Steuben Spotlight

Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities for over 100 years!

July 2019

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Steuben 4-H’ers get hands-on government experience

Victoria Kelly, Country Critters 4-H Club; and Rachel Eckler, Country Bunch 4-H Club, attended the 2019 Citizenship-Washington Focus Trip (CWF) on July 7-13, 2019. Laura Eckler served as their chaperone. CWF is a week-long 4-H citizenship program for youth, ages 14-19, that takes place at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center just miles from Washington, DC. CWF provides 4-H youth with opportunities to explore, develop, and refine their community and civic engagement skills to be outstanding leaders in their communities. Through hands-on educational workshops, and sightseeing tours in the “living classroom” of Washington, D.C., youth learn about the history of our nation, the leaders who have shaped it, and how they can apply the leadership and citizenship skills they learn during CWF when they return home.

Rachel reflects “Citizen Washington Focus was an educational time for me. Through writing mock bills, hosting a congressional session, and visiting some of our nation’s most treasured artifacts and places, I learned a lot! CWF strengthened my skills in civility (a topic we focused on); having a chance to practice it when discussing controversial topics with other 4-Hers and even some of New York state’s representatives. My favorite portion of the trip was visiting the Thomas Jefferson memorial and learning about the legacy he left to our nation and the impact it left to many presidents after. Another

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Building a good financial literacy foundation for kids

The Dormann Library in Bath was the location for the first “Money As You Grow Bookshelf” program, a pilot series held over four Mondays in June. The purpose of this family financial literacy education program is to provide both the parent and child with opportunities to have positive interactions about money and to enhance the financial and lifelong learning skills of both parent and child.

The program is designed to help parents teach children ages 6-10 about money through reading children’s books and engaging in a fun activity. While the children were reading and doing activities, the parents met with CCE-Steuben Financial & Consumer Educator, Nancy Reigelsperger, to discuss financial topics and strategies to teach children about money. Each family received a book to take home with them each week. The program received excellent feedback, and additional libraries in the area are planning to host the program later this year.

CCE Steuben Mission

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Steuben County builds strong communities through education and collaboration in the areas of Agriculture & Natural Resources, Financial Literacy, Nutrition Education and 4-H Youth Development.

United Way Community Partner

PutKnowledgeToWork.org Facebook: CCESteuben Instagram: @CCESteuben

Sign up for our monthly E-News on our website. Follow us on Social Media for daily news updates.
GAPS training offered hands-on individual work

This spring CCE Steuben and the Cornell Vegetable Team offered a 2-day GAPS (Good Agricultural Practices) training, open to all fresh produce farms. Extension Vegetable Specialist Robert Hadad led the presentation and training of the two-day workshop.

The initial day focused on assessing the risks and implementation of practices to reduce food safety risk on fresh produce farms. The second day focused on farm-specific GAPS plans with experts in the room to assist with questions along the way.

Master Gardeners establish pollinator garden

CCE Steuben Master Gardeners established a new pollinator garden by partnering with Hakes C&D Landfill in Painted Post, NY. The garden focuses on a monarch butterfly habitat, with 15 plots planted with various species of 300 native milkweed plants. Monarch butterflies lay their eggs only on milkweed plants, and larvae feed exclusively on this plant after hatching. Monarch butterflies are a great showcase species for pollinators, because they are known worldwide and are eye-catching insects. Many thanks to the staff at Hakes Landfill for the on-site help and planning.

Sewing classes prepare 4-H’ers for evaluation and revue

This year the 4-H Home Economics program concentrated on sewing, with several Saturdays planned throughout the spring to introduce sewing techniques to 4-H members. Additional classes were added for youth who already knew how to sew. And this summer, a sewing series was added to the summer programming.

The annual Steuben County Clothing Revue was held in May with the theme “Rompin’ & Hoppin’ Around.” The Revue is a chance for 4-H sewers to model their work. Those chosen to represent Steuben County at the New York State Fair in 2019 were Madison Conrad, Emilie Feely, Stephanie Fox, Abby Gleason, Greta Huber, Victoria Kelly, Aubrie Laverty, and Olivia Lewis.

