CCE Cortland Behind the Scenes

We may be heading into the cold month of February but CCE Cortland has been busy identifying and addressing the needs of our farming community. We have many events, programs, and initiatives scheduled throughout the upcoming year, including a **Lambing and Kidding Workshop** scheduled for Saturday, February 6th, 10 - 11:30 am (register [here](#)).

We also have a **Virtual Open Farm Days** (together with CCE Tompkins) scheduled for early March with a focus on value-add producers that use locally sourced produce, dairy, and grain - highlighting Cortland's very-own **Food & Ferments**, and our second **Cortland Ag-Coffee Hour** of the year titled "How are YOU?" with Kate Downes from NYFarmNet on March 17th from 6:30 - 8:00 pm (register [here](#)).

We've recently gotten involved in a statewide effort to address solar-siting in our communities - of course, our interest is centered around how it affects agriculture in Cortland County. In order to address YOUR solar-siting concerns we'd love to hear from you. Please consider taking a quick 5 minutes to fill out [this questionnaire](#).
Sign-up for our Ag Alert texting system. Emails are often overlooked, and when important information comes around (such as the new labor law or the livestock law that was discussed in the recent past) people need a way to learn about these pertinent items quickly and efficiently. A text alert system has been developed to meet that goal, but you must sign-up to receive them. To sign up please fill out this questionnaire (you do not need to fill out everything if you don’t want to, but to get the text alerts we at least need your cellphone number and service provider).

Of course one of my (Dana) favorite aspects of my work with CCE Cortland is meeting you - our farmers! I enjoy learning and hearing about what you do, and more importantly what you need. So thank you to everyone who I’ve had the opportunity to talk with and learn from. If you haven’t heard from me please do reach out, I’d love to hear about you and your farm or farm-related business. You can reach Dana at (607)391-2664 or via email at dmh353@cornell.edu

The new year also means, for many of you, the start of a new farm account book. We have plenty in the office (beef, farm, and dairy) so don't hesitate to contact us if you need a need account book for the new year

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January Highlights from CCE Cortland

- Hosted the January Ag Coffee Hour: Farmland Leasing with Jerry LeClar from NYFarm
- More videos have been added to the CCE Cortland - Ag YouTube Channel (check it out [here](#))
  - Visit Main Street Farm ([tour, Q&A](#))
  - [Farmland Leasing Coffee Hour Presentation & nyfarmlandfinder.org review](#)
- Working with a statewide team to develop an up-to-date list of slaughter and processing facilities in NYS and related programming to help increase packer capacity in NYS.
- Working with a statewide team to address ag-related solar issues (please share your thoughts on Ag & Solar in Cortland County [here](#))
- Started the inaugural Cortland County 4-H feeder calf project with 11 4-Hers taking part!!!!
- Planning for the 2021 Ag Literacy Program with 23 Cortland County 2nd grade classes signed-up to participate.
- Collected a variety of articles and farmer-funding opportunities listed at the bottom of this email
- ...and much more in the works that we will share as time goes by!

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Other Cortland County Ag-related organization news
CCE Cortland is not the only organization in Cortland County that serves the farm community and we want to do our best to keep you up to date on some of the other institutions in our community working for you!

**Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District** (follow on Facebook). Landowners filing for an agricultural assessment in 2021 must file applications with their local assessor by **March 1st**. To complete an application, landowners must have a Soil Group Worksheet (SGW) prepared by the SWCD for each tax parcel they intend to enroll. Landowners who have previously had a worksheet completed for a tax parcel do not need a new one unless ownership, acreage, or land use has changed.

Landowners participating in the program for the first time, or those who need a revised worksheet, should contact the Cortland County SWCD office by **February 15th**. When calling have the tax map number, address/location, and acreage for each parcel available. This information can be found on the most recent tax bill. A fee of $50.00 will be charged for each worksheet.

For new applications, the form RP-305 must also be filled out and given to your local assessor. This form can be found on the internet and is available under “Exemptions” on the Cortland County Real Property Tax Services webpage. To remain eligible, a renewal form RP-305r must be filed annually. Contact your local assessor or the Cortland County Real Property Tax Services office at (607)753-5040 for information about the assessment process, eligibility criteria, or your property information. Contact SWCD to make an appointment for your Soil Group Worksheet at (607) 756-5991.

