buying healthier food with your money and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits; reading and understanding food labels; and using less salt, sugar and fat when you cook.

We think of summer vacation as a carefree time for kids. However, when schools close, the meals many low-income children rely on also end. The USDA Summer Food Service Program provides children with healthy meals when school is not in session. ESNY provided assistance to Brewster School District’s Food Service in kick starting a summer meals site, serving free, nutritionally balanced breakfast and lunch - Monday thru Friday– to any child age 18 and younger, at St. Lawrence O'Toole School in the Village of Brewster. The Kent Public Library also offered free summer lunch to children on Monday & Wednesday. ESNY’s nutrition educator introduced healthy eating and nutrition concepts to youth receiving meals and their accompanying adults.

Making a Difference in Putnam County


Cornell Cooperative Extension of Putnam County along with three Putnam school districts - Brewster, Mahopac, and Haldane - participated in a multi-year, multi-state USDA study, in 2014, “Overseeding a Safe, Cost-Effective Practice to Grow Thick, Healthy Sports Fields,” headed by Cornell University’s Turf faculty. The Child Safe Playing Fields Act limits pesticide use on school and daycare center grounds. This applied research study on high-use sports fields demonstrated how repetitive overseeding can create dense, safe playing surfaces without using herbicides to control weeds.

The study culminated with a 2017 “IPM Workshop for Safe Playing Fields: Keeping the Bugs Out on a Budget” hosted by Mahopac School District’s Lakeview School in the lower Hudson Valley region. This all-day field workshop featured Cornell’s Turf Team sharing the research results. The 26 school and park sports turf managers in attendance learned the how-tos of this overseeding technique to improve their playing fields. They also increased their knowledge on: current research on best management practices for sports turf care; identifying and managing turf weeds and insects without using pesticides; IPM strategies for long term prevention of weeds and insects; tick safety; and goose deterrent practices. Our collaboration with this project brought university expertise to Putnam’s school turf managers.
Keep Putnam Farming: High-Tunnels Extend the Growing Season.

High-tunnels are not greenhouses. They are temporary structures placed directly on arable land. Crops are grown in the soil inside the tunnel rather than on benches as in a greenhouse. The structure can be moved to another part of the field when soil or crops necessitate. Farmers use these structures to increase yields of heat-loving produce like tomatoes and peppers and extend the growing season of cold loving greens like lettuce, kale and spinach. The National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offers subsidies for farmers to build high-tunnels on their land. But often once built, farmers are unsure how to best use the structures.

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The Future
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Inclusiveness

Extending the Growing Season with High-Tunnels workshop was held for Putnam County growers, cosponsored with Putnam County Soil and Water, Cornell University’s Eastern NY Commercial Horticulture Program and Vegetable Team NYS Integrated Pest Management, and NRCS presented best practices for extending the growing season, rotating crops, managing diseases, creating an integrated pest management plan and more. But in many ways the 24 growers that attended were the stars, teaching each other and sharing experiences.


Shiitake mushroom growing offers Putnam farmers and woodlot owners an opportunity to generate income from their woodlands and offset land taxes. As part of a NY Farm Viability Institute grant, Cornell Small Farms Program’s Steve Gabriel brought his agroforestry business planning and marketing expertise to Putnam. At a one-day workshop held at Green Chimney’s Clearpool Model Forest, 30 farmers and woodlot owners from the lower Hudson Valley learned about commercially growing woodland-cultivated shiitake mushrooms. Attendees learned the steps for developing this business enterprise including: business planning; strategies for minimizing costs and optimizing efficiency; and aspects of production important to selling mushrooms in New York such as safety, sanitation, marketing and regulations. Participants are eligible to attend advanced trainings and receive one-on-one support. The statewide goal is 150 shiitake growers who see a minimum $10,000 profit from this locally grown product after a four-year training and mentoring period. We offered trainings in 2017 and will continue in 2018 to work with producers to establish this industry in Putnam County and the lower Hudson Valley.

Above: Farmer Sarah Lucas of Yarrow Hollow Farm shows visiting growers how she is using her 96 ft. high-tunnel to extend the growing season.
Right: Woodland cultivated, log-grown shiitake mushrooms.
Cornell Cooperative Extension Volunteers Invest Their Time and Talents to Make Putnam County a Better Place to Live.