Financial program branches out with homeowner savings

CCE Financial & Consumer Educator, Nancy Reigelsperger, recently collaborated with USDA and Phil Cherry, the Community Energy Advisor for Steuben County to host an “Affordable Ways to Mend your Home” class. The workshop was well attended and received great feedback. There are many resources available for homeowners but they may not be aware of them or the eligibility requirements. For information on the Loan and Grant program offered by the USDA, call 607-776-7398 x4. Smart Energy Choices is a new program to help residents with free or low cost energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions. You may want to start with a free energy audit to determine your next steps in making your home more energy efficient. Contact Phil Cherry at 607-535-7161 x 3220 for more information.

CCE nutrition program explores the sugar in various drinks

Finger Lakes Eat Smart New York (FLESNY) Nutritionist Austin Nichols taught a Rethink Your Drink workshop at the Corning Salvation Army in May as part of a Cooking Matters for Adults series lesson. The participants went through different stations to learn about the different things to be wary of when we buy drinks. For the milk station the participants learned that all of the milks, from whole to fat free, had the same amount of nutrients in them. A blind taste test of whole, 2%, 1%, or fat free milk proved that they “could not taste a difference between any of the milks!”

The participants then went through the soda and energy drink station. They learned that these drinks are mainly just carbonated water and sugar, but they had no idea how much sugar was in their drinks. The most shocking revelation came when the participants measured the sugar content in the Mountain Dew and learned that it had 23 teaspoons of sugar! One person said, “I can’t believe it has that much sugar, and you are only supposed to have 6 teaspoons of added sugar a day!”

The next station dealt with juices and they learned how to be wary of how much juice is actually in your drink. If it doesn’t say 100% then you are paying extra for sugar water without any benefits. A participant mentioned that “You have to watch out for these drinks. They make them look like they have a lot of juice, but actually only have 5% juice.”
Agriculture specialists aim to assist farmers

This year, CCE Steuben joined the Cornell Vegetable Team and became one of five counties to create the Southwest New York Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops (SWNYDLFC) Team. The teams are a major opportunity to build connections on a multi-county level and bring agriculture expertise and knowledge directly to the producers of Steuben County. Currently we have brought aboard three new regional team members.

Margaret Lund serves growers as a Vegetable Specialist, with a focus on potatoes, dry beans, post-harvest handling and storage. She earned her B.S. from Clemson University in Environmental and Natural Resources and her PhD in Entomology (April ’19) in the Vegetable Entomology Laboratory from Michigan State University. During her PhD studies she conducted research on various vegetable crops on cooperating farms, organized extension field days, taught undergraduate lab courses and supervised scouting for invasive pests on sponsored grant research.

The SWNYDLFC Program is the newest Cornell Cooperative Extension regional program and covers Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, and Steuben Counties. The team’s regional specialists work with Cornell faculty and Extension educators to address issues that impact the agricultural industry in New York by offering educational programming and research based information to agricultural producers, growers, and agribusinesses in the Southwestern NY Region.

Katelyn Walley-Stoll, the SWNYDLFC team’s Business Management Specialist, will be working on programming related to financial management, business summaries, production economics, business planning, and market analysis while also working to identify the needs of the region. She grew up on a dairy farm in Walton, NY that is still operated by her family. She earned her Bachelor’s Degree in Animal Science and Agribusiness Management from Cornell University and her Master’s Degree in Adult Learning from SUNY Empire State College. Joshua Putman has joined the team as a Field Crops Specialist. He has a B.S. degree from Wilmington College of Ohio in Agronomy, and a M.S. degree from Kansas State University in Weed Science, where he studied Palmer amaranth control. He also has several years’ experience in crop-related agribusiness in New York State.