**Seven Valleys Health Coalition** (follow on Facebook)
Interested in reaching local market channels? The website [buylocalfoodny.org](http://buylocalfoodny.org) is a new online directory for local food that lets customers easily find your business. The website allows producers to list products, seasonal availability, and where to customers can purchase farm products. To create a profile, please contact Seven Valleys Health Coalition at grace@sevenvalleyshealth.org or 607-756-4198.

**Cortland County Farm Bureau** (Follow on Facebook)
The Cortland Farm Bureau Board is looking forward to 2021 as our community slowly pushes beyond the 2020 challenges with COVID19. We still need to stay safe and be careful, but there is room for optimism as we look towards spring and another growing season. The State Farm Bureau worked tirelessly to gain a year of study from the State Wage Board before considering moving the overtime threshold from 60 hours per week to 40 hours per week. The issue will be reviewed again in November. That State Annual Meeting was held virtually this year and resolutions from across the state were discussed and voted upon to develop the initiatives the state level staff will work on this year. Locally, our Board is planning to host a Virtual Ag Trivia event in late February as a one year replacement for our annual Ag Trivia Dinner. Keep an eye out for more details soon. Local Farm Bureau Scholarships are also available to high school seniors. Email Jeff at jap255@cornell.edu for an application. Everyone work at keeping healthy as we approach sapping season and maple syrup as a first step towards spring!

Jeff Perry, President, Cortland Farm Bureau

**USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)** offers voluntary programs to eligible landowners and agricultural producers to provide financial and technical assistance to help manage natural resources in a sustainable manner. Through these programs, the agency approves contracts to provide financial assistance to help plan and implement conservation practices that address natural resource concerns or opportunities to help save energy, improve soil, water, plant, air, animal, and related resources on agricultural lands and non-industrial private forest land.

If you would like more information about opportunities with NRCS, please contact your local Cortland NRCS Service Center at 607-753-0851 ext. 3.

We have a [Farm Service Agency office (USDA-FSA)](https://www.fsa.usda.gov) in Cortland County. The mission of FSA is to "serve farmers, ranchers, and agricultural partners through the delivery of federal agricultural programs". You can find their contact information [here](https://www.fsa.usda.gov).
January Cortland Ag-Coffee Hour Recap
- Farmland Leasing with Jerry LeClar from NYFarmNet -

On the evening of Wednesday, January 20th from 6:30 - 7:30, CCE Cortland hosted the first Cortland Ag-Coffee Hour of the year with Farm Consultant Jerry LeClar. Jerry has years of experience working with farmers throughout NYS on a variety of topics, starting in Ag Education, then extension, and finally as a FarmNet consultant. The hour+ presentation and conversation was filled with information on how and what to consider when leasing farmland. After Jerry went over key points to consider, Dana, the CCE Cortland Ag Team Leader, reviewed nyfarmlandfinder.org, a website produced and maintained by Farmland for a New Generation and American Farmland Trust.

Want to connect with a NY FarmNet consultant? call (800)547-FARM or web NYFarmNet.org

You can find the recording of this Ag-Coffee Hour or on our CCE Cortland Ag YouTube page

Items of Interest and Other News

Join the Farmer-to-Farmer (Ithaca Area) Discussion Group
This is an information exchange page for the commercial farming community in and around Ithaca. To join the group, please message an administrator, and answer a few questions about why you wish to join, your location and the type of farming you do. Please note that the members are screened solely for farming interest and membership does not reflect an endorsement of their goods or services. All members should exercise reasonable caution when interacting within the group just as you would with anyone you meet whom you do not know.

Looking for Forage - Check out the CCE NYS Forage Exchange
Find & sell corn & hay and other miscellaneous forage.

