

Cornell Cooperative Extension Rockland County 2022 Annual Report



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About CCE Rockland Mission

Cornell Cooperative Extension puts knowledge to work in pursuit of economic vitality, ecological sustainability and social well-being. We bring local experience and research-based solutions together, helping New York State families and communities thrive in our rapidly changing world.

Vision

Cornell Cooperative Extension is a national leader in creating positive change on behalf of families and communities through rigorously-tested extension programs. We create measurable change by aligning local needs with the resources and priorities of the land grant system and its state and federal partners.

A Letter from the President of the Board & the Executive Director

Dear Friends of Extension,

In September, we began training our 17th class of Master Gardener volunteers (MGVs). Our first class was offered 40 years ago in 1982 and they have been held every other year since! Incredibly, several people from that first class are still active MG volunteers today. Diane and Bob Leifer lent their expertise in vegetable gardening to our Green Gardener program in the winter. This shouldn't really be surprising because our MG volunteers are some of the most passionate and dedicated volunteers to be found. Our MG volunteers offer a variety of well-attended horticulture programs to libraries and learning centers, oversee gardening programs in schools, tend our own demonstration gardens, and assist visitors to our Horticulture Diagnostic Lab.

Then, in November our 42nd veterinary science program for high school students began with 32 participants. This ever-popular program showcases local veterinarians and other professionals who speak about careers available in taking care of animals. In addition to the regular topics presented, this year included a visit to the Bergen County Horse Rescue Center and the Mercy College Veterinary Technology Department as well as hands-on dissection of owl pellets, sheep hearts, and frogs. It's not unusual to hear from our veterinarians that they started on their journey by attending our Vet Science program!

Complementing our legacy programs are the many single-session programs that are created each year. New presentations are based on the latest research from the Cornell campus, such as wildlife management in the backyard, pollinator-friendly gardens, and spotted lanternfly mitigation.

We hope you enjoy these highlights of 2022. Check out our website and see what we have in store for you in 2023!



Bernadette Connors, Ph.D.
CCE Rockland President
Board of Directors



Suzanne Barclay
CCE Rockland
Executive Director

4-H Development

Animal Science and Care Programs – Few other organizations in the County offer programs where young people can learn about animals. Our popular **4-H Veterinary Science Career Exploration Program** has been presented for over 40 years. This year, 4-H educator Kristin Ruggiero helped 32 high school students explore veterinary science careers, skills, and concepts with local professionals. New this year were visits to Oradell Animal Hospital and Mercy College and dissections of various specimens. The **4-H Beginner Dog Training** led by Fran Hellman of Four Paws Guidance Dog Training was presented in October. Five youths ages 10-17 learned how to read canine body language and communicate with their dogs using a reward marker.

4-H Junior Animal Science returned in September with 12 youths ages 10-13. Youth explored animal science careers by visiting the Threefold Community Farm, Best Friends Pet Hotel, Trailside Museums & Zoo, and Rockland County Sheriff's Mounted Police Unit.

Teen Leadership Rockland, Sponsored by Leadership Rockland and CCE Rockland – During this six-month program, 27 high school sophomores learned to develop leadership skills and connect with peers and community leaders. New partnerships this year included Jawonio, People to People, Orangetown Jewish Center, Rockland County Soil & Water Conservation District, and St. Thomas Aquinas College.

4-H Youth for Climate Action – This year, 19 high school students joined this intensive program including six returning students. From January through June, the members visited sites such as the Eileen Fisher Waste No More Factory, Lamont-Doherty Hudson River Field Station, White Plains Tesla, and Minisceongo Creek. They worked with peers and professionals to develop service projects centered on climate change. Members planted Trees for Tribes, created school gardens, composted, conducted opinion surveys, collected cosmetics to reduce waste, and monitored water quality.

Horses-R-Us 4-H Club - In its second year under new leadership, the Horses-R-Us Club grew from 18 to 27 members. The club participated in a variety of local, regional, state, and national programs including Heritage of West Nyack Fall Festival, Equine Affaire, community service with 13 Hands Equine Rescue, 4-H Public Presentations, YouthFest, and the 4-H Project Evaluation and Showcase Event.

