

# Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties

## 2025 Annual Report to the Community

**Agriculture and Horticulture**

**4-H Youth Development**

**Nutrition Education**

**Community Development**

**CCE**

**Master Gardener**  
Cornell Cooperative Extension

**Learn Garden Reflect**  
Cornell Garden Based Learning

**Agriculture Program**

**SCHOHARIE-OTSEGO-DELAWARE**  
**FAMILY FARM DAY**  
Cornell Cooperative Extension

**LOCAL FOODS HEALTHY SCHOOLS**  
FARM TO SCHOOL  
Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Schoharie and Otsego Counties

**EFNEP**  
Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

**Building Healthy Habits**

**SNAP-Ed New York**  
SAVE TIME. SAVE MONEY. EAT HEALTHY.

**healthy-connections.us**  
FOOD • NUTRITION • FITNESS

**Smart Energy Choices**  
Mohawk Valley

# 2025 Staff, Regional Teams, Board of Directors and Committee Members

## Staff

Teresa Adell, Otsego 4-H Subject Educator  
Carlotta Batchelder, Community Energy Advisor  
Liz Callahan, Executive Director  
Kat Cordero, Association Program Coordinator  
Kelley Doolin, Agriculture & Food Systems Educator  
Valentina Conway, Senior 4-H Afterschool Program Activity Leader  
Michaela Fisher, Community Energy Educator  
Marcie Foster, Horticulture & Natural Resource Educator  
Maegan Freeman, SNAP-Ed Nutrition Educator  
Mariah Goodwin, Special Projects Educator  
Carol Kennedy, Interim Administrative Assistant  
Michelle Leveski, Healthy Connections Nutrition Educator  
Nelta Miller, EFNEP Nutrition Educator  
Mayra Richter, Finance & Human Resource Manager  
Catherine Roberts, Schoharie 4-H Resource Educator  
Susan Salisbury, 4-H Afterschool Program Coordinator  
Nicole Thompson, Finance & Human Resources Assistant

## 2025 Board of Directors

James Bryant, Schoharie County At-Large Director  
Tina Douglas, Otsego County At-Large Director  
Lynn Dunn, Schoharie County 4-H Youth Development Program Director  
Christine Edwards, Otsego County Agriculture/Horticulture Program Director  
Deborah Gansinger-Hall, President, Schoharie County Family & Consumer Science Program Director  
Danielle Hautaniemi, State Extension Specialist  
Betsy Jensen, Schoharie County Agriculture/Horticulture Program Director  
Lesley Judd, Secretary, Schoharie County At-Large Director  
Shelby MacLeish, Vice-President, Otsego County Family & Consumer Science Program Director  
Andrew Marietta, Otsego County Representative  
Kianny Luggo, Non-Profit Leadership/Board Intern  
Carol Phelps, Otsego County Agriculture/Horticulture Program Director  
Tom Pullyblank, Treasurer, Otsego County At-Large Director  
Steve Sinniger, Otsego County 4-H Youth Development Program Director  
Alicia Terry, Schoharie County Representative  
Mahla Zare, Schoharie County At-Large Director

## **Eastern NY Commercial Horticulture Program** ([www.enych.cce.cornell.edu](http://www.enych.cce.cornell.edu))

Chuck Bornt, Team Leader, Extension Vegetable Specialist  
Dan Donahue, Tree Fruit Specialist  
Elizabeth Higgins, Team Leader, Business Management Specialist  
Mike Basedow, Tree Fruit Specialist  
Ethan Grundberg, Vegetable Specialist  
Elisabeth Hodgdon, Vegetable Specialist  
Heather Kase, Berry Specialist  
Teresa Rusinek, Vegetable Specialist  
Jeremy Schuster, Viticulture Specialist  
Crystal Stewart-Courtens, Extension Vegetable Specialist  
Maire Ullrich, Vegetable Specialist

## **Central NY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Team** ([www.cnydfc.cce.cornell.edu](http://www.cnydfc.cce.cornell.edu))

Erik Smith, Team Leader, Field Crop Specialist  
Ashley McFarland, Livestock Specialist  
Raevyn Saunders, Agriculture Management Specialist  
Heer Patel, Field Support Specialist  
Daniella Gonzalez, Dairy Specialist

## 2025 Program Advisory Committees

### **Agriculture/Horticulture**

Melissa Brechner  
Christine Edwards  
Carmen Fagnani  
Betsy Jensen  
Karli Johnson  
Pete Nichols

### **4-H Positive Youth Development**

Lynn Dunn  
Steve Siniger  
Deb Stanton

### **Family & Consumer Science**

Deborah Gansinger-Hall  
Lindsey Garner  
Jessica Hill  
Shelby MacLeish  
Kelly Martin  
Brenda Seery

Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and educator recognized for providing equal program and employment opportunities in accordance with applicable laws.

## **Introduction**

Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties (CCESO) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational organization that is part of the Cooperative Extension land grant system, a partnership between County, State, and Federal governments that is administered in New York State through Cornell University. Each county's Cooperative Extension association is independent. Since 1914, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schoharie and Otsego Counties has responded to the needs of local residents with unbiased, research-based information, tools, and education that residents trust. CCESO's staff works with local residents to identify community issues and needs, and develop appropriate strategies and programs, that are based on current information available from Cornell University and other land-grant universities.

Cornell Cooperative Extension's staff and trained volunteers deliver education programs, conduct applied research, and encourage community collaborations. Our educators connect people with the information they need on topics such as commercial and consumer agriculture; nutrition and health; youth and families; finances; energy efficiency; economic and community development; and horticulture, climate stewardship, and sustainable natural resources. Our ability to match land-grant university resources with community needs helps us play a vital role in the lives of individuals, families, businesses, and communities throughout Schoharie and Otsego Counties. CCESO's Program Areas include: Family and Consumer Science, Agriculture and Horticulture, and 4-H Positive Youth Development.

