News From CCE

By Barb Neal, CCE Tioga

Thanksgiving has always been my favorite holiday. I remember coming back from watching the big high school football game and walking into my Nana’s home and being enveloped in the warmth of the kitchen and the heavenly smell of turkey and all the fixings cooking in the oven. All members of the family, joining hands around the table, giving thanks for the bounty not only of that one meal, but of all the family meals throughout the year.

We have much to be thankful for here at CCE as well. Our kickoff year for Seed to Supper was a success, and there are folks in both counties who have learned how to grow their own food thanks to this amazing program. Who knows, there might be a few memories made this year as new gardeners share their gardens’ bounty with their family on Thanksgiving day.

For my family, we will be sharing rutabagas, roasted Brussel sprouts, and mashed potatoes—all from our prolific garden—this holiday. I am already planning an expanded garden next year—and planning to expand Seed to Supper for Tioga County so that even more folks will savor their own home-grown food next year.

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CCE Chemung Workshops

The High Tunnel workshop scheduled for November 1st will be rescheduled as the presenter is unable to attend due to a family emergency. We are sorry for any inconvenience. The new date for the workshop will be announced as soon as possible.

Workshop: Let’s grow garlic

November 7, 2017; 6:30 – 7:30 PM. Do you love garlic? Garlic has a range of potential health benefits. It is a good source of Calcium, Phosphorus and Selenium, and a very good source of Vitamin C, Vitamin B6 and Manganese. In this one-hour workshop, Chemung County Master Gardener, Brandy Kreisler, is going to talk about how to select and grow great garlic in the home garden. You will also learn garlic storage and cooking tips.

Speaker: Brandy Kreisler, Chemung County Master Gardener

Place: Steele Memorial Library (IT room), 101 E Church Street, Elmira, NY

Workshop fee: Free, but a $3 suggested donation helps support our Horticulture program.

Please register with Chemung CCE at 607-734-4453, or jv578@cornell.edu.

Back by Popular Demand: The CCE Tioga Homesteading Series!

I have begun to plan a winters-long series that will be of great interest to homesteaders in Tioga and Chemung counties. Some of the workshops that will be offered will include:

- Meat chickens and laying hens
- Raising pigs
- Beekeeping
- Starting an Orchard
- Mushroom logs
- Goats and sheep
- And much more!

Watch this space next month for the schedule! If you have a topic you would like to have a class on, let me know!

Email Barb at ban1@cornell.edu
But in riparian habitats, i.e. along waterways, it is a true one of the easiest invasive plants to manage on dry ground. Arduous as that may sound, I actually consider knotweed to have arisen the following spring. (They produced knotweed shoots, wan and tentative though they were, umphed. Then after a summer free of the weed, a number of them sprouted up. I mowed weekly, and by year seven it appeared I had tri-gulfed by knotweed, as was most of the yard. For six years knotweed spread and is hard to eradicate. Its perennial roots migrate underground, creating dense thickets. Children love to play in these “forests,” but most adults aren’t keen on having to beat back the invader from their gardens and lawns. But because knotweed can provide instant privacy, some welcome it. As invasive plants go, it could be worse. Knotweed doesn’t blister your skin like giant hogweed and wild parsnip do or snuff out forest regeneration in your woodlot the way swallow-wort does. It’s not poisonous to animals; in fact it’s grazed by deer, rabbits and even livestock. Maybe the “best” part is that it produces little or no viable seed.

And it has some genuine good points. It is a source of resveratrol, a compound which shows promise in the treatment of cancer and heart disease. Its flowers, while unable to beget offspring, produce loads of nectar and pollen, and are an important late-season nectary (I’ve been waiting a long time to use that word) for honeybees and wild pollinators. It’s also edible. The young shoots taste much like rhubarb, and can even be made into pie.

Of course knotweed has many strikes against it or folks wouldn’t get so agitated when you mention its name. It spreads and is hard to eradicate. Its perennial roots (rhizomes) can snake underground 60’ or more from the main plant. It can accidentally “migrate” with soil or fill, as a teeny bit of root is all it takes for trouble to start. The tenacious rhizomes make knotweed a challenge to control. You can smother it for several years only to have it reappear like Houdini when you yank the covering back.