4-H Cornell Career Explorations - From June 28-30, six Rockland County 4-H members attended the annual 4-H Cornell Career Explorations Conference at Cornell University. After being offered virtually for two years, this year's event was an exciting opportunity for the members to explore future education and career opportunities, and experience Cornell University and campus life.



SNAP-Ed New York

What is SNAP-Ed NY? SNAP-Ed is the educational facet of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Rockland nutrition educators Amanda Cappadona and Sonia McGowan reached 1,202 participants in 2022 through 49 direct educational programs. The main messages they convey are 1) save time, save money and eat healthy; 2) say yes to fruits and vegetables, and 3) move more, in any way people are able! Lessons have been slowly shifting back to in-person, but some sites prefer the flexibility of a hybrid or virtual model. Educators can adjust as needed when there are COVID surges.

Rescued EATS (Education, Assessment, and Technical Support) is a SNAP-Ed pilot project designed to reduce food insecurity, fill nutritional gaps, and improve nutrition among those at risk of poor health, chronic disease, and obesity. The Rescued EATS project has included pantry client surveys investigating what happens to fresh produce that clients receive after distribution. This is an area of food insecurity research that is rarely explored and so little data exists on the subject. SNAP Educators were able to collect over 120 surveys across nine Hudson Valley counties, including Rockland County.

Pantry Visits and Recipe Demos - In addition to direct education, SNAP-Ed also provides indirect education to the community through site visits, food demonstrations, and handouts. Nutrition educator Amanda Cappadona visited Mt Kisco Food Pantry, Haverstraw Catholic Charities, and Sloatsburg Food Pantry and provided education materials and recipe demonstrations for pantry recipients.

Statewide School Wellness Summer Symposium 2022

SNAP-Ed hosted a virtual, statewide symposium that took place August 9th-11th. Teachers across New York State attended virtual sessions covering school meals, physical activity in the classroom, youth and family engagement, and more. Amanda Cappadona coordinated the youth and family engagement panels which included speakers from Alliance for a Healthier Generation and local Family Resource Coordinators from East Ramapo Central School District.



Horticulture Education & Master Gardener Volunteers

In 2022 CCE and the Master Gardener Volunteers were thrilled to be able to meet in person and provide horticulture educational programming throughout Rockland County at libraries, community centers, farmers' markets, and public events.

Green Gardener - In February and March, CCE offered the Green Gardener program, a virtual educational gardening series. The program focused on three topics - starting a garden from scratch, organic edible gardening, and native plants. Taught by horticulture educator, Kristen Ossmann and Cornell Master Gardener Volunteers, this series of lecture presentations and interactive assignments offered an in-depth, environmentally focused educational experience that prepared students to create their own sustainable, healthy, and thriving gardens.

Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) - With funding provided by LHPRISM, CCE Rockland was able to partner with Rockland Conservation Service Corp and employ two interns. Victoria McFadden and Patrick Fitzgerald worked closely with horticulture resource educator Kristen Ossmann to provide educational outreach on spotted lanternflies to the Rockland County public. They completed extensive surveying of SLF and its primary plant host, tree of heaven, or *Ailanthus*, recording findings in iMapInvasives. The interns participated in the setup and monitoring of physical traps at the infestation sites throughout the County. Hundreds of spotted lanternflies were trapped and eliminated. Victoria and Patrick created social media content reaching thousands of people. They also created a video tutorial on how to make a trap for catching spotted lanternflies to help Rockland residents manage infestations in their own landscapes.

Master Gardener Volunteer Training – The biannual in-depth Master Gardener Volunteer training began in September with 19 trainees. This training is an extensive 20-week program that covers various horticulture topics such as botany, entomology, composting, small fruit for the home garden, soil health, native plants, and others. Classes are taught by instructors from Cornell University, other CCE associations as well as our horticulture educator and Master Gardener Volunteers. The program provides essential training for Master Gardener Volunteers to learn and become well-versed in horticulture topics that they will then share with the Rockland community.



