
Cornell Cooperative Extension Clinton County Annual Report

2025



Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities

A Message from our Executive Director



Linda Gilliland
Executive Director

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Cornell Cooperative Extension-Clinton has a mission that we all strive to fill every day. Our mission is to enable Clinton County residents to improve their lives and communities through partnerships that put experience, research, and evidence-based knowledge to work. Personally, I have had the privilege of witnessing the profound impact CCE-Clinton and the transformative connections CCE fosters between youth, families, seniors, orchardists, farmers, and community members. Seeing the positive impact of CCE's educational programs and the powerful stories of those we serve have been constant reminders of why our work is so essential.

Thank you for the leadership, guidance, and dedication our Board President, Rob Timmons, our hardworking Board of Directors, and our two volunteer leadership committees (Youth and Families and Ag & Natural Resources), have provided throughout the year. It is an honor to work with our strong volunteer contingent of Master Gardener Volunteers, 4-H Members, Leaders and Families, and Climate Steward Volunteers.

As CCE-Clinton looks ahead to 2026, we are filled with anticipation for the growth and opportunities that await us. Thank you to all our community members who have supported Cornell Cooperative Extension-Clinton County. Your generosity, dedication, and belief in our mission make everything we do possible.

With gratitude and excitement for the future,

Linda Gilliland

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Executive Director

Program Highlights

Youth and Family Development

Chelsea and Kari provide a broad spectrum of innovative education in 4-H, Fostering Independence, Emergency Preparedness, Clover Buddies, Master Food Preservation, and Babysitting, to name a few. These positive youth and family programs are simply amazing. In May, 427 sixth graders attended Environmental Field Days at the Clinton County Fairgrounds and had FFA members present as teen presenters along with the Farm Bureau.



A foundation piece of the 4-H program is Public (speaking) Presentations. 94 youth presented on topics near and dear to their hearts. These 4-H'ers are amazing. Interest in STEM Robotics continues to grow, so much so that the 4-H Robotics team split into two great teams, the T.I.M.B.E.R. Bots and Forged Robotics.



Now in its 11th year, Bluegrass Next Generation is a unique 4-H program that has volunteers instructing youth in bluegrass music. Private funders provide instruments and other materials for young people to participate in and appreciate this timeless music. In 2025, our program expanded to the Adirondack Christian School, where upwards of 20 youth participate in monthly lessons provided by some of their own teachers.

Our summer session of Fostering Independence proves to be a fun and immersive two-day experience. This year, we had a parent participate with their children and reported learning more than they had anticipated.



Program Highlights

“I had no idea that there was so much to laundry care, label reading on the food I’m buying, and learning how to properly and effectively use the fire extinguisher was the highlight of our week!” – Mom, age 47.

Empowering the Future

4-H Teen Ambassadors

The Teen Ambassadors attended the Food Justice Summit at the Wild Center, where they learned about our community’s food systems and the determinants that affect health and food access. During the summit, they had the opportunity to brainstorm with local and state stakeholders in the food justice community to identify ways to make food more sustainable and accessible for residents of the North Country.

The ambassadors also assisted with the Master Gardener Plant Sale by providing community service hours at a kids’ activity table. There, local youth were able to start their own seeds for the growing season and learn how to care for them until they are ready to be transferred into garden beds. Finally, Teen Ambassadors attended the Career Explorations event at Cornell University. Career Explorations is a program offered by NYS 4-H that provides teens with a unique opportunity to tour the Cornell campus and participate in workshops focused on potential future career paths.

The Teen Ambassadors Club continues to grow each year, with more teens interested in participating in leadership projects and making a positive impact within their community.



Program Highlights

Senior Fitness



Mary Breyette continues to support seniors through online and in-person fitness programming, social contact, and a sense of community. Mary continues to reach out and connect with a staggering number of our older residents through her senior exercise classes. If you attend Mary's morning exercise classes, you know she knows your name! Mary's fitness program is supported by a partnership with the Office of the Aging. 633 senior fitness participants completed their surveys, which is an increase from 2024.

These are just some of the hundreds of Senior Fitness participants' proclamations:

"Thank you for all the exercise classes. Your verbal inclusion of older participants is heart-warming. Thank you for caring about and checking on participants. You touch many in a positive way." - Becky L.

"I am so lucky to have found you and your morning zoomers. So helpful, especially when I might feel a bit 'blue'...knowing that spending an hour with you and the rest of the community will brighten my day." - Sonya B.



Program Highlights

Consumer Horticulture and Master Gardener Volunteers

CCE Clinton's dedicated Master Gardener Volunteers delivered a broad assortment of gardening programs throughout the county in a variety of settings, such as Ag Literacy Week readers, native plant gardening, bucket gardening, composting education, recycling information, pre-K programming, nurses' appreciation week, farmers market support, community garden support, garden advice, and the plant sale. The horticulture team provides direct education to 12 community gardens and 12 bucket garden events, providing materials, supplies, guidance, and outreach through the generous support of the Chapel Hill Foundation. Thirty-six Master Gardener Volunteers contributed a grand total of 2,720 hours to the Master Gardener Volunteer program.