What's the Story with Ag Worker COVID Vaccine in NYS?
(reposted CCE IPM listserve)

The CDC defines frontline essential workers as the subset of essential workers likely at the highest risk for work-related exposure to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 because their work-related duties must be performed on-site and involves being in close proximity (<6 feet) to the public or to coworkers. ACIP has classified the following non–health care essential workers as frontline workers: first responders (e.g., firefighters and police officers), corrections officers, food and agricultural workers, U.S. Postal Service workers, manufacturing workers, grocery store workers, public transit workers, and those who work in the education sector (teachers and support staff members) as well as child care workers. A tiered approach for essential workers builds on the occupations identified by the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine for early vaccination (4). https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm695152e2.htm#T1_down

Keep up-to-date as NYS distributes the COVID vaccine by visiting this website: https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/

Second Round of PPP Loans
(reposted from SBA)

SBA, in consultation with the U.S. Treasury Department, reopened the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) for First Draw PPP Loans the week of January 11, 2021. SBA began accepting applications for Second Draw PPP Loans on January 13, 2021.

USDA Extends the Harmonized GAP Assistance Program
(reposted from Morning Ag Clips)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has extended the USDA Harmonized Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Assistance Program to remain available to eligible producers until all allocated funds are depleted. The program helps fruit and vegetable growers in 16 states enhance

USDOL Releases H-2A Final Rule
(reposted from Farm Bureau)

The DOL released a H-2A final rule that made several adjustments to the visa program. The final rule mandates electronic filing of job orders and applications. Additionally, it provides the ability to stagger the entry of workers into the country over a 120-day period and allows agricultural employers the flexibility to file a single application for different dates of need instead of multiple applications. It allows H-2A employers a 14-day arrival window; creates new standards applicable to rental housing and public accommodations; allows state workforce agencies to inspect housing every twenty-four months; increases surety bond requirements. A full copy of the rule can be found here.
market access by paying the cost of user fees for voluntary audits.

**Trends in Organics Sales and Products**  
(reposted from Penn State University)

The 2019 organic survey results were recently announced from the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and the Organic Trade Association’s (OTA) industry survey. Steady growth rates continued as national sales of all organic products increased 31% (or $2.4 billion) since 2016, allowing total U.S. organic sales to surpass $55 billion for the first time.

**USDA Provides 1.6M to NYS Ag Resources**  
(reposted from Morning Ag Clips)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is allocating $1.6 million to New York as part of its effort to strengthen the nation’s infrastructure for pest detection and surveillance, identification, and threat mitigation, and to safeguard the nursery production system. Overall, USDA is providing more than $70 million in funding this year to support 383 projects in 49 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, and Puerto Rico. USDA provides this funding under the authority of the Plant Protection Act Section 7721.

**Caterpillar Tunnels and Soil Health**  
(reposted from Sustainable Farming Association)

Growing in a covered space seems to be a trend for many local vegetable growers and there is good reason in our northern climate. To help measure the soil health both inside and outside of a caterpillar tunnel, farmers can use a soil health report card with four easy soil health tests.

Here are a series of reports from Sarah Lindblom of Solar Fresh Produce in Buffalo, MN, who received a Mill City Farmer Market Next Stage Grant to study and demonstrate caterpillar tunnels.

**Thinking of Starting a Red Meat Packing Plant in NYS?**  
(reposted from Cornell Beef Management Blog)

This webinar laid out some of the primary considerations for opening a red meat slaughter and processing facility, from infrastructure to regulations and from labor to financing. Presenter Marty Broccoli of Cornell Cooperative Extension in Oneida County has 40 years of experience in the meat packing industry, and provides technical assistance for new plants in NY. Keith Schrader is a long-time beef farmer who owns Schrader Farms Meat Market, a USDA slaughterhouse in Romulus, NY. Both will share key tips and lessons learned, with ample time for Q&A.

**Utility-Scale Solar - What You Should Know**  
(reposted from SWNY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Team)

In March of 2020, Gov. Cuomo announced in his State of the State address an ambitious goal of 70% of the state’s electricity needs would be generated via renewable means by 2030. Under this Green New Deal, the mandate increases to 100% by 2040. As a result, coal-fired plants will be idled while more wind and solar projects will be initiated. For you, as a holder of large tracts of open land, that may mean that you will be visited by landmen seeking to lease all or a portion of that land to use for constructing a solar array. Understand, this is not a couple of dozen panels up on the barn roof generating a few kilowatts, but acres of panels on the ground generating several megawatts of electricity. This is not necessarily a bad thing as it reduces carbon emissions and may provide a secondary income stream for you, especially if it is placed on marginal land or land not currently in productive use. That said, in order for this to be a benefit and not a detriment you need to go into it with your head up and your eyes open.
Upcoming Workshops

**Part-time Farmer Tax School**  
(re-posted from CCE Capital Area Ag & Hort Program)  
January 28th 6:30 - 9  
Online

When it comes to taxes, do you have any of these questions?