In 2017, 328 volunteers, including Board of Directors, Advisory Committees, Master Gardeners, 4-H Leaders, 4-H Fair Committee and special project and event volunteers along with 510 4-H Fair community volunteers provided educational programs and services valued at $499,967.

Above: Master Gardener Volunteer Ed Illiano shows young gardeners how to thin their carrots. MGVs share their experience and enthusiasm with others. That includes vegetable garden know how. These children were proud of their produce!

Master Gardener Volunteers Making a Difference.

You will find our corps of 80 qualified Master Gardener Volunteers (MGVs) at work throughout Putnam County: teaching classes and helping gardeners at Putnam County’s Tilly Foster Community Garden; answering questions and providing unbiased, research-based horticultural and garden information at the Cold Spring Farmers’ Market; teaching classes at libraries, garden clubs and schools; giving environmentally-sound and locally appropriate advice to homeowners on our CCE Horticulture Hotline; assisting with our garden-based learning projects at Camp Herrlich and in the Village of Brewster; organizing summer hikes to educate the public about invasive species; bringing agriculture to Putnam’s classrooms during New York’s Agriculture Literacy week; and much, much more. MGVs help our CCE educators bring Cornell University to all corners of the County, translating the research and science into easy-to-use information for gardeners, homeowners, youth and communities.

4-H Youth Give Back to the Community!

Service learning is a core component of the 4-H youth development experience. In the 4-H pledge, members state that they will strive to use their head, heart, hands and health to improve their club, community, country and world. This year’s 4-H community projects included collecting food for Putnam CAP’s food pantry; coordinating the Giving Tree Project for CoveCare Center—collecting holiday gifts for their clients’ families.

Above: 4-H Teen Action Group members annually coordinate the Giving Tree Project for CoveCare Center—collecting holiday gifts for their clients’ families.

Above: Master Gardener Volunteer Anita Conway assists in our Horticulture Diagnostic Lab identifying pest and plant problems and helping residents choose environmentally sound, integrated pest management methods to controlling insects and plant pathogens on landscape and house plants.

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Enhancing the Environment

**Extension Educators and Master Gardener Volunteers Connect with the People of Putnam County:**

**Natural Resources and the Environment:** Forests, Wetlands, Biodiversity ● Invasive Species ● Agroforestry ● Water Quality ● Climate Change ● Model Forest

**Community Horticulture:** Home Gardening, Landscaping and the Environment ● Gardening for Health ● Family and Youth Gardening ● Seed to Supper ● Seed to Salad

**Master Gardener Volunteers:** Master Gardener Plant Sale ● Speakers Bureau ● Cold Spring Farmers Market ● Brewster Farmers Market ● Demonstration Gardens: Native Plants, Vegetable Gardening and Composting ● Rain Barrel and Composting Classes

**Commercial Horticulture:** International Society of Arboriculture Arborist Training ● Webinars for Landscape and Lawn Care Professionals ● Monthly e-newsletter

**Agriculture:** Small Farms ● Eastern New York Commercial Horticulture Program ● Putnam County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board

**Invasive Species and Land-Use History: Master Gardeners Lead Hikes Towards Better Health**

Using nature as a classroom, Master Gardener Volunteers (MGVs) offered six, free, guided hikes throughout Putnam County for the public. These hikes focus on the history of land-use and introduction of invasive species. Putnam County Department of Health helped to promote these hikes as part of their focus on mental and physical health. CCE Educator Kate Everitt collaborated with state and local agencies to organize each hike, extending our network of partners. When possible, an agency partner also attended the hike, when not, we acknowledged the agency, their roles in our community, the resources they offer and their volunteer opportunities.

For each hike, Master Gardener Volunteer Ed Illiano worked with county and town historians to bring accurate, fascinating and local information on land use patterns and their impacts. On the hikes, participating MGVs introduced the idea of an invasive species and discussed the pathways of introduction. This not only included accidental introduction on hiking and fishing equipment, but also occasional deliberate introduction through agriculture, horticulture and other human disturbances. We wanted the participating hikers to become more aware of the impacts human activities have on the natural resources of Putnam County.

