

## CCE Monroe County Agriculture Program Update March 2026

### Program Highlights

#### Direct Education Workshops & Outreach:

- **Urban Ag Spring Conference, March 21:**
  - Tabling - focus on Diagnostic Clinic services, small fruit growing tips, and CSA promotion
  - Presentation - cover 'Growing Strawberries and Raspberries in Urban Gardens.'
- **Bishop Kearney, March 25** – lesson on Plant Propagation for high school junior and senior students
- **AITC, March 26, 27** – reading the "Season on the Farm" and activity for the 3rd-grade students
- **On-Site IPM Training for Spanish-Speaking Vegetable Farm Employees** – in collaboration with Cornell's Integrated Pest Management, offering customized workshops to teach farm workers about relevant pests on each farm.
- **Monroe County Agriculture / Horticulture Program Farmer Enrollments** – over a hundred brochures were sent to Monroe County farmers, greenhouse, and nursery businesses, and we already have several enrolled for the 2026 season.
- **Cornell Summer Intern** – in the process of interviewing potential candidates for the Diagnostic Clinic and Harvest NY to increase community outreach

#### Direct/Indirect Farmer Support through Grant-Based Projects

- **Community Garden Grant** – the team (CCE, SWCD, Harvest NY) held info sessions with selected gardens: St. Peter's Community Garden, Gandhi Institute, and Beechwood Beauty. The grant supports community gardens in the City of Rochester by funding materials, education, and services (soil testing). The next step is to plan the work, purchase materials, and install desired features for each garden.
- **Farmers' Market Resiliency Grant** – Funded by the NY DAM to grow a more resilient food supply chain. Grant will help strengthen farmers' markets' resiliency by enhancing their infrastructure, online presence, marketing, and outreach efforts. Collaboration between Monroe, Wayne, Ontario, and Yates Counties.
- **Friday Fresh** – monthly eblast informing farmers about upcoming events and workshops.
  - Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) Food Safety Training
  - Intro to Tree Fruit Production Series, six Thursdays
  - 2026 Forage Congress
  - ICE on the Farm, Part 2, Webinar, Farm Commons

#### Strategic Plan Update –

Strategic Plan Goal(s) this strategy relates to:

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

**Diagnostic Clinic** – Capture learnings from the NY 30 Hour Pesticide Course and write an SOP for future reference.

**4.1.** Leverage our relationships with current partners and identify new collaborators to address gaps and opportunities:

*Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities*

*Cornell Cooperative Association in Monroe County provides equal program opportunities.*

- a. Growing Potato workshop and sale in collaboration with Fraser Garlic Farm
- b. Urban Agriculture Community Enhancement Project in collaboration with SWCD and Harvest NY

**Story of Celebration or Success— Professional Development & Training** – Jarmila completed the 6-week “Develop Your Diagnostic Skills” course, offered by Cornell’s Integrated Pest Management and presented by Karen Snover-Clift, *Director of the Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic at Cornell University*, and Sandra

Jensen, *Diagnostician of the Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic at Cornell University*.



Six Tuesday sessions were held in January-February 2026 via Zoom for those who were interested in improving their plant disease diagnostic skills. This webinar series was a unique training opportunity for those who identify plant diseases, answer questions, and educate others about plant health and disease issues.

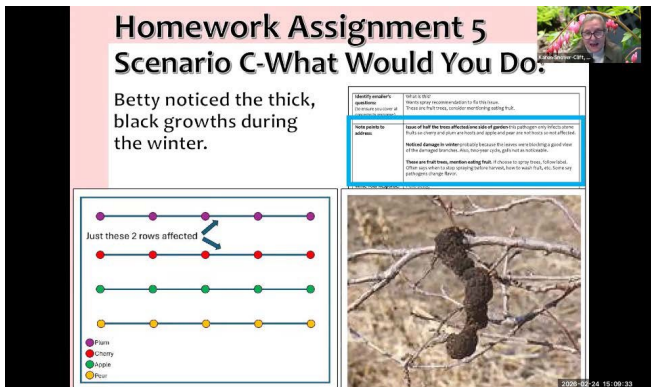
During a 12-hour comprehensive course, the participants learned step-by-step diagnostic procedures, answers to common plant health questions, examples, and key

resources. Modules included a wide range of topics, from basic plant pathology 101, abiotic factors vs. pathogens and pests, plant pathogens and humans, to sample submission and testing.

Among many learnings, we have learned the difference between parasitic and saprophytic plants.

**Parasitic plants** (bad guys) are organisms that derive their nutrients from other living plants

**Saprophytes** (good guys) are those plants that live off dead organic matter. They are decomposers, and we need them to break down all organic matter in nature!



The workshop also included homework assignments.