## Family & Consumer Science Program



According to the CDC, “Most people in the United States don’t eat a healthy diet and consume too much sodium, saturated fat, and sugar, increasing their risk of chronic diseases,” including obesity. Obesity is a common, serious and costly disease that can have devastating effects and be passed down through generations. Obesity affects both children and adults in our rural communities and increases risks for many serious health conditions such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, some cancers, and mental health.

## Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program

Life today can be busy and hectic for families, and many have chosen to incorporate more processed foods instead of cooking from scratch. While intended for convenience, many ready-to-eat foods are more costly, can worsen food insecurity and have long-term effects on health.

CCESO’s EFNEP program helps families get back to the basics by teaching cooking skills and promoting cooking from scratch for long lasting sustainable healthy practices.

The program is promoted at schools, Head Start sites, County departments of social services, community events, county fairs, and multiple agencies. Programming is conducted through group classes and on-on-one education, both in-person and virtual.

### *2025 Nutrition, Health and Well-Being Success Story*

A client who is a wife and mother to a toddler, enrolled in our EFNEP program because she lacked cooking skills and confidence in the kitchen. While her husband did most of the food prep in the home, the client wanted to learn more so she could be more involved in the meal decisions for their family. Being apprehensive around the hot stove and using knives were barriers which led her to pass the cooking off to her husband. The client said “As my daughter grows, I would like to be able to be more confident, so I can help her learn to cook as she gets older and make sure I can provide healthy meals and snacks. I am a little nervous, but I am ready to jump in, and ready to learn.”

The process started with learning basic nutrition and kitchen safety, like the proper way to use a knife and cutting board, and *My Plate*. When she felt ready, the client and the Nutrition

Program Educator started simple and made a snack that didn't require the stove, but included chopping, to build confidence. She then moved on to make a simple quesadilla with vegetables. The client learned to take her time and get comfortable with a small knife and using the stove.

Throughout the first five lessons she continued to become more familiar with new cooking techniques along with cooking new recipes, and learning how to menu plan and shop efficiently. By the end of the sixth lesson, she had become more at ease in the kitchen and was more actively participating in meal prep. “I feel so good about being able to contribute more to my family's healthy meals and not resorting to readymade foods because I didn't have the skill and confidence I needed. I feel like I am contributing to my daughter eating healthier and that makes me feel good.”

Program Educator started simple and made a snack that didn't require the stove, but included chopping, to build confidence. She then moved on to make a simple quesadilla with vegetables. The client learned to take her time and get comfortable with a small knife and using the stove.



## Farm-To-School

CCESO works with community partners, the students and staff of local school districts, and New York State (NYS) agricultural producers to develop the capacity of schools to increase the volume and variety of NYS farm products procured by local school districts for school food service programs. CCESO's Farm-to-School program implements "Harvest of the Month" programming that encourages students to try (potentially new) NYS-produced foods that are prepared in healthy and appealing ways. CCESO also works with school food-service staff to increase the quantity and variety of NYS products available to students through school food service programs, and helping local schools to achieve and maintain the "NYS 30% Initiative." CCESO's Farm to School program is supported by a grant from the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets.

### *Local Food for Local Schools:*

#### *2025 Procurement Success Story*

Even though we are in a rural and agriculturally based area, there are many children and families that do not know where food comes from or how to prepare fresh foods. For many students their main nutrition comes from meals eaten at school, meaning that if we want children to grow up with healthy eating habits, they need to experience those healthy foods and habits in school. Using more raw and unprocessed ingredients, especially local ones, can be costly, but School Food Authorities can apply for the NYS 30% Initiative to receive a higher rate of reimbursement from the state for buying New York State foods. This helps to lessen the financial burden on schools and encourages them to serve more raw, unprocessed healthy foods from local farms and producers, which helps boost the local economy and strengthen the community as a whole.

Food Service Directors do not always have the knowledge of how to procure local products or where to find them. CCESO's Farm-to-School Coordinator helps connect school Food Service Directors with local producers and ensure both know what is required for the purchase to qualify for the NYS 30% Initiative. The Farm-to-School Coordinator created a list of farms and producers and the products that they could potentially sell to schools. School Food Service Directors can use this list to find a producer/product local to them. CCESO's Farm-To-School coordinator prepares interested producers for the process of working with the school.

When a local producer expressed an interest in expanding their beef sales, the Farm-To-School coordinator set up a meeting between the producer and the interested school, where we all discussed the details of working together: products, prices, amount needed, delivery, and most importantly, ensure that the purchase would count towards the NYS 30% Initiative. The Farm-To-School Coordinator also worked with the producer to educate them on the documentation that would be needed for

the NYS 30% Initiative, and connected them with other school districts to foster new relationships—which will hopefully lead to more local food purchases by the districts.



*Harvest of the Month tasting in September '25, Worcester Central School: Tomatoes - tasting: tomato, cucumber, and mozzarella salad.*



*Third grade students who were willing to try the salad show off their "I tried it!" stickers.*



*Students sharing that most of the students who tried the salad thought it tasted great, by show of votes.*



# SNAP-Ed Program



CCESO partners with the CROP (Creating Rural Opportunities Partnership) to provide youth series and family nutrition and cooking education series at many local schools. These programs allow families to spend time cooking together: they learn about a nutrition topic, prepare a healthy meal, eat the meal together and clean up together.