With about 20 attendees per hike (126 total participants, both families and adults), the MGV guided hikes were some of our best-attended programs this year. The main feedback participants shared was that they were more likely to go on hikes but were: new to the county, unsure about going alone, unsure about where to park, or couldn’t find the trailhead. They enjoyed learning about the history of the land-use as well as the accidental and deliberate introduction of invasive species. Making the land-use history and invasive species education an integral part of the walk provides many avenues of learning. The outdoor classroom engages all of the senses and links experience with new knowledge. We also formed new relationships with local organizations and agencies who are eager to host hikes with us in 2018.
Invasive Forest Pest Resources: Collaborating Across Organizations to Reach Volunteers & Green Industry Professionals.

As the impacts of invasive forest pests swept across community boundaries in the northeast, NYS agencies strategized to spread the word and increase pest monitoring by citizens and green industry professionals. These pests impact communities, individuals and businesses, and may irretrievably reshape our natural world, communities and landscapes.

The NYS IPM (Integrated Pest Management) program, through NYS Ag & Markets, spearheaded this project. CCE Putnam participated in gathering, writing and editing resources that can also be used by other CCE county offices and their volunteers. In the lower Hudson Valley, CCE Putnam teamed up with PRISM partners to broaden our reach. Simultaneously, NYS DEC’s forest health division also focused on these invaders, and by cooperating with their foresters and educators, we provided forest pest education regionally and statewide to New York communities and businesses.

Recognizing the many good resources developed by our agency partners, our focus was to create a resource for CCE educators, volunteers and diagnostic labs that answered a few key questions: What are these pests? Where are they currently found? How do you report them? Where can you find more information?

Supplying our educators and volunteers with these reference tools enables them to find timely, evidence-based resources as they answer questions within our community and while staffing our diagnostic lab hotline.

Locally, we hosted two workshops for volunteers (33) and green industry audiences (25), collaborating with Lower Hudson PRISM partners. Using the same materials, CCE educators offered workshops like this across New York State (145 people attended from 38 NYS counties, reported by Dr. Betsy Lamb, NYS IPM).

The co-developed materials formed the core of an Invasive Forest Pest Handbook organized and distributed by NYS IPM to which diagnostic staff can add updated resources as they emerge. For example, Oak Wilt, an invasive pathogen was detected in two more NYS counties: updated information on this pest from the Cornell University Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic and NYS DEC Forest Health can now be added to the resource binders in CCE diagnostic labs across the state. In this digital age, keeping in touch with collaborators helps us all stay on the same "page." Providing green industry professionals and members of the community with updated resources maintains our position as a trusted resource.

Above: Hemlock Woolly Adelgid is one of two invasive insects demolishing hemlocks statewide. The picture above, by Mark Whitmore of Cornell University and the NYS Hemlock initiative, typifies the appearance of an infested branch. Within 3-10 years, an infestation can kill a hemlock, ultimately changing the forests we love.

Below: NYS DEC Forest Health Division’s Rob Cole talks about Southern Pine Beetle, an emerging threat to two–needle and three–needle pines.

Right: Fact sheets like the this form the core of the Forest Pest Handbook, now found in each CCE office in NYS. This handbook guides volunteers and professionals alike to state and federal agency resources where they can check on the pest’s current location and rate of spread.
Community Collaboration at Camp Herrlich: Facilitating Youth as They Explore Vegetable Gardening and Make Healthy Choices.

Addressing Needs: As part of our CCE Putnam program focus on food security, food justice and obesity prevention, we strive to teach more people to grow and prepare vegetables. This year we teamed up with Eat Smart New York Hudson Valley and Department of Health educators to define areas of need within our county. Camp Herrlich serves one of those areas. Why work with children? Children who grow their own vegetables are more likely to eat vegetables. And adults who grew vegetables in their youth are more likely to eat vegetable and to share their growing experience with their children. Vegetable consumption is an indicator in likelihood to maintain a healthy weight.

Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) As part of Putnam County Department of Health’s CHIP goals, we focus countywide on increasing vegetable consumption to improve health (Obesity). Our goal is that through vegetable gardening we will increase children’s familiarity with and willingness to consume vegetables, thus improving lifelong health. Developmentally, we wanted the children to feel confident in their ability to: plant, plan, maintain, harvest and prepare vegetables. We also want them to have a safe space to engage in decision making and observations, to assess problems and come up with creative solutions. And above all we wanted to empower them to take initiative and make decisions.