When I moved into my home the whole back side was engulfed by knotweed, as was most of the yard. For six years I mowed weekly, and by year seven it appeared I had triumphed. Then after a summer free of the weed, a number of knotweed shoots, wan and tentative though they were, arose the following spring. (They’re gone now.)

Arduous as that may sound, I actually consider knotweed one of the easiest invasive plants to manage on dry ground. But in riparian habitats, i.e. along waterways, it is a true monster. Its superpower? A tiny fragment of stem, root or leaf, so long as it stays moist, quickly becomes an impenetrable thicket.

Fluctuating water levels wash plant fragments downstream, creating innumerable knotweed colonies. In some stretches of the Oswego and Salmon Rivers, the banks are literally walls of Japanese knotweed. It restricts—sometimes eliminates—water access, and out-competes existing vegetation. Because its tops die back each fall it does not mitigate erosion the way native shoreline plants like willow and shrub dogwood do, and water quality and habitat suffer.

As much as I’d rather avoid pesticides, I have to admit that with the right herbicide knotweed is as easy as, um, pie to kill. Glyphosate, the active ingredient in products like Roundup, is extremely effective when applied at the optimal timing (early fall) and right concentration. Along shorelines, where killing knotweed is most essential, non-chemical methods are of limited use.

Stem injection, the labor-intensive process of injecting each stalk with a small dose of concentrated glyphosate, is safe to use right up to the water’s edge, and is very effective. Another riparian option is the cut-stem method, where stands are cut and removed, and the “stumps” treated with glyphosate. Good old-fashioned foliar application can be employed a safe distance from surface waters.

So what about backyard knotweed? Non-chemical methods include repeated hand-pulling (where practical) or mowing, and smothering.

If you choose herbicide, which application method is best? The St. Lawrence-Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Invasive Species Management just concluded a three-year knotweed eradication project on a section of the Salmon River near Pulaski, NY. They found that after three years there was no measurable difference between the three methods. Given that a stem injector costs hundreds of dollars and foliar application goes at least ten times faster than the cut-stem method, the best option might be the equally effective but cheaper and easier one.
If It Smells Like a Petunia or Shampoo, It Might Be a Pesticide

From the USDA Agriculture Research Service website, June 19, 2017

A scent that petunias and snapdragons release to attract pollinators may be an environmentally friendly control for pests like the spotted wing drosophila fly (SWD) and the brown marmorated stink bug.

Agricultural Research Service (ARS) chemist Aijun Zhang discovered the fragrant chemical methyl benzoate, which is also a popular ingredient approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for use in foods, cosmetics and shampoo, can kill these insects and others.

Few choices are available for controlling SWD, which is an invasive species from Asia. It has quickly spread across the United States and can cause significant damage to fruit crops, especially berries.

Zhang, who is with the ARS Invasive Insect Biocontrol and Behavior Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland, points out the possibility of a new bio-based pesticide—especially one based on an inexpensive chemical whose residue lasts a relatively short time in the environment—is exciting.

Recently, Zhang was granted a patent for insecticide use of methyl benzoate. ARS is seeking a company to license the technology and bring commercial products to market.

Originally, Zhang was identifying volatile compounds in apple juice that attracted fruit flies. Compounds found in rotting apples and other fruits usually attract flies. He found one compound—No. 19—strongly repelled SWD, and later showed it killed them as well. Compound No. 19 turned out to be methyl benzoate, with its characteristic wintergreen-spicy, floral-fruity aroma.

Methyl benzoate proved to be 5 to 20 times more toxic to eggs of brown marmorated stink bug, diamondback moth and tobacco hornworm than a conventional pyrethroid insecticide, a sulfur and pyrethrin mixture, or some organic products currently on the market.

Next, Zhang will test methyl benzoate's effectiveness against mosquitoes, fire ants, gypsy moths and stored-product insect pests. All of these insects are developing resistance to standard pesticides.