## SNAP-Ed 2025 Success Story

Getting kids to try new foods can be a struggle. When they play a role in preparing the food, they are more likely to try the foods. The SNAP-Ed Nutrition Program Educator received the following mail from a parent who participated in the CROP family series:

*I just wanted to tell you how valuable this class is to us. My child was diagnosed with a severe egg allergy at 18 months due to an anaphylactic reaction. Until that point, I was the "my kid is going to eat everything" mom. After that point, I let him lead and I didn't put up much of a stink, as long as he was eating. Unfortunately, he has been an incredibly picky eater ever since and getting him to try new foods is a struggle.*

*I have made it a priority to focus on food and nutrition with him. I've always demonstrated this by eating healthy myself, and encouraging him to help prepare meals. You know how it*

*goes—kids don't always listen to their moms like they do an outside influence.*

*So, I know it can be a bit discouraging to hear the "no's" when you ask if the kids like the meals. Regardless of whether the kids like the recipes, participating in the activity of cooking has been essential in getting my son to try new foods. Just trying feels like a big win for us!*



Afterschool program at Hancock, talking about physical activity and made a granola bar



Family cooking class at Sidney School. The student is making guacamole.



## Healthy Connections

Healthy Connections was created to be the sister program to the very successful and well-established Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). Healthy Connections works with anyone who doesn't meet EFNEP's income eligibility requirements. Nutrition education programs like Healthy Connections are designed to give people the tools they need to make informed choices about food, promote physical activity, and provide a supportive atmosphere that encourages the development of healthy habits.

Healthy Connections offers education and outreach that includes nutrition education programming series to individuals and families in homes, and in class settings. Programs focus on shopping for healthy food on a budget, food preparation and preservation, and promoting physical activity. In 2025 the Healthy Connections nutrition education program's efforts to address hunger, food insecurity, and physical and mental health challenges in rural communities (often food deserts) across Otsego and Schoharie Counties were supported with funding from the Rural Health Education Network of Schoharie, Otsego and Montgomery (RHENSOM). Healthy Connections nutrition education programs also reached families, adults, seniors, kids and teens, including engaging nutrition education programming for the families of students in CROP (Creating Rural Opportunities Partnership) Programs.

### *2025 Nutrition, Health and Well Being Success Story: Sweet & Natural*

Children are consuming high rates of processed foods and foods with added sugars, increasing the possibility of childhood obesity and putting them at risk for poor health outcomes later in life. A diet rich in fruits and vegetables is associated with health benefits such as decreasing the risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes. The food preferences of children are influenced by their exposure to different foods. Introducing and educating children to fruits gives them a snack that is rich in vitamins and nutrients for a healthy and active lifestyle. This program was developed to introduce and educate the young

children in our community to a healthy way of eating and enjoying delicious fruits and vegetables.

A six-week nutrition education program, using the Choose Health: Food, Fun, and Fitness (CHFFF) curriculum was offered at the Cobleskill Campus Child Care Center (5Cs). The program introduced a new nutrition lesson each week, and a snack to go along with the lesson. It would start with a story connected to the lesson, then an activity that got the kids up and moving. The best part of the lesson was when the children helped make a delicious snack. Most all the children would try the snack and liked it. The teacher at the daycare center said, "the children definitely benefitted from the program." They learned about nutrition, and they enjoyed trying new fruits and vegetables. The 5Cs even invited the nutrition program educator to do another six-week nutrition program.

Both the parents and the teacher witnessed the benefits of the program and asked to have the nutrition education program extended. The children at the childcare center loved the different foods and activities. As a result of the children participating in the nutrition education program and sharing their enthusiasm with their parents, a few of the families signed up for a "Cooking With Kids" parent and child cooking class offered at the Extension Center.



# Agriculture and Horticulture Program



## Agriculture & Food Systems

CCESO's Agriculture program supports the strategic implementation of the goals and objectives of the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plans (AFPP) of Otsego and Schoharie Counties, and promotes collaboration (avoiding duplication) among entities supporting agriculture in Otsego and Schoharie Counties.



Local farmer Nipu Berger presenting about the certification she uses on her farm, Certified Naturally Grown at the Farm Certification Program in Schoharie County

## 2025 Agriculture Success Stories

Farmers across the region need better access to timely information, one-on-one support, and contacts with agencies and programs. Many producers, especially beginning farmers and small diversified operations, seek stronger peer networks and clear pathways to resources that can help them navigate financial, regulatory, and production challenges.

In 2025, CCE Schoharie-Otsego co-hosted a regional Ag Solutions and Networking event that convened farmers, service providers, and partner organizations to address local agricultural challenges and strengthen professional networks. The event connected participants with technical resources, programs, and peer support.

CCESO coordinated and facilitated the event in collaboration with five organizations. One of the sessions, titled Ag Issues Roundtable, was a farmer-driven discussion about questions or concerns local producers were facing. That session was well attended and provided insight on the needs of the attendees. Time was allocated at the end of the day for networking among farmers and expo vendors, which included service or product providers, regulatory organizations, and Extension programs.

The event brought together farmers and agricultural professionals for shared learning. Attendees indicated an increased awareness of technical assistance programs and business resources. The expo portion of the event reduced barriers for farmers to connect with service providers, improving their ability to access support. This event strengthened cross-organization relationships and contributed to a more connected, informed, and resilient farm community, setting the stage for ongoing collaboration.

## Family Farm Day

For more than a decade, Family Farm Day (FFD) has been very successful in achieving two main goals: to increase public awareness of agriculture; and to provide an opportunity for participating farms to expand their customer bases. FFD continues to nurture better connections between the public and farms. It responds to the challenges small farmers face building local, economically feasible markets for their diversified products (not all farmers are able to participate in farmers' markets). As the region's largest agritourism event, FFD responds to growing interest in increasing access to local farm products, and in opportunities that expand the public's knowledge of farms and food systems. On FFD visitors enjoy behind-the-scenes tours of farms, participate in unique on-farm educational activities, and learn more about the important role that farms play in our rural communities.

Survey data shows that many participating farms have been able to convert FFD visitors into consistent clientele. In addition to local visitors, FFD attracted visitors from surrounding counties, the NYC metropolitan area, and neighboring states. Participating farms reported that FFD continues to be a high revenue event that presents a unique opportunity to expand their customer bases each year.

