December 2015

Dear Friends of Cornell Cooperative Extension:

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Staff, it is our pleasure to share with you our 2015 Annual Report highlighting some of Cornell Cooperative Extension Cayuga County’s (CCE Cayuga County) accomplishments during the past year.

Our Board of Directors, staff and volunteers all take pride in the legacy and strides made to raise awareness in the areas of agriculture, strengthening families with nutrition, health & safety, youth development, environmental stewardship and invasive species awareness. The quality and scope of these programs are a result of the tireless efforts and talent of the dedicated staff, an involved Board of Directors, engaged program advisors, numerous committed volunteers and our connection to Cornell University.

Helping people help themselves since 1914…

Cornell Cooperative Extension has been assisting the residents of Cayuga County for over 100 years. We bring the application of Cornell University-based science and research to improve the lives and families of a broad and diverse county population, from farmers and businesses to clubs and schools. Children have the opportunity to learn leadership skills through 4-H, low income families and seniors learn how to feed themselves and their families healthy and nutritious foods on a budget, farmers learn the latest and best management practices to ensure the quality and quantity of their crops and residents throughout the county learn how to manage and conserve energy resources to survive tough economic times.

We have always valued your help… Become a Friend of Extension

Now we ask for your support so we can continue to provide and expand these beneficial programs and services in Cayuga County. Become a Friend of Extension and your local donation to CCE Cayuga County is money well invested. If you have not already donated, please fill out and return the enclosed envelope today!

We hope you enjoy reading the enclosed annual report about your Cornell Cooperative Extension. If you have any questions please feel free to call us at 315-255-1183 extension 256.

Sincerely,

Felicia Franceschelli
Board President

Douglas Ververs
Executive Director

“Climate change will have a major impact moving forward on our businesses and communities. CCE Cayuga County is well-positioned to assist in educating the residents and agricultural producers of Cayuga County as they adapt to these changes.”

Allison M. Chatrchyan, Director, Cornell Institute for Climate Change and Agriculture (CICCA) at the 2015 Annual Meeting for Cornell Cooperative Extension Cayuga County November 19, 2015
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Meet the Staff

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Agriculture Senior Resource Educator & Team Leader
Judy Wright
Agriculture Resource Educator
Keith Severson
Environmental Resource Educator
Stefan Lutter
4-H Youth Development Community Educator
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4-H Youth Development Community Educator
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Public Funding Partners

County of Cayuga
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Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension

United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food & Agriculture
Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy
Director, USDA/NIFA

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Cayuga County
Financial Support for 2015

- Employee Benefits from Cornell $182,511 (29.0%)
- Program & Operating Income $38,249 (6.0%)
- Other Grants & Contracts $49,193 (7.8%)
- State Grants $83,561 (13.3%)
- Federal Grants $32,190 (5.1%)
- County Appropriation $244,675 (38.8%)

Total Revenue for 2015 $630,379
In 2015, CCE Cayuga County became part of an eleven county regional multi-year food stamp (now referred to as SNAP) nutrition education grant, lead by CCE Wayne County and CCE Tompkins County. The regional grant targets SNAP and SNAP eligible populations that live in high needs areas, such as Auburn and Port Byron. The goal of the grant is to improve the likelihood that persons eligible for SNAP will make healthy food choices and choose physically active lifestyles consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Due to delays in the grant funding approval, work began half-way through the year. Almost 3,000 adults and 2,000 youth were served with various activities such as farmer’s market food demonstrations, workshops at area food pantries and community gardens, and the BOCES workforce development site. By the end of the grant year, 60% of adults reached through the various locations, increased their daily number of servings of fruits and vegetables, 40% increased their physical activity and 60% decreased their consumption of sugary beverages, and high fat foods, all targeted behaviors of the grant.