- How much farm income do I need to make to be able to deduct it on my taxes?
- What form(s) do I need to complete?
- What, if any, tax management strategy should I have for my farm business?

Dayton Maxwell and Steve Hadcock will be prepared to answer these and other tax related questions for you during this meeting. Steve and Dayton will not only discuss income tax concepts, they will also cover Agricultural Value Assessment, Building Exemptions, sales tax regulations and Farmers School Tax Credit.

**Agricultural Exemptions for NYS Farmers**  
(re-posted from CCE Broome)  
February 2nd, 7 pm  
Online

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County in partnership with Farmland for the New Generation New York will present a workshop on Agricultural Exemptions for NYS Farmers. On February 2nd at 7:00 p.m. come and learn about a variety of agricultural tax abatement and incentive programs available to you!

**Plant Production Lunch and Learn Series**  
(re-posted from UNH Extension)  
Tuesdays Feb 2nd to March 30th, 12 - 1 pm  
Online

The UNH Cooperative Extension Landscape and Greenhouse Team is hosting a Plant Production lunch and learn webinar series. You can attend as many or as few as you like. Register and select the sessions you would like to attend. You will receive an email with a link to the webinar.

**Onboarding & Training Farm Employees with Google Classroom**  
(re-posted from Cornell Ag Workforce Management)  
Feb 3rd, 11am  
Online

Have you ever wished there was a better way to organize paperwork, training materials, and business information to share with new employees? Could your farm provide a better employee onboarding experience if more than one person had access to the onboarding materials?

**Value-add producer grant (VAPG) program**  
(re-posted from CNY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Team)  
Feb 3rd, Feb. 17th, March 3rd, 6:00 - 7:30 pm  
Online

Feb 3rd - What is VAPG?  
Feb 17th - How do I apply for VAPG?  
March 3rd - How are VAPG applications selected for funding?

**Value-add producer grant (VAPG) - Where to Start**  
(re-posted from Penn State Extension)  
Feb 4th, 10 - 11 am  
Online
Thinking about applying for a USDA Value-Added Grant? Join Extension staff and Karen Kuhns, Area Specialist Value-Added Producer Grant Program Coordinator for Value Added Grants - Where to Start; a presentation on eligibility and grant details, including food, fiber, and wood projects.

FSA Fridays
(re-posted from USDA)
Fridays in February from 12 - 1 pm
Online
Each Friday in February learn about different FSA programs and services available to you.

Lambing & Kidding Part 1: Online Presentation
(re-posted from CCE Cortland Co.)
Saturday, February 6th, 10 - 11:30 am
Online
With lambing and kidding season upon us, it is time to brush-up on lambing and kidding knowledge so that you can properly respond to needs that arise this season.

Join CCE Cortland, and Cornell University researcher Dr. Niko Kochendoerfer for Lambing and Kidding Part 1: Presentation & Discussion (with ample time given for Q&A and discussion).

Practical Soil Health Workshops
(re-posted from SCNY Dairy and Field Crops Team)
Feb 9th - March 2nd, 12:30 - 1:45 pm
Online
Cornell Cooperative Extension’s South Central NY Dairy & Field Crops Team offers an online meeting series starting February 9 and ending March 2. The program features practical management recommendations for enhancing soil health in field crop production.

1 DEC pesticide recertification credit will be earned on February 9 in categories 1A and 21. CCA credits will be available for all sessions. There is a single $10 charge on February 16 for Compaction Reduction and Remediation. Pre-registration is required by February 7, 2021.

Direct Marketing Beef Webinar Series
(re-posted from NY Beef Council)
02/11, & 03/11 7 - 8pm
Online
Join NYBC’s Executive Director, Jean O'Toole for a series of workshops discussing important topics in marketing your beef locally. Gain a better understanding of working with your processor, beef cuts and cooking, and learn about the beef marketing resources available!