## Annie's Project

The NYS "Inspired by Annie's" collaborative initiative enhances the capacity for community organizing among women in agriculture. CCESO's staff participates in, and helps to teach, workshops; contributes to the efforts of the NYS Annie's Project to streamline statewide communications; and participates in many Annie's Project facilitator meetings. CCESO collaborates with the NYS Annie's Project to train new CCE program facilitators who are qualified by Annie's Project (Iowa) to teach the Annie's Project curriculum. The NYS "Inspired by Annie's" offers a workshop series that addresses Business Development, Marketing Agriculture Products, Farmland Evaluation and Agri-



Family Farmstead Dairy in Otsego County on Family Farm Day

culture Mediation. Collaborators included: CCE Oneida, CCE Broome, and Annie's Project Iowa State.

## Regional Agriculture Teams

CCESO's investment in two of Cornell Cooperative Extension's regional ag teams leverages Extension and applied agriculture research programs critical to the success of farms in Otsego and Schoharie Counties. In partnership with Cornell and Cooperative Extension Associations in neighboring counties, the teams deploy 19 highly skilled specialists in the areas of vegetables, tree fruit, small fruit, grapes, dairy, livestock, field crops and ag business management; provide high quality educational programs addressing the needs of local agricultural producers; offer broader "ag management" resources; and provide cutting edge research and education to local farms. CCESO's investment in the regional ag teams ensures the growth and profitability of the industry that is vital to our food systems and an important economic engine in both counties. By investing in the regional agriculture teams, CCESO is able to access the expertise and resources of all 10 regional teams in the NYS Extension System and more effectively access the rich faculty and program resources of Cornell University and the National Land Grant System to benefit Otsego and Schoharie County agricultural producers and ultimately all residents of the county.

## 2025 Horticulture Success Stories

### Invasive Species Outreach

What do jumping worms, wild parsnip, spotted lantern fly, emerald ash borer and Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed, Asian longhorn beetle, and the hemlock woolly adelgid have in common? They are all examples of the Invasive Species (IS) that are increasingly impacting our communities. CRISP (Catskill Regional Invasive Species Program) works closely with CCE's educators to develop and implement IS programming and outreach. CCESO's staff and MGVs provide IS identification services free of charge and have a related webpage (<http://cceschoharieotsego.org/invasive-species>).



### Master Gardener Volunteers

The primary mission of the Master Gardener program is to provide research-based garden education and support to the community.



Biennial Master Gardener Volunteer Training (MGVT) has been offered since 2003 through a partnership among CCEs in Schoharie-Otsego, Herkimer, Chenango, and Delaware counties. After completing the Master Gardener training, the trainees join the corps of the CCESO Master Gardener Volunteers (MGV) who provide education and outreach in response to the increased interest in vegetable, native plant and pollinator gardening; consumer horticulture; and promoting sustainable gardening practices through the MGV helpline, outreach efforts, and programs. There are currently about four dozen active MGVs in Otsego and Schoharie Counties. MGV programs

and the Cooperstown and Cobleskill demonstration gardens are fully supported by program fees, grants, and income from the MGVT plant sale to support the development and implementation of programming including: food security, native plants and pollinators, beginner and small-space gardening.



28 Master Gardener Volunteers from Herkimer, Schoharie and Otsego Counties gathering on day 1 of their 6-month training to become Master Gardener Volunteers

## Food Gardening for Adults and Youth: Fighting Hunger/Food Insecurity Success Story

The Seed-to-Supper program is a free beginner vegetable gardening series that provides straightforward, practical information about growing healthy food on a budget. Through a series of classes, participants learn the basics of planning and planting a garden, as well as, how to harvest and prepare the vegetables. The Seed-to-Supper program is geared towards adults, however, the curriculum can be adopted to teach children about growing food. CCESO invested in this program to provide food gardening education for both children and adults.



Seed to Supper PILOT program in Schoharie and Otsego Counties. Programs designed to teach growing food on a budget.

Food insecurity and access to fresh food is a growing issue in Otsego and Schoharie Counties. While gardening alone will not solve these issues, teaching people and families how to grow a portion of their own food on a budget alleviates some struggles associated with food insecurity and access.

*continues on page 10*

CCESO trained volunteer garden educators to then teach programs based on the Seed-to-Supper curriculum in Otsego County and Schoharie Counties. CCECO then selected partner agencies within the community to recruit participants and host the Seed-to-Supper gardening series. CCECO successfully secured grant funding to support the program. Utilizing the Seed-to-Supper curriculum as a model, CCECO staff coordinated vegetable gardening programs and series with 4-H youth. The CCECO demonstration garden in Cooperstown was used as an outdoor classroom and learning space for the youth gardening series.

Five (5) 4-H youth completed the Together We Grow and Eat gardening series in Otsego County and four (4) 4-H youth completed the Planning your Garden series in Schoharie County. The youth were actively engaged in age-appropriate beginner gardening activities.



*Together We Grow and Eat Gardening Series: Collaboration with 4-H in CCECO demonstration garden in Cooperstown.*

In a collaborative effort, Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) staff from Schoharie, Otsego, and Herkimer Counties pooled resources to train Seed-to-Supper volunteer facilitators. This approach allowed for a streamlined and highly organized regional training that prepared eleven (11) volunteers across the three counties.

In Otsego County the Milford Come!Unity Garden was the host agency, providing a wonderful location to accommodate the program with a garden, classroom, and food pantry onsite. Ten (10) participants completed the majority of the training. In Schoharie County the Cobleskill Campus Child Care Center (CCCCC) was selected as the host agency for Schoharie County to support a developing school garden and engage with parents wanting to learn to garden. Nine (9) participants successfully completed the series.

## Community Energy Advisors

In 2025 CCECO's Community Energy Educators provided programming and outreach to help Otsego and Schoharie County residents access and navigate resources and funding opportunities to benefit from home improvements, rebates and clean energy careers.



