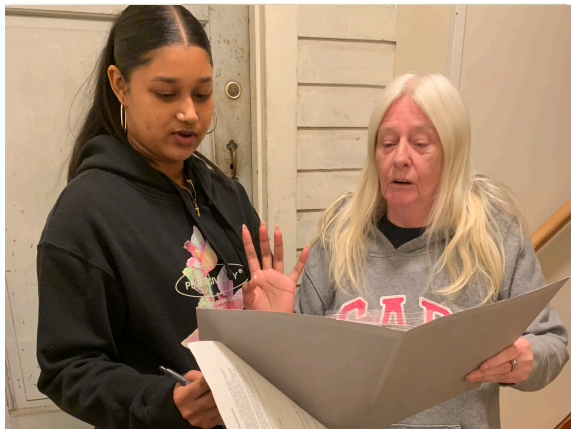
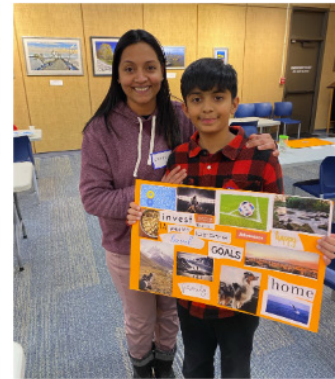


2025

ANNUAL REPORT



Cornell Cooperative Extension | Albany County



A letter from The Association Executive Director & Board President

Dear Friends of Extension,

On behalf of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Albany County (CCE), we are pleased to present the 2025 Annual Report. This report showcases many of our remarkable educational initiatives and highlights several accomplishments from the past year.

We are deeply grateful for CCE's outstanding staff and our more than 250 dedicated volunteers, whose skill, passion, and commitment drives our mission of providing research-based education and outreach that benefits the residents of Albany County.

CCE's work is strengthened by the many partnerships we are fortunate to cultivate, including our government partners at the county, state, and federal levels; Cornell University faculty and administrators; and a wide network of local and regional schools, businesses, non profits, health care organizations, and municipalities. These alliances enable us to deliver a wealth of timely, relevant educational resources that enrich the lives of diverse audiences across Albany County and the Capital Region.

Please join us in celebrating CCE's ongoing achievements. We look forward to building upon this success and continuing to make a meaningful impact throughout Albany County in the years ahead.



Lisa V. Godlewski
Association Executive Director



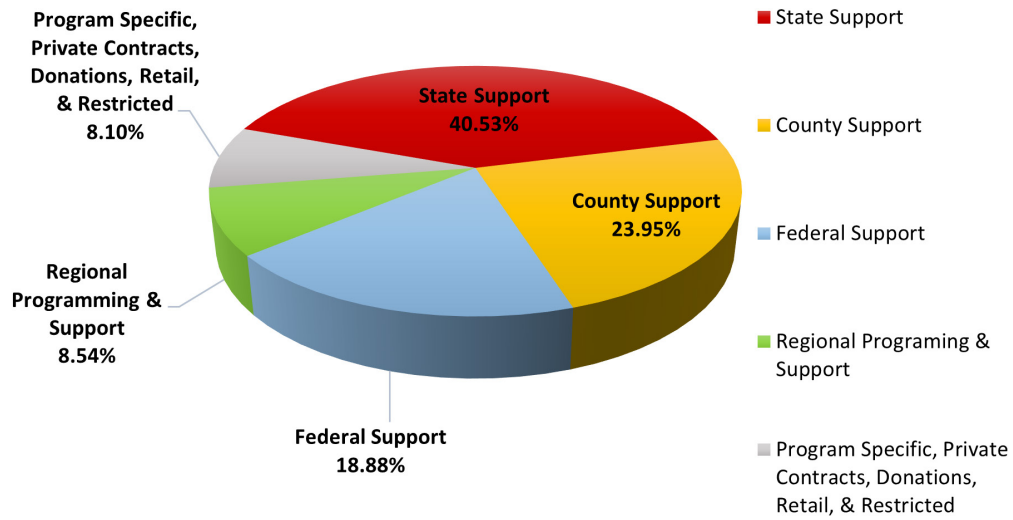
Carolyn J. Anderson
Board President

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 research-based solutions together, helping New York State families and communities thrive in our rapidly changing world.

