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OPEN FOR BUSINESS: CCE Impact Continues During COVID-19



CCE has always been about community, and while our capacity to serve the public during a global pandemic didn't decrease...it certainly *changed*. During these uncertain times, CCE plays a more vital role than ever before in Oneida County. We remain the constant and valued resource for the agricultural community, for schools, for childcare providers, and for families always seeking new information to keep their households healthy and stable. Therefore, focusing on nutrition, agriculture, and youth as we work through COVID-19 changes is critical. Take a look at the program summaries that follow. Whether we're talking farmers, food, child care, or children's minds, the numbers speak for themselves, CCE staff demonstrated amazing capacity despite shutdown to rally within days — sometimes *hours* — as needs changed and emerged. I am especially confident that we have again proven our adaptability and our value to the residents and businesses of Oneida County. On behalf of all at CCE, a special thanks to you — our County legislators — for *your* service and support of our efforts to improve quality of life for those who call Oneida County *home*. — *Mary Beth McEwen, Executive Director*

AGRICULTURE / AG ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

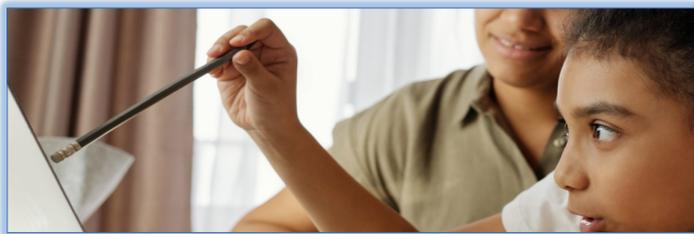
...a farmer to CCE: *"Thanks. I can always count on you."* - *Bob Pawlowski, ZENNYLL Farms, Verona NY*

Oneida County farms experienced huge economic setbacks in 2020 as revenues diminished with the closures of schools, restaurants, and food processing plants. Here are *just a few* Q2 Ag accomplishments during COVID-19:

- ◆ **2552:** protective masks *plus* **640** gallons of hand sanitizer distributed to farmers;
- ◆ **65:** business guidance consultations and **45** agronomist visits conducted for Oneida farms;
- ◆ **5:** new-to-CCE farms requesting soil health / land management assistance;
- ◆ **20:** one-on-one consultations by Livestock educators to address on-farm challenges;
- ◆ **316,000:** individuals reached through CCE's 'Save-Our-Farms' public outreach and t-shirt campaign, launched via social marketing and www.cceoneida.com to shed awareness on our farmers' COVID plight;
- ◆ **\$50,000:** total of two USDA SNAP grants received for urban micro-farming and a Somali Bantu Farm Market in Utica;
- ◆ **68:** participants completing **4** Ag Business Education programs offered virtually — Aspiring Farmers Academy, QuickBooks, RISE (Retirees in Service to Environment), and "Farm-to-Market" for value-added product development.



4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT / AG IN THE CLASSROOM: Keeping Kids Connected During COVID-19



"The importance of agriculture is overlooked...I want my students to have outside opportunities with programs that spark interest and encourage engagement...I will continue to work with Mary Ellen {at CCE} to bring more agriculture lessons to my classroom and students." — *Kristen Calidonna, 3rd Grade Teacher, Sauquoit Valley Central Schools*

- ◆ **263:** students completing **5** virtual 'Ag in the Classroom' lessons developed for Clinton/New Hartford/Sauquoit schools;
- ◆ **4:** 'Reading Wednesday' video events conducted to enable teachers to incorporate agriculture into their curriculum;
- ◆ **1800:** hours of 4H community service this year, including sewing and donating masks during COVID-19;
- ◆ **6:** virtual "Mom, I'm Bored" lessons created for home-study in plant science, recycling, STEM, agriculture, reading, art.

VOLUNTEER MASTER GARDENERS PROGRAM GROWS & GOES VIRTUAL

As requests for classes have *increased* with gardening on the rise during home confinement, CCE's Master Gardeners also had to develop new ways to reach patrons. VMG went *virtual* logging *record numbers* of course registrations:

- ◆ **433:** registrations received for **6** online horticultural workshops.

HEALTH / NUTRITION / PUBLIC MARKET

- ◆ **\$9,257:** American Heart Association grant funds received to introduce *new* consumer education services at the Oneida County Public Market, and *increased* family nutrition tours at area grocery stores;
- ◆ **26:** professionals from **15** agencies completing Obesity Prevention Training;
- ◆ **22:** day care providers completing training on the future importance of physical activity and wellness to kids;
- ◆ **1407:** individuals reached via monthly newsletters focused on nutrition & COVID-19 resources;



- ◆ **800:** digital nutrition education packets requested by **7** community business partners for distribution to their own SNAP-ED eligible clients.

CHILD CARE COUNCIL & COVID RELIEF

- ◆ **40:** families* receiving a total of **\$23,476** assistance after CCE received two emergency foundation grants to provide child care scholarships for families in need due to COVID;
- ◆ **95:** families* receiving a total of **\$151,564** assistance after CCE was designated to disburse federal "CARES ACT" stimulus funds for child care across **3** counties*;
- ◆ **495:** COVID-19 health & safety kits valued at **\$137,000** distributed to providers* during **8** drive-through giveaways;
- ◆ **18:** 'Town Hall Calls' held in collaboration w/ NYS reps, enabling providers to ask pandemic-related questions;
- ◆ **292:** providers received **40** newsletters during COVID to keep them connected; subscriptions increased **21%** during shutdown.

*(The Child Care Council Serves Oneida/Herkimer/Madison Counties)

