



Cornell Cooperative Extension | Saratoga County

NEWSLETTER

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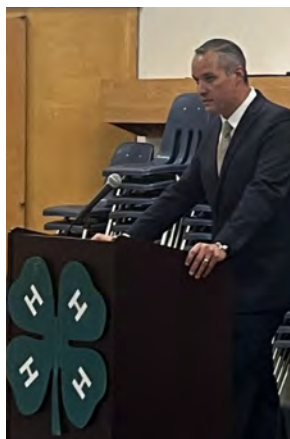
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County Announces Election of Leland Bunting as Vice President of NYSACCE4-HE

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County is pleased to announce that Leland Bunting, 4-H Educator, has been elected to serve as Vice President of the New York State Association of Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H Educators (NYSACCE4-HE).

This honored appointment reflects Leland's exemplary leadership, dedication to positive youth development, and commitment to the mission and values of Cornell Cooperative Extension. As Vice President, Leland will represent Saratoga County, the Capital District, and the broader New York State 4-H community, contributing to the advancement of youth programming across the state.

NYSACCE4-HE is a professional organization that promotes the development and recognition of 4-H youth development educators throughout New York State. Through professional development opportunities, collaboration, and the annual NYSACCE4-HE Conference, the association works to strengthen the capacity and impact of 4-H programs statewide.

We extend our sincere congratulations to Leland on this well-deserved honor and are confident that he will serve with distinction in this important leadership role.



Turner appointed Chair of Northeast Extension Directors

Andrew Turner '88, M.P.S. '93, director of [Cornell Cooperative Extension](#) and associate dean for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the College of Human Ecology, has been named Chair of the [Northeast Extension Directors](#) (NEED) network. He succeeds Dr. Roy Beckford of the University of New Hampshire in this role.

NEED is a collaborative network of Extension leaders across the Northeast region. The group works to align priorities, strengthen partnerships with federal and state agencies, and advance the land-grant mission through shared initiatives that benefit communities across the region.

In this role, Turner will help set strategic priorities for the Northeast region, foster multi-state collaborations, and ensure the region's voice is represented in national conversations on research, education, and community impact. His leadership will help strengthen connections across the land-grant system and highlight New York state's contributions to innovation in agriculture, youth development, and community vitality.

Known for his leadership in 4-H youth innovation, his work advancing food systems across rural and urban communities, and his commitment to workforce development partnerships that bridge education and industry, Turner has built a career spanning nearly every level of Extension, from county educator and director to statewide specialist and administrator. In his ["Letter from the Chair,"](#) he outlines a vision for collaborative leadership and shared priorities across the Northeast, emphasizing the power of collective Extension work to strengthen communities



Photo Credit: RJ Anderson/Cornell University

Andy Turner, director of Cornell Cooperative Extension, at the 2024 Steuben County 4-H Summer Showcase.

and advance the land-grant mission.

"This organization increases collaboration at a critical time for core aspects of the extension and land-grant mission, such as food system sustainability, youth development, and health and wellness efforts," said Turner. "Working together, we can position Cooperative Extension as a mechanism for addressing critical community needs and creating spaces for dialogue across perceived differences and divides, re-building the civic infrastructure that has become so fractured."

CAR SEAT CHECK

With 90% of car seats installed incorrectly, plan to see us. We will have Nationally Certified Technicians and Instructors to educate you on the correct installation of your car seat and how to fit your child correctly in the seat!

Call **CCE Saratoga 518-885-8995** to schedule a car seat check with our Nationally Certified Technician /Instructor.

For more information [click here](#)

**Free Car Seat
Safety Check**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for **October 23 | 6pm** at the Wilton-Saratoga Elks. This is also Extensions Annual Meeting/Dinner.

CCE Saratoga's Board of Directors

John Mancini - *President*

Liz Newsom - *Vice President*

Mark Preissler - *Secretary*

Jim Pettis, Jr. — *Treasurer*

Tom Venditti

Alex Guilmette

Nancy Wade Leary

Kevin Veitch—*Board of Supervisors Representative*

Danielle Hautaniemi - *Cornell Representative*



New York State Agritourism Conference

Conference Schedule

The first-ever New York State Agritourism Conference, hosted by the CCE Agritourism Program Work Team, is designed to support farms in growing successful visitor experiences. This statewide gathering will feature expert-led sessions, peer networking, and practical tools to help farms expand direct sales, education, hospitality, and entertainment offerings.

While geared towards NYS farms looking to start or expand their agritourism operation, the conference is open to educators, public officials, and tourism industry professionals who want to learn more about supporting agritourism in NYS.

Registration closes November 5, 2025

Cost: \$100 (includes both conference days featuring two different tracks and over 18 speakers as well as interactive sessions, a Monday evening regional networking event, and light snacks on both days).

Event Details

New York State Agritourism Conference

Date

November 10 - November 11, 2025

Location

Saratoga Springs City Center
522 Broadway Entrance
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

Host

Cornell Cooperative Extension Agritourism Team

Lindsey Pashow - [email](#)

[Event Registration](#)

NYS Ag Workforce Development Council

Ag Labor Road Show IX

The Roadshow delivers essential updates on labor law, regulations and workforce best practices - tailored for farm owners, managers, and ag service providers. Sessions also focus on practical strategies to boost communication, strengthen retention, and build a positive workplace culture.

This year's Roadshow will feature two webinars and four-in person meeting across the state:

1. December 1 - Webinar 1
2. **December 9 - Elks Lodge, Greenwich, NY—full day in person session**
3. December 22 - Webinar 2

Additional in-person sessions are:

December 10 - Hilton Garden Inn, Watertown, NY
December 17 - Cornell AgriTech, Geneva, NY
December 18 - Genesee Community College, Batavia, NY

The content at all in-person sessions is the same.