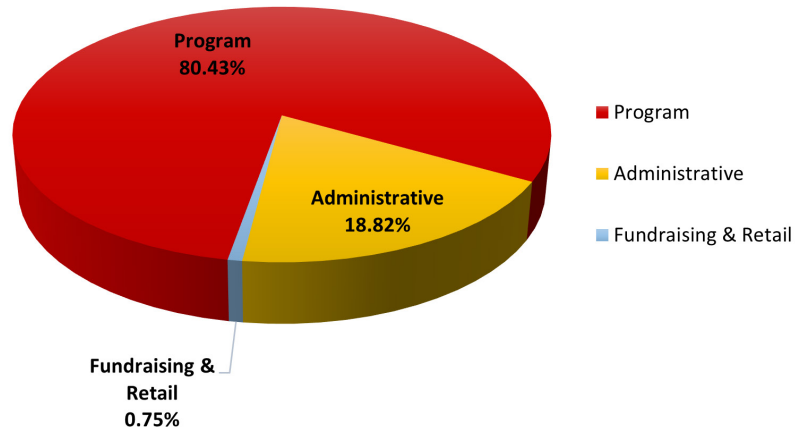


Financial Report

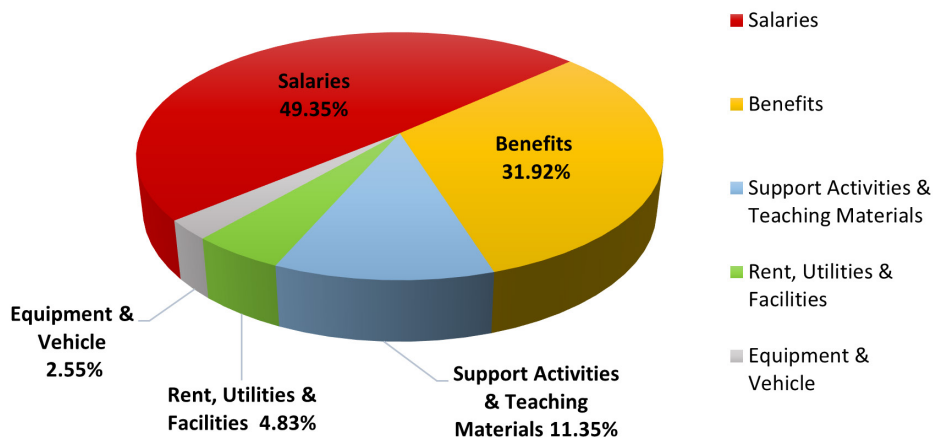
Support & Revenues



Expenditure Breakdown



Program Expenditures



4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The 4-H Youth Development Program continues to spark curiosity and confidence by inviting youth to explore new experiences through hands-on learning in a welcoming, supportive environment. Programs range from creative arts and STEM to agriculture, environmental education, career exploration, local foods, veterinary science, and nutrition education. This hands-on approach keeps young people active and engaged, helping them build skills, connect with peers, and dive into high-quality 4-H curriculum.

100+

volunteers provided learning opportunities to help youth reach their goals and discover their sense of purpose

300+

youth were involved in the 4-H Club Program in Albany County

1,023

fair exhibits and animal show classes were entered by 131 4-H members at the Altamont Fair

4-H Club Program

The 4-H Club Program provides young people with more than educational activities—it gives them the confidence, leadership skills, and sense of purpose they need to become resilient, engaged citizens. Teens bring these skills to life through the 4-H Teen Action Group, where community service becomes action. One of their most meaningful projects is Adopt-A-Family, a partnership with the Albany County Department of Children, Youth and Families. Each holiday season, the teens “adopt” a local family, carefully selecting gifts from each family member’s wish list to make their celebration brighter. The funds come from their own hard work in the 4-H Milkshake Booth at the Altamont Fair, where they spend six long days mixing milkshakes and raising money for service projects that truly matter. Through their efforts, teens see firsthand how their choices and commitment can make a real difference close to home.



