



# Cornell University Cooperative Extension Monroe County

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## CCE Monroe County 4-H Program Update January 2026

### Program Highlights

- In December Cultivating Community members put together 80 winter break activity kits for the families of St. Mark's & St. John's Episcopal Church, including a custom-made activity booklet with hand-drawn coloring pages. The Cultivators also helped distribute food to 76 families at the People's Pantry.
- Students in Kali Maher's class at Indian Landing Elementary (Penfield) earned third place in the New York Agriculture in the Classroom Mac & Cheese Challenge with their recipe, "*Mrs. Maher's Cheesy Delight*," applying skills learned through 4-H Agriculture in the Classroom lessons.
- 4-H educators continue to have a strong presence in classrooms across the county, bringing Dairy in the Classroom and lessons connecting youth to cultures from around the world to more than 1,500 students each month.

### Strategic Plan Update

#### **1.3 Program Effectiveness- Assess current programs for pertinence, reach, sustainability, and impact.**

Leslie will be assessing current 4-H club programs for relevance, reach, and sustainability to ensure effective use of resources and continued delivery of impactful, research-based experiences that meet the evolving needs of Monroe County youth and families.

#### **2.1 Resource Management-Padlet**

Jessica is utilizing her expertise and digital tools, such as Padlet, to share activities and resources with classroom teachers, enhancing integration of 4-H concepts in the classroom and with families and caregivers, sustaining cross-sector programming through efficient use of available resources.

#### **4.1 Collaborations & Partnerships**

Lily is working to leverage our relationships with current partners and identify new collaborators to address gaps and opportunities.

**BOD Engagement Opportunity** –The month of March is Agriculture Literacy Month. 4-H educators will be bringing *Seasons on the Farm* by Chelsea Torentto to classrooms across the county. The sign up for reading in these classrooms will be coming soon!

- Enrollment and re-enrollment for the 2025-26 4-H year is now open. Families and caregivers interested in learning more about club opportunities can email [monroe4h@cornell.edu](mailto:monroe4h@cornell.edu).

***"Please contact the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County office if you have any special needs."***

***Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities***

**Cornell Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities.**

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County is supported by public and private funding. Primary cooperating partners are the County of Monroe, the State of New York and SUNY's Land Grant Colleges at Cornell University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

**United Way of Greater Rochester - Designated Donor # 2206**

- Like and follow the [Monroe County 4-H Youth Development](#) Facebook page.

### **Story of Celebration or Success**

This December, the Cultivating Community youth workforce development program kicked off with the creation of holiday activity bags for the children of the Saint Mark's & Saint John's (SMSJ) Church! The distribution program provides about 80 families with food for Christmas break, and Cultivators have worked to make the holidays enjoyable by assembling bags for children containing beading and ornament sets as well as fully designed activity books with coloring pages, games and more.

Saint Mark's & Saint John's Church (SMSJ) developed a close reciprocal partnership with the Cultivators this summer, when Cultivators spent six weeks beautifying and harvesting from SMSJ's community gardens. The Cultivators are thrilled to continue working with SMSJ! The continuation of the collaboration has proved beneficial for both parties, giving Cultivators valuable experience in the workforce as they help SMSJ provide for the community.



Members of Cultivating Community creating original artwork for their activity book that was distributed to families at St. Mark's & St. John's Episcopal Church.