Zhang is also investigating whether low doses of methyl benzoate could control Varroa mites, the No. 1 problem of managed honey bees today.

The Agricultural Research Service is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific in-house research agency. Daily, ARS focuses on solutions to agricultural problems affecting America. Each dollar invested in agricultural research results in $17 of economic impact.
High-schoolers spawn fish, grow lettuce on NYC school rooftop

By Jon Craig, Cornell Chronicle, October 27, 2017

Atop a roof overlooking Manhattan’s skyline at sundown Oct. 25, more than 300 public officials and proud parents of Food and Finance High School students toured a first-of-its-kind aquaponics greenhouse. Philson A.A. Warner, founding director of the Cornell Cooperative Extension – New York City (CUCE-NYC) Hydroponics, Aquaculture, Aquaponics Learning Lab, offered lively, personal tours of the newly opened greenhouse. The structure is used to grow lettuce and fish through a natural process that conserves energy and the environment.

“The youngsters learn to do more with the sciences,” Warner said of his teenage students, whom he called “Cornell colleagues.”

Eight computers monitor “the weather situation above us,” to help control indoor temperatures, moisture and ideal humidity for growing vegetables, Warner said.

“This is what we call a green, green, green greenhouse,” he said, noting it produces “clean, safe, fresh foods. ... Nothing goes to waste.”

Even its solar panels are producing surplus energy that is fed into the grid.

Heads of lettuce that can take up to 10 weeks to grow outdoors are cultivated in just three weeks at the school on West 50th Street. About 8,000 pounds of tasty fish spawned monthly are another benefit of the scientific project.

As part of the greenhouse’s grand opening ceremony, dozens of high school students greeted guests and served crab cakes, vegan meatballs, fancy desserts and other hors d’oeuvres that they cooked in the school’s kitchens.

Jennifer Tiffany, Ph.D. ’04, executive director of CUCE-NYC, heaped praise on everyone who helped produce the hands-on learning environment and thanked the “brilliant students” who served as caterers and provided warm hospitality for the event.

“What an amazing, amazing community of young people,” Tiffany said during the ceremony.

Warner designed the 1,664-square-foot greenhouse, which is now part of the New York City Department of Education’s Park West Educational Campus. The project was financed through private donations, the New York City Council and the Manhattan Borough President’s Office.

Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer said she was very proud to have been instrumental in approving and helping secure public and private funding for the project. “You are training people for the future,” she said.

“You could be in the Bronx and they are talking about the fish” produced at the Manhattan high school, Brewer gushed. “Without Cornell, this would not have been possible. This is a very exciting project.”

The Food Education Fund, a nonprofit foundation, also has been a key partner in developing and sustaining the learning labs. Nan Shipley, chair of the board of the Food Education Fund, proudly pointed out that the Food and Finance High School has a 91 percent graduation rate, with most of its students advancing to college or full employment in related fields.

About 400 students are enrolled at Food and Finance High School. The school’s curriculum includes paid internships at restaurants and other food service businesses. The opening of the greenhouse marked the latest expansion of ongoing learning lab programs in a long-standing partnership with Cornell University.
1. **What is the Census of Agriculture?**

The Census of Agriculture is a complete count of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. Even the small plots of land - whether rural or urban - growing fruit, vegetables or some food animals count if $1,000 or more of such products were raised and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the Census year.

The Census of Agriculture, taken only once every five years, looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures. For America’s farmers and ranchers, the Census of Agriculture is their voice, their future, and their opportunity.

2. **Why is the Census of Agriculture important?**

The Census of Agriculture provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive and impartial agricultural data for every county in the nation. Through the Census of Agriculture, producers can show the nation the value and importance of agriculture, and they can help influence the decisions that will shape the future of American agriculture for years to come.

By responding to the Census of Agriculture, producers are helping themselves, their communities, and all of U.S. agriculture.