Master Gardener Volunteers

Master Gardener Volunteers assisted in the planning of three native plant gardens, one of which has been implemented at the Plattsburgh Public Library. Continued support has been provided to the 12 other community garden locations, including the St. Joseph's Greenhouse and the Underground Railroad Museum, as well as plans to expand into other locations, such as Morrisonville Elementary School and the town of Mooers.

Clinton County has many community gardens as well as home gardens and homesteads. Consumer Horticulture is able to offer support and assistance in the identification of growing challenges, soil testing, insect identification, wildlife interactions, and plant identification, to name a few.



Program Highlights

Agriculture

Local farms and their farmers continue to steward the land in the present with an eye on the future. Innovation and resiliency continue to be their priorities. Agriculture continues to see innovations and resilience in ever-changing markets, climate challenges, soil health, and pest and disease management.

The office provided support and information for beginning and veteran farmers throughout the year via direct inquiries and a variety of events. CCE partnered with the Farm Bureau and Soil & Water Conservation District to provide an Agriculture Tour to our county legislators to see up close the economic impact agriculture has on Clinton County.

CCE coordinated and hosted a variety of educational events for our farmers, as well as those who serve them. Manure Pit Rescue Training taught first responders how to safely rescue those who fall into manure pits, a training not normally available to them. An Agriculture Skill Builder Series provided a variety of topics for farmers, including orchardry, grafting practices, viticulture, grant writing, livestock management, artificial insemination, and Ag in the classroom for youth.

ENYCHP specialists provide education in commercial tree fruits, grapes, berries, and vegetables, as well as food safety. Harvest NY specialists provide marketing and agritourism education, delivering workshops and training highlighting current research and best practices.



Program Highlights

Natural Resources and Climate Stewards

CCE Clinton leads the Climate Steward Volunteers in both Clinton and Essex Counties – a program that empowers people, through CCE partnerships, to make a positive impact in their community towards climate resilience and climate change mitigation.

Three Climate Steward Volunteers continue to make an impact in their communities, including assisting the City of Plattsburgh's Climate Task Force in their goal of moving their bronze status in the Climate Smart Communities program towards silver, implementing pollinator fields in Upstone Quarry, and creating more accessible compost opportunities for farms. The Climate Stewards program continues to grow with 5 new volunteers.

The natural resources program provides workshops and seminars on climate science, by providing environmentally-friendly practices that get implemented into other programs, such as the Master Gardener Volunteers, Horticulture, and Agriculture. The nature book had 66 participants this year. In partnership with Point au Roche State Park, it focuses on natural science books every other month. The University of Chicago Press recognized the book club and formally requested reviews of pre-released books by club members.



Program Highlights

SNAP- Education

SNAP-Ed Nutrition Educators Alisha Thapa and Shannon Drowne expanded the program's reach across Clinton and Essex Counties through a strong network of more than 45 community partnerships, including schools, libraries, public housing, food pantries, senior centers, and social service agencies.

They delivered 327 direct education sessions and engaged community members through outreach events. Participants included school children, adults, older adults, and individuals with developmental disabilities. Through hands-on activities, food demonstrations, and evidence-based curricula, participants gained practical skills in healthy eating, meal planning, budgeting, and nutrition label literacy.

The program also supported a Fruit and Vegetable Prescription initiative, connecting eligible patients with nutrition education and vouchers to purchase fresh produce at local markets. Participants reported positive behavior changes, including increased fruit and vegetable consumption, reduced sugary beverage intake, and greater confidence in preparing healthy meals.



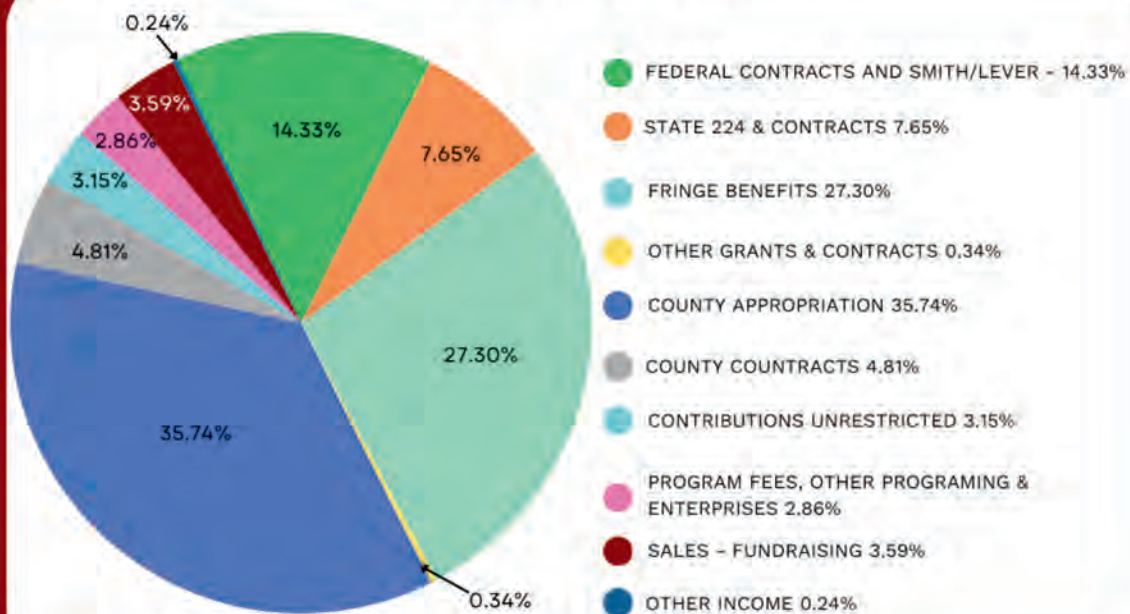
"I knew these drinks had sugar, but I never really thought about how much. The visual of the sugar made a big difference." – an adult participant at Salvation Army Soup Kitchen

