Cornell Cooperative Extension
Monroe County

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4-H Program Update
February 2026

Program Highlights

- **Winterfest at Mendon Ponds Park:** Cultivating Community youth partnered with CCE staff to facilitate a hands-on snowflake activity, engaging participating families and representing 4-H programming at this community event.
- **Library Program:** The Spring/Summer 4-H program flyer is now available for libraries and partner organizations to support scheduling and outreach for upcoming youth programming. Reach out to Leslie Pude lap276@cornell.edu with questions.
- **School Partnership:** Lily completed her first semester collaborating with Bishop Kearney's plant science program, establishing instructional support and partnership continuity for agricultural education engagement.
- **Ag. in the Classroom:** Elementary students across the county continued monthly participation in Ag. in the Classroom programming, in January, youth explored food safety and temperature control through hands-on engineering design, working in small teams to create and test insulated coolers.

Strategic Plan Update –

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

Leslie is 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

- **Agricultural Literacy Month:** In March, the 4-H team will deliver agricultural literacy programming in classrooms across the county. Community members are invited to participate by reading *Seasons on the Farm* by Chelsea Tornetto; those interested in volunteering may contact Leslie at lap276@cornell.edu to sign up.

Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities

Cornell Cooperative Extension provides equal program opportunities.

Story of Celebration or Success

Thanks to support from a GVRMA grant, the 4-H team was able to bring an engaging guest speaker experience to students at School 9. Philomina Emeka-Iheukwu of Philomina's Food at the Public Market joined us to share her enthusiasm for healthy eating, leading an interactive presentation on the benefits of fruits and vegetables for 65 sixth-grade students. The highlight of the visit was a live smoothie-making demonstration where every student sampled the final product and took home a recipe to try with their families. Conversations also connected students to local agriculture by exploring where fresh foods are grown and how they can be purchased within the community.

The energy in the room reflected the impact of hands-on learning experiences that connect youth to food, health, and local resources. Students were curious, engaged, and excited to participate — and many expressed interest in recreating the recipe at home. This experience represents a meaningful celebration of partnership, grant investment, and youth engagement, demonstrating how experiential programming can spark enthusiasm for nutritious choices while strengthening awareness of local food systems.

Students at RCSD School #9 participate in a smoothy making activity.