Event Details

Save the Date - Ag Labor Road Show In-Person Event (Greenwich, NY)

Date

December 9, 2025

Time

TBD (probably 9-4)

Location

Elks Lodge
130 Bulson Rd
Greenwich, NY 12834

Host

NYS Ag Workforce Development Council

Cornell Ag Workforce Development Program
[email Cornell Ag Workforce Development Program](#)

[Event Registration](#)

CENTRAL NEW YORK DAIRY, LIVESTOCK & FIELD CROPS

If I'm Not Here Tomorrow: Estate Planning for Young Farm Families with Children

[Click here to register for this free webinar.](#)

Estate planning sounds complex and expensive—but it doesn't have to be. A few simple steps now can save your family a world of stress later. In this webinar, we'll cover estate planning essentials related to wills & trusts, powers of attorney, guardianship plans, and business continuity documents. We'll also talk about planning for a variety of situations so that if the worst happens, you'll know family and businesses are taken care of. You'll also learn what to think about if you've got teenagers, and how to prepare for aging parents.

Disclaimer: This webinar is intended to provide general information only. Every person has unique, individual facts and circumstances related to their family business, and financial situation. Always consult with licensed professionals before making legal or financial decisions.

Event Details

Date

November 5, 2025

Time

1pm - 2pm EST

Location

Zoom

Host

NY FarmNet

Michael Robertson
1-800-547-3276

Landscaping for Winter Birds

By Amy Bartlett Wright



Flowering Crabapple (*Malus 'Almey'*)

Uploaded by arctangent

Gardeners routinely select trees and shrubs for their showy blossoms, fall color, or attractive form. You can also invite an abundance of birds to your garden by choosing plantings that provide shelter, food, and nesting sites for them. The birds will reward you by adding song, color, and flight to your landscape.

After flowering, plants create seeds and fruits. Migrating and overwintering birds depend upon these food sources for survival and to build up reserves for making their long migratory flights, so seeds and fruits should be allowed to stay on the plants. Providing a well-planned landscape offering shelter and a steady and varied supply of food will ensure regular visits from native and migratory birds throughout the growing season and into winter.

BIRDS

The following descriptions of North American birds include their favorite food sources. For more about birds and plants specific to your area, consult a regional bird book and nearby garden center or wildlife agency. Measurements listed are from beak to tail.

Cedar waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*). This 6-1/2- to 8-inch bird, found across North America, has a waxy sheen and a pointed crest of head feathers. It eats a wide variety of berries and is a joy to watch feeding or tending young.

Northern cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*). The northern cardinal is one of the most popular North American birds. Its overall bright red color and crested head feathers, which raise when the bird is alert or excited, readily identify the male. Female cardinals also have crests, but their coloring is more subdued. This mainly eastern bird measures 7-1/2 inches. Food sources include insects, seeds (especially sunflower), and fruit.

Finch. Their bills are generally short and wide, just right for cracking seeds. This large group includes crossbills, finches, and grosbeaks. The 5-inch goldfinch is widespread; the 5-1/2-inch purple finch is common throughout eastern, central, and Pacific states. Goldfinches enjoy eating the seeds of many meadow flowers including daisy, dandelion, and thistle.

Blue jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*). This aggressive feeder, found east of the Rocky Mountains, often wins when competing for food with other birds. The bird measures 11 inches. Jays in the West include the Steller's jay (*C. stelleri*), which is common in coastal forests and mountains into the Rockies. Jays love to eat sunflower seeds at a feeder or from the plant. Their familiar screech can be heard throughout the year.

Warbler. There are more than 50 species of warblers, most of which are colored with some yellow. They are generally smaller than sparrows and have thin pointed bills. Berries are their main winter food source.

Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*). Also called the northern mockingbird, this 9- to 11-inch bird ranges primarily in the midcontinent. It composes its song in mimicry of other birds. It is strongly territorial throughout the summer months and eats insects, seeds, and fruits.

Chickadee (*Parus*). This bird sings its name, "Chickadee-dee-dee," as it flits about tree branches. Chickadees nest in excavated softwood, often using birch trees. The black-capped chickadee (*P. atricapillus*), measures 4-1/2 inches. Six species of chickadee are found in various regions of North America; besides the black-capped, they are boreal, Carolina, chestnut-backed, Mexican, and mountain. These birds feed on insects, seeds, and fruit.

Tufted titmouse (*Parus bicolor*). Like the cardinal, it sports a pointed head crest. This cute bird is a pleasure to see at a feeder, at a berried plant, or hanging upside down to feed on insects found under leaves. The male and female sport similar colors and measure 6 inches. The tufted titmouse is found in the eastern half of North America.

Woodpecker. These birds peck wood in search of wood-boring insects; they also enjoy ripe berries. In an interesting adaptation for clinging to branches, the birds' stiff tail feathers act as additional support when they stand vertically on branches, two toes forward, two back. Downy woodpeckers (*Picoides pubescens*) enjoy bright red viburnum berries. They measure 6 to 7 inches and are found throughout North America.

Eastern or rufous-sided towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*). This 7- to 8-inch bird, which resembles the more familiar robin, is found throughout the eastern United States; the western rufous-sided towhee has white spots on its back and shoulders. The brown towhee (*P. fuscus*), common in the West, is found on hillsides, in scrubby or wooded areas, and in coastal gardens. In winter these birds enjoy acorns and berries.

Bluebird (*Sialia*). Western (*S. mexicana*) and eastern bluebirds (*S. sialis*) make their nests in the soft wood of decaying trees. Both are 7 inches long. The western bluebird is found west of the Rockies. The eastern bluebird is becoming reestablished after a period of decline. Bluebirds will settle in nest boxes provided by gardeners and also enjoy a local birdbath. To survive the winter, they depend on food sources such as berries, spiders, and insects.

Swallow. These acrobatic flyers benefit us by eating flying insects considered pests by some. Their narrow, pointed wings allow them to swoop and dive. Before fall migration, swallows gorge themselves on insects and bayberries. Tree swallows (*Tachycineta bicolor*) are 5- to 6-inches long. They are found throughout North America and are the only swallow to overwinter in the southern states. Other swallows include barn swallows, cliff swallows, and purple martins.

Article continued on next page.

Sparrow. Many species of sparrows are found in North America, and most enjoy a habitat of brush, thickets, and open woodlands. The white-throated sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) is found primarily east of the Rockies. This bird measures 6 to 7 inches. Food sources include berries, seeds, spiders, and insects.