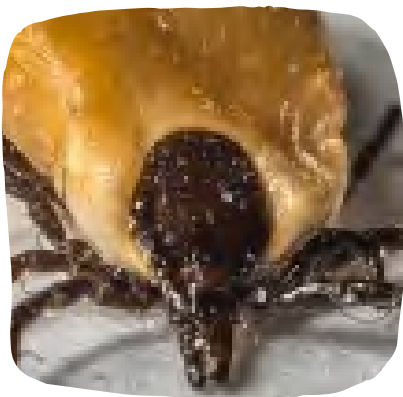
Horticulture Diagnostic Laboratory

Lab Inquiries - The Horticultural Lab handles inquiries for pest and disease problems in conjunction with general gardening questions for ornamental plantings, vegetable gardens, and agricultural crops. During 2022 there was a total of 1,189 inquiries. These inquiries include visitors to the Lab (330), emails (145), and telephone calls (716). Many of the people who called with plant disease problems were advised to bring the sample in for diagnostic identification. A total of 535 fact sheets addressing environmentally safe ways to address horticultural and pest problems was distributed by the Horticultural Lab. Michael Wilson manages the lab assisted by Master Gardener Volunteers.

The most prevalent inquiry in the early spring was related to winter damage to plants. Requests increased for plant identification, soil sampling, and information on vegetable gardening. Early summer resulted in inquiries that related to drought conditions with turf and ornamentals. Rockland experienced a drought and a series of heat waves in June, July, and August and inquiries reflected it. *Thuja* sp. (Arborvitae) was the most common ornamental plant brought into the lab for evaluation. Leaf minor, spider mites, and drought were the prevalent conditions affecting the samples. The drought effects on both ornamentals and turf presented an opportunity to suggest water-wise gardening techniques. There were record-low numbers of ticks during 2022. This could be attributed to the drought which may have affected the population as well as high temperatures which kept many people indoors.

Invasive Species Manual – A guidance manual on how to address invasive species on parkland was created for the Orangetown Parks and Recreation Department. Funded by the Lower Hudson PRISM (Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management), the manual discussed the most prevalent invasive species found in four Town parks and the mitigation methods for managing them.

Fertilizer Law Class – In 2011 Rockland County passed a law to restrict the application of fertilizer to April through November to prevent non-point source water pollution. The Horticulture Lab Manager teaches the Fertilizer Law class once a month to landscapers and contractors in Rockland County. Participants learn when it is legal to apply fertilizer in accordance with the law. To reach participants with limited English, the class is simultaneously translated into Spanish by a Master Gardener Volunteer.



Environmental Education

Stormwater Consortium of Rockland County - The Stormwater Consortium, comprised of all 23 towns and villages in Rockland are managed by environmental educator, Jen Zunino-Smith. The Consortium assists the municipalities to meet their stormwater permit requirements mandated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and to educate the public on stormwater pollution. The Consortium has been working collaboratively to map each municipality's network of stormwater outfalls, catch basins, manholes, and stormwater conveyance pipes to a single, centralized Geographic Information System (GIS) database. Funding from two grant rounds was received from the NYSDEC to enable this work. Combining the stormwater mapping with existing data on water quality will allow us to understand stormwater impacts and trends on Rockland's surface waters.

Stormwater Radio Show - As part of the Consortium's public education work, our Hort Lab Manager, Michael Wilson, hosts the monthly Stormwater Consortium Radio Show on WRCR. In 2022, the themes for the show included the environmental impact of stormwater for the homeowner, green infrastructure, ecological landscaping, rain gardens, Best Management Practices, bio-filtration, and flooding. In the December show, the Lab Manager interviewed the new Special Assistant to the Rockland County Water Task Force to discuss the need for water conservation in Rockland. The Lab also recorded educational sessions on stormwater and pollution for municipalities to comply with the NY stormwater regulations.