### *2025 Success Story: Home Becomes Safer and More Energy Efficient*

A client contacted CCECO because her furnace wasn't working. The Community Energy Advisor (EA) was able to guide her through programs to first get a new furnace for her home, and then apply for a secondary program to help her receive additional insulation and air sealing, creating a safer, more comfortable, and energy efficient home.

The Energy Advisor from CCECO was able to teach the client how to apply for a Home Equipment Repair and Replacement (HERR) application provided by The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). This included helping the client contact HEAP approved contractors and navigating eligibility information. Once that was completed, the EA educated the client about the Empower+ program through NYSERDA, emphasizing that a well-insulated house would further ease her heating troubles. The EA assisted the client in her Empower+ application and followed up throughout the process as the grant funds were utilized to better her home.

The client and her three young children benefitted from the installation of a new furnace, which drastically reduced their energy bill and enhanced their safety (they had previously been using plug in space heaters, an expensive and dangerous alternative). The weatherization grant supported insulation in the attic and basement, air sealing in the basement, as well as an electric panel upgrade and dehumidifier.



*Community Energy Advisors Carlotta (left) and Michaela (right) display the many opportunities the Mohawk Valley Regional Clean Energy Hub offers at CCECO's annual meeting. Also pictured is their dollhouse, displaying how various energy efficient upgrades can look like in a home.*



## 4-H Youth Development Program

4-H connects youth to hands-on opportunities that help them grow into competent, caring and contributing members of society, all while making friends and having fun. Through programming, youth work to develop their individual four “H’s”—HEAD, HEART, HANDS, and HEALTH. Youth are encouraged to use their HEAD to develop clearer thinking, decision-making, and knowledge that is useful throughout their life. Youth use their HEART for greater loyalty and to acquire strong personal values, positive self-awareness, and concern for others. Youth use their HANDS for larger service, workforce preparedness and to develop useful skills and science technology literacy. Youth also work toward their HEALTH for a better living and a healthy lifestyle.

4-H project work is designed to teach youth life skills through hands-on activities that help them grow confidence, independence, resilience, and compassion. Animal projects help 4-H youth build important life skills including hard work, responsibility, critical thinking and decision making, and 4-H youth gain public speaking experience conducting public presentations.

### *2025 Success Story: 4-H Thriving Model*

The Fenimore Farm Junior Livestock Show is a summer tradition in Cooperstown, NY, and celebrated its 77th season in 2025, with more than 200 youth handlers and 500 animals participating in the show from a nine-county region, including 80 4-H youth from Schoharie and Otsego Counties. Each year, Fenimore Farm collaborates with Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H Educators, clubs, and volunteers to put on the show for 4-H youth ages eight to eighteen who have prepared various breeds of dairy cattle, beef cattle, swine, dairy goats, meat goats, and sheep that they own or care for, for competition. Throughout the year, Extension staff and volunteers provide 4-H youth with guidance and education in animal care, safe animal handling, and ethical practices in raising animals, to help members develop responsibility, confidence, and hands-on skills. Several of the Schoharie and Otsego Counties 4-H youth who participated earned championship titles. The show brought together families, volunteers, and the community all in support of positive 4-H youth development. While show opportunities empower youth to excel in the show ring, the most meaningful successes were seen in displays of good sportsmanship by 4-H’ers supporting peers, helping younger exhibitors, and demonstrating respect throughout the event.

Youth spend months to years of hard work raising their animals and preparing them for the showring. Through 4-H animal projects and show opportunities, youth learn responsibility, and proper animal handling and care, all while growing in confidence, independence and compassion. The audience includes 4-H youth members who are supported by their families, leaders, educators, judges, sponsors, and community supporters, who are all invested in positive youth development. Together, the Fenimore Farm, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and its support-

ers, give youth an opportunity for healthy competition through the Junior Livestock Show, all while allowing youth to showcase and further develop their hard work, dedication, and skills.

Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H Educators play an important role in the success of the show by providing not only collaborative planning and staffing during the event, but by providing guidance, resources, and educational support to youth that make the event both meaningful and well-organized. Extension staff and 4-H volunteers work behind the scenes to help ensure youth safety and proper animal care standards, while also preparing members through hands-on learning opportunities throughout the year. Overall, through the Fenimore Farm Junior Livestock Show, Cornell Cooperative Extension showcases its commitment to positive youth development all while helping to strengthen the agricultural community.

Through hands-on 4-H projects, record keeping, and events like the Junior Livestock Show, youth learn proper animal handling, care and safety, all while developing responsibility, leadership, and skills. At the show itself, many youth exhibitors achieve personal milestones, some through improving their showmanship techniques while others simply by gaining confidence in presenting their animals in the showring.

A Schoharie County 4-H youth won the Fenimore Farm Cup for Best of Show Dairy while another Schoharie County youth won the F. Ambrose Clark Livestock Cup for Best of Show in the beef, swine, meat goat, and sheep categories. There were also several grand champion dairy cattle breed titles that went to Schoharie and Otsego County 4-H youth members, including, titles for grand champion Ayrshire, Guernsey, Holstein, Jersey and Milking Shorthorn. In the livestock divisions, Supreme animal awards went to Schoharie County youth in the beef cattle and sheep categories. Grand Champion Showmanship awards were given to an Otsego County youth in the sheep division, and to a Schoharie County youth in the dairy goat division as well.

In addition to animal awards, there is a \$500 Agricultural Leader Scholarship in honor of Terra Jackson, sponsored by Chobani, that is presented to the youth who writes the most outstanding essay submission. The recipient of the 2025 Terra Jackson Award went to an Otsego County 4-H youth member this year.

The impact of the Fenimore Farm Junior Livestock Show on youth accomplishment extends beyond ribbons and awards. When youth participants encourage one another, lend a helping hand to younger participants, and show respect to judges, volunteers, and other competitors, they demonstrate core values taught through 4-H programming and learn that leadership, kindness and character matter just as much as skill.