URBAN 4-H PROGRAM

The Urban 4-H Program continues to provide positive youth development experiences for children of all ages in communities throughout Albany County, with an enhanced focus on supporting youth in urban neighborhoods. Educators partner with a number of organizations and schools to offer high-quality, engaging educational programs that help young people build skills, form connections, and support their overall well-being alongside their families.

4,110

youth participated in Urban 4-H programs focused on hands-on learning related to STEM, environmental science, coding, and healthy living

295

youth participated in 4-H workshops during the YMCA summer sessions, with 90%+ of the youth attending all four weeks of programming

Urban 4-H Program

Urban 4-H program educators provide young people in city schools with meaningful opportunities to build life skills, develop leadership abilities, and engage in hands-on learning that strengthens their confidence and future success. Through the in-school and after-school programs, Urban 4-H reaches youth who are involved in enrichment activities. Educators provide a learning environment that enhances problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and skill development using topics related to STEM, environmental science, coding, and agriculture and dairy education. This past year, more than 4,000 youth in eight elementary schools in the Albany and Cohoes school districts connected with 4-H educators.



YOUTH & AGRICULTURE

Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County's Youth and Agriculture program provides hands-on educational opportunities that help youth understand where their food comes from and why supporting local agriculture is important. In 2025, staff organized Ag Days, bringing livestock directly to schools to give students an up-close look at farm animals and food systems. With the Farm-to-School Program, students participated in taste test opportunities to try new foods and learn about the benefits of buying local. Youth programming conducted at the Normanskill Farm provided second graders from 12 different City of Albany schools the opportunity to explore the history of an old dairy farm, and learn about dairy and beef cattle, sheep, police horses, and blacksmithing. All of these educational experiences spark curiosity, build agricultural literacy, and help young people appreciate the vital role farming plays in their communities.

6,872

students engaged in hands-on activities to learn about the importance of dairy and agriculture

706

students from urban elementary schools learned about agricultural life and the history of farming

871

students participated in Agriculture Literacy Week, representing 12 different schools and five school districts in Albany County

Farm-to-School Program

The Farm-to-School Program strengthened the connection between local farms, schools, and families while bringing fresh, local food and meaningful agricultural learning directly to students. Each month, educators visited eight schools, making more than 11,000 student contacts with hands-on lessons about where food comes from and why it matters. Through taste tests, interactive demonstrations, and classroom activities, students explored the benefits of buying local food and eating fresh, seasonal foods. Many tried new fruits and vegetables for the very first time and learned how these foods are grown, harvested, and processed right here in Albany County. The impact extended well beyond the cafeteria. Schools built relationships with nearby farms and began incorporating more locally produced items into their cafeteria menus. Families reported an increase in shopping at local farms and farm markets, strengthening both the regional food system and the local economy.



LOCAL AGRICULTURE

Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County's Local Agriculture Program focuses on strengthening farm businesses and preserving agricultural land. Farmer meetings introduce new income opportunities, provide marketing strategies, and share best practices for long-term land stewardship. Hands-on support helps farmers troubleshoot challenges and connect them with the right resources, agencies, and experts. Working with both new and experienced growers, programming fosters a resilient agricultural community and promotes a sustainable local food system for generations to come.