3. **Who uses Census of Agriculture data?**

Census of Agriculture data are used by all those who serve farmers and rural communities — federal, state and local governments, agribusinesses, trade associations and many others. Farmers and ranchers can use Census of Agriculture data to help make informed decisions about the future of their own operations. Companies and cooperatives use the facts and figures to determine the locations of facilities that will serve agricultural producers. Community planners use the information to target needed services to rural residents. Legislators use the numbers from the Census when shaping farm policies and programs.

4. **How is the Census of Agriculture conducted?**

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will mail questionnaires for the 2017 Census of Agriculture to farm and ranch operators in December 2017 to collect data for the 2017 calendar year. Completed forms are due by February 5, 2018. Respondents can complete the Census online at [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov) or return their forms by mail.

5. **Must I respond to the Census of Agriculture?**

Yes. United States law (Title 7 USC 2204(g) Public Law 105-113), requires all those who receive a Census of Agriculture report form to respond even if they did not operate a farm or ranch in 2017.

6. **What if I only have a small operation or do not participate in government farm programs, do I have to fill out a Census of Agriculture form?**

The Census of Agriculture is the responsibility of every individual who produces or grows any agricultural product, including field crops, fruits, vegetables, floriculture, and livestock, regardless of the size or type of operation. For Census of Agriculture purposes, a farm is any place from which $1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the Census year. To get a census if you never filed before, request one at: [https://www.agcounts.usda.gov/legacy0/cgi-bin/counts](https://www.agcounts.usda.gov/legacy0/cgi-bin/counts)

7. **What if I did not receive or I lost my Census of Agriculture form?**

If you need more information, or need help completing your Census of Agriculture form, call toll-free (888) 424-7828 or visit [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov).

8. **When will 2017 Census of Agriculture results be announced?**

NASS plans to release Census of Agriculture data, in both electronic and print formats, beginning in February 2019. Detailed reports will be published for all counties, states and the nation.

9. **Where can I find Census of Agriculture data?**

Census of Agriculture data is available through the local NASS field office in your area and at many depository libraries, universities and other state government offices. It is also available online at [www.nass.usda.gov](http://www.nass.usda.gov) or [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov). For additional information on the Census of Agriculture and other NASS surveys, call the Agricultural Statistics Hotline at (800) 727-9540.
Choosing the Right Market Channel

By Brain Moyer, Program Assistant, Penn State. Updated August 8, 2017. Original article source: https://extension.psu.edu/choosing-the-right-market-channel.

Diversified farming means being experts in production and having a market for each product. How we plan to sell our products is just as important as deciding how we will grow them.

"Simple" you say, "I'll sell them at the farmers’ market or through my CSA". Not so long ago, that option was a no-brainer, but today, many CSA's struggle to fill shareholder slots and vendor spaces may be limited at the farmers’ markets. Fortunately, there are many more channels for reaching your potential customer these days. But, we need a way to evaluate those channels so we can assess which ones might be best for our business and our quality of life.

Marketing what we grow can take up to thirty percent of our time, which is time away from farming. We need to ask ourselves:

"What markets will give me the greatest return on my time and amount of product sold?"
"Am I the right person to be marketing my product?"
"If I'm not the right person, who is"?

If you decide that you are the right (or only) person to do the marketing, then you need a way to figure out how you can have a diverse marketing plan and still have time to grow your products.

The goal should be to have a marketing plan that is just as diverse as the farm products you are offering.

Let's think about what channels you want to use to sell your products. Some market channels we pick because they appeal to us and others because they are a necessity. They aren't our favorite market outlets, but we feel we have to do them. An example might be farmers’ markets. Some folks love being at the market and others do not. But, if your goal is to build up your CSA or pick your own operation, then selling at a farmers’ market could be a short term marketing solution to get your farm's name out into the community. It is inexpensive advertising while selling your products as well.