CCE Stormwater and Water Quality Education – CCE Rockland's stormwater education webpage is continually updated and includes volunteer and internship opportunities for a range of audiences. The webpage includes an interactive water quality map for Rockland County with data for watershed boundaries, NYSDEC's Water Quality Classifications, and confirmed and suspected Harmful Algal Bloom sites throughout Rockland. The live hydrologic layer shows flow direction across the County. Stormwater education posts are regularly scheduled on CCE Rockland's social media accounts.

Rain Barrels and Compost Bins – CCE Rockland sells rain barrels and compost bins at cost on behalf of Rockland Green. The drought and a rebate from Veolia may have led to record sales in 2022. CCE Rockland continues to promote the use of rain barrels as a way to conserve water used outdoors. The horticulture educator and Master Gardener Volunteers presented a number of workshops to demonstrate how easy and important it is to compost table scraps and yard waste at home to keep material out of landfills.



Our 2022 Community Network

Thank you to our Community Partners!

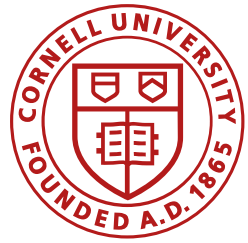
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rockland has partnered with hundreds of nonprofit agencies, organizations and businesses during the past year including:

- Bergen County Horse Rescue
- BRIDGES
- Best Friends Pet Hotel
- CANDLE
- CCE Dutchess County
- CCE Orange County
- CCE Putnam County
- CCE Sullivan County
- CCE Ulster County
- CCE Westchester County
- Center for Safety & Change
- Clarkstown Community Learning Center
- Clarkstown Justice Court
- Clarkstown Police
- Dominican University
- Eileen Fisher Waste No More
- Four Paws Guidance Dog Training
- Garden Club of Nyack
- Hackensack Riverkeeper
- Haverstraw African American Connection
- Haverstraw, Nyack Youth, Spring Valley and Western Ramapo Collaboratives
- Headstart of Rockland
- Jawonio
- Meals on Wheels
- Mercy College
- Keep Rockland Beautiful
- New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- New York State Department of Health
- New York New Jersey Trail Conference
- Nyack Farmers Market
- Nyack Pollinator Pathway
- Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory
- Leadership Rockland
- Oradell Animal Hospital
- Orangetown Jewish Center
- Ramapo Garden Club
- Rockland BOCES
- Rockland Composters
- Rockland Conservation and Service Corps
- Rockland County Division of Environmental Resources
- Rockland County Department of Health
- Rockland County Environmental Educators
- Rockland County Food Pantries: TOUCH, Sloatsburg, People To People, Catholic Charities
- Rockland County Libraries: Blauvelt, Finkelstein, Kings Daughter, Nanuet, New City, Nyack, Orangeburg, Palisades, Pearl River, Piermont, Sloatsburg, Suffern, Rose Memorial, Valley Cottage, West Nyack
- Rockland County School Districts: Clarkstown, Nanuet, North Rockland, Pearl River, South Orangetown, Suffern, Nyack, East Ramapo Central
- Rockland County Sheriffs Mounted Police Unit
- Rockland County Youth Bureau
- Rockland Farm Alliance
- Rockland Green
- Rockland County Human Rights Commission
- Rockland Municipal Planning Federation
- Rockland Sierra Club
- Rockland Teachers Center
- Rockland Veterinarians: County Animal Hospital, Valley Cottage Animal Hospital, North Rockland Animal Hospital, Nanuet Animal Hospital, Spring Valley Animal Hospital, Cat Care Clinic of the Nyacks
- Rockland Works
- Sparkill Creek Watershed Alliance
- St. Thomas Aquinas College
- The Learning Collaborative
- Threefold Community Farm
- Towns of Clarkstown, Haverstraw, Orangetown, Ramapo, and Stony Point
- Trailside Museums & Zoo at Bear Mountain State Park
- United Way
- Upper Nyack Green Committee
- Villages of Airmont, Chestnut Ridge, Grandview-on-Hudson, Haverstraw, Hillburn, Kaser, Montebello, New Hempstead, New Square, Nyack, Piermont, Pomona, Sloatsburg, Spring Valley, Suffern, Upper Nyack, West Haverstraw and Wesley Hills
- White Plains Tesla
- Wickes Arborists
- Wild Woods Restoration Project
- 13 Hands Equine Rescue

2022 Funding

Thank you to our Funders!