CCE Cayuga County partnered with the Cayuga Community Health Network (CCHN) to offer Cooking Matters an in store tour of Walmart and a market tour at the Auburn Farmers Market. CCHN provided funding for the $10 grocery challenge at the conclusion of both tours and a NOEP (Nutrition Outreach and Education Program) worker from the Cayuga Seneca Community Action Agency provided the participants with information and reusable shopping bags. Participants were observed returning back to the farmers market several times after the tours.

This was the final year of a five year grant with CCE Cayuga County and the Cayuga County Health Department partnering to offer free radon test kits to area residents. The final year focused on making sure that residents whose homes tested high, not only retested to make sure the results were accurate, but also sought mitigation to resolve the problem. Free workshops were offered to inform people of their options related to radon and what are the health risks associated with high levels.

Since fall of 2015 CCE Cayuga County staff and volunteers have been providing packets of information about Avian Influenza (AI) to keepers of small and backyard flocks throughout the county. To date over 25 packets have been distributed and fortunately AI has not been detected in New York.

Due to cuts in Eat Smart NY (ESNY) funding, alternative sources of funding were sought. One major source came from Partnership for Results, a partner agency for several years through ESNY, which runs afterschool programming in three elementary schools as well as the junior and senior high schools in Auburn. CCE Cayuga County provided nutrition education for approximately 500 youth during the 2015 school year. At Genesee Elementary School, two raised bed gardens were established with funding from ESNY and will be using curriculum from USDA to teach students about growing their own food. Herman Avenue Elementary School also has a garden which was used to work with after school youth. Weekly cooking clubs were held at the junior and senior high schools with youth gaining skills in selecting and preparing foods that are healthy and budget friendly.

Held each year on October 24, Big Apple Crunch is a fun, interactive celebration of Food Day. Over one hundred youth in Cayuga County came together to take part in the “crunch heard 'round the world” along with businesses, schools, organizations, and individuals.

Over 700 Cayuga County elementary school students were introduced to agriculture during March’s 2015 Ag Literacy Week. Students were read Weaving the Rainbow written by George Ella Lyon and illustrated by Stephanie Anderson. This story takes the reader through the process of raising and caring for animals for their fleece and continues with shearing, carding, spinning and the dying process. This is an excellent example of agriculture not always being what we eat, but also what we wear!
Environment & Natural Resources

Students Study Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change

Fifty years ago, scientists presented to President Lyndon B. Johnson a paper outlining concerns over increasing carbon dioxide pollution into our atmosphere and the potential of the gas to alter the planet's climate. The authors predicted the extent of warming through the year 2015, and as the year draws to a close, their estimations have proven to be extraordinarily accurate.

2015 has been the warmest year on record, with each month surpassing the corresponding month of all five next warmest years on record. In accordance, CCE Cayuga County has taken steps toward educating the public on climate change.

Thirteen students in the environmental science class at Auburn High School learned about the earth’s climate and how it is impacted by greenhouse gas emissions this past spring. They learned about sources of emissions, likely consequences of a failure to regulate emissions, and several policy and technological means of reducing emissions.

Armed with this information, students went about documenting their school's emissions. Working with the Environmental Resource Educator, they gathered data such as heating fuel and electricity consumption, transportation expenditure, and estimations of solid waste disposal. Students learned how to calculate emissions from all this data, in the process learning how different fuels contribute different amounts of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

With a fully outlined ‘portfolio’ of emissions generated by the Auburn school district, and understanding the output in the context of global warming, students elected to aim for a 10% reduction in emissions for the school over the next ten years. To achieve a plan for this, they went about researching and designing ‘strategies’ for emissions reductions, ranging from solar panels to composting and recycling to tree planting on campus. Each of these strategies was reduced into a hard figure representing the quantity of emissions avoided should the strategy to be pursued by the school. In total, the student’s strategies surpassed the 10% reduction target. In a final presentation to a school administrator, the students impressed with their knowledge, accuracy, and the detail of their plans, enough to persuade the school into forming an Action Committee that is looking at ways to reduce environmental impact.