A Short List of Trees and Shrubs That Attract Birds

When birds feed on the seeds or berries of plants, they spread them later in their droppings. This seed dispersal often leads to the propagation of new plants. Therefore, it is a good idea to use native plants instead of introduced ones to attract birds. Natives are well adapted to local soil types and climates, and don't require special winter protection or soil amendments to thrive. Also, many native plants are being stressed or extinguished by invasive or introduced species such as bittersweet vine (*Celastrus scandens*), Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*), and English ivy (*Hedera helix*).

TREES

Birch (*Betula*). Seeds of several native species feed siskins and redpolls. Shed bark is used for nesting material. Trees produce cone-like fruit in fall.

Evergreens. Cedar (*Cedrus*), juniper (*Juniperus*), spruce (*Picea*), pine (*Pinus*), hemlock (*Tsuga*). The thick branches of native evergreens provide birds with necessary winter shelter from the elements and year-round protection from predators. Game birds and waxwings eat the berries of cedars and junipers. Chickadees, crossbills, goldfinches, nuthatches, siskins, and woodpeckers pick the winged seeds out of pine and spruce cones.

Common hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*). This tree, native to the eastern states, is also called sugarberry because of its purplish fruit. It attracts game birds, finches, thrushes, and woodpeckers. Western hackberry (*C. reticulata*) has tiny red or brown berries, and desert hackberry (*C. pallida*) is useful as a honey source or bird food.

Flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*). This eastern native tree grows in shade or sun, and produces red berries that attract game birds and many songbirds. Its western counterpart is Pacific or western dogwood (*C. nuttallii*).

American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*). The nuts of these large and long-lived native trees are food for blackbirds, chickadees, jays, and tufted titmice.

American holly (*Ilex opaca*). Holly is associated with the holiday season because of its vibrant red berries against pointed dark green leaves. The bounty of berries will sustain a variety of birds including cedar waxwings, finches, mockingbirds, thrushes, and woodpeckers. Many other species of holly grow as shrubs. Note that most holly plants are male or female, and both are required for the female to bear fruit.

Crabapple (*Malus*). This tree is popular with landscapers, who favor its beautiful flowers, and birds, such as cedar waxwings, finches, and mockingbirds, which enjoy the fruits well into winter.

Tupelo (*Nyssa*). These native gums love damp woods. Black and sour gum (*N. sylvatica*) and cotton gum (*N. aquatica*), found in southern

regions, are magnificent large trees. Sour gum also grows in the West. The dark blue fruits are tasty to game birds, mockingbirds, thrushes, and waxwings. One of the last trees to produce foliage in spring, the tupelo is the first to turn blazing red in late summer.

Cherry (*Prunus*). Pin cherry (*P. pensylvanica*), black cherry (*P. serotina*), and chokecherry (*P. virginiana*) are some of the best trees for attracting birds. Cedar waxwings, crows, finches, flycatchers, grosbeaks, grouse, jays, mockingbirds, pheasants, thrushes, vireos, and woodpeckers feed on their fruits.

Oak (*Quercus*). Acorns are a winter staple not only for squirrels and chipmunks but also for many bird species. Crows, ducks, flickers, grouse, jays, nuthatches, pheasants, quail, titmice, towhees, turkeys, and woodpeckers enjoy feeding on acorns.

American mountain ash (*Sorbus americana*). Grouse, thrushes, waxwings, and woodpeckers enjoy the clusters of scarlet fall berries, which remain on the tree all winter if not eaten.

SHRUBS

Serviceberry (*Amelanchier*). These hardy shrubs or small trees -- also called shadbush, shadblow, or saskatoon -- are seen as understory in sparse woods or at woodland edges. The early show of white blooms adds to the landscape well before their dark berries benefit birds.

Holly (*Ilex*). Some are evergreen, such as inkberry (*I. glabra*), and some are deciduous, such as winterberry (*I. verticillata*). Female plants produce berries that sustain birds including cedar waxwings, finches, mockingbirds, thrushes, and woodpeckers.

Bayberry (*Myrica pensylvanica*). This hardy native shrub is commonly found in sandy soil along coastal areas. Female plants produce an abundance of hard, waxy berries that attract bluebirds, crows, game birds, meadowlarks, myrtle warblers, tree swallows, and woodpeckers.

Rose (*Rosa*). Rose hips are a winter food source for game birds and songbirds, to whom they are available when preferred foods are covered with snow.

Yew (*Taxus canadensis*). This common plant is adaptable both for trimmed hedges and natural spreading. Its dense evergreen growth offers security for birds. Game birds, mockingbirds, robins, and sparrows enjoy the juicy, sticky red fruits.

Blueberry (*Vaccinium*). Highbush (*V. corymbosum*) and lowbush blueberry (*V. angustifolium*) are widespread native species whose berries feed game birds, jays, orioles, sparrows, tanagers, thrushes, towhees, waxwings, and woodpeckers. Mammals such as deer will eat the woody shoots in midwinter when other foods are scarce.

Viburnum (*Viburnum*). Several species of these deciduous or evergreen shrubs are attractive to gardeners and birds alike. Gardeners enjoy the plants' form, foliage, and blooms, while birds enjoy their berries. The fruits are red, blue, or black and are quickly consumed in late summer and early fall by finches, game birds, mockingbirds, thrushes, waxwings, and woodpeckers.

Author and artist Amy Bartlett Wright lives in Rhode Island.
Photography by Suzanne DeJohn/National Gardening Association

Roasted Pumpkin Seeds

Don't throw away the pumpkin seeds from your pumpkin...Roast them!

THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

PUMPKIN SEEDS, ROASTED

Follow this simple three-ingredient recipe to make delicious Roasted Pumpkin Seeds, a great, filling snack choice or crunchy topping on a salad!

Ingredients:

- 1 cup raw pumpkin seeds from a pumpkin
- 1 Tablespoon oil (canola, olive or vegetable)
- 1 teaspoon salt

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Clean the kitchen area and wash hands with soap and water.
3. Carve the pumpkin, and separate pumpkin seeds from the stringy pulp.
4. Rinse raw pumpkin seeds in a colander under cold running water. Shake or pat seeds dry with a paper towel.
5. In a bowl, toss seeds in oil and salt.
6. Spread seeds on a lightly greased cookie sheet.
7. Roast seeds in the oven for 20 to 30 minutes or until golden brown, flipping halfway through.

