Cornell Cooperative Extension
Putnam County

2018 Annual Report

Strengthening Community and Economic Vitality
Enhancing the Environment
Strengthening Youth and Families
Dear Friends and Supporters of Cornell Cooperative Extension,

The Cornell Cooperative Extension of Putnam County Board of Directors and staff are proud to present the 2018 Annual Report which provides a quick tour of the year’s educational programs and their positive impacts on the local economy, environment and social well-being of Putnam County residents.

Since 1944, Cornell Cooperative Extension has maintained a strong and 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.

While Putnam County has undergone dramatic changes over the decades, our mission and commitment to assist Putnam County government by helping our residents and communities find practical solutions to problems and improve the quality of life remains the same. Putnam families, businesses and communities deal with a variety of issues, from simple to complex. Our educational programs and services continually evolve in response to their changing needs by providing up-to-date, 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 by:

- 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 339 volunteers, readily and diligently 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 and evidence-based 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.

We are very appreciative of the financial support received from our Putnam County, New York State and Federal partners, private foundations and community supporters. Our knowledgeable and experienced staff and volunteers will continue to deliver high-impact, results-oriented educational programs and services that meet the needs of Putnam residents and communities as well as state and national goals. As my Cornell Cooperative Extension career draws to a close, I am grateful for the opportunity to work alongside this extremely dedicated staff and corps of volunteers. Cornell Cooperative Extension looks forward to serving our residents and communities and having a positive impact on Putnam living in 2019.

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:

**COLLABORATION**
We work toward common goals developed from shared commitments and responsibility. We share power, ensure equity, and are accountable to shared values and principles.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**
We commit to build and sustain systems, relationships, and decision-making processes to ensure that CCE programs are shaped by diverse community engagement, which address the needs of local communities through application of Cornell research.

**CREDIBILITY**
We commit to science and research-based knowledge to address the challenges facing the people of New York State. We democratically evaluate our approaches and impact and respond to changing needs and demographics.

**DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**
We commit to build and sustain an organization that welcomes and supports diverse program participants, volunteers, and staff at all levels.

**PARTNERSHIP**
We develop and sustain partnerships as a core to Extension education that are based on mutual trust, empathy, equity and shared values. We develop programs by utilizing the knowledge and wisdom of community and university partners.

**VOLUNTEERISM**
We believe that volunteers commit to a noble outcome for a great reward and therefore, we provide a path for personal development and fulfillment of volunteers, including volunteer educators, board members, community supporters, collaborators, professionals and faculty.

**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.
Strengthening Community and Economic Vitality

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 and 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 provide leadership and resources to facilitate the delivery of quality, cost-efficient services that address local needs. We serve in community leadership roles 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 improve the health of Putnam residents and prevent chronic disease; and Putnam County Youth Board assisting the Putnam County Youth Bureau in developing and implementing their comprehensive plan for youth services.

We’re helping expand Putnam’s economy. Our educators provide leadership for promoting agriculture, business development and preserve open space. They serve on: the Putnam County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board, implementing the County’s Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan; the Cornell Eastern New York Commercial Horticulture Program Administrative Management Group, providing technical training and assistance to the County’s agricultural producers; the Cornell University Sustainable Landscape Commercial Horticulture Program Work Team, providing technical training and assistance to the County’s commercial green industry; the Clearpool Model Forest Steering Committee, helping landowners understand the shared benefits of well managed forests; the Putnam County Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors, fostering business development, retention and expansion.

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 33rd PCSN Community Awards Breakfast, held in October at the Putnam County Golf Course, brought 150 nonprofit, government and business leaders together and recognized 22 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: The Putnam County Children’s Committee accept the 2018 PCSN Distinguished Service Organization Award presented in recognition of their 100 years of providing for Putnam’s children in need to ensure their health, safety and well-being.

Right: Judith Marano (right) received the Norman Vincent Peale Outstanding Service Award in recognition of her leadership, dedication and passion to the programs and activities of the Town of Southeast Cultural Arts Coalition, contributing to the cultural rebirth of the Village of Brewster.
Eat Smart New York Hudson Valley
Eat Smart New York Hudson Valley (ESNY) is the nutrition education and obesity-prevention component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Eat Smart New York provides nutrition education and obesity prevention interventions for low-income people who are eligible for SNAP or other means-tested Federal assistance programs. Our activities are evidence-based and delivered through comprehensive multi-level interventions, including behaviorally-focused direct and indirect education, policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change strategies and social marketing tactics. Our priority messages include: Fill up on Fruits and Vegetables, Sip Smarter, Drink Water and Move More.

