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**Cornell Cooperative Extension
Essex County**

CCE ESSEX NOW OFFERING FREE KIDS PROGRAM AT LAKE PLACID AND SARANAC LAKE FARMERS' MARKETS

Power of Produce Club Begins for the Third Year

June 25, 2021

Lewis, NY - Starting this week [Cornell Cooperative Extension \(CCE\) of Essex County](#) will be hosting free activities for children at the Lake Placid and Saranac Lake farmers' markets through the season. The program is called the Power of Produce (POP) Club and aims to get kids excited about fresh, local fruits and vegetables, local food systems, and science topics related to agriculture through a series of fun activities. Each week at the Lake Placid and Saranac Lake Farmers' Markets, Essex County CCE volunteers will be offering kids an opportunity to taste a locally grown fruit or vegetable, participate in an activity, and receive \$5 to choose a fruit or vegetable to purchase.

Every child who participates will receive a POP "passport," where each week they can write about or draw what they taste, their activities and their produce choice. Activities are geared toward children ages 4-10. Some activities that kids have enjoyed in the past and can expect this year are cooking demonstrations, coloring, storytime, composting, vermiculture, scavenger hunts, crafts, meeting farmers, and much more.

The POP Club starts on Wednesday, June 23 for Lake Placid and will run weekly until September 8. For Saranac Lake, the POP Club begins Saturday, June 26, and runs through the market season until October 9. To participate, families can simply stop by the CCE tent located towards the entrance of both markets anytime during market hours, no need to register in advance. The [Lake Placid Farmers' Market](#) is Wednesdays from 10 am to 1 pm in the parking lot of Green Goddess Natural Foods at 2051 Saranac Avenue, and the [Saranac Lake Farmers' Market](#) is Saturdays from 9 am to 1 pm at Riverside Park. Kids are encouraged to join as many weeks as they would like and build out their POP Club "passport," but popping in for one day is always welcome as well.

At the CCE Essex tent, community members can also receive SNAP tokens for use at the farmers' market and find information on local food and agriculture, area farmers' markets schedules, seasonal cooking and cooking on a budget, and resources for using SNAP locally. Starting July 1st, all SNAP purchases up to \$20 are eligible for [Double Up Food Bucks](#)- a dollar-for-dollar matching program. Double Up Food Bucks will allow SNAP participants to purchase twice the amount of produce at the market for the same price.

Carly Summers, the Agriculture Issue Leader of CCE Essex and program lead says, "The Power of Produce (POP) Club is a great way to offer multiple fun and educational opportunities for families at the farmers' market. The goal is to help people feel connected to their local farms and communities in new ways."

Rebecca Williams and Olivia Swanson, two Americorps VISTA volunteers working with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Essex County, will be leading the program, alongside partners at [Adk Action](#), who will be available to register eligible individuals for the [Fair Food Pricing](#) program and provide information about their pollinator project and handing out free pollinator-friendly wildflower seeds. Additionally, the Adk Action team has partnered with Blue Line Compost, so all Compost for Good participants can drop off and swap their compost buckets at the Adk Action tent anytime during market hours.

After last year's POP Club was run virtually, CCE Essex is thankful to be able to return to in-person programs. "We are really excited to get out into the community and start making in-person connections again," said Rebecca Williams. "For many folks, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted just how important supporting local farm businesses is. Many people are becoming more interested in consuming more local, sustainable food, and I am excited to be a part of this team helping inspire kids to get out there and learn where their food comes from."

"Learning to appreciate where your food comes from and what you eat is a lesson that is crucial to learn at a young age, as it can help establish healthy eating habits for the future. It's known that young kids often need to try new foods 5-10 times, but even up to 15, before they like it. To be able to offer exposure and opportunities to taste new foods in a fun and engaging way is a step towards opening kids' minds to trying new things, making healthy choices, and appreciating where food comes from," shares Olivia Swanson.

A huge thank you to our sponsors and partners that support this program, including the Cloudsplitter Foundation, AuSable Valley Grange Farmers' Markets, Farm Credit East, The Well Fed Essex County Collaborative, and Adirondack Farm to School.

The [Power of Produce Club](#) is a nationally recognized children's program designed by the United States Farmers' Market Coalition. It was first developed by a farmers' market in Oregon City in 2011, and since

has become an open-source curriculum for other markets and community organizations to bring to their area. This is the third year CCE Essex will be hosting the Power of Produce Club, with in-person programming in 2019 and virtual programming in 2020. You can read more about the last in-person Essex County [Power of Produce Club in 2019 here.](#)

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About CCE Essex and Adirondack Harvest

The mission of Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) is to enable people to improve their lives and communities through partnerships that put experience and research knowledge to work. Essex County Extension staff and trained volunteers deliver educational programs, conduct applied research, and encourage community collaborations through initiatives like the Master Gardener Program and 4-H.

Adirondack Harvest works to increase opportunities for profitable, sustainable production and sale of high-quality food and agricultural products, and expand consumer choices for locally produced healthy food. Its work covers the greater Adirondack region and northeastern New York State. Learn more at adirondackharvest.com.

[Find more photos and more press materials here.](#)