

CCE Schoharie & Otsego Counties
Funds Development Committee Meeting Minutes
March 5, 2025

Present: Andrew Marietta, Shelby MacLeish, Mahla Zare, Lesley Judd and Liz Callahan

Updates on Funding Cultivation for 123 Lake St Rehabilitation

- Congressionally Directed Spending apps due 3/31 – applying for Coop building rehab
- Will focus all attention/cultivate all connections with the REDC process in the summer
- Will use both applications to leverage matching support (e.g. revisit Scriven funding)
- Pursuing funding for energy efficiency improvements (Sustainable Westchester RAN)

Donation to Schoharie County 4-H from Howes Cave Animal Hospital

Follow-up with Senator Oberacker regarding stalled NYS Funding

NOISE Analysis Brainstorming

Strengths

- Staff expertise/knowledge
- established programs
- buildings
- CCE/Cornell
 - Strong network, resources
 - Unique role of CCE helping farmers and the community
 - Youth Development: 4-H/4-H ASP, nutrition, support, service, opportunities for youth

Needs

- Funding/capacity: Resources (compensation) to retain/attract staff with the expertise we need
- Facility needs: if we could improve the facilities it would better support our goals
- Expand our connections to attract a more representative pool of Board/PAC members
- Improve Program Advisory Committee engagement (update model, energize)

Opportunities

- Gardens (in Coop/Cobleskill) continue to be opportunities, have a lot of support
- Potential to build-on collaborations between ag community and SUNY
 - Student engagement, cases studies in classroom/student support ag community
 - using college resources to engage local 4H'ers with College
- Tie to Cornell, CCE system/other extensions, are strengths
 - E.g.: syrup production do more to connect producers with CCE/Farmers' Museum

- Connection to TFM/better developing maple industry by help leverage scriven (sugaring off is well established)
- Use the garden space to raise our visibility
- Cornell/CCE Resources
 - How many dairy farms are using our CNYDLFC Team in each county?
 - Is there a different ag industry that we should be looking at?
 - What can CCESO do to help the industry (what are other CCEs doing?)
 - Forestry Program: Ots Co contracts with a forester, are there ways that Cornell can support this/support forestry plan? Relevant services that make a case for sustained funding
 - Inventory of the services that Cornell/CCE has
 - Things are changing from an agricultural standpoint in Otsego Co
 - Discussion of Revenue Opportunities for our Extension
 - E.g.: MGVs/seed swap,
 - Maple Production Starter kit?
 - Interest in lowering the barriers to entry and saving money
 - Seed to Supper /container gardening – getting people started in a modest way that give people confidence to do more
 - Buying a calf/pig is a greater investment than boiling maple sap, very specialized
- Collaboration
 - Work with MG, developing gardening networking between two counties,
 - Branching out/brining in new stakeholders committed to food security, hunger
 - Seed to Supper pilot and growth
 - Ag Networking gatherings – replicate in Ots Co.
 - Figure out how to create partnerships, collaborations, relevancy and more connections with each County’s leadership
 - The stronger that connection is the less likely we will be cut/the more successful we will be in leveraging more support
 - Business owners – platform to share their success stories/best practices/ ID mentors to inspire others/young people – network

Improvements

- Need to better communicate what we do
 - Committee members are not aware of all we are doing
 - There is more we can do to get the word out, tell our stories better
- Continuing to do things like the legislative gatherings at events like the Co Fairs
 - Connect with them somewhere, ideally tied to what we are doing, cultivation and relationship building, fine-tune engagement

- Having a large, spread-out staff – ways to improve staff interactions, productivity/sustainability, continuing to connect staff b/c we are physically disconnected

Exceptions

- Two County challenges
 - Improvement, too; Weakness, too; and a Need
 - Budgetary system is a challenge (two county accounting)
 - If one county pulls out the whole system will collapse – so another reason to keep the reporting very separate, can defend that each county's allocation is staying in the county
- Need partnerships/collab connections b/t 2 counties
 - Relevant conversations between reps from each county?
 - Where is the tension? Why?
 - Build a better connection between the counties/has to help
- Cornell is a strength but the systems creates challenges (bureaucratic/not agile)
 - Cornell will ask CCEs to pay more for fewer services
 - Centralization of teams, relevance in counties