Through partners and collaborations, we reached nearly 200 residents (89 residents through direct education, and 117 through indirect education) in Putnam County in 2018.

ESNY worked with the Patterson Library and the CCE of Putnam County Master Gardener Volunteer program to provide programming about harvesting and preparing seasonal vegetables alongside a nutrition education lesson that emphasized our Fill up on Fruits and Vegetables message.

In terms of youth programming, the Kent Public Library was a site for various afterschool programs where the Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) curriculum was utilized to bring hands-on nutrition education, snack preparation and physical activity to youth of various age groups. As the host of the only summer feeding program in the county, the library also took a step forward by adopting an environmental change, hosting a Summer Meals kickoff event in the month of July. This outreach event was designed to bring awareness of the program to local families with young children.

The Catholic Charities agency, in the Village of Brewster, continues to open its door to ESNY bilingual programming with a primary focus on women participants through their kinship circles. Through various lessons and hands-on activities, the women learned to include more fruits and vegetables in their family’s diet, how to reduce sugar sweetened beverages and the importance of daily movement. The hope here is that they will, in turn, share this message with other women to improve their community’s health.

NYS Excellence in Integrated Pest Management Award
A 14-year veteran of Putnam County, Jen Lerner’s work as an invasive species educator, pollinator advocate and turfgrass researcher has demonstrated her commitment, enthusiasm and mastery of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) tools and tactics. Promoting IPM through education, demonstrations and inclusive programs, she has empowered her community with effective, science-based techniques.

“Jennifer Lerner’s willingness and enthusiasm for extending information to her region is legendary,” says Dr. Elizabeth Lamb, Cornell University’s IPM Ornamentals coordinator. “She’s a gem.”

A stalwart champion of bees and the native plants they depend on, Lerner so inspired Cornell Cooperative Extension’s Master Gardener Volunteers from her advanced pollinators classes that they took what they learned and passed it on to over 530 community members at farmers’ markets and county fairs. Under her guidance, these volunteers created a special section—“Beauty and the Bees”—at the Master Gardeners’ annual plant sale. This section, now three years old, dwarfs the inventory of non-natives plants offered for sale.

Lerner also manages a demonstration pollinator garden located beside the Putnam County Department of Motor Vehicles, which attracts hundreds of patrons day in and out. “Jen has been an important influence in promoting native plants,” says Janis Butler, Cornell Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Volunteer. “Whether it’s through engaging lectures, newsletter articles or in-person demonstrations, she illustrates the importance of planting natives wherever possible.” Lerner received her award on November 14 at Cornell Cooperative Extension’s yearly in-service training in Ithaca, NY. Learn more about Integrated Pest Management at nysipm.cornell.edu.
Welcome New Master Gardener Volunteers

We are so excited to have 14 new Master Gardener Volunteers join the ranks in Putnam County this year—welcome! Each volunteer completed a 10-week training with Cooperative Extension Educators. Members hail from throughout Putnam County and bring diverse skills to the team. They are eager and ready to get their hands dirty in all things gardening and environment. Their interests include growing microgreens in your home, lakeshore buffer planting, teaching children about gardening and much more. Look for them as they begin to serve Putnam County in their new role as Master Gardener Volunteers.

Farmers & Woodlot Owners Take Part in the NY Farm Viability Shiitake Enterprise Project

Research and development at Cornell over the past decade, along with several partnerships and research projects, has enabled greater understanding of the technical and business aspects of a small farm log-grown shiitake enterprise. Woodland log-grown mushrooms are a relatively new, niche crop and are a low-input, high output enterprise that can also offset land taxes.

As part of a New York Farm Viability Institute grant, State and county CCE educators took farmers and woodlot owners through the steps of building a shiitake business. The enterprise program included in-person trainings at the Clearpool Model Forest (Kent) as well as ongoing webinars and a growers Listserv. Educator Jen Lerner, and Columbia/Green educators Marilynn Wyman and Tracy Erin Testo brought the Watershed Agricultural Council on board. Collaboratively they leveraged resources to reach landowners throughout the New York City watershed. Building a viable farm enterprise requires two major parts: the technical aspects of how to successfully produce shiitake mushrooms, and the business planning aspects including marketing, budgeting and legal requirements.