Freedom to Make Decisions: Youth-Led Collaborative Teams

It’s important for youth to engage in decision making, and to learn from trial and error without a “safety net” of adult decision making. The garden is a great place to make mistakes, makes observations, and learn from those. We used felt fabric shapes so that garden teams could discuss, place and change the locations of plants in their garden. This allowed them time to explore and think through the process and come to a collaborative team decision. We photographed their garden designs and presented each team with a laminated version of their garden layout to work off of when it came time to plant.

What is a Garden to You?

Sometimes words don’t come easily. We felt that it was important to evaluate youth participants’ perceptions of gardening. To set the stage, we used a reflective evaluation, asking students to show us what “garden” meant to them. Some drew us photos of ketchup and of Madison Square Garden. Others drew us detailed scenes of flowers, trees and wildlife, or of neatly planted rows of vegetables. Clearly we had a broad range of perception and interest. But as our program developed, those perceptions changed as did the value and hierarchy of objects in the drawings.
Spring Garden School: A New Twist on Right-Plant/Right-Place.
This year Master Gardener Volunteers led a day-long program on plant communities and how they create habitat which supports wildlife. The program culminated with a hands-on design session where teams of MGVs helped attendees perform a site-assessment on their property by using a property plan and satellite images.

This hands-on peer to peer experience genuinely helped attendees make a first, important step: assessing what types of plants would thrive in their landscapes. MGVs explored online resources with volunteers and uncovered the geology and soils of Putnam County. Participants learned how to build soil, save water, and create habitat landscapes that use fewer inputs, like water or pesticides and landscapes that take less time for upkeep.

Lily Leaf Beetle Biocontrol Study. As part of the statewide effort to control the invasive insect *Lilioceris lilii*, or Lily leaf beetle, we released biocontrol insects (tiny wasps about the size of a gnat.) Teaming up with Cornell’s NYS Integrated Pest Management Horticulture Specialist Brian Eshenaur and Department of Natural Resources Entomologist Mark Whitmore, CCE educators in six locations statewide have released these tiny parasitoid wasps.

As part of this effort, CCE Putnam educator Jen Lerner has spoken to Master Gardener groups in Putnam, Westchester and Dutchess: Over the next 3 years of this study, MGVs throughout the region will cooperate with the insect-rearing lab in Rhode Island to submit samples so we can track the success of the helpful parasitoids. Collaborators statewide will use the materials Jen Lerner has developed as they work with growers, volunteers and the public to help them understand how biocontrol works on this invasive pest. This is a three year funded project and we look forward to our continued collaboration with NYS IPM staff and Natural Resource faculty in the Northeast. Most of all we look forward to controlling this destructive beetle which has destroyed native and managed lilies since its introduction in 1992.

Bee-Friendly Back Yards: Collaboration
As part of our efforts to raise awareness of the plight of native and managed pollinators, we developed and installed interpretive garden signage in our demonstration garden. The signs were part of a collaborative effort with Cornell Plantation’s (now Cornell Botanic Gardens) Sarah Fiorello, interpretation coordinator. We find collaboration to be a great way to connect with other organizations’ volunteers and members and let them know what Cooperative Extension is all about. Along with Putnam County’s Stonecrop Garden, in Cold Spring, we offered a bee-friendly backyards program. With MGVs as docents, attendees walked the gardens and viewed the systematic beds to learn about pollen and nectar resources. The 33 attendees learned why pollinators are important and how they could make their gardens a pollinator paradise.
4-H Helps Youth Make Healthy Choices, Excel in Science and Become Leaders in Their Communities:
Leadership • Agriculture • Video Production • Community Service • Environmental Education • Belonging • Hands-on • Life Skills • Science, Engineering & Technology • Mastery • Citizenship • Public Speaking • Theater • Healthy Lifestyles • Valuing Diversity • Connected to research at Cornell University • Career Exploration • Independence • Youth Empowerment • Real-World Job Skills • Decision Making

4-H Sewing
Putnam County 4-H Youth Development Program held three Learn to Sew Workshop Series in 2017, one in the spring and two in the fall. The spring series, with 12 youth participants, and one of the fall series, with 7 youth participants, focused on basic sewing skills. In both programs, the youth members worked on various projects such as making tote bags and pillow cases, while also working on basic skills that included sewing buttons. The participants were also able to give back to the community by donating all the pillowcases they had made to the Maria Fareri Children’s Hospital. The second fall workshop series was geared to youth with more experience. Participants in the advanced sewing program worked on more advanced sewing skills and regularly worked on the sewing machines, each creating their own dress. All the participants are encouraged to exhibit what they have created at the Putnam County 4-H Fair. In addition to hands-on sewing skills, the youth learned to practice patience and diligence, which is an essential component in all elements of sewing.