Storage:

1. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator, no more than 10 to 14 days. For longer storage, place in the freezer.



Notes:

- For extra flavor, sprinkle the roasted pumpkin seeds with your favorite seasoning. Try garlic, onion, or parmesan cheese.

Nutrition Facts:

Serving size: ¼ cup; Calories: 170; Total Fat: 15g; Cholesterol: 0mg; Sodium: 70mg; Total Carbs: 4g; Protein: 9g.

NDSU EXTENSION

CINNAMON AND SUGAR ROASTED PUMPKIN SEEDS

Ingredients:

- 1 cup pumpkin seeds
- 1 Tablespoon melted butter (or substitute cooking oil)
- 1 Tablespoon sugar
- ¾ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- Dash of salt

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 300°F.
2. Toss seeds with melted butter or oil.
3. Mix dry ingredients and sprinkle over seeds; toss.
4. Line a well-greased baking sheet with seed mixture and bake for approximately 50 minutes.
5. Stir and mix the seeds often to keep them from burning and sticking. Bake until browned.

Makes eight (2 tablespoon) servings. Each serving has 170 calories, 14g fat, 7g protein, 7g carbohydrates, 1g fiber, and 5mg sodium.



Try another pumpkin recipe from NDSU:

PUMPKIN PIE OATMEAL:

<https://www.ndsu.edu/agriculture/extension/publications/field-fork-pumpkins>



Spooktacular Halloween Treats

-Written by Tammy Kelly and updated by Jennifer Stroud

October first has come and gone which means the countdown is on for Halloween!

Children of all ages look forward to the time honored tradition of wearing a great costume and trick-or-treating! There is no excitement quite like coming home with a bag full of free candy, but it is still important to keep your kids safe and the inevitable “sugar rush” manageable. Before trick-or-treating, it is always a good idea to discuss with your child how important it is to check out the goodies at home before eating, it can become a family tradition, make it even more fun by letting your children trade for favorites! Be sure to dispose of any candy that has already been opened or that might look really old, and also discard any treats that potentially could be a choking hazard.

Also, before hitting the town to trick-or-treat, feed your children a healthy meal, it will reduce the temptation of gobbling up the sugary treats. Make a plan for enjoying the fun treats, limit the pieces of candy per day amounts and after a specific time frame donate to a non-profit.

SPOOKTACULAR HALLOWEEN RECIPES

PUMPKIN PUDDING GHOSTS

Ingredients—Pudding

- 1 package gelatin
- 2 cups whole milk
- 1 cup sugar
- 6 large egg yolks
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 (15 oz) can pumpkin puree

Ingredients—Topping

- 2 large egg whites
- 1/3 cup sugar
- ½ tsp cream of tartar
- Pinch of salt
- Small candy eyes

Directions

1. Sprinkle gelatin over the 1 tbsp cold water in a bowl; let bloom.
2. Whisk milk, sugar, yolks, cinnamon, and salt in a heat-proof bowl. Place over boiling, whisk until thickened (10-12 min.)
3. Remove from heat, whisk into gelatin, then add pumpkin.
4. Divide into 12 small cups and chill 4-8 hours.
5. For topping, whisk egg whites, sugar, cream of tartar, and salt over boiling water until hot and sugar dissolves (1-2 mins.). Beat until stiff peaks form.
6. Spoon topping onto puddings in ghost shapes, add candy eyes, and chill until serving.

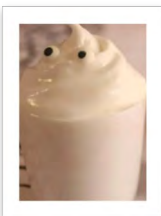


Photo credit: Food Network

SUPER SIMPLE MUMMY MEATLOAF BITES

Ingredients

- 1 lb. ground beef
- ½ cup breadcrumbs
- ¼ cup Parmesan, shredded
- 1 egg
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 1 package puff pastry, thawed
- Ketchup (for eyes)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375°F
2. Mix beef, breadcrumbs, cheese, egg, garlic, salt, and pepper. Shape into small flattened loaves.
3. Wrap with puff pastry strips to look like mummies.
4. Bake 20-25 minutes until golden brown and cooked through.
5. Add ketchup eyes before serving.

WITCH HAT CALZONES

- 1 package refrigerated pizza dough
- ½ cup marinara sauce
- 1 cup mozzarella, shredded
- 1 egg, beaten
- ½ cup mini pepperoni

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Roll dough and cut into triangles.
2. Mix cheese and pepperoni. Place a spoonful on wide ends of triangles.
3. Fold, seal edges, and brush with egg.
4. Bake 15-20 minutes until golden. Serve with extra marinara.



Photo credit: Tried and True Recipes

DIRT CUPS (Halloween Style)

A classic! Use chocolate pudding, crushed chocolate cookies, and gummy worms for a creepy treat. Decorate with candy pumpkins, candy bones, or edible eyes for extra fun.

For more Spooktacular Halloween Recipes visit:

<https://lenoir.ces.ncsu.edu/2025/09/spooktacular-halloween-treats/>





Give Your Old Pumpkins New Life After Halloween

After Halloween, there will be plenty of decomposing pumpkins around. Instead of tossing them in the trash, consider these creative ways to recycle your pumpkins, inspired by NC Cooperative Extension – Lenoir County Center, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

- **Feed the Birds (and maybe the squirrels):** If the base of your pumpkin is still intact, cut it off and fill it with bird seed for your feathered visitors. Squirrels also enjoy pumpkin seeds (and bird seed!), so filling your old jack-o-lantern with seed might even help distract them from your bird feeders.
- **Share with Local Wildlife:** Cut your decomposing pumpkins into smaller pieces and place them in a wooded area or brush pile where wildlife can safely enjoy them. Rabbits and other small critters will appreciate the treat—and you can enjoy watching them.
- **Treat Your Backyard Chickens:** Chickens love pecking at pumpkin flesh and seeds. Just be sure to remove any moldy portions before feeding.

Important Reminder:

Although deer will readily eat pumpkins, it is **illegal to feed deer in New York State**. Intentionally placing pumpkins where deer can

access them is inappropriate and can lead to ecological damage, property damage, and an increased risk of disease transmission among deer.