Let's take a look at an exercise borrowed from the "Guide to Marketing Channel Selection" written by Matthew LeRoux, Agricultural Marketing Specialist, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County NY. This exercise can help you make some decisions about your marketing channels. On the left hand side of the chart we have the marketing channels our example farm is planning to use. We want to rank the channels against each other. "1" is the best criteria and "5" being the least favorable. Channels you feel are equal for a certain criteria are given the same number and the next number is skipped. After you rank the market channels, you can total up the scores, and give each channel a final ranking. The channel with a final ranking of "1" is the most favorable.

For our example farm, it looks like

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing Channel</th>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Labor Required</th>
<th>Association costs</th>
<th>Total Score</th>
<th>Final Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On-farm Stand</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers Market</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale Distributation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

West Wind Farm Anytown, NY
restaurants would be the preferable marketing channel. Over time, these rankings can change. For instance, if the volume of product sold increases for their on-farm sales then that channel may replace restaurants as the top ranking channel. We can also see that Wholesale Distribution ranks higher than Farmers Markets largely because of the labor associated with farmers’ markets, which can also change over time.

Finally, consider how each of the market channels will affect you personally. What is the perceived level of stress involved with supplying those market channels? What will it do to your (and your family's) quality of life? If need be, add that as a column to this exercise. It is just as important as the rest for a profitable and happy farming life.

**Singles, Twins, and Triplets: You Are a Factor in Your Lambing Rate**


Your management over your sheep flock does impact the number of lambs your ewe produces each season. What can you do to ensure your ewes lamb twins this breeding season?

Former Extension Educator Mike Fournier explained to the Sheep Management class that shepherds can heavily influence whether their ewes lamb singles or twins each year. Single births - or none at all - cannot always be blamed on the ram. How can you ensure your ewe weans healthy lambs?

Following these simple tips should help improve your flock productivity.

**Know your breed characteristics and breed (or cross breed) accordingly**

Some breeds, like Finn sheep, have multiple births - more like litters. Black-faced breeds tend to have less multiple births than white-faced breeds.

**Strap a marking harness on your ram**

It may look silly, but a breeding harness can save you from a lambless season. These harnesses cost about $25, and are strapped onto the breast of the ram. A crayon is inserted in a pocket, and when a ram mounts the ewe to breed, the crayon leaves the color on the ewe so you know she is bred. Change the color of the crayon every 2 weeks. If the ram doesn't mount any ewes, or if a ram continues to mount the same ewes throughout the breeding season, you know there is a problem with your ram.

**Deworm your sheep**

Internal parasites develop in manure and make their way into your sheep's digestive tract through the pasture and forage they eat. Deworming will ensure the energy you are putting into your sheep through feed and forage goes toward helping your sheep grow or maintain their productivity instead of feeding parasites. An effective deworming schedule would be: the end of pasture season, one month before lambing, one month after starting pasture, two months after starting pasture, and before breeding - 5 times per year.

**Feed your ewes well**

You may think, well, I do feed my sheep. But this is one of the most important contributors to ensuring multiple births. This is not to say you should feed your ewes so they are fat - that would cost you money in feed and decrease the ewes ability to maintain a pregnancy. Feeding a little extra energy - such as grain - two weeks before breeding is called flushing. Flushing will increase the ewes chance of having twins because her nutritional needs will be met and she will have that little extra energy she can put into growing lambs. Flushing should continue 2-3 weeks into the breeding season. (Keep in mind, fat ewes should not be flushed.)
News, Notes and Workshops for Tioga and Chemung County Farmers and Gardeners

Two Day Cover Crop Workshop

Good Morning Farmers, students, researchers, extension educators, government and industry representatives, and other cover crop enthusiasts,

You are invited to the first annual Northeast Cover Crops Council Meeting hosted by Cornell University and the USDA NRCS Big Flats Plant Materials Center on November 8-9, 2017.

Please click on the link below (or copy and paste) for the event website containing all information and registration:

http://www.event.com/events/northeast-cover-crops-council-annual-meeting/event-summary-926c9a4a2f2b49d7903750daea51249d.aspx

Please note: Each day requires a separate registration which can be accessed directly below.