Over the two year program window, we trained approximately 60 farmers and woodlot owners in Putnam and nearby counties. Attendees went home with an electronic packet of farm and profit/costs spreadsheets. Steve Gabriel, with the Cornell Small Farms Program, continued to work with growers and the Farm Bureau to address legislative and food preparation issues.

The growers Listserv remains an active collaboration nexus where growers can share their experience, problem solving solutions and marketing ideas. Training videos and subsequent hands-on classes introduced growers to the mechanics of log inoculation and laying yard management.

Above: Shiitake logs stacked in a “laying yard.” They will rest here for about a year before producing mushrooms and will continue to fruit for about six years.
Cornell Cooperative Extension Volunteers Invest Their Time and Talents to Make Putnam County a Better Place to Live

In 2018, 339 volunteers, including Board of Directors, Advisory Committees, Master Gardeners, 4-H Leaders, 4-H Fair Committee and special project and event volunteers along with 480 4-H Fair community volunteers provided educational programs and services valued at $599,221.

4-H Youth Making a Difference in the Community

The goal of the Putnam County 4-H program is to offer a collaborative environment where diverse youth and adults are empowered to live up to their potential and meaningfully contribute to their communities. Each year, 4-H Members give back to their community by organizing and taking part in a variety of service learning programs including collecting food for Putnam CAP’s food pantry; providing face painting and children’s activities for the Putnam County Children’s Expo & Safety Fair sponsored by the Child Advocacy Center; making cards for veterans and Blythedale Children’s Hospital, coordinating the 4-H Giving Tree Project for CoveCare Center, community clean-ups in Philipstown, volunteering at the Putnam County 4-H Fair as well as other community events throughout the county, filming community events for viewing on Comcast’s public access channel, and more.

Participation in community service allows youth to develop and enhance valuable life skills including leadership and organizational skills. Community service opportunities also foster civic responsibility and provide youth with real world experience in a variety of career fields.

Master Gardener Volunteers Make an Impact

Eighty enthusiastic Master Gardener Volunteers (MGV) served 3,251 hours in Putnam County. 2018 marks the 37th year of the MGV program in Putnam County.

 MGVs provide science-based horticultural and environmental advice to residents through their Speaker’s Bureau talks at libraries, garden clubs and schools; giving hands-on instruction at demonstration gardens at Tilly Foster Community Garden, The Garden Around the Corner in Brewster and the vegetable and pollinator gardens at the CCE office; the Horticulture Hotline and Diagnostic Lab taking calls, walk-ins and emails from residents who need an insect identified or advice on what plant to put in their shady yard; bringing Putnam-friendly plants to their May Plant Sale and 4-H Fair Plant Sale for you to add to your garden; and so much more!
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 Sales ● Speakers Bureau ● Cold Spring Farmers Market ● Horticulture Hotline ● Demonstration Gardens: Pollinator Support, Native Plants, Vegetable Gardening and Composting

Commercial Horticulture: International Society of Arboriculture Arborist Training ● Trainings for Turf and Landscape Professionals ● Diagnostic Services

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

Teaching Landowners and Youth to Grow Shiitake Mushrooms

Growing and harvesting forest products like shiitake mushrooms help land-owners defray taxes and that means they are more likely to keep their land forested. While some may gradually harvest renewable resources like firewood or saw timber, others may look for a tastier option. Log-grown shiitake mushrooms are a emerging New York State product.

Jen and Matt created a four-year timeline to slowly ramp up shiitake production to 100 logs. Part of the proposal relied on the help and experience of Master Gardener Volunteers (MGVs) and Clearpool education staff both with the workshops and in the laying yard. Together with volunteer and staff help, Jen and Matt cleared space for a laying yard (where shiitake logs are rested and harvested). The intent is to build facilitation expertise and capacity within our two Putnam County based programs. In 2018, two MGVs assisted attendees (41) at two hands-on workshops. Our plan calls for two workshops each year for the next two years.

Another part of the proposal included youth education. The Green Chimneys Clearpool Model Forest is also an outdoor education camp and school for children with special needs. As Jen and Matt set up the laying yard, they created the space with teaching in mind. There is a lot to learn from fungi, and Matt is able to teach science, math and record keeping as this small enterprise grows. The school also manages a small farm stand on Green Chimneys’ Brewster campus where they intend to sell the dried shiitake.