"I have increased the number of steps from 10,000 to 15,000 in my daily walks. And I eat more vegetables now than I did before." – an FVRx participant

2025 BUDGET

Total Revenue	\$908,165.07
Total Transfers from Fund Balances	\$1,550.00
Total Revenue and Fund Transfers	\$909,715.07
Total Expenses	907,402.57
Total Transfers to Fund Balances	\$2,312.50
Total Expenses and Fund Transfers	\$909,715.07

FUNDING



Thank You!

To Our Partners

W.H. Miner Agricultural Research Institute
Clinton County Soil & Water Conservation District
USDA Farm Service Agency
Natural Resources Conservation Services
Clinton County Farm Bureau
Northern New York Ag Development Program
Cornell PRO-DAIRY
Farm Viability Institute
ENYCHP
Plattsburgh Farmers and Crafters Market
Integrated Pest Management Program
Lake Champlain Basin Program
Clinton County Health Department
Action for Health
Clinton County Fair
Town of Plattsburgh
North Country Chamber of Commerce
North Country Clean Energy Hub
FFA Organization
Local School Districts including Plattsburgh, Peru,
Beekmantown and Saranac
SUNY Plattsburgh
Champlain Valley Education Services
Clinton County Dept. of Social Services
Behavioral Health Services North
Friends of Point Au Roche
JCEO
Ted K Center
North Country Child Care Coordinating Council
Plattsburgh/Rouses Point Recreation Department
Clinton County NY Public Libraries
Foundation of the Adirondacks
Rotary Club of Plattsburgh Sunrise
Chapel Hill Foundation
Senior Planet
Clinton County Office for the Aging
Bluegrass for the Next Generation, Project Inc.
Harvest New York

And to the many more people, businesses, and organizations who shared their time, resources, and experience.

Who We Are

Staff

Mary P. Breyette—Senior Fitness Educator
Chelsea Denny—4-H Youth & Family / Health & Wellness Educator
Shannon Drowne—Nutrition Program Educator (SNAP)
Linda Gilliland—Executive Director
Kari Lamkins—Nutrition, 4-H Educator & Master Food Preserver
Lois McClurg—Office Manager
Viktoria (Tia) Legge—Agricultural Educator
Robert Swem—Finance Coordinator
Alisha Thapa—Nutrition Program Educator (SNAP)

Regional Staff

Mike Basedow—ENYCHP Fruit Tree Specialist
Elisabeth Hodgden—ENYCHP Vegetable Specialist
Lindsey Pashow—Ag Business & Marketing Specialist
Jeremy Schuster—Viticulture Extension Educator
Jennifer Stanton—ENYCHP Technician

Board of Directors

President & Legislative Rep—Rob Timmons

Vice President—Fred Palmer

Treasurer—Shannon Thayer

Secretary—Rachel Dutil

Directors At Large:

Wanda Carroll, Matthew Douthat, Ely Giroux,
Marisa Lenetsky, Alexandra Mesick, Norma Menard,
Chrysa Rabideau, Courtney Rock

Cornell University Representative

Kevin Jordan, Extension Specialist

Agriculture Program Committee

Bruce Bennett, Nataly Batiston, Mike Briscoe,
Jim Cayea, Anika Craig, Robert Guay,
Alec LaPierre, Jennifer Perry, Erin Walker
Alexandra Mesick—Board Representative

Youth & Family Program Committee

Molly Flynn, Heather Gauthier, Katie LaBonte,
Jennifer McIntyre, Vicki Martineau, Linda Noyes,
Katie Ryan, Erin Pangborn, Nancy Zukowski
Wanda Carroll—Board Representative

A dark red silhouette of Clinton County, New York, is centered on a solid red background. In the upper right corner of the county's outline, there is a small white square containing a red five-pointed star.

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

Cornell Cooperative Extension | Clinton County

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