

JANUARY 2020 AGRICULTURE REPORT

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Sullivan County



WORKSHOPS/EVENTS

- **February 24th:** Food Safety Modernization Act Training Workshop at the Catskills Food Hub
- **March 19th:** Wholesale Success for Vegetable & Produce Farms
- **March:** NYS Grown & Certified & NOFA Organic Certification Program
- **April 1st:** Agriculture Career and Job Fair at SUNY Sullivan
- **April 2nd:** New Farm Labor Laws: Adapting your Labor Strategies

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

Staff assisted producers and partners with the following:

- **Beginner Farmer:** In January, staff have continued to assist with inquiries in the areas of sheep and goat, vegetable production, funding opportunities, agriculture assessment, hemp production, and poultry production.
- **Farm Assistance:** 75 inquiries through phone and email, 8 in person technical assistance. Assistance includes lab testing, pesticide certification, farm food safety, and agriculture assessment information.
- **Agri-Business Revolving Loan Fund:** The month of January yielded 2 inquires regarding funding opportunities. Staff will continue to respond to farmers with identifying funding and working on business planning.
- **Farm Business Planning:** Staff are currently working with 2 farmers to develop and assist with business plans around products such as vegetable production and small scale dairy operation.
- **Farmland Preservation:** Staff are working to implement the NYS Ag and Market Farmland Implementation grant program for Hilly Acres Farm. Staff have been working with DHC to develop the contracts and partner agreements for the projects. Staff have been very busy working with the Sullivan County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board this month. The board recently met to review farmland preservation projects, create a new farmland preservation priority farmland list and recommend a new farmer appointment to the board. The board anticipates working with CCE Sullivan and the Planning Department to offer a Legislative Farm Tour in May.

CATSKILLS KITCHEN FOOD INCUBATOR PROGRAM

We received 15 inquiries/technical assistance through phone, email and in-person contacts. We have 11 users in the kitchen making a variety of products such as value added products and prepared foods.

We are in the process of implementing the USDA Rural Business Grant program to further expand the Catskills Teaching Kitchen. As part of the project, CCE is undergoing major renovations and anticipate a ribbon cutting in April. These renovations will entail advanced learning technology, enhanced classroom space and a renovated teaching kitchen. As part of the business incubator portion of the project, we have offered 15 Food Business workshops in 2019 on topics such as social media marketing, business planning, licensing and permitting.



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USDA FOOD SAFETY OUTREACH PROGRAM

CCE Sullivan recently received a \$96,000 grant to assist farmers with compliance under the Food Safety Modernization Act. As part of the Food Safety Outreach Project, CCE staff are developing food safety and wholesale workshops for farmers. Workshop topics include Farm Food Safety Training, Food Safety Plan writing, NYS Grown & Certified, NOFA Organic Certification, Wholesale recordkeeping, packaging and labeling and farm employee hygiene.

USDA Farmers Market Promotion Project

CCE Sullivan is currently developing a plan to provide training on food licensing and safety, marketing, branding, customer service and product display. In addition, a marketing and advertising plan will be developed which will entail creating a wide range of marketing materials, website/branding development for both individual farmers' markets and the Sullivan Catskills Farmers' Market branding initiative and general educational outreach on buying local. Staff are currently in the process of developing a business plan for the Sullivan Fresh Mobile Market and Farmers Market 2020 season. As part of the project, CCE staff and farmers market managers are attending the NYS Farmers Market Federation Training in March.

STAFF TRAINING, OUTREACH & MEETINGS

- CCE staff attended Congressman Delgado's Ag advisory meeting. 30 attendees from across the district highlighted agricultural issues and challenges.
- CCE staff attended the Cornell Small Farms training on pasture grazing, beekeeping and sheep management.
- CCE staff attended the USDA Value Added Funding workshop in Dutchess County. As part of this workshop, CCE are providing technical assistance to two farms who are interested in applying for this grant.
- Staff attended the NYS Agriculture Society Conference in Syracuse. The conference discussed the economic state of agriculture and the new Farm Labor laws. The Commissioner of the NYS Agriculture and Markets delivered the State of Agriculture address at this conference.
- CCE staff attended the Cornell Cooperative Extension Legislative Outreach Day in Albany, where lawmakers engaged with interactive displays highlighting CCE-led initiatives