There is no instant gratification with shiitake logs. After inoculation fruiting can take up to a year, though a single log may remain productive for up to six years. Yes, it was fun. Now, will it turn a profit? The students will have to tell us.
Innovation: Taking Pollinators into the Digital World

We are glued to our screens. According to the Pew Research Center (Pew, Social Media Use, 2018) 75% percent of US adults and 95% of 18- to 24-year-olds watch YouTube videos. Recognizing this growing trend, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Putnam County created a 360° interactive video experience that leads virtual visitors through the pollinator garden at our CCE Putnam office via mobile device, computer, or 360° viewer. This tour includes interactive “stopping points” that highlight Integrated Pest Management and pollinator support concepts.

We have added another dimension of innovation and capacity to current virtual learning experiences. CCE educators and Master Gardener Volunteers worked collaboratively with 4-H youth in the Media Production Club, each bringing their skills together in an intergenerational learning environment. Tapping the proven record of accomplishment and video-editing expertise of the long-running 4-H club (20 years), we paired those with the content expertise of CCE educators and MGVs.

People engage with science-related social media posts when they focus on visuals, contain little additional information or include “a call to action.” Stopping points include short IPM and pollinator protection messages, and a “call to action” with specific steps people can take to support pollinators in their landscapes, gardens and parks. The link to this video will be shared with NYS IPM and other CCE associations statewide. The virtual tour can be used in school settings to introduce youth to pollinator concepts in an engaging digital format. Additionally, Jen Lerner foresees evolving uses of this technology for future projects that can include local history, land use and invasive species education.

Lily Leaf Beetle Biocontrol Study: a Growing Success

As part of a 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) in 2017. In 2018, Putnam County saw the first successes with a locally reproducing population. 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 so that they can spread through NYS.

As part of this effort, CCE Putnam educator Jen Lerner has spoken to Master Gardener groups and Garden Clubs in Putnam, Westchester, Dutchess and Orange counties. Collaborators statewide will use the materials developed by Jen as they work with growers, volunteers and the public to help them understand how biocontrol works on this invasive pest. 2019 marks the last year of this three-year funded project and we look forward to our continued collaboration with NYS IPM staff and Natural Resource faculty. After that, we hope to continue to provide a safe haven for this tiny insect ally so that it can slowly spread to lilies throughout the region. Most of all we look forward to a time when growers and gardeners alike can once again grow beautiful lilies.

Above: This projection provides the base layer to an experience seen “in the round” Photo: 4-H Media Productions Club youth.

Above: Our native black swallowtail butterfly is seen here enjoying nectar from an Asiatic lily. The invasive Lily Leaf Beetle, *Lilioceris lilii*, devours and kills both native and imported lilies. Photo by Ginger Lefurgy
Encouraging Health and Building Community Through Vegetable Gardening: NYS “Seed to Supper”

Putnam County continues its dedication to food security and food systems education through a number of programs in 2018. Food insecurity affects 12.6% of New York’s population, and “Seed to Supper” is designed to teach participants how to grow their own vegetables on a budget and in small spaces. We believe that everyone who wants to garden should be able to, and that it can be a source of joy, health, and relationship building. The Village of Brewster is the most densely populated municipality in Putnam County, and approximately 55.98% of the population is Hispanic, compared to a 14.3% county average. Many of the residents have immigrated here in recent years, and face an English language barrier. CCE Putnam was committed to holding a successful program in Brewster and overcoming the language barrier to serve the community.

CCE educators, Jen Lerner and Becca Ligrani, and MGV Anita Conway, traveled to Geneva, NY in March for a daylong training in preparation to teach “Seed to Supper,” With that under their belts, they returned to Putnam County and shared their gleanings with the rest of the team. CCE Putnam forged strong community partnerships through the implementation of “Seed to Supper.” The Town of Southeast Cultural Arts Coalition is the garden host at Studio Around the Corner and provides the classroom space and financial support for class materials for this multidimensional program. In addition to this important partner, four Westchester Community College Kathryn W. Davis Global Scholars assisted in the program facilitation, delivering classes with youth and helping non-English speaking participants navigate the course.

MGVs taught four classes in a combined lecture and hands-on format. Community volunteers assisted in preparing the garden beds and planting mixed vegetables in the Garden Around the Corner. MGVs and Kathryn Davis Scholars led children’s activities while parents were in the “Seed to Supper” classes. Children started seeds and built a vertical trellis for the garden. At the culmination of the course, each participant planted a patio tomato container garden to bring home. The objectives of this course were to raise awareness of food security in our community and to teach new gardeners how to be successful on a small budget. Master Food Preserver, Stephen Nocera (left), taught a harvesting and cooking class in the garden using produce harvested that morning.