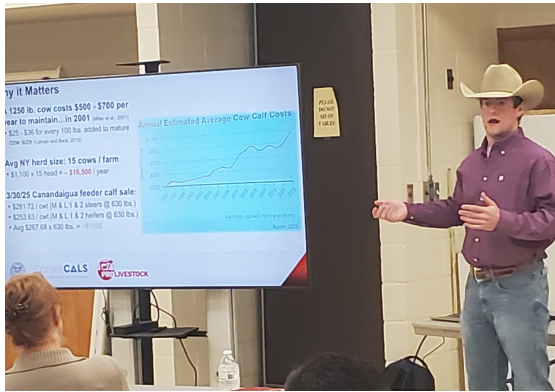
318

farmers and producers received assistance through ag-related phone calls, emails, soil tests and farm visits

119

participants attended workshops on Beef Quality Assurance, Ag Certifications, Ag Assessment Accreditation, and Tick Prevention Education

Agricultural Assessment Training



Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County's Local Agriculture Program hosted a training for farmers, landowners and town assessors focused on understanding and effectively implementing Agricultural Assessments. The meeting strengthened communication between producers and assessors while ensuring the proper use of New York State's Agricultural Districts Law, including eligibility requirements and how agricultural assessments can reduce property taxes by valuing farmland at its prescribed assessed rate.

In addition to property tax savings, the program highlighted the broader protections and support offered through agricultural districts, including: limiting unreasonable local regulation on farm practices, modifying the ability of public agencies to acquire farmland through eminent domain, requiring state agencies to adjust procedures to better support active farm operations, and providing Right to Farm protections from private nuisance suits for land enrolled in agricultural districts or receiving an agricultural assessment. This collaborative training strengthened shared understanding of the law, supported accurate local implementation, and reinforced the value of agricultural districts and assessments in protecting farmland and supporting the viability of local farms.

MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The mission of the CCE Albany County Master Gardener Volunteer Program is to teach the community about environmental stewardship, gardening for food security, and to support homeowners who have questions about managing their landscape. The program also engages and immerses children, youth, and adults into the world of horticulture and gardening.

7,888

hours were donated by
82 Master Gardener Volunteers,
multiplying the educational
outreach to Albany County residents

75

Veterans learned about growing
vegetables and using companion plants
for the VA Hospital Serenity Garden

1,433

Albany County residents attended
49 Master Gardener Speakers
Bureau community presentations

Children's Gardening Program

The CCE Albany County Master Gardener Children's Gardening Program was strengthened this year through a generous grant from the City Club of Albany, allowing expansion of the children's garden at CCE to enrich the learning experiences offered in the Summer Garden Adventure program. With this support, youth explored the vital role native plants play in sustaining pollinators and wildlife—knowledge that empowers them to become environmental stewards in their own communities. Working in groups—focused on butterflies, beetles, bees, birds, and bats—they investigated the needs of each pollinator, then applied their learning by designing and building raised demonstration gardens. Through a local connection with Allie B's Cozy Kitchen, six urban youth received Master Gardener Program scholarships and transportation to participate, ensuring equitable access to hands-on environmental education.



HEALTHY INDOOR ENVIRONMENTS

A healthy indoor environment is vital for the health, well-being, and productivity of Albany County residents. Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County conducts outreach and education on common household hazards to increase awareness, help residents identify specific risks in their homes, and provide educational resources to take action to improve their indoor environmental health and enhance their overall quality of life.

1,000+

individuals gained awareness of the benefits of a healthy home during educator visits to more than 400 Albany County residences

400+

homes increased their fire safety with fire prevention and mitigation interventions, including new working smoke alarms and up-to-date fire extinguishers

Healthy Homes Program

The Healthy Homes Program improves the health and safety of Albany County residents by helping them recognize and address environmental hazards in and around their homes. CCE educators visit homes to assess conditions, share information on the eight principles of a healthy home, and provide education on how to avoid residential injuries, prevent childhood lead poisoning, control asthma, decrease exposure to indoor air pollutants, improve home hygiene, manage pests, and prevent fire deaths. During the year, educators actively expanded referral networks to connect residents with additional local assistance providers in the community. CCE Albany County also provided enhanced support to improve indoor air quality for individuals requiring asthma management.