Wednesday, November 8, 2017:

Presentations will focus on soil health, cover crop practices for no-till, pest management, cover crop mixtures, harvesting cover crops for forage, and more. Participants will also have the opportunity to present their own work in a Poster Reception featuring local and seasonal refreshments and hors d’oeuvres. Location: Cornell University - The Statler Hotel 130 Statler Drive Ithaca, New York 14853

First Day Registration

Thursday, November 9, 2017:

This day will feature a field tour of the cover crop demonstration plots at the USDA-NRCS Big Flats Plant Materials Center in Big Flats, NY. Please dress accordingly. Location: USDA-NRCS Big Flats Plant Materials Center 3266 RT 352 Big Flats, NY 14814

Second Day Registration

This meeting will be a great opportunity to learn about advances and network with cover crop experts from the Northeast. Space is limited, so register now to secure your spot! (Once capacity is reached, a wait list will become available.) Hope to see you then!

Conference for Women by Women

Nov 3rd. The NY Women for Agriculture team is excited to be hosting the first annual NY Women in Agriculture conference, Friday November 3rd, in Syracuse, NY. This conference will focus both personal and business growth skills and tools for women involved as either primary or partner opera-

tor for their agriculture operation. https://spark.adobe.com/page/KSo7TCLB01BgC/

3rd Annual Nut Bonanza

Saturday, November 4, 10:00am-5:00pm@Twisted Tree Farm (279 Washburn Road, Spencer, NY 14883)

Taste freshly harvested American persimmons, acorns, chestnuts, hickory nuts, butternuts, hazelnuts, and black walnuts during the Nut Bonanza at Twisted Tree Farm in Spencer. Stations will be set up for attendees to experience roasting chestnuts, processing acorns, pressing walnut oil, and more! Event is held outdoors with a bonfire, but there is covered space in case of rain. Kids are welcome! Suggested donation of $5-$20 or bring a local food to share. Questions? Contact Akiva Silver at ttfarm279@gmail.com. Sponsored by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County.

Winterizing Your Garden

Thursday, November 9, 5:30-6:30pm @CCE-Tompkins Education Center, 615 Willow Avenue, Ithaca, NY

Learn how to prepare and protect your soil from winter cold and spring rains, to ensure optimal nutrition and soil tilth for great gardening the rest of the year. Cost: $5-$10/person self-determined sliding scale, pay what you can afford. Call Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County to register and pay by phone. Questions? Contact Jennie Cramer at jrc10@cornell.edu.

Introducing the Lifestyle Farming Conference

Saturday, November 11, 2017. At SUNY Cobleskill, we believe in hands-on learning and using our resources to empower our neighbors. After a successful inaugural Lifestyle Farming Conference we are proud to host the second Lifestyle Farming Conference, an intense one-day educational event covering more than two dozen topics in farming and homesteading skills. http://web.cobleskill.edu/lfc/#primary

Building Permanent Raised Beds with Hand Tools

Saturday, November 18th, 9AM - 2PM. Groundswell Incubator Farm, 100 Rachel Carson Way,

Cost: Sliding Scale, $5-$25, No one turned away for lack of funds.Sean Dembrosky of Edible Acres will lead a very hands on workshop showing participants strategies and techniques for taking ‘weedy’ areas of shrubs, brambles, tall grasses, young trees, etc., and converting it into permanent raised beds on contour that can be incredibly productive.

REGISTER HERE

Southern Tier Maple School

Dec 2nd from 9:30am to noon- Cornell Cooperative Extension’s State Maple Specialist, Steve Childs, will lead this annual refresher to help maple producers of all levels improve the productivity, efficiency and profitability of their operations. The workshop will conclude with a maple syrup tasting and grading demonstration. Light refreshments provided. $5 donation at the door. For general information on maple syrup production, please visit: www.cornellmaple.com
To Serve and Strengthen Local Farms, Local Food,

Members are at the heart of Farm Bureau, a grassroots-driven organization of families and individuals in New York who care.

For additional questions, contact Brett Chedzoy of Schuyler CCE at 607-535-7161, or by email at: bjc226@cornell.edu