Master Gardener Volunteers and CCE educators engaged 20 residents in the “Seed to Supper” course, and six additional community volunteers to tend to the garden. Volunteers donated 115 pounds of fresh produce to the Community Action Partnership food pantry in the Village of Brewster. Some quotes from participants include: “This course has helped me connect with others in my community.”, “This course has given me new gardening information and knowledge that I can put to use.”, and “I plan to grow some of my own food this season.” In the end, the “Seed to Supper” program confirmed our belief that gardening is a source of joy, health and relationships. The participants are not the only ones who benefitted; volunteers and educators alike felt a strong sense of community and purpose in being a part of this project.

Above:  “Seed to Supper” participants harvest beans in the Garden Around the Corner.

Above:  Master Gardener Volunteer, Stephen Nocera, teaches a cooking class in the Garden Around the Corner.

Above:  Children attendees loved their seed starting activities.
**Cold Spring Farmers’ Market**

MGVs staff a monthly informational table at the Cold Spring Farmers’ Market, answering gardening questions, promoting CCE and building relationships with the community. MGVs say that market-goers look for them and know they are a reliable resource. This year, MGVs had a theme to their table each month, with an expert on site to talk about topics including seed starting, composting, fall garden clean-up and more. MGVs shared information with over 300 people at the market. Come visit us in Cold Spring!

Left: MGVs (L-R) Karen Ertl, Janis Butler, Sheila Navarra, and Christine Ng-Yow representing CCE Putnam at the Cold Spring Farmers’ Market. Photo provided by the Cold Spring Farmers’ Market.

**Health, Culture, and Science for Youth**

CCE educators and MGVs led several garden-based programs for youth, exposing them to concepts beyond gardening how-to. At Camp Herrlich, CCE educators and MGVs helped campers plan their own salad gardens, plant the seeds and take care of their plants. Then, we celebrated their success with a salad party, where kids tried new vegetables and loved making their own salad dressings. We asked the youth to draw pictures of what gardening meant to them before and after the program.

Above: Youth drawings indicate an understanding of plant biology and identity as a gardener.

At the Patterson Library, we offered a three-session program based on the delightful book, “The Three Sisters: Exploring an Iroquois Garden.” These sessions incorporated elements of history, gardening, healthy food choices and food preparation. Youth participants planted a three-sisters garden which included beans, corn and squash: staple foods of the Iroquois. Eat Smart NY SNAP educator, Bintou Hinds, and Master Gardener Volunteer, Susan Newman, joined us for the final session where youth made a fresh corn and bean salad, roasted squash and of course popped popcorn!

Above: Youth participants prepare salads from vegetables just harvested from their gardens at Camp Herrlich.
Strengthening Youth and Families

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

Tropical Fish & Aquatic Plants 4-H Program
In the Spring of 2018, the Putnam County 4-H Youth Development Program developed and participated in a Tropical Fish and Aquatic Plants 4-H Program in partnership with the Danbury Area Aquarium Society.

Eleven youth and their parents took part in a ten-week educational program, exploring topics such as biology, chemistry and environmental science. Each of the participants were given a starter fish tank, filters, lights, plants, rocks and, of course, fish. Volunteer instructors from the Danbury Area Aquarium Society worked weekly with the youth and their families to teach them a variety of tropical fish species and aquatic plants. Participants also learned how to analyze water samples, set up a fish tank, operate and clean their tank filters and care for fish. In addition, the participants discussed responsibility and respect for nature and living creatures. The youth participants and their families were also invited to attend regular meetings with the Danbury Area Aquarium Society, where they were given an opportunity to take part in special educational presentations.

In the final weeks of the program, each participant was asked to create an educational poster about a specific fish and give a short presentation to the group about what they had learned.

The program culminated in the posters being compiled as part of a larger display that was entered as an educational project at the Putnam County 4-H Fair. The members of the Danbury Area Aquarium Society designed and built a large exhibit, consisting of nine, one gallon tanks filled with the fish that the youth had been asked to report on.

