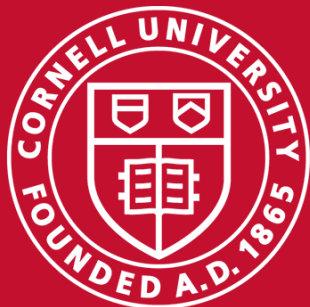


# Cornell Cooperative Extension Herkimer County

## Spring Newsletter



### **Mission Statement:**

"The Cornell Cooperative Extension educational system enables people to improve their lives and communities through partnerships that put experience and research knowledge to work."

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May 2021

Looking back on the last year gives one an appreciation for many things but particularly for the strength of all those essential workers who went to work every day despite the risks involved and the resiliency of our communities here in Herkimer County. Amongst the most important of the essential workers are the farmers, food processors, retail workers and others in the supply chain who made sure that our food supply was uninterrupted. They continued working even though there were great uncertainties in wholesale markets that threatened their future livelihoods.

Now that we have managed to continue on for a full year of managing the pandemic, it is time to thank those who helped us get here, from the farmer's field to our kitchen tables. So from the Board and staff of the Cornell Cooperative Extension Herkimer County we thank:

- Farmers who never experienced a shut down because they were too busy keeping their animals fed and cared for, their crops growing and products moving to market.
- Food production workers who processed the raw materials from the farms into healthy food for our tables
- Grocery store workers, waitstaff and the others who brought the food the final mile to feed our families.

Here at CCE Herkimer County we continue to work with the public to contribute to their well-being through programs to improve nutrition, agricultural and horticultural practices and improve our communities.

Sincerely,

Garet D. Livermore  
Executive Director

*Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities*

Diversity and Inclusion are a part of Cornell University's heritage. We are a recognized employer and educator valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities.



Forty-one Master Gardener Volunteers (five from Herkimer County) completed the eighteen-week training program in March. The volunteers in the program will work with CCE staff on community garden projects across the county including school gardens, answering homeowner questions and working with community based organizations on food access projects.

Working to help community members launch agriculture related businesses, Nicole Tommell of the Central New York Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops team offered a four-part on-line class *Marketing Your Farm Products 101* in February. The 52 registrants learned about using social media, governmental and private grants and other business boosting resources over the course of the class.

This winter CCE working with HeatSmart Mohawk Valley presented a series of five on-line workshops on cold climate heat pumps familiarized homeowners, businesses and farmers about this new energy saving technology and New York State incentives to help them install the climate control devices in their buildings.



Twenty staff members of the Village of Ilion Public Works and Water Departments received *Game of Logging* chainsaw safety instruction through the coordination of CCE working with NYCAMH and professional forestry trainers.



Interest increased in gardening and homesteading skills throughout the last year. An example of the demand CCE is seeing are the record numbers of garden soil samples brought to us for testing and the 62 people who enrolled in a recent on-line beekeeping class. We will continue to meet the need through weekly vegetable gardening sessions on our Facebook page and supporting new gardeners with our Master Gardener volunteer force.

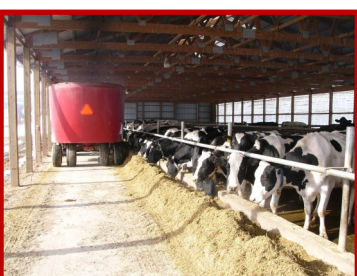
The 2021 Herkimer County Local Foods map will be available in early June for distribution (64 farms and five Farmers Markets on map). Copies will be available at organizations and businesses as well as farmers' markets located in Herkimer County.



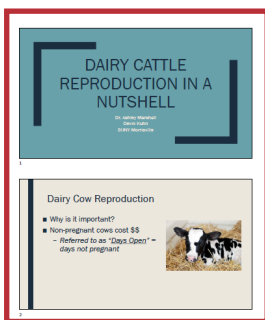
On April 21st the newly formed Herkimer County Agricultural Council had an organizational meeting to organize the council, discuss priorities and establish a meeting schedule. The council is a part of the Herkimer County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board which is charged with preserving farmland and helping to create opportunities for the county's farmers.

The Central New York Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops (CNYDLFC) Team held many virtual events this spring, reaching over 800 farmers. Participants were from various places, locally, regionally, as well as out-of-state and internationally.

Offerings included: PPP2/ EIDL Loan Advance / Expansion of CFAP 1; Small Scale Food Processing Workshop; Annie's Project: Risk Management for Farm Women (12-part series); Marketing Your Farm Products 101 (3-part series); VAPG Training Course (3-part series); Dairy Forward Grant Informational Webinar; 2021 Corn Day; Soybean and Small Grain Summit; USDA Resources for Beginning Farmers in NY / Understanding Eligibility Requirements for NRCS and FSA Programs; 2021 Central NY Dairy Day (two days); March Madness Management Series for Equine Owners, Operators, and Enthusiasts (5-part series); Considerations in Finishing Beef; Digital Agri-Marketing (3-part series); and Farm Financial Management (3-part series).



4-H Dairy and Horse Bowl sessions have been well attended with 75-150 youth participating from around the state and other states. There were over 100 on Dairy Bowl, 50-60 on Horse Bowl. The sessions have been beyond the original four weeks based on interest. 4-H is planning in-person competitions in next month. Animal showmanship series will start again in April.