Lead Safe Work Practices

Through the Lead Safe Work Practices Program, CCE Albany County educates residents on the dangers of lead poisoning, which is particularly harmful for children under six years old. As an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-accredited training provider for the EPA's Renovation, Repair, and Painting Initial and Refresher Training and the EPA's Lead Abatement Worker Training, CCE Albany County offers courses several times per month throughout the Capital Region. Upon completion, students become EPA-certified renovators trained in specific work practices to prevent lead contamination. CCE educators also regularly provide lead poisoning prevention resources to the public and during outreach events.



490+

individuals became EPA-certified renovators and 30+ others achieved recertification through more than 50 trainings delivered throughout the Capital Region

210

Capital Region construction and housing-related businesses enrolled in the Lead Safe Work Practices Program, strengthening local capacity for safe renovation and repair work

Radon Outreach and Education

The Radon Outreach and Education Program raises awareness among Albany County residents about radon, a naturally occurring radioactive gas that poses serious health risks. Through the program, residents can request a kit from CCE Albany County to test their homes for radon. Educators also share information about radon exposure and pathways, demonstrate accurate do-it-yourself testing procedures, and connect residents with certified professionals for further testing and remediation work if dangerous levels of radon are found in a home.

200+

radon test kits were distributed by the CCE Albany County radon program

400+

residents received education on radon exposure, testing, and mitigation

ENERGY

Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County supports communities to make sustainable choices that build resilience and have long-term benefits for the environment. As New York State transitions to a clean energy economy, CCE Albany County is taking an active role in helping people navigate available resources and programs to empower them to make decisions that reduce environmental impacts while meeting their household's needs.

Capital Region Clean Energy Hub

Since September 2022, CCE Albany County and five other local non-profit organizations have partnered to serve as the Capital Region Clean Energy Hub. The Hub is one of 12 Regional Hubs created by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) to provide information to individuals, small businesses, and affordable housing owners about the benefits of the clean energy economy, ways to reduce energy use and costs, and approaches to making more informed energy decisions. As a member of the Hub, CCE Albany County shares information about clean energy upgrades and equipment, like heat pumps, solar energy, and weatherproofing, plus available incentives to reduce costs; helps individuals complete applications for incentive programs; and finds qualified contractors to perform clean energy upgrades, among other activities. The Capital Region Clean Energy Hub covers Albany, Columbia, Greene, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren, and Washington counties to provide support to the greater Capital Region.

2,000+

Capital Region residents were connected with resources to increase their energy efficiency

90+

events were attended by energy advisors, where participants received education on ways to reduce energy use and costs and how to make more informed energy decisions

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County (CCE) serves as an authorized alternate certifier for HEAP, helping eligible households access essential heating assistance without needing to apply directly through their local Department of Social Services. As an alternate certifier, CCE staff are trained to complete HEAP applications, verify documentation, and determine preliminary eligibility for certain HEAP benefits, including regular benefits and emergency assistance. Staff also make critical referrals for additional resources and education.

2,310

participants received assistance through HEAP

4,000

voicemails and phone calls were answered and addressed throughout the season

HUMAN ECOLOGY

Human Ecology educational programming is designed to prepare individuals and communities with the knowledge, skills, and principles needed to create healthy, sustainable, relationships between people and their environments. Human Ecology offers a variety of educational programs that apply research-based information to improve health, strengthen families, and empower communities with practical knowledge. Programs focus on topics such as nutrition, family dynamics, child development, parenting, workforce development and financial literacy.

Financial Literacy Programs

Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County provides financial literacy education that equips participants with practical skills in budgeting, credit management, debt reduction, savings strategies, and consumer decision-making. These services are delivered through culturally responsive workshops and community-based programming that is accessible to individuals with limited financial resources and limited access to traditional financial institutions.