Over the process, the students learned how to use Microsoft Excel to manage data and perform calculations. They learned about earth science, climate change, global warming, feedback loops, and other environmental issues. They learned about policy changes that could reduce climate change, as well as available technology. They also learned how to prepare a finalized, detailed report, and present in front of professionals and colleagues.

Another Record Recycling Year

This was a record year for recycling events at CCE Cayuga County.

The spring Electronics Recycling event attracted just over one thousand attendees. This event was so well attended, that we accidentally ‘broke the budget’ - in part because the market crashed for leaded glass (box TV’s) prior to the event, making them particularly expensive to dispose of.

The second Electronics Recycling event held in September was attended by 680 people. This surpassed any previous attendance and collected well over 100,000 lbs. of material. To offset the cost of recycling leaded glass, we asked for $10 donations per TV or monitor, something most people were more than happy to do.

The Tire Recycling event drew 192 participants, managing to remove 2,470 tires from our local environment.

The Household Hazardous Waste event was attended by 279 people who brought everything from paint to pesticides.

Our final November event, America Recycles Day, brought in 169 participants.

Overall, the folks in Cayuga County came out in force to take advantage of our recycling events and did an excellent job keeping material out of the waste stream. A big thanks to our partners, Cayuga County Planning and Economic Development and Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Congratulations Donald “Skip” Jensen

Donald “Skip” Jensen of Yates County was recently named the 2015 Friend of Extension for his commitment to supporting and promoting the Cornell Cooperative Extension system.

Skip is currently serving his second term as the CCE Board President in Yates County. He has been an active, contributing member of the board since 2010 and has served on various committees. Skip has been described as a determined, dedicated friend to Cooperative Extension and as having great skill, tact, and diplomacy as a board leader.

Skip is a Senior Field Advisor for the New York Farm Bureau where he is a liaison between local Farm Bureau Boards, Cayuga County being one, and the NYS Farm Bureau office.

We are honored to call him a true Friend of Extension.
That’s a RAPP

CCE Cayuga County once again participated with Cornell University’s Recycling Agriculture Plastics Program (RAPP) with outreach to farms and related businesses. During 2015, seven Cayuga County operations generated over 22 tons that was diverted from the waste stream. In addition, Ag Resource Educators helped staff the RAPP booth at Empire Farm Days and facilitated a connection between Cargill in Liverpool and a local recycler, diverting 5.5 tons of Super Sacks from the landfill. It is the local connections that CCE Cayuga County offers that allowed this to happen.

We Continue To Look For Life on Mars

If there are farmers on Mars studying Earth for agronomic research on how to grow corn more effectively then they need to look no farther than Cayuga County. This snapshot on Google earth (below) provides the visual evidence of Arnold Richardson’s Adapt-N plot located in the Red Creek area.

These plots were designed to provide results to commercially available model piloted at Cornell University to select the optimum application rate of nitrogen to maximize production and reduce excess based upon improved weather data during the early growing season. There were three such plots located in Cayuga County in 2015.

The Master Gardener Volunteer program has been active as a service provided for the past 30 years. Its primary purpose is to provide home and community gardeners with unbiased, gardening information that is based on research or reliable experience, through “neighbors-teaching-neighbors”. During the growing season volunteers are available six hours a week and have provided responses to over one hundred and fifty inquiries via phone, email or samples submitted. In addition, Master Gardener volunteers have evaluated at 4-H’s Youth Fair and staffed booths at Central New York’s TomatoFest and VaVa Bloom Garden Show. The service, knowledge and education they provide is valued by their clientele and everyone they serve.