Compost Instead!

The NYSDEC encourages residents to keep pumpkins and gourds out of landfills by composting them.

Tips for Composting Pumpkins:

- Smash up the pumpkin rinds and guts before adding them to your compost pile, and mix them with plenty of carbon-rich materials such as leaves, wood chips, or twigs.
- Remove all candles, wax, and decorations before composting. Avoid composting painted or glitter-covered pumpkins.
- Removing the seeds ahead of time will prevent new pumpkin plants from sprouting in your compost pile.

No Home Compost Pile? Look for a local *Pumpkin Smash* or drop-off event in your area—a fun, sustainable way to say good-bye to your Jack-o'-Lanterns. Find more information at:

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8799.html>

CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OF PUTNAM COUNTY

Spotted Lanternflies



If you've had it with spotted lanternflies, you are not alone. You can get some revenge, or at least a little satisfaction by destroying their eggs.

In late fall, after spotted lanternflies are killed by freezing temperatures and before they hatch in May, find and destroy spotted lanternfly egg masses. Check for the egg masses on tree trunks, branches, rocks, lawn furniture, and really any hard surface that's outside. They are well camouflaged, about 1½" long and ¾" wide and look like grayish splotches of mud or putty.

Scrape the egg masses into a resealable bag or container that contains rubbing alcohol or hand sanitizer and dispose of them in the solution to be assured they will not hatch. Because spotted lanternflies lay many egg masses high up in tree canopies, removing egg masses within reach will not eliminate them, but because each egg mass contains up to 50 eggs it can reduce the numbers, especially early in the season.

NYS IPM Program

What's Bugging You?

Not all things that buzz, crawl or slither are pests. Figuring out WHAT is bugging you is the first step.

NOVEMBER 7: Understanding indoor cockroaches | Invasive tawney field cockroach

Several cockroach species are found in homes, and each one tells a story of why it's there. Learn to distinguish indoor cockroaches, and stick around to hear about the newest cockroach invader in the Northeast.

[Register Here!](#)



Ways to Conquer Household Clutter



What is Clutter?

The word clutter is often used to describe an overaccumulation of items located together in a disorganization fashion. Household clutter is quite common today. Over time, this clutter can feel overwhelming and even negatively impact personal health and well-being.

Besides this, natural environments can be negatively impacted when valuable natural resources are consumed during material production, only to become unused clutter or garbage in landfills.

Determine the Type of Clutter

Before deciding what to discard, determine whether you have regular household clutter or sentimental clutter. Clutter comes in many forms. Household clutter might include items like toys, mail, books, cleaning supplies, and hobby materials. On the other hand, sentimental clutter often consists of items passed down from loved ones, such as sports memorabilia, dishes, photographs, jewelry, and other heirlooms. Identifying the type of clutter that you have will help you make better decisions on how to part with it.

How Does It Happen?

Clutter can accumulate over both short and long periods, often taking over before you realize it. Household clutter builds up when we hold on to items that no longer serve a purpose. This clutter can result from various factors, including excessive spending, lack of storage, receiving gifts, buying items, emotional attachment to items, and mental health conditions.

Benefits of Reducing and Preventing Household Clutter

Financial Savings: Experts have estimated that Americans now spend \$300 a month on impulse purchases. In addition, only 20 percent of items are used in the home, while the other 80 percent is potential clutter. Being mindful of your spending habits can prevent clutter in the home and greatly improve financial well-being. In addition, selling unused items—that would otherwise only be collecting dust—can create additional income.

Less Stress: Most of us spend a large percentage of our time in and around our homes. Research has shown that clutter can reduce our ability to focus and concentrate, which can increase the stress hormone cortisol. Our homes are intended to be the place we relax and recharge after long workdays. But instead, a cluttered home will remind you of all the things that need to be done. Reducing household clutter can lessen your stress and calm your mind. Your home will then rightly serve its purpose as a place for relaxation and socialization with friends. Decluttering is also an opportunity to engage in more movement and physical activity, which supports stress management and builds healthy habits.

Improved Environmental Stewardship: Reducing clutter in our home enables you to properly recycle and donate items that you do not

need. Less clutter also helps to reduce carbon emissions by factories and shippers because fewer items are having to be produced and delivered to you. In addition, landfill is saved when you have less to throw away.

Saves Time: Whether it's moving, storing, cleaning, or looking for lost items, clutter can consume a lot of your time and energy. Decluttering a space will take some time in the beginning, but the result will free up your time over the long run.

Less Allergies and Hazards: A cluttered home is harder to vacuum and dust. This creates the perfect environment for dust mites, pollen, pet dander, and other pests to accumulate. Mold also may go undetected. All these items can cause allergic reactions and asthma symptoms. A clutter-free home is easier to clean and provides a healthier and safer living environment.

Decreased Risk of Slips and Falls: Clutter can put you at risk of slips and falls. When floors are covered with too much "stuff," accidents can quickly happen and cause injuries. Cluttered countertops or shelves can cause injury if something falls or topples over.

Easy Ways to Conquer Household Clutter

1. Before buying something new, first remove an unused item from your home. Also, ask yourself if you truly need the item before purchasing. Work to be mindful of your purchases.
2. Be prepared when you begin the decluttering process. Have garbage bags, storage bins, markers and labels, multipurpose cleaners, towels, vacuum, and any other supplies that may be needed.
3. Reduce clutter by starting with a small area to organize so you are not overwhelmed—like an under-the-sink cabinet.
4. Set reasonable goals to declutter a specific number of spaces over the next month, such as all your kitchen cabinets.
5. Sort items into four piles: keep, sell, donate, or throw away. Selling items can generate extra cash for you, and donating to local charities helps your community.
6. Find a specific location for everything you plan to keep, such as placing all keys in one box. Group similar items together to easily find them in the future.
7. After decluttering the area, clean and wipe down the newly exposed area. This will help to get rid of dust and allergens that have been "hiding" behind or underneath the clutter.
8. Create daily habits to prevent clutter, such as opening and sorting mail daily, cleaning the kitchen after each meal, folding and putting away fresh laundry, and tidying up at the end of each day. It takes only two weeks to create a new daily habit.
9. Use the 60-second rule: If it takes 60 seconds or less to put an item away, go ahead and do it now.
10. Do not hesitate to ask for help. Reaching out to family or friends can alleviate the stress of decluttering on your own. Family and friends can offer a neutral perspective, making it easier to decide what to keep and what to let go.