Throughout the fair, both the youth participants and Danbury Area Aquarium Society members gave hands-on, mini demonstrations and talks about how to create and care for these mini-ecosystems. More than 20,000 fairgoers had an opportunity to learn about home aquariums during the 4-H showcase.
Putnam County Youth Forum

Many agencies seek an “active youth voice” when planning, carrying out and evaluating youth programs. Youth input is a valuable tool in creating positive, meaningful experiences for youth that goes beyond token participation in a program. The Putnam County Youth Forum provides an opportunity for youth to contribute their ideas, skills and leadership on a number of topics.

This annual event, now in its 25th year is co-sponsored by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Putnam County’s 4-H Youth Development Program and the Putnam County Youth Bureau. It is an all day educational event arranged by teens for teens, with over 130 high school students attending in 2018. The Planning Committee, which is comprised of high school students from each of the county high schools, selects the topics of the workshops as well as the workshop facilitators. The committee members take an active role in determining the format of the event and provide leadership during the event. Topics such as Family Stress, Teen Addictions, Healthy Life Styles and How to Survive Your 1st Year of College are always popular. Students from all Putnam County high schools are invited to attend as well as Putnam resident students who attend high schools outside of the county.

The Forum’s teen planners experience a real sense of accomplishment from developing such a unique event for their peers. In addition, by being involved in every part of the planning process, teen planners are able to enhance their organizational and leadership skills.

Putnam County 4-H Fair

The Putnam County 4-H Fair is the highlight every year for both our volunteers and the community. July 2018 marked our 47th Annual Fair. This year’s fair was attended by more than 22,000 people from around Putnam, Westchester, Dutchess and Fairfield Counties, and was a jam-packed three days of country-style, family fun. Year after year, 4-H members and their parents, 4-H alumni and leaders, Master Gardener and CCE volunteers, along with Fair Committee members work tirelessly alongside our staff and interns to make an unforgettable family-friendly weekend right here in Putnam County. Starting in late spring, our 4-H teens are hard at work in the CCE office, at the fairgrounds and all around the county, making everything ready for the Fair.

The 4-H Fair is also a celebration of all of the work our amazing youth volunteers do year-round throughout the Putnam community. As in previous years, the 2018 Fair featured a series of animal shows and exhibitions. Youth from around the Putnam area showed their farm animals, rabbits, dogs and other furry friends and were judged in different showmanship categories. Teens from the 4-H Teen Action Group and other 4-H clubs helped to staff different parts of the fair, including refreshments, logistics, animal shows, crafts and the always-popular face painting tent. The 4-H Media Productions Group again hosted a high-tech booth with a green screen in the main Exhibition Building. Budding artists, scientists, cooks and crafters also submitted their work to be judged and displayed. All of these young people are already community leaders at such a young age and are dedicated to making our community more welcoming, friendly and vibrant.

Photos: Members of the 2018 Youth Forum Planning Committee.

Photo: Above 4-H Member proudly displaying her ribbons from The 4-H Fair!
4-H Clubs—the Core of the 4-H Youth Development Program

For decades, Putnam 4-H has created a space where youth can participate in enriching activities that allow them to explore their individual interests and form lasting friendships. The 4-H program offers a variety of programs for youth aged 5 to 19, which include clubs and societies based around a particular special interest, community service opportunities and educational trips and events.

Each year, approximately 2000 young people take part in 4-H activities in our county. We believe in the power of youth to change the world, starting right here at home.

The primary goals of 4-H are to develop citizenship, leadership and life skills in youth, specifically 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 and technology

In 2018 our 4-H Youth Development Program:

- Served 1,828 Putnam youth.
- Sponsored or participated in over 32 community events and special interest programs including the Putnam County Youth Forum and the 4-H Fishing Clinic.
- Had 212 adults serve as 4-H volunteers.
- Had 322 adults and 158 youth volunteer at the Putnam County 4-H Fair.
- Supported year round 4-H Clubs and special interest projects including 4-H Media Productions, the 4-H Basic Dog Obedience Series and the 4-H Jr. Vet Program.

One of the joys of the 4-H program is its flexible model of community-driven programming. With the help of talented, dedicated adult volunteers, 4-H youth can form clubs and activities around any area of interest they may have. Our ever-growing list of clubs focuses on topics as varied as horses, film and media production, teen leadership, insects and sewing. These clubs form the backbone of the 4-H program and help support the planning and execution of the annual 4-H Fair, a family-friendly event attended by thousands of Putnam and other local residents.