Photos: Above: 4-H Putnam member showing her pillow case that was donated to Maria Fareri Children’s Hospital.
Left: 4-H Sewing Project Volunteer Joan Newman assisting member with her project.
Below: 4-H Members showing their pillow case sewing project.
4-H Dog Program
The 4-H Dog Care and Basic Training Series took place in spring of 2017 and had 11 youth participants ages 9 and up. For 8 weeks, the participants took part in hands-on exercises, learning successful dog ownership techniques, general dog care and handling, and basic dog showmanship skills including guidance on competition and other dog sporting fields. Basic dog care training included learning about topics such as dogs’ diets, grooming, health issues to watch out for and dog commands. The 4-H Dog Care program also allowed youth an opportunity to get more involved in other 4-H activities such as the Putnam County 4-H Fair. After the training program, the youth participants had an opportunity to put their new showmanship skills to the test and showcase their dogs in the Dog Show at the Putnam County 4-H Fair, held during the summer in a fun family-friendly environment. Learning basic dog care has been known to help children improve their social skills as well as increasing self-esteem and self-confidence. We expect to offer this program again in the spring of 2018.

Putnam 4-H at the NYS Fair
In August, 2017, seven of our Putnam County 4-H youth members attended the New York State Fair in Syracuse. While at the Fair, our youth took on various leadership roles, such as running STEM activities, managing the 4-H Putnam County Booth, serving as a judge’s assistant, and assisting with horse events. This unique opportunity provided Putnam youth the chance to strengthen their leadership, organization and communication skills.

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Photos: Above: 4-H Putnam Dog Program participant.

Photos: Above: 4-H Putnam members at the NYS Fair.
4-H Clubs—the Core of the 4-H Youth Development Program

The 4-H Youth Development Program serves youth from all backgrounds throughout Putnam County. Boys and girls, ages 5-19, can take part in 4-H clubs, special-interest programs, short-term projects, individual and family learning opportunities and school enrichment programs.

The primary goal of 4-H is to develop citizenship, leadership and life skills in youth through experiential learning opportunities and a positive youth development approach. Today’s 4-H program has three primary initiatives:

- Citizenship
- Healthy living
- Science, engineering, math & technology

In 2017 our 4-H Youth Development Program:
- Served 1,978 Putnam youth.
- Sponsored or participated in over 30 community events and special interest programs including the Putnam County Youth Forum and the 4-H Fishing Clinic.
- 242 adults served as 4-H volunteers.
- 321 adults and 189 youth volunteered at the Putnam County 4-H Fair.
- Supported year round 4-H Clubs and special interest projects including the Tall Oaks 4-H Horse Club, 4-H Media Productions, and the 4-H Junior Vet Science Program.

This unique learn-by-doing model teaches youth essential and transferrable skills that they'll use throughout their lives, such as problem solving, decision making, coping, communicating and responding to the needs of others. In addition to mastering a variety of important life skills, 4-H members connect with caring adults in their community and make friendships that last a lifetime.

4-H Horse Clubs

Putnam County 4-H has two horse clubs, Dusty Stables Crew 4-H Club in Putnam Valley and Tall Oaks 4-H Horse Club in Brewster. Dusty Stables Crew has members of ages 5-19 and Tall Oaks Horse Club has members aging from 9-19. These groups both learn barn management, basic health/horse care, equine science, proper grooming techniques and more. Club members not only benefit from learning these diverse skills and topics, but they also gain confidence and self-esteem. Our 4-H horse clubs allow our youth to get the hands on life experience they might need in the future.
4-H is a positive youth development program that empowers young people to reach their full potential. Putnam County 4-H’ers are becoming leaders in our community today. Through hands-on learning, research-based 4-H youth programs and adult mentorship, the Putnam County 4-H members in 4-H clubs, classroom clubs and after school programs are committed to their extra curricular educational experience, benefitting all of us in Putnam County.