Afterschool and pantry classes learn that veggies are good

Watkins Glen Elementary School after-school programs have become active partners with Finger Lakes Eat Smart New York (FLESNY) in promoting healthy eating and physical activity for students. Kids recently tried a Broccoli Raisin Salad adapted from Food Hero as part of the Farm-to-School initiative, and it was a big hit. Using the CATCH curriculum as a springboard, Nutritionists Joan Martin and Debbi Fry, Environmental Nutritionist Sarah Hess, and Farm-to-School Coordinator Ainsley Robbins set up a table in front of a set of windows framed the school’s garden. The FLESNY staff shared the importance of healthy vegetables with over 500 students and staff members. Assistant Principal Rhonda Underhill got in on the act as well, serving samples of the broccoli recipe and encouraging kids to try it as they lined up for the cafeteria.

Many kids were willing to try a sample of the broccoli recipe and vote for one of three options: “I love it,” “Maybe,” or “No, Thank You.” The “I love it” category was the clear winner. We heard some great kid comments, too, like “I’ll vote for it’s amazing!” “This is absolutely delicious!” “My mouth waters every time I walk by; can I have some more?” And finally, “This could be dessert.”

FLESNY Nutritionists Jon Sterlace and Austin Nichols, and CCE Steuben Farm to School Coordinator, Ainsley Robbins, provided joint educational workshops on adding more vegetables to your diet and how to start a container garden to grow your own vegetables and herbs at home. We offered 11 workshops for 68 people to a variety of audiences including food pantries clients and volunteers from Painted Post, Woodhull, Corning, and Hornell, members of the Steuben County DSS Mobile Work Unit in Bath, 4-H youth and their parents, and a group of developmentally challenged students and support staff in the Hornell Senior High School.

EFNEP celebrates 50th anniversary

Over the last 50 years more than a half million children in New York have benefited from the Expanded Food Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), a federal program delivered through Cornell Cooperative Extension that helps families with limited resources learn how to eat healthy meals on a budget and lead active healthy lives.

To celebrate the milestone, 200 educators from across the state, including CCE-Steuben Nutrition Educator Pat Lampthier, gathered in Ithaca in June for a conference.

The program sees savings of $10 in health costs for every EFNEP dollar invested and approximate savings of $5 in food costs for every dollar spent.

This spring Lampthier has worked with FLESNY educators to promote healthy eating and an active lifestyle to a number of groups including 4-H members. The program has taken participants into the local grocery stores and helped them learn how to choose the best foods for their families.
Fairground horse stalls overhauled

This spring, 4-H volunteers, leaders, parents and youth began work on revitalizing the 4-H horse facilities at the Steuben County Fairground. The stalls, original to the fairgrounds, were in desperate need of repair for safety of the horses and youth. With nearly 35 stalls, it was no small task.

Over the span of several work days – and hundreds of community service hours, youth and adults completed the first 10 stalls by the June 9 4-H Qualifying Horse Show! The goal is to complete all 25 sponsored stalls by the 2019 Steuben County Fair. Besides addressing major safety concerns, the youth made new friends, learned important life skills and gained a strong sense of ownership and pride in their work to reach the project goals.

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Steuben County is the only county from western New York that sends youth representatives to this event. It is our hope to continue to support this event for our youth to receive this once in a lifetime experience. If you’d like to sponsor or donate towards this experience, please call 607-664-2300.

(Continued from Page 1) The memorable portion of my trip was being able to connect with other 4-Hers from around the United States and learn how 4-H functions around them."

Victoria echoed, “Citizenship-Washington Focus may be my favorite 4-H trip that I have been on. It was amazing to see the Capitol, the White House, and numerous monuments, but I also greatly enjoyed our mock 4-H Congress. We practiced writing bills, debating, reviewing and rewriting, and holding a Congressional session. The memories of the history I experienced, the lessons I learned, and the people I met will definitely remain with me for years to come.”

Lastly, Laura shared, “Citizen Washington Focus is an amazing trip! 4-H’ers spend a week in Washington DC learning about our nation’s legislative branch - conducting their own congressional session, as they learn how to write, revise, question, and vote on the bills they write. In addition to their hands-on learning, participants visit with New York State representatives, sharing with them their experiences in 4-H and its impact on their lives. Sightseeing tours into our nation’s capital highlight the history of our country and the impact of that history on our government today. It has been a fantastic week, watching our future leaders impact the world today!”

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