Homesteading



CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Garlic Growing Guide



Vegetable (Cool Season) -
Onion Family

Allium sativum var. *sativum*
and *ophiosco*

Alliaceae Family Synonym:
Allium ampeloprasum

Easy to grow and productive -
a pound of cloves can produce
7 to 10 pounds of garlic - the
“stinking rose” needs rich,
well-drained soil, full sun and
excellent weed control.

carry diseases or have been treated to discourage sprouting.
Most are also from varieties that are not well-adapted to New
York's climate. Purchase bulbs from mail order suppliers, garden
center, or other local source.

Break bulbs apart at planting time, keeping papery husks on the
individual cloves. Plant with tips up, 2 inches deep and 4 to 6
inches apart in rows 15 to 24 inches apart. Plant elephant garlic
varieties about 3 inches deep and 8 to 12 inches apart.

Mulch heavily after planting to prevent soil heaving - particularly
with less-hardy elephant garlic varieties. Roots will begin to grow
even though topgrowth may not be evident in late fall and
winter. Remove mulch in spring, leaving only what is needed to
suppress weeds.

For larger bulbs, remove woody flower stalks (scapes) as they
appear. Bulblets at top of scape can be used in cooking.

Plant large cloves to produce the largest bulbs. Plant smaller
cloves at closer spacings or in patches for harvest as garlic greens.
Save largest bulbs for planting your next crop.

Pests: Expect few or no insect problems.

Diseases: Bulbs may rot in heavy, wet soils. Otherwise, few
serious disease problems. Do not plant where other onion family
crops have been grown in the past 3 years.

VARIETIES

Browse [garlic varieties](#) at our [Vegetable Varieties for Gardeners](#) website.

Softneck varieties (*Allium sativum* var. *sativum*): So called
because their necks stay soft at harvest time, so they can be
braided. Produces large cloves around the outside, and smaller
cloves in the middle. Strong flavor. Stores well. Less winter-hardy
than stiffnecked varieties. Varieties found in supermarkets are
most often softnecks. Includes Silverskin and Artichoke types.

Stiffneck varieties (*Allium sativum* var. *ophioscorodon*): A single
ring of cloves surrounds a stiff central stem that curls as it grows.
Most cold-hardy of the garlics, but doesn't store as well as
softnecks and has a milder flavor. Cloves are easy to peel.
Includes Rocambole, Purple-Striped and Porcelain types.

Elephant, or great-headed garlic (*Allium ampeloprasum*): Milder
flavor, intermediate between garlic and onions. Larger bulb with
fewer larger cloves (usually about four). More closely related to
leeks than to *A. sativum* garlics, and not as hardy.

GROWING INFORMATION

Site Characteristics	Plant Traits	Special Considerations
Sunlight: - full sun Soil conditions: - requires well-drained soil - requires high fertility Well-drained, fertile, with plenty of organic matter. Slightly dry sites preferable. Tolerates wide pH range but prefers slightly acid soil (6.2 to 6.8).	Lifecycle: annual Perennial grown as an annual. (Fall-planted, harvested the following summer.) Ease-of-care: easy Easy if you have rich well-drained soil and good weed control. Height: 1 to 2 feet Spread: 0.5 to 1 feet Foliage color: medium green Foliage texture: medium Shape: upright Shape in flower: same as above	Tolerates: - frost Special characteristics: - not native to North America Special uses: - edible flowers

How to plant: Propagate by division or separation—Cloves must be exposed to temperatures below 65 F or they may fail to form bulbs when planted. Plants may produce flowers, but they are usually sterile.

Maintenance Care: Garlic prefers cool weather when developing foliage, and warm weather when bulbs enlarge. Fall plantings take about 8 months to mature.

Choose a weed-free, well-drained location. Raised beds are ideal. Do not plant where other onion family crops have been grown in the past 3 years.

In New York, plant from about the time of first fall frost to early November. If your soil is loose and well-prepared, you can plant in very early spring, but fall plantings usually yield more.

Using cloves from the supermarket is not recommended. They may



Small Batch Sauerkraut Tips

Sauerkraut is made from thinly shredded cabbage or a combination of cabbage and other vegetables that is salted and then fermented in its own juice. The first sauerkraut was made in China, about 2,000 years ago, during the building of the Great Wall. However, the Germans are probably best known for their kraut making skills. In the 16th century they perfected the process of mixing salt and cabbage and allowing it to ferment. This process is still used today to make kraut around the world.

Making small batches of sauerkraut in quart, half gallon, and gallon jars has become popular. There are also many gadgets and kits on the market today to make kraut easy and fun. Kraut made in small batches ferments much more quickly than in the huge crocks from the past. It can be made, fermented and then, refrigerated and eaten, while another batch ferments.

Sauerkraut Recipe Conversion for Smaller Quantities

BASIC RECIPE		
1– quart wide-mouth jar	½ gallon wide-mouth jar	1-gallon jar
1½ pounds Cabbage	2½ pounds Cabbage	5 pounds Cabbage
2½ teaspoons Pickling Salt	4½ teaspoon Pickling Salt	3 Tablespoons Pickling Salt

Select mature, firm heads of cabbage. The best kraut is made from the mid to late season cabbage crop. However, you can make kraut year-round from cabbage purchased at the supermarket. When making kraut from fresh-picked cabbage, it is best to wait 1-2 days after harvesting to make the kraut. Kraut can be made from both red and green varieties.

Variations: Besides cabbage, you can add a small amount of grated carrot, beet, turnip, kale, hot pepper, garlic or juniper berries to your cabbage mixture.

Instructions: Remove outer leaves from the cabbage and rinse heads with cold water and drain. Cut the heads in halves or quarters and remove the cores, trim and discard any damaged tissues. Cabbage can be weighed before or after shredding.