*continues on page 12*

Each year, the Fenimore Farm Junior Livestock Show has a Good Sportsmanship Award that is awarded to any individual; exhibitor, family member, friend, or volunteer who demon-

strates good conduct, character and overall good sportsmanship towards others during the show. This year that award went to one of our Otsego County 4-H youth.

### Otsego County 4-H Activities



Crafty Chipmunks 4-H Club working on garden art.



The Gilbertsville Dairy Club making wooden tool boxes



The Ewes & Friends 4-H Club learning about different types of wool



The Fields & Flats 4-H Club visiting a fish hatchery



The Springfield High Meadows 4-H Club community service.



Otsego County 4-H Public Presentations



Otsego County 4-H members at 4-H Science Day held at SUNY Oneonta



Otsego County 4-H members competing at 4-H Livestock Skillathon



4-H members showing at the Otsego County Fair



*continues on page 14*

### Schoharie County 4-H Activities



4-H member Lizzy giving her public presentation on the champagne d'argent rabbit breed, at the Sunshine Fair



A scene from the Sunshine Fair featuring 4-H non-animal project exhibits, including several Best in Show winners



Participants in the 4-H Woodworking Workshop proudly display the toolboxes they built during the hands-on program.



4-H youth at the Junior Department Sheep Show during the Sunshine Fair



*Schoharie County 4-H youth exhibitors at the Fenimore Farm Junior Livestock Show*



*4-H member Brooke preparing her dairy goat for the Fenimore Farm Junior Livestock Show*



*Schoharie County 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl teammates pose together at the Capital District competition*



*4-H member Olivia talks with the judge during the Fenimore Farm Junior Livestock Show.*

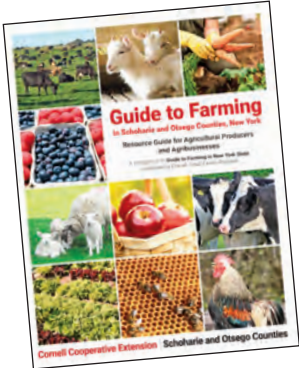
## Learn More About Us



To learn even more about us read *Connections—the News Magazine of Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties*. Sign up for our free online newsletter at [www.cceschoharie-otsego.org/connections](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org/connections). The articles are chosen to meet the broad interests of community residents. Printed copies are available at our offices.

The Farm Guide, developed by CCE for Family Farm Day 2025, is a great resource, providing readers with product listings, mapping of farm locations, and contact information for area farmers' markets and local farms to visit, even after the Family Farm Day event. [www.cceschoharie-otsego.org/2025FarmGuide](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org/2025FarmGuide).

CCE developed an updated resource for area farms and agribusinesses, the **Guide to Farming in Schoharie and Otsego Counties, New York**. This guide provides farmers, food producers and processors, and agribusinesses in Schoharie and Otsego Counties with contact information and brief descriptions of services provided by local, regional, and national organizations and agencies.



## Our Mission

Cornell Cooperative Extension puts knowledge to work in pursuit of economic vitality, ecological sustainability and social well-being. We bring local experience and evidence-based solutions together, helping New York State families and communities thrive in our rapidly changing world.



SCHOHARIE COUNTY EXTENSION CENTER



OTSEGO COUNTY EDUCATION CENTER

**Schoharie County**  
173 South Grand St., Suite 1  
Cobleskill, NY 12043-4649  
t. 518.234.4303  
f. 518.234.4305  
[schoharie@cornell.edu](mailto:schoharie@cornell.edu)

**Otsego County**  
123 Lake St.  
Cooperstown, NY 13326-1017  
t. 607.547.2536  
f. 607.547.5180  
[otsego@cornell.edu](mailto:otsego@cornell.edu)

**Oneonta Outreach Office**  
31 Maple St.  
Oneonta, NY 13820-1940  
t. 607.433.2521  
f. 607.436.9682

[www.cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org)

## Committed Volunteers

Your time, talents, and dedication enable us to offer more to the communities we serve. You have our deepest appreciation. If we have missed your name, please know we value your effort as well!

### **Schoharie 4-H**

Sarah Blood  
Heather Bouck  
Nancy Brumaghim  
Jessica Butler  
Rebecca Carr  
Marissa Colvin  
Tommy Cook, Jr.  
Kelly Coons  
Amy Cornwell  
Jacqueline Dinger  
Vicki Echnert  
Carrie Edsall  
Emily Gigandet  
Jacqueline Giordano  
Lois Goblet  
Aimee Hadleigh  
Sarah Hoose  
Kelly Houston  
Brenda Hughes  
Rochelle Hulslander  
Alicia Irvin  
Antone Irvin  
Jaime Jones  
Calley Knapp  
Randi Korona  
Lisa Kuehnle  
Jane Lacko  
Crystal Lobdell  
Maria Loux  
Sarah Madore  
Alicia Mahler  
Anthony McGibbon  
Samantha Moyster  
Andrea Ostrander  
Erika Palombo  
Alexandra Paris  
Lacy Parrish  
Nicholas Recheizer  
Barbi Richards

Hailey Rivers  
Jennifer Robinson  
Erin Saddlemire  
Allison Sanganetti  
Jessica Schoenecker  
Kecia Schultz Warner  
Shannon Sears  
Nichole Slater  
Faye Benedict Smith  
Lydia VanEvera  
Amelia von Korff  
Emily Wallace  
Jennifer Walrath  
Darah Wright  
Damien Zurek  
Darlene Zurek

### **Otsego 4-H**

Janet Attanasio  
John Attanasio  
June Baker  
Rebecca Barringer  
Beth Bartlett  
Jonathan Bartlett  
Jessica Bennett  
Matthew Blankenship  
Danta Bolin  
Gavin Bonczkowski  
Sandra Bonczkowski  
Suzanne Campbell  
Kelly Cleaveland  
Sarah Curtis  
Anna Dangca  
Jessica DeBoer  
Michael DeBoer  
Dennis Decker  
Stephanie Decker  
Nicholas DeDominicis  
Amy Doody  
Debra Dutcher