102

adults took part in financial literacy educational programming

77

students engaged in work-readiness education through Albany County's Summer Youth Employment Program

Food Preservation Trainings



Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County delivered hands-on home food preservation education during a series of 10 local in-person classes, five virtual classes, and a display and demonstration at the Altamont Fair. In partnership with an educator from CCE Saratoga, five three-day Master Food Preserver trainings were held across the state to help prepare volunteers to teach others in their community. Adults of all ages focused on safe, approved techniques and tested recipes.

88

adults from five counties attended the three-day Master Food Preserver training

275

participants attended 14 healthy cooking classes at community centers and senior living sites

Hudson River Fish Advisory Program

The Hudson River Fish Advisory Program educates community members on safe fish consumption practices and the health risks associated with mercury and PCB exposure. The program empowers local residents to make informed decisions about recreational fishing, improving public health awareness and safety.

6,200

individuals received Hudson River Fish Advisory resources and participated in interactive programming

50+

exhibits at community events were attended by Capital Region residents



Parenting Education

Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County's parenting programs provide research-based education and practical support to help caregivers strengthen family relationships and promote healthy child development. Through workshops and classes, parents learn effective communication, positive discipline, stress management, and age-appropriate expectations. These programs create a supportive environment where families can build skills, increase confidence, and foster safe, nurturing homes for children.

242

adults took part in parenting education program series, earning completion certificates



CAPITAL REGION SNAP-ED

SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education) helps individuals and families with limited incomes make healthy food and lifestyle choices. Through classes, community partnerships, and educational resources, SNAP-Ed teaches practical skills such as meal planning, budgeting for nutritious foods, and increasing physical activity. The program works in schools, community centers, and local organizations to create environments that support healthier living and reduce food insecurity, helping program participants to improve their well-being and quality of life.

9,300+

participants were involved in a nutrition lesson or program

500+

location sites were reached in the nine counties served

Unlocking the Power of Produce

Capital Region SNAP-Ed developed and offered a new comprehensive, hands-on nutrition education and food access program that combines direct education, food assistance, and practical skill-building to help participants make lasting changes. The Unlocking the Power of Produce series provided practical knowledge and skills to support healthier eating habits and chronic disease prevention. Evaluation data demonstrates both measurable progress and positive participant experiences.

- 28% of participants increased how they rated their health
- 39% of participants increased how they rated their diet
- 39% of participants ate more than two kinds of fruit more often
- 28% of participants ate more than two kinds of vegetables more often
- 61% of participants read the nutrition facts label more often



CAPITAL AREA AGRICULTURE & HORTICULTURE PROGRAM (CAAHP)

The Capital Area Agriculture and Horticulture Program (CAAHP) team works with a diverse range of farmers and growers across a four-county region, from clients that are thinking about starting a farm to families long established in multi-generational farm businesses. Throughout the year, team members provide education through virtual and in-person workshops, newsletters and consultations to meet the needs of producers across the region. Areas of expertise include field crops, commercial horticulture, farm profitability, commercial livestock, beginning farming, agriculture entrepreneurship and market development.

Commercial Livestock



Cambridge Valley Auction approached CCE about developing and delivering a Beef Quality Assurance Transportation (BQAT) training to ensure compliance with some of the large packing houses that require cattle haulers to be BQAT certified. The training covered proper animal handling, animal welfare, identifying when animals aren't fit for trucking, and included a section on Department of Transportation requirements. Fifteen participants attended the training, passed the written exam, and reported that the program was very informative.

100+

individuals attended a virtual program on Raising Laying Hens for Eggs in partnership with the Cornell Livestock Program Work Team

70+

participants attended a wide range of workshops, from Fiber Quality and Small Farm Poultry Production to Beef Quality Assurance programming

Beginning Farmer/Market Development

The Capital Area Agriculture and Horticulture Program (CAAHP) team continues to receive inquiries from individuals interested in starting a farm business. Team members assist with understanding the complexities and intricacies involved in operating and managing a farm, providing technical assistance and resources to support those who do start farms, and offering programs that include business plan development, record keeping, farmland rental, and strategies to better understand market opportunities. In 2025, the Agricultural Entrepreneurship/Market Development educator created and implemented a statewide webinar series on farm record keeping for participants across the state, including the four-county CAAHP area.