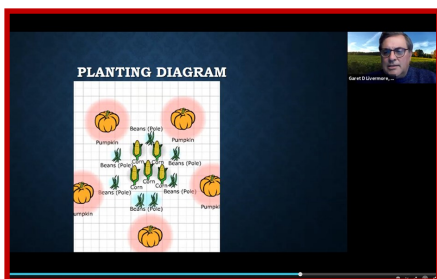


Tractor Safety was held in-person at VFW in Clinton supported by Clinton Tractor with twelve participants. 4-H Youth Development provides Tractor and Machinery Certification for youth 14 years and older. This certification allows 14 and 15 year olds to legally operate tractors and machinery while off the family farm. Farm safety awareness is a major focus.



The 4-H Government Intern Program took a pause from in person sessions this 2020-2021 school year, due to COVID-19. Video interviews of Herkimer County departments recorded in the Fall 2020 were shared with all Herkimer County high schools to be used in their classroom for both fall and spring semesters. We are looking forward to planning an in person program for the 2021 academic school year.

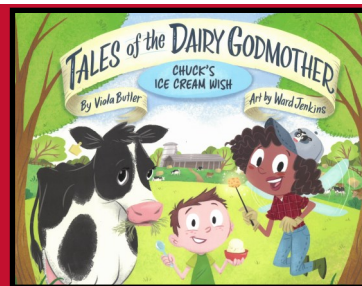
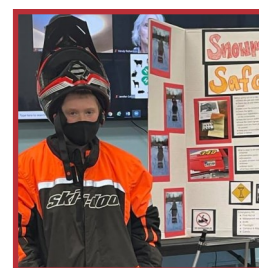
"4-H at Home: Garden Series" was a five-part webinar series offered regionally via Zoom, with CCE Herkimer County in charge of two of the sessions. *Three Sisters Gardening: Iroquois Living History*, was the topic.



Executive Director/Ag Issues Leader spoke on. Seed packets were then mailed out to participants, so that they could plant their own corn, beans and squash.



Herkimer County 4-H members participated in 4-H Public Presentations, held at CCE of Herkimer. Twenty-one 4-H youth, from all over Herkimer County took turns giving illustrated talks, and demonstrations in front of judges as well as virtually who evaluated their presentation skills. The Occupational Hazards 4-H Club, a Herkimer BOCES classroom club, held a Public Presentation event at the Herkimer BOCES. Sixteen students participated in demonstrations and illustrated talks in front of fellow students and staff both in person and virtually.



Ag Literacy Week was a huge success. *Tales of the Dairy Godmother* by Viola Butler, illustrated by Ward Jenkins, was read virtually. The follow-up classroom project making ice cream (supplies delivered to schools by CCE) was wildly popular. Schools from Dolgeville, Little Falls, West Canada Valley, Frankfort-Schuyler, Town of Webb, Central Valley Academy, and Mt. Markham all participated with Owen D Young planning to do their reading later this spring.

Ellie Ainslie, former Herkimer County 4-H'er and Dairy Princess, read to Frankfort-Schuyler and Little Falls, and shared a video of her making ice cream at King Bros Dairy.

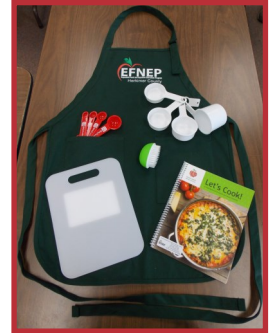






The Facebook Live pilot project with Clinton County CCE EFNEP program had seven Herkimer County participants complete the six-week series that is supplemented with two additional sessions locally. Another series is planned in May adding Broome County EFNEP participants to group.

Herkimer County EFNEP has been selected to work with the EFNEP Young Adult Pilot reaching 18-25 year olds without children (or pregnant) living independently (or moving towards independence) who are at or below 185% poverty (under or unemployed) who are interested in learning life skills to support living and working in Herkimer County as stable and productive adults. The initial plan is to connect with the “Herkimer County Youth Services Task Force” that is part of the Herkimer County DSS Plan to explore ways to connect with the target audience through agency partners. This expands recruitment from the traditional EFNEP audience of low income families with children (or pregnant).



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## Upcoming Programs

This summer Herkimer CCE will be working with CCE Hamilton County and Cornell's Natural Resources Department to present a series of programs on Climate Change and Adirondack Brook Trout in Old Forge, Raquette Lake and other communities in the Adirondacks. The project kicks off on June 4th and 5th with public talks, hikes and hands-on activities for the family at Great Camp Sagamore in Raquette Lake.



The Farmers’ Museum Junior Livestock Show is planned for July 11, 12, and 13 as one day “in-and-out” shows rather than a three day overnight event as in the past. The event tests the skills of youth handlers ages eight to eighteen from a nine-county region who present animals that they own, care for, and have prepared for competition.

Although final details for fairs this year have not been confirmed, 4-H is tentatively planning their events for the Herkimer County Fair (August 17-22) and the New York State Fair (August 20-September 6).

4-H will be at the Beaversprite Nature Center, the conservation education center of the Utica Zoo, for workshops this spring including building a stomp rocket, geocaching, string art and painting clovers for the planter boxes that were built as a collaboration between Herkimer County 4-H and Mt. Markham FFA. The planter boxes were to be used at the Herkimer County Fair and were made as a community service project to help beautify the fair.

Livestock Fitting and Showmanship Series will be starting back up offering both in-person and virtual options.

Herkimer County 4-H is continuing their work with the Utica Zoo to grow vegetables to be harvested for the zoo animals. Work on the Utica Zoo garden will begin in May. Herkimer County 4-H’ers will be maintaining and harvesting produce throughout the summer months. In turn, the volunteers receive free admission to the zoo.