Doug Dutcher  
Melissa Fetterman  
Nicole Field  
Cathy Galley  
Cindy Gilbert  
Haley Groat  
Jessica Hart  
Kristi Hartman  
Jessica Hausmann  
Kerensa Jones  
Shirley Keene  
Desiree Kever  
Ann Kelchlin  
Jacqueline Kelchlin  
Mary Kay Kennedy  
Deborah Kogut  
Amanda Licata  
Katie Lindsey  
Brian Manchester  
Deborah March  
Justin March  
Hannah Miller  
Kristine Mravlja  
Peter Mravlja  
Mary Lou Parker  
Lori Peck  
Patrick Pegg  
Victoria Pegg  
Aurore Perrine  
Christopher Perrine  
Amanda Powers  
Cindy Powers  
Holly Pullis  
Denyse Ruffles  
Bridgette Shepardson  
Benjamin Smith  
Jennifer Smith  
Jeffery Sullivan  
Samantha Talarico  
Jaelyn Turnbull

Cierra Utter  
April Vunk  
Mike Wolfe  
Elizabeth Young

### **Schoharie Master Gardeners Program**

Debra Bechtold  
Elizabeth Brown  
Susan Carver  
Berenice Dooley  
Pamela Hart  
Annette Holowka  
Theresa Kaya  
Diane Mills  
Scott Mills  
Paula Sinatra

### **Otsego Master Gardeners Program**

Ellen Alex  
Suzanne Belew  
Mark Boshnack  
Christine Burrington  
Mary Ellen Calta  
Fiona DeJardin  
Darleen Fournier  
Carolyn Hopper  
Kim L'Heureux  
Annette MacLeod  
Christine McGurrian  
Susanna Membrino  
Paul Mendelsohn  
Elaine Nahman  
Celia Oxley  
Carol Phelps  
Francine Stayter  
Emma Kirsch  
Ellen LaSalle  
Susan Jones  
Audrey Porsche

# Our Generous Supporters

Contributions make a difference!