Meat Processing Training Certificate
(re-posted from SUNY Cobleskill)
May - June 2021
We are happy to announce that we are planning to run the Meat Processing and Food Safety Certificate Program May 17 – June 11, 2021. This is contingent on the status of COVID-19. There will certainly be specific protocols that will need to be followed but those we will establish as we get closer to the start of the course.

Refresher on Beef Stocker Enterprise
(re-posted from Cornell Beef Management Blog)
Ongoing
Online
Many of you may be thinking about running Stockers this summer. An excellent set of resources including videos
and handouts are available at on the Cornell Beef Blog under “Stocker Cattle. This Stocker Short Course was made possible by a grant from NYS Ag and Markets. For market information, go to the “Market Info” Tab.

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**Funding Opportunities**

**Farmer Veteran Fellowship Fund**  
(re-posted from Farmer Veteran Association)  
applications due Feb. 14th

The Farmer Veteran Fellowship Fund is a small grant program that provides direct assistance to veterans who are in their beginning years of farming or ranching. The Fellowship Fund does not give money directly to the veteran, but rather to third-party vendors for items the veteran has identified will make a crucial difference in the launch of their farm business. Awards range from $1,000 to $5,000, and nearly $3 million has been awarded to veterans since 2011.

**Quality Loss Assistance Now Available for Eligible Producers Affected by 2018, 2019 Natural Disasters**  
(re-posted from USDA)  
due March 5th

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) today announced that signup for the Quality Loss Adjustment (QLA) Program will begin Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2021. Funded by the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020, this new program provides assistance to producers who suffered eligible crop quality losses due to natural disasters occurring in 2018 and 2019. The deadline to apply for QLA is Friday, March 5, 2021.

**National Grid Agricultural Discount**  
(re-posted from National Grid)  
on-going

The Residential Agricultural Discount Program is an electricity rate discount applied to the electricity delivery charge, available since September 1, 2014, to eligible National Grid residential agricultural customers, as a result of funding through the New York Power Authority (NYPA) ReCharge New York program.

**NRCS - EQIP On-Farm Energy Initiative**  
(re-posted from NRCS)  
on-going

Financial assistance is available to inventory and analyze farm systems that use energy and identify opportunities to improve efficiency through the development of an Agricultural Energy Management Plan (AgEMP). The AgEMP, or energy audit, is completed by NRCS-certified Technical Service Providers (TSPs) and provides:

- Itemized energy use by individual systems to establish a baseline for electricity and other fuel improvements,
- Recommendations for equipment improvements and upgrades,
- Potential energy reductions and financial savings for each recommendation
- Cost estimates of potential improvements, and
- Length of expected payback for energy efficiency upgrades

**NRCS - EQIP High Tunnel System Initiative**  
(re-posted from NRCS)
A High Tunnel System, commonly called a “hoop house,” is an increasingly popular conservation practice for farmers, and is available with financial assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). With high tunnel systems, no summer is too short or winter too cold because high tunnels:

- Extend the growing season
- Improve plant quality and soil quality
- Reduce nutrient and pesticide transportation
- Improve air quality through reduced transportation inputs
- Reduce energy use by providing consumers with a local source of fresh produce

**National Rollover Protective Structure (rollbar) Rebate Program**  
(re-posted from ROPS4U)  
rolling rebate opportunity

"The National ROPS Rebate Program (NRRP) is a voluntary program that provides rebates for approximately 70%* of the cost of purchasing and installing a ROPS (Rollover Protective Structure; rollbar) kit. This rebate covers the ROPS kit (rollbar and seatbelt), shipping, and professional installation, if desired"

**Farm Storage Facility Loans**  
(re-posted from USDA-FSA)

FSA's Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program provides low-interest financing to producers to build or upgrade storage facilities and to purchase portable (new or used) structures, equipment and storage and handling trucks.

**Farm Credit East Grants & Incentives for NE Agriculture Report**  
(re-posted from Farm Credit East)

This is a comprehensive list of grants and other incentives for agriculture throughout the northeast, including NY State, where you can find funding opportunities by state or by region.

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