Shred or slice cabbage using a sharp knife, kraut cutter, mandolin or food processor. The shreds should be long and thin, about the thickness of a quarter. Once shredded, place cabbage in a large bowl and sprinkle pickling salt evenly over the cabbage. With clean hands (or wear disposable gloves), thoroughly mix the salt into the cabbage. You will notice cabbage will begin to wilt as the salt is mixed in. When all the salt is dissolved and the cabbage is juicy, begin packing the cabbage firmly into the jar. Use your fist or wooden mallet to firmly and evenly press the cabbage into the jar. As you pack you will notice the juice coming from the cabbage. You will need enough juice to cover the cabbage. It is important to leave at least 3-4 inches of head space between the cabbage and the top of the jar.

Once the jar is adequately filled and the juice is covering the cabbage you are ready to put a weight on the kraut to keep the liquid covering the cabbage during the fermentation period. The weight can be a purchased food grade glass disk, stainless steel spring, or a small freezer-weight plastic bag filled with brine* that fits into the jar. Be sure to wipe the edges of the jar before putting the weight on top. Then, place the fermenting lid and screw band on top of the jar and set in a

warm location to ferment. **PLEASE NOTE:** If you are using a brine bag as a weight, you don't need the lid on top.

***Brine Recipe** (if needed): 1 1/8 teaspoon salt to 1 cup hot water. Cool before use. (To be used if cabbage does not produce enough juice to cover all solids in the jar or to fill plastic bag if it is used for a weight).

Fermentation Temperature and Management—Store at 70-75° while fermenting. At temperatures between 70-75°F sauerkraut will be fully fermented in about 1-2 weeks; at 60-65°F fermentation may take 2-3 weeks. Temperatures lower than 60°F sauerkraut may not ferment. Above 75°F sauerkraut may become soft. The smaller the fermenting container, the faster it will ferment. Small batch kraut ferment quickly so check it daily. A good test to see if kraut is ready is to smell and taste it. It should smell and taste like kraut not sour or salted cabbage. The cabbage should remain firm, not soft and slimy. It also should smell like kraut, not wine. When the kraut taste is to your liking it is time to stop the fermentation and it is ready to eat.

Preserving Kraut—Fully fermented sauerkraut may be kept tightly covered in the refrigerator for several months or it may be canned or frozen for long term storage. **Tip:** If storing in refrigerator remove the fermentation lid and replace with a plastic lid to prevent off-odor in your refrigerator.

Canning Instructions (Can plain sauerkraut only)

- **Hot Pack:** Bring sauerkraut and liquid slowly to a boil in a large kettle, stirring frequently. Remove from heat and fill jars rather firmly with sauerkraut and juices, leaving ½ inch headspace. Adjust lids and process. (See time below.)
- **Raw Pack:** Fill jars firmly with cold sauerkraut, and cover with juice, leaving ½ inch headspace. Adjust lids and process. (See time below.)

RECOMMEND PROCESSING TIME FOR SAUERKRAUT— In Boiling Water Canner

Style of Pack	Jar Size	Processing Time at Altitudes of			
		0-1000 ft.	1001-3000 ft.	3001-6000 ft.	6001-8000 ft.
Hot	Pints	10 min.	15 min.	15 min.	20 min.
	Quarts	15 min.	20 min.	20 min.	25 min.
Raw	Pints	20 min.	25 min.	30 min.	35 min.
	Quarts	25 min.	30 min.	35 min.	40 min.

Freezing - Pack kraut into freezer bags or containers, label and freeze.

Tips

- Never reduce the salt when making kraut. If the finished product is too salty it can be rinsed in cold water before serving.
- Store canned sauerkraut in a cool, dark place.

Using Kraut—Sauerkraut can be served in many ways. It is often eaten with hotdogs and sausages. It can be cooked with chopped apples, mash with potatoes, added to chowder, used as a pizza topping and even made into a chocolate cake.



Preserving autumn—Exploring the art of drying food

Dehydration is one of the earliest forms of food preservation.



I crunched through the dried leaves on our sidewalk as I looked up to admire the glorious orange, red and yellow leaves on trees in our colorful autumn season.

When I walked into our house, I picked up dried leaves from a rug. Our dogs had scamp-ered in with leaves clinging to their fur. Some-

times, they nibble on the leaves, but they do not find dried leaves to be appealing snacks.

According to food historians, early people observed animal feeding behavior to determine what was edible. Berries, for example, may have fallen from a tree, and the animals ate the dried fruit—and lived.

Beyond learning from animals, people soon discovered that food could last longer if it was dried.

Drying, or dehydration, is one of the earliest forms of food preservation. Early populations recognized that the action of the sun and wind could remove water. The scientific knowledge that informed us that bacteria, molds and yeast could lead to spoilage did not arrive for many generations.

Drying lowers the water activity—the amount of water available for micro-organisms to grow—helping food last much longer.

Remember that removing the water from food also concentrates the calories and natural sugars.

For example, a cup of grapes has about 60 calories, while a cup of raisins (packed in a cup) has more than 490 calories. These are both healthy snacks, but be aware that dried foods have more calories.

Drying food dates back to ancient civilizations before 12,000 B.C., where early people dried vegetables and fruits and other foods for later use.

Early Native Americans were particularly adept at drying corn, berries, squash, chokecherries, meat products and many other foods to help sustain their populations through cold seasons.

Pemmican is a mixture of dried meat, fruit and fat that was a portable food. The calories and nutrition they provided served as “energy balls.” Native Americans used the dried food to make various soups and recipes. Many of the traditional recipes remain.

What dried foods do you enjoy? Do you like raisins, cranberries, bananas, mangos, prunes or apricots? Maybe you like fruit leather or trail mixes with dried fruit. Instant coffee and nonfat dry milk are other innovations that grew from commercial applications of dehydration.

If you would like to try making your own dried food, easy-to-use appliances are available to help you dehydrate food all year round. From countertop food dehydrators to home freeze dryers, consumers can dehydrate food safely and effectively at home.

Apples, cherries and grapes are among the fruits that are excellent for drying. Carrots, corn, potatoes, squash and tomatoes are among the vegetables that can be successfully dried at home. When properly dried

and stored in moisture-proof containers such as glass jars, dried food can last several months.