4-H Jr Vet Program

Approximately 30 Putnam County youth are given the opportunity annually to explore the broad scope of veterinary medicine and animal science by shadowing local veterinarians. This seven-week series explores basic pet care, animal biology and physiology, and the veterinary profession. Participants of this program acquire insights that contribute directly to their education and career planning. Furthermore, this unique program offers opportunities for youth to explore STEM related occupations and connects them to mentors in the veterinary field. 4-H Jr. Veterinary participants leave the program with an increased passion for pursuing their aspirations of working with animals. The series culminates with a field trip to a local horse farm, where participants learn basic equine veterinary care including grooming, feeding and how to take the temperature of a horse.

This program is offered twice annually in partnership with South Putnam Animal Hospital (Mahopac), Pawling Animal Clinic (Pawling), Trained by Teresa (Dog Trainer, Mahopac), Companion Pet Hospital (Carmel), Brook Farm Veterinary (Patterson) and North Fork Horse Stables (Putnam Valley).
4-H Giving Tree Project
The 4-H Giving Tree Project is organized by the 4-H Teen Action Group in partnership with CoveCare Family Services. The project provides families in need with an opportunity to receive gifts from community members to give to their children for the holidays.

Members of the 4-H Teen Action Group make the gift request tree tags and run community outreach by each managing one tree, placed in various locations throughout Putnam County and they also re-stock the tree tags when necessary. By taking on this responsibility, the 4-H youth leaders learn time management organization and, most importantly, about helping others and taking more of an active leadership role in the community.

4-H Public Presentations.
The ability to clearly communicate ideas is a powerful tool. Effective public speaking and communication skills are critical for succeeding in life, and for reaching personal and professional goals. Many students are not exposed to these skills until they are adults – when they face the pressure of interviewing for jobs or presenting to a manager. The 4-H Public Presentations program uniquely empowers youth to master these skills before college, giving them the advantage needed to succeed.

4-H Public Presentations is a program in which youth learn to create a presentation and develop the skills needed to present it before an audience. Youth learn about the research process and the steps needed to organize information into an interesting and creative presentation format.

Youth learn about the varied purposes of presentations and how to tailor their material to meet their goals. Beginners are encouraged to select simple topics with which they are extremely comfortable, so that the presentation process is the focus of their learning.

As youth progress and grow each year, they are challenged to deliver more difficult kinds of presentations, to use more advanced technology in their presentations where appropriate, and to venture into unfamiliar topics or styles.
Funding

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 augment 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.

2018 ESTIMATE OF SUPPORT

Putnam County provided 29.6% of the Funding, and receives 100% of the programming.

Federal Government 8.7%
Direct aid, fringe benefits & university resources

Other Sources 15.3%
Grants, fees & contributions

Putnam County 29.6%
Direct aid

New York State 46.4%
Direct aid, fringe benefits & university resources
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
Brook Farm Veterinary Center
Camp Herrlich
Carmel Central School District
Catholic Charities
Cold Spring Farmers’ Market
Comcast
Companion Pet Hospital of Carmel
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
  Eastern NY Commercial Horticultural Program
  Garden Based Learning @ Cornell University
  Lab of Ornithology
  NYS Integrated Pest Management Program
  Small Farms Program
  Urban Horticulture Institute
CoveCare Center
Danbury Area Aquarium Society
Drug Crisis in Our Backyard
Eat Smart NY
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 AgriBusiness Development Corporation
Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation
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

North Fork Horse Stables
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 Association
Oasis Sportsmen’s Club
Orange County Chamber of Commerce
Patterson Library
Pawling Animal Clinic
Pied Piper Pony Rides & Petting Zoo
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
  Historian’s Office
  Mental Health Services
  Office for Senior Resources
  Personnel Department
  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
Rotary Club of Carmel
South Putnam Animal Hospital
Stonecrop Garden
Taste NY
The Prevention Council of Putnam
Town of Southeast Cultural Arts Coalition
Tractor Supply Company, Patterson, NY
Trained by Teresa
Watershed Agricultural Council
Westchester Community College Kathryn Davis Global Community Scholars
The Association

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The Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Putnam County is part of the national Cooperative Extension system, an educational partnership between County, State, and Federal Governments.

As New York’s land grant university Cornell administers the Cooperative Extension system in this state. Each Cooperative Extension association is an independent employer that is governed by an elected Board of Directors with general oversight from Cornell University. All associations work to meet the needs of the counties in which they are located as well as state and national goals.