305

individuals attended a variety of beginning farmer educational meetings and webinars

90

individuals received direct assistance regarding starting or operating a farm business

Commercial Ornamental Horticulture

The Commercial Ornamental Horticulture program serves the ornamental industries with research-based educational assistance related to cut flowers, Christmas trees, bedding plants and nursery species. Fertility, soil health, and integrated pest management are of particular importance as team members promote the use of sustainable practices that result in higher quality plants and better crop yield. In 2025, cut flower growers from across the country attended the Winter Cut Flower Webinar series that offered a variety of topics including season extension, cover crops, post-harvest care, and pests and diseases. In addition, the results of a two-year research trial funded by the New York Farm Viability Institute were shared with 581 growers to help them learn about using cover crops in cut flower production.



230+

cut flower growers from across the country attended the 2025 Winter Cut Flower Webinar Series

54

on-farm consults were conducted, helping growers diagnose pest and disease problems, sharing new research-based information, and demonstrating better farming practices on crop production and soil health

Field Crops

Farmers gathered at CaseyLand Farm in Schaghticoke for the annual Fall Roundup event, with a meal sponsored by the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative. Educators from the CAAHP team discussed hay quality and integrated weed management for pastures and hay fields. The program also addressed the variability of livestock nutrient requirements, highlighting the value of hay testing. A demonstration was provided on proper hay sampling techniques. Participants shared valuable insight from their operations that were deemed either effective or unsuccessful forage management.



15

farmers attended Fall Roundup, drawing participants from all four counties in the CAAHP service area

1,511

participants attended 71 educational CAAHP events

5

corn fields were monitored weekly through the summer months for Western Bean Cutworm



Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County Staff

Association Executive Director

Lisa Godlewski

Program Directors

Lisa Buenau, Barbara Stevens

Issue Leaders

Kathleen McAllister, Amy Shatsoff

Finance Manager/Regional Finance Lead

Anthony Zumbolo

Regional HR Lead

James McNaughton

Regional IT Lead

Erik Yager

Administrator

Jessica Denno

Program Managers

Rachel Greenberg, Carole Henry, Alexander Kleinberger, Amanda Terhune

Educators

Isabella Aversa, Nicholas Blow, Laura Coraldi, Grace Davis, Maria DeLucia-Evans, Thomas Gallagher, Joseph Ganley, Michael Lefebvre, William Lindau, Karen Roberts Mort, Camden Muller, Frank Orenstein, Cassandra Persaud, Caroline Rooney, Mackenzie Sadler, Rachel Sakadolsky

Capital Area Agriculture and Horticulture Program

Stephen Hadcock (Team Leader)

Dara Boudreaux, Danielle Doering, Rachel Moody, Jingjing Yin

Capital Region Clean Energy Hub

Bradley Towle (Program Manager)

Alexander Flowers, Tyler Folts

SNAP-Ed Educators

Crystal Davis, Jillian Doynow, Brenna Kavakos, Megan Latza

Office Support Staff

Jodi Anderson, Michael Heiserman, Sophia Loukides, Diane Probst, Desiree Shuman, Jessica Sforza, Mia Sitts, Teresa Tymchyn, Matthew Warnken

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THANK YOU

Board of Directors Members

Master Gardeners

4-H Leaders

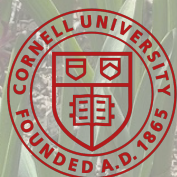
Advisory Committee Members

Student Interns

Our volunteers provide several thousand hours of program guidance and outreach education each year.

We would like to thank them all for their dedication and support to CCE Albany County!





Cornell Cooperative Extension | Albany County

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