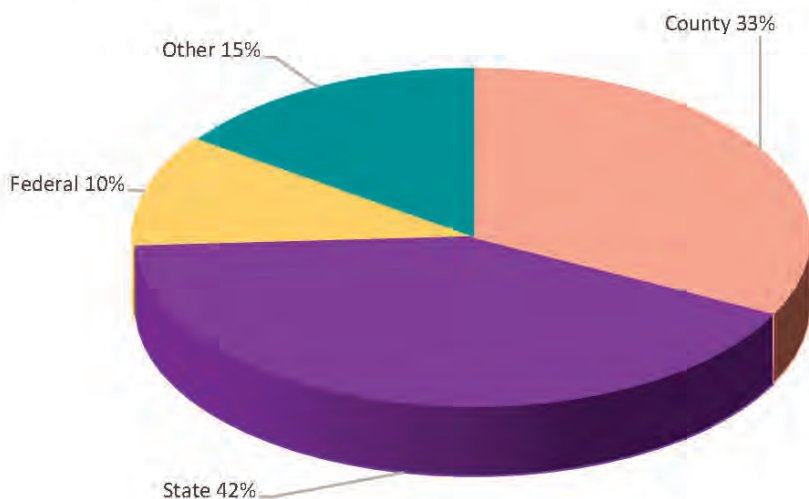
Annuto's Farm Stand  
Augur Doody Farm  
Baker Creek  
Shirley & Richard Ball  
Barringer Family  
Barringer Livestock  
Bassett Healthcare Network  
Beaver Den Diner  
Bella Michaels Restaurant  
Marcy & Robert Birch  
Pauline Boyer  
Broadwell Dairy & Orchard  
Brown's Feed Inc.  
Bull's Head Inn Cobleskill Inc.  
Burn Ayr Farm  
Burpee Seeds  
CADE Inc.  
Cynthia Campbell  
Angelo Carapezza  
Carpets Plus  
Susan Carver  
Catskill Mountain Veterinary Association  
Central Bridge Farms  
Charles J. Husted Inc.  
Linda Chism, in memory of Karl Yoder  
Cobleskill Tractor Supply  
Cobleskill Veterinary Clinic  
Cold Spring Farm  
The Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties  
The Community Foundation of Otsego County  
Cooperstown Natural Foods  
Country Boy Realty  
David Cox  
Dairy Farmers of America  
Giovanni De Cesare, in memory of Karl Yoder  
Deboer Family  
Delaware County Farm Bureau  
Maria Deysenroth, in memory of Lynn Joy  
Dollar Tree  
Dawn Donnelly, in memory of Karl Yoder  
Lynn Dunn  
Deb & Doug Dutcher, in memory of Rich McCaffery  
Eastern Crown Inc.  
Christine Edwards  
Empire Livestock Marketing LLC  
Empty Pockets Ranch  
Family Farmstead Dairy  
Farm Credit East  
Fenimore Asset Management  
Fenimore Farm and Country Village  
Elizabeth Ferrara, in memory of Karl Yoder  
Scott Fickbohm  
Michele Finin  
Mark Fitzgerald  
Fly Creed Cider Mill  
Stephen Forte, in memory of Karl Yoder  
Fox Creek Farm  
Fuzzy's Building & Excavation  
Deborah Gansinger Hall  
Garden Club of Richfield Springs  
George Keyser  
Michael Graziano, in memory of Karl Yoder  
Gretna Gardens LLC  
Hannaford Markets  
Anne Hart  
Olivia Hart  
Hausmann Family  
Danielle Hautaniemi  
Hickling's Fish Farm Inc.  
High on the Hog  
Home Depot  
Home Town Hauling & Recycling  
Timothy Hoose  
Howe Caverns Inc.  
Howes Cave Animal Hospital, on behalf of Tiffany Bonsell  
Hubbell Family Farm  
Huff Inc.  
The Ice Burgh  
Institute for Rural Vitality at SUNY Cobleskill  
Betsy Jay  
Betsy Jensen  
Jubilee Farms  
Shirley Keene  
Kelley Farm & Garden  
Kennedy Agency LLC/American Insurance Co.  
Kenyon Insurance Agency  
Kneller Insurance Agency  
KNK Landscaping LLC  
Deborah Kogut, in memory of Yvonne & Charlie Page  
Carole & Michael Lachance  
Lake & Valley Garden Club  
Lamont Engineers  
Lavender Fields at Maxwell Farm  
Lea & Bryce Murcraay  
Leatherstocking Cooperative Insurance Co.  
Leatherstocking Region Federal Credit Union  
Limesprings Farm  
Lindberg Family  
Lindcrest Farms  
Katharine Lloyd  
Locomotions Sports Bar & Grill  
Lutz Feed Co. Inc.  
Shelby & Padraic MacLeish  
Maple Hill Syrup Farm  
Maplewood Farm & Orchard  
March Family  
Andrew & Melissa Marietta  
Mayne Creations & Design  
Christine McGurrian  
Samantha Messler  
Mickle Hollow Maple & Honey  
Middleburgh Telephone Company  
Middlefield Orchard  
Hanna Miller  
Mirabito Energy Products  
Mohawk Valley Beekeepers Club  
Morris Fire Dept. Auxiliary, in memory of Lynn Joy  
Beth Mowry  
Angel & Peter Mravlja  
Kris Mravlja  
Mustang Valley Sanctuary  
New Asbury Gardens Outdoor Living & Garden Center  
New York Pizzeria Inc.  
Noble Ace Hardware  
Norton's Gas Inc.  
The NYCM Foundation  
Old Homestead Farm  
Mike Opalka  
Otsego County Farm Bureau  
Otsego County Patrons/Co-operative Fire Relief Association  
Parsons Vegetable Farm  
The Peachin Group LLC  
Lillian Perrine  
Megan Perrine  
Carol & Steve Phelps  
Agnes & Bernard Phillips, in memory of Karl Yoder  
Poplar Hedge Farm  
Pro-Struction LLC  
Kristin & Thomas Pullyblank  
Donald & Catherine Raddatz  
Revspirits & Beeline Meadery  
Roedale Farm  
Rotary Club of Cooperstown  
Schoharie County Farm Bureau  
Schoharie County Home of Ongoing Learning  
Schoharie Valley Farms  
Seed Savers Exchange  
Steven Sinniger  
Slate Hill Lavender Farm  
Stannard's Maple Farm  
Kelly Stephens  
Sterling Insurance Company Foundation  
Stewart's Shops  
Stewart's Foundation  
Stone House Farm  
Mary Sullivan  
Sun Mountain Apiary  
Sunstruck Farm  
SUNY Cobleskill Student Government Association  
SUNY Oneonta  
Sydenstricker Nobbe Partners  
Carol Taylor, in memory of Robert W. Taylor  
Thistle & Lace Boutique  
Elaine Nahman & Tom Tighe, in memory of J. Rielly & B. Peterson  
Townline Equipment Sales  
Tractor Supply Co.  
Van Dale Farms  
Elsa Van Glad Varrecchia  
Village Variety Store  
Walmart Spark Good  
The Walter J. & Anne H. Burchan Chritable Trust  
Watershed Agricultural Council  
Pure Catskills  
Weaver Farm Market  
Rebecca & William Weinert  
Jeffrey Woeppel  
Jolene & Robert Yoder, in memory of Karl Yoder

## Association Funding

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schoharie and Otsego Counties is financially supported by county, state, and federal funds. This cooperative funding partnership links local residents and communities to Cornell University and the nationwide land-grant university system of research and education. Our core governmental funding is augmented with grants, contracts, program fees, and private contributions.

### 2025 Financial Support for 10/01/2024 - 09/30/2025

<i>County</i>	
Funding Appropriation	484,609
County Contracts	47,794
<b>Total County Support</b>	<b>532,403</b>
<i>State</i>	
County Law 224 Funds	130,810
OCFS, AG & Markets, NYSERDA	88,499
Direct University Fringe Benefits	462,523
<b>Total State Support</b>	<b>681,832</b>
<i>Federal</i>	
Smith-Lever	24,000
EFNEP (nutrition education program)	61,492
SNAP Ed & CACFP (free & reduced reimbursements)	89,550
<b>Total Federal Support</b>	<b>175,043</b>
<i>Other Sources</i>	
Program Participation Fees	32,312
Grants, Contracts, Special Projects	68,800
Contributions, Fundraising	86,775
Interest Income, Rental Income, Misc Income	60,957
<b>Total Other Sources of Support</b>	<b>248,844</b>
<b>Total Support to Association</b>	<b>\$1,638,121</b>



### Funding Source Definitions:

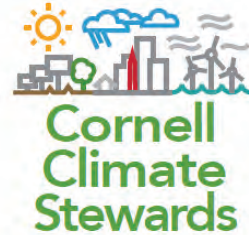
**County Appropriations** – represent funds from Schoharie and Otsego Counties to support the work of the Association.

**Direct Aid** – represents fringe benefits paid on behalf of the association through Cornell University.

**Federal Smith-Lever Funds** – support through the federal enabling legislation for Cooperative Extension, administered by state land-grant institutions.

**State 224 Funds** – represent legislative support from NYS for operation of county cooperative extension associations.

# CCE in Action!



## Here is how you can support CCE outreach:

Making a donation is as simple as going to [www.cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org) and clicking this button:



Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your contribution is tax deductible to the extent provided by law.

**Cornell Cooperative Extension** | Schoharie and Otsego Counties