National 4-H Science Challenge

4-H National Youth Science Day (NYS), took place on October 4, 2017. NYS is the world’s largest youth-led science day. Putnam County’s 4-H youth participated in this day of science by engaging in various hands-on activities including a GPS Scavenger Hunt, making their own stress ball, and learning about pollinators through several hands-on crafts. The NYS provides an opportunity for our youth to learn more about science and the world surrounding them.

4-H Face Painting

The 4-H Face Painting Club teaches Putnam County youth, ages 11 and up, basic face painting skills and skills on how to properly work with young children. This club provides a unique opportunity to showcase 4-H in the community. In 2017, the club provided face-painting at the Carmel Street Fair, the Carmel Civic Association Halloween Party, the Putnam County 4-H Fair and more. Their presence at these events helps to not only promote the Putnam County 4-H Youth Development Program but serves to enhance the youths’ sense of civic responsibility and leadership.

Above: Members of the Putnam County 4-H Youth Development Program engaging in hand-on Science Day Projects.
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Putnam County is funded by annual appropriations from County, State and Federal governments. Grants, contracts, program participation fees and private contributions leverage our core government funding.

This funding partnership provides an educational system that links our County residents, businesses, and communities with Cornell University and the nationwide land-grant university system of research and education.

Our Putnam County funding is essential to maintaining this unique Cooperative Extension partnership between the County, State, and Federal governments and Cornell University, which is New York’s land-grant university.

Our core governmental funding is further leveraged by the loyalty and hard work of a dedicated corps of skilled volunteers helping to make Putnam County a better place to live and work.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Putnam County is a subordinate government agency with an educational mission that operates under a form of organization and administration approved by Cornell University as agent for the State of New York. It is tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
Collaboration and Partnerships

Working together to build strong healthy families and communities while enhancing Putnam County’s social well-being, economic vitality and natural resources.

Brewster-Carmel Garden Club
Brewster Central School District
Brewster Elks Lodge #2101
Brewster Public Library
Brook Farm Veterinary Center
Camp Herrlich
Carmel Central School District
Carmel Fire Department
Cold Spring Farmers’ Market
Comcast
Cornell Cooperative Extension Associations in the Hudson Valley
Cornell University - Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research
Cornell University College of Agriculture & Life Sciences:
  Department of Natural Resources
  Department of Horticulture
  Garden Based Learning @ Cornell University
  Lab of Ornithology
  NYS Integrated Pest Management Program
  Urban Horticulture Institute
  Eastern NY Commercial Horticultural Program
CoveCare Center
Drug Crisis in Our Backyard
Eat Smart NY
Greater Mahopac-Carmel Chamber of Commerce
Green Chimneys Children’s Services
Green Chimneys Clearpool Campus
Green Chimneys Clearpool Campus Model Forest
Haldane Central School District
Hamlet of Carmel Civic Association
Hudson Highlands Land Trust
Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union
iMap Invasives
International Society of Arboriculture
Jack Stewart Jr. Memorial Fund
Kent Public Library
Live Healthy Putnam Coalition
Lower Hudson PRISM
Mahopac Central School District
Mahopac Garden Club
Mahopac Public Library
New York/New Jersey Trail Conference
NYC Department of Environment Protection
NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets
NYS Association of Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H Educators
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
NYS 4-H Shooting Sports Program
NYS Agriculture in the Classroom
NYS Office of Children and Family Services
NYS Turf and Landscape Association
Northfork Stables
Oasis Sportsmen’s Club
Patterson Library
Pied Piper Pony Rides & Petting Zoo
Putnam ARC
Putnam Community Action Program
Putnam County
  Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board
  Bureau of Emergency Services
  Child Advocacy Center
  Department of Consumer Affairs
  Department of Health
  Employee Wellness Committee
  Highways & Facilities
  Mental Health Services
  Office for People with Disabilities
  Office for Senior Resources
  Sheriff’s Department
  Veterans Memorial Park
  Youth Bureau
Putnam County Economic Development Corporation
Putnam County Federation of Sportsmen
Putnam County Housing Corporation
Putnam County Soil & Water Conservation District
Putnam Fish and Game
Putnam Hospital Center
Putnam Valley Central School District
Putnam Valley Grange
Rotary Club of Carmel
South Putnam Animal Hospital
Studio Cultural Arts Coalition
Teatown Lake Reservation
The Prevention Council of Putnam
The Longview School
Tractor Supply Company
Trained by Teresa
Watershed Agricultural Council
The Association

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