As we wrap up the gardening season, instead of a single recipe, I invite you to explore several publications at North Dakota State University Extension about drying fruit, fruit leather, vegetables, herbs and jerky.

- **Making Fruit Leathers:** Fruit leathers are nutritious, high-energy snacks for children and adults. Fruit leathers are portable, making them convenient additions to school lunchboxes or backpacks when camping or hiking. Making fruit leather is a good way to use leftover canned fruit and slightly overripe fresh fruit.
- **Drying Vegetables:** Drying is a long-standing, fairly easy method of food preservation. Whenever you preserve foods, choose the best-quality fruits and vegetables. As with other food preservation methods, drying does not improve food quality. Proper and successful drying produces safe food with good flavor, texture, color and nutritional properties.
- **Drying Fruits:** Making dried fruit can be a fun family activity with a tasty end product. Dried fruit is a portable snack, and it can also be used in recipes. Proper and successful drying produces safe food with good flavor, texture and color. Whenever you preserve foods, choose the best-quality fruits and vegetables. As with other food preservation methods, drying does not improve food quality.
- **Jerky: A Native American-inspired snack we all can enjoy today:** Though there have been many forms of dried meat throughout history and across the globe, jerky as we are used to seeing it today originates from the Native peoples of North and South America. In North America, Native Americans were often on the move and made use of large animals, such as buffalo, elk and deer. This publication provides step-by-step directions on how to create delicious jerky.

Many ovens are too warm to allow for the slow drying temperatures needed to effectively dry food. If you dry the food too quickly, the outside forms a hard “case” around the food that does not allow drying throughout.

If you decide to purchase a food dehydrator, look for heat control with a thermostat that allows a temperature range of 85 to 160 degrees Fahrenheit. A two-speed fan with a horizontal flow is preferable.

The trays should have a 1/4—to 1/2-inch edge to avoid spillage. The plug should be grounded, and look for the “Underwriters Laboratories” (UL) designation, which shows that the product has been certified to meet safety and quality standards.

As you enjoy autumn’s colors, bring its flavor indoors. Try drying a batch of apple slices or making fruit leather from applesauce—simple projects that give you a taste of history and a healthy snack today.

(Julie Garden-Robinson, Ph.D., R.D., L.R.D., is a North Dakota State University Extension food and nutrition specialist and professor in the Department of Health, Nutrition and Exercise Sciences.)



Cooking venison for flavor and safety

WHAT CAUSES THE WILD OR GAMEY TASTE IN VENISON?

Venison refers to the meat of antlered animals such as deer, moose, elk and caribou. The 'wild' flavor of venison is directly related to what the animal eats. Corn fed deer will have a milder flavor than those that eat acorns or sage. The 'gamey' flavor is more noticeable in the fat. Removing the fat, connective tissue, silver skin, bone and hair during processing lessens the 'gamey' taste. However, undesirable strong flavors are due to inadequate bleeding, delay in field dressing or failure to cook the carcass promptly.

PREPARATION METHODS TO IMPROVE TASTE

There are many different methods that help improve the 'gamey' taste of venison.

Remove residual hair

- Removing hair reduces undesirable, gamey flavors.
- Use a vinegar-soaked cloth to remove hairs.

Tenderize

- Pound meat with a tenderizing tool.
- Make several small cuts in the meat with a knife.
- Grind meat.

Add Spices

- Spices may be used to cover up the 'gamey' flavors in venison.
- Experiment with herbs like rosemary, marjoram, thyme and sage.

Rub with fat

- Add other fats to keep game meat from becoming too dry.
- Rub a roast with oil, butter, margarine, bacon fat, sweet cream or sour cream to add moisture, richness and flavor.

Use Marinades

- Marinade may be used to cover up the 'gamey' flavors in venison.
- Marinades tenderize (soften muscle fibers) and enhance the flavor of venison.
- Marinades can add fat and calories to this lean cut of meat.
- Always marinate meats in the refrigerator.
- Always include a high-acid liquid like lemon or tomato juice, vinegar or wine to soften the muscle fibers.

No time to marinate? Cover the meat with vinegar water (2 tablespoons vinegar to a quart of water) and place in the refrigerator for about an hour before cooking.

Marinade directions

Marinades can tenderize, enhance and disguise game flavors.



- Cover meat with one of the following marinades
 - *2 cups vinegar, 2 cups water and ½ cup sugar
 - *French dressing
 - *Italian dressing
 - *Tomato sauce or undiluted tomato soup
 - *Tomato juice
 - *Fruit juice (such as lemon, pineapple or a mixture of many juices)
 - *¼ cup vinegar, ½ cup cooking oil, ½ teaspoon pepper and ¼ teaspoon garlic salt.
 - *2 cups water, 2 cups vinegar, 1-2 tablespoons sugar, 4 bay leaves, 1 teaspoon salt, 12 whole cloves, 1 teaspoon allspice and 3 medium sized onions, sliced.
 - *Garlic salt, salt and pepper to taste. Add equal parts of Worcestershire sauce and two of your favorite steak sauces. (This gives a blend of flavors and also is excellent for basting game roasts or thick steaks during cooking.)
 - *2 tablespoons vinegar, 1 ½ teaspoon ground ginger, 1 clove garlic, minced, 2 tablespoons brown sugar, ½ cup soy sauce and ¾ cup vegetable oil.
 - *Commercial marinade.
- Place in the refrigerator overnight. (Marinating meats for more than 24 hours breaks down the meat fibers making it mushy.)
- Drain and discard marinade.
- Broil, roast, or braise the marinated meat.

[Read the complete article for cooking methods to enhance taste, cooking tips and cooking to the proper temperature for safety.](#)



Your Guide to safely handling and preparing game birds!



Wild game birds may become contaminated with bacteria or gastric juices if they are improperly handled. Off-flavors and odors may develop in the meat, and your risk of foodborne illness may increase. For optimum eating quality, remember important handling tips during hunting, storage and food preparation.

View A POCKET GUIDE TO GAME BIRDS for more information.

<https://www.ndsu.edu/.../pocket-guide-care-and-handling...>

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