- Apple Bank
- Bleakley, Platt & Schmidt, LLP
- Dominican University
- Health Research Inc. (HRI)
- Hudson River Estuary Program
- Lower Hudson PRISM
- Manhattan Beer Distributors
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- New York State Water Resources Institute
- New York/New Jersey Trail Conference
- Onsite Energy Inc.
- Orange and Rockland Utilities
- Rockland County Division of Environmental Resources
- Rockland County Department of Social Services
- Rockland County Youth Bureau
- Rockland Green
- Stormwater Consortium of Rockland County
- Toward a Sustainable Future
- Tractor Supply Company
- Veolia



County

Honorable Edwin J. Day Rockland
County Executive

Honorable Jay Hood, Jr.
Rockland County Legislative Chair

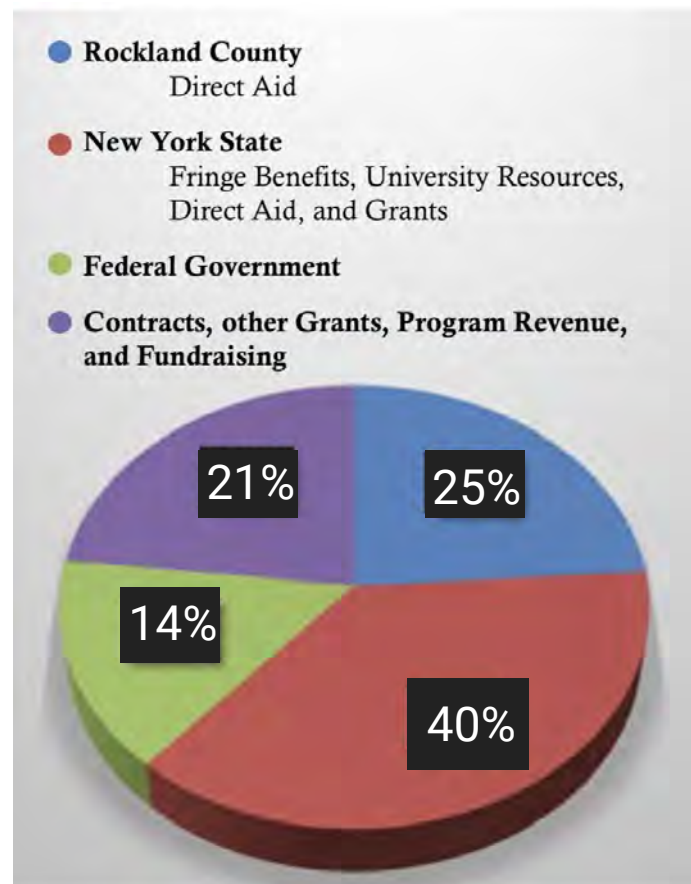
State

State of New York
Cornell University
Dr. Christopher Watkins, Director,
Cornell Cooperative Extension

Federal

United States Department of Agriculture

The County of Rockland, through the Rockland Legislature, provides substantial funding for Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rockland's programs and operations which allows us to leverage state and federal funding.





Help CCE Rockland reach 200 years and beyond

- Be a **Speaker**, share your expertise
- Be an **Advocate**, spread the word
- Be an **Advisor**, help shape our programs in advisory committees
- Be an **Intern**, gain experience and help us reach the community
- Be a **4-H Leader**, shape the next generation
- Be a **Master Gardener Volunteer**, keep Rockland growing
- Be an **Environmental Steward**, keep Rockland healthy
- Be a guide for **Youth**, educate & enrich Rockland's youngsters
- Be a **Participant**, attend our programs & utilize our services
- Be a member of the **Board of Directors**, help guide CCE

To find out more about volunteering or to express your interest, please email rockland@cornell.edu or call the office at (845) 429-7085