Farm Worker Safety Training Offered

Farm worker safety has become an area of increased interest on local farms spurred by a Local Emphasis Program (LEP) initiated by OSHA in 2014. In 2015 over 145 area dairy farm workers from 4 farms were provided training through CCE Cayuga County on a variety of farm hazards including safe handling of chemicals, personal protective equipment, distracted driving and equipment operation, pesticide hazard communication, safe grinding and welding techniques, and noise protection. CCE Cayuga County offered to revisit farms to aid farm owners in adoption and implementation of safety practices. One farm took advantage of this opportunity which benefited both the farm and CCE Cayuga County staff. It is difficult to determine when an accident has been avoided because safe practices were implemented. The farm worker safety trainings were part of a grant awarded to Cornell’s ILR program by WYNCOSH (Western New York Council on Occupational Safety and Health) and benefit Cayuga County Farms.

Over 40 residents attended an informational meeting focused on Harmful Algal Blooms at the Ward O’Hara Agricultural Museum. Featured speakers were Dr. Nelson Hairston, Dept. of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Cornell University and Dave MacNeill, New York Sea Grant.
NEW!!! Cayuga County 4-H Presents Standardbred Horse Clinic!

The Cayuga County 4-H program received funding from the Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund to provide a clinic on Standardbred and Harness Racing Education. “Re-purposing Your Standardbred Horse” was the special feature program presented by Cyndi Clark and her daughter, Hillary, who’ve adopted a retired Standardbred Horse (Rio) from Sunshine Horses rescue program. They spoke in-depth about the Standardbred breed, uses, attributes of the breed and their suitability to be “re-purposed” as a 4-H project horse. A demonstration of “Rio” in her training as a pleasure/trail horse highlighted their presentation. Additional topics presented by other volunteers included: Showmanship and Riding Patterns, Training on the lunge line and Drill/Parade Team.

Snook Training Stables located in Weedsport was the host facility drawing youth and adult participants from Cayuga, Onondaga and Oswego counties. Twenty-eight youth and 19 adults attended the fall Standardbred Horse Clinic. Part two of the Standardbred Program included a tour of Sunshine Horses facility in Central Square, NY in November.

4-H STEM at BTW’s Casey Park after School Programs

Once every month, 20 youth in grades 5 and 6 would gather for a 4-H STEM Club during their after-school program at the Casey Park Elementary School in Auburn. Youth would take part in a hands-on science activity that would challenge them to be a scientist. Youth explored food science, biofuels, rocketry, ornithology, flight, physics and more! Youth were able to question, try new things, explore hands-on science, and were able to share. “I like science, I can’t wait for you to come back with some more!” said one excited youth.

Youth demonstrated great interest in science related activities and careers and are enthusiastic about science in general.

CCE Cayuga County will be heading back to Casey Park for another year of 4-H STEM Club, and some new hands-on science activities to share.

Expansions at 2015 4-H Youth Fair & Remember the Big 6 Picnic

The Cayuga County 4-H Youth Fair & Remember the Big 6 Picnic, held at the Ward O’Hara Agricultural and Country Living Museum & Dr. Joseph F. Karpinski Sr. Educational Center in Auburn, proved to be another great success in July 2015! Among the traditional activities featured at the annual event, new additions included a 4-H small animal display, a 4-H beef cattle display and demonstration. Revitalizing the 4-H beef cattle project area (a vacancy for over 10 years), has increased program participation as well as interest for expanding into other livestock areas.

Over 100 Cayuga County 4-H youth exhibited animals and/or youth building projects in the 2015 4-H Youth Fair. During the 3 day event, over 3000 community members attended a variety of activities. Sixty-four youth qualified to participate in the 2015 New York State Fair with over 100 exhibits and competitive events.

Cayuga County 4-H Youth Fair & Remember the Big 6 Picnic
Scheduled for
July 28, 29 & 30, 2016
4-H Healthy Living at Freedom Camp 2015

Community Educators and 4-H youth brought healthy living education to Freedom Recreation Camp in July. Freedom Recreation Camp is attended by youth with special needs, or youth who have a sibling with special needs. Over the course of four days, one hundred participants learned that the choices they make, in terms of diet and exercise, can make a difference in their health and well-being.

Through various hands-on activities, youth were able to determine, how much salt, sugar and fat were in some of their favorite things to eat. Determining how much sugar is in your favorite soft drink, and measuring it out to see how much sugar you are putting into your body, can be empowering.

The clear favorite of all of the activities was the “blubber burger” activity that made the fats in fast food favorites a reality. Using shortening, youth measured the amount of fat that is in a typical fast food burger, and put it on a bun. Offering a visual illustration of just how much fat is consumed. One youth said that “I knew that my favorite fast food was not good for me, but I had no idea how much fat was in just the sandwich, not including the fries!” Another reaction to note was “I won’t be going to McDonald’s as much as I used to, it is not good for me.”

Youth spent time learning about healthier choices and were able to try out healthy and tasty snacks from recipes provided. Fun activity games were also introduced to show that incorporating exercise into your daily routine can be fun.

Lastly, youth were able to share with their families, who attended the final day of camp, some of the healthy choices that they learned at camp. A smoothie making demonstration offered healthy snack options, educational games were demonstrated, recipes and snacking tips idea sheets were made available to take home and share together. Thank you to our funding partner United Healthcare.

4-H Volunteers of the Year

Kelli Morgan and Wendi Casper received the CCE Cayuga County 2015 4-H Volunteer of the Year Award. Kelli has been involved with the Cayuga County 4-H program for several years. She has supported the program in a number of ways including: donating pumpkins for the Old Fashion Halloween event, donated towards the 4-H Youth Fair and Remember The Big 6 Picnic, acted as a liaison to the Cayuga County Dairy Promotion Team, and more. Kelli’s wealth of knowledge, positive energy and community connections have led to more 4-H events and exposure. With her busy life, she still manages to find time for the 4-H program. Thank you Kelli for your dedication and support to the Cayuga County 4-H Program!

Wendi Casper is also a recipient of the 4-H Volunteer of the Year Award. Wendi was persuaded into volunteering for the 4-H program by her dear friend Cindy Stephenson. Unbeknownst to Wendi, was she in for a wild ride. What started out to be “Yes, I would be willing to host kids at my barn for horse project learning” turned into a whole lot more. Wendi soon found herself hosting county-wide clinics, applying for grants on behalf of the 4-H program, teaching clinic sessions, assisting with horse shows, being a member of the horse committee and so much more. CCE Cayuga County 4-H is thankful for the time, dedication and support Wendi provides to the youth and families of Cayuga County. Thank you Wendi for all that you contribute to the Cayuga County 4-H Program!
Help Keep Our Local Programming…

Become a Friend of Extension

For over 100 years, Cornell Cooperative Extension Cayuga County has been providing programs and services that bring the resources of Cornell University and national Land-Grant university system to the local level. Your tax deductible donation will help us continue to deliver the high-quality innovative programs that are vital to our local agriculture producers, families and community. Your support will help us to continue our mission of Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities.

For more information on becoming a Friend of Extension, go to our website and Show Your Support! http://blogs.cornell.edu/ccocayuga

THANK YOU TO OUR NEW Friends of Extension…

Tom & Pat Ambrose
Bocad Farms
Keith Batman & Barbara Post
Mark Perry

Day Old Pheasant Chick Program

Over 2,400 day old pheasant chicks arrived on an early spring day at the CCE Cayuga County Education Center. CCE Cayuga County facilitated the placement of the day old chicks that were from the New York State Department of Environmental Conversation’s Game Farm outside of Albany, NY into new homes. Once the chicks were old enough, they were released to repopulate the open fields and hedgerows throughout Cayuga County. Thank you to the 25 volunteer families who accepted the responsibility of feeding, watering and caring for these chicks for eight or so weeks.

Visit our website

http://blogs.cornell.edu/ccocayuga