



AUGUST 10, 2026

Cornell Cooperative Extension | Saratoga County

NEWSLETTER

Discover Saratoga County's Horse Country This Summer!

Saddle up for a memorable summer afternoon! Horse lovers, families, and anyone curious about Saratoga County's celebrated equine heritage are warmly invited to the Annual Horse Farm Tour on Saturday, August 15, from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Hosted by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County in collaboration with local farms, this free, self-guided event offers a rare opportunity to step behind the scenes of working horse facilities, meet the horses, and experience firsthand the passion and care that make Saratoga County one of New York's premier horse destinations.

Tour These Participating Farm:

- **Alliance 180** (5846 Jockey St., Galway)
- **Therapeutic Horses of Saratoga** (683 NY-29, Saratoga Springs)
- **Horse'n Around Acres** (5423 Crooked St., Broadalbin)
- **The Cheshire Horse of Saratoga** -Tack, Feed & Supply Store (402 Geyser Rd, Saratoga Springs)

Each stop offers its own unique experience - from horse care and training to therapeutic riding, equine education, and the many important roles horses play in our community. Visit one farm or explore them all at your own pace throughout the afternoon.

More than just a tour, this event is a celebration of Saratoga County's deep-rooted horse culture that extends far beyond the racetrack. Meet the people who care for these remarkable animals, learn about local equine programs, and enjoy an afternoon in some of the county's most beautiful horse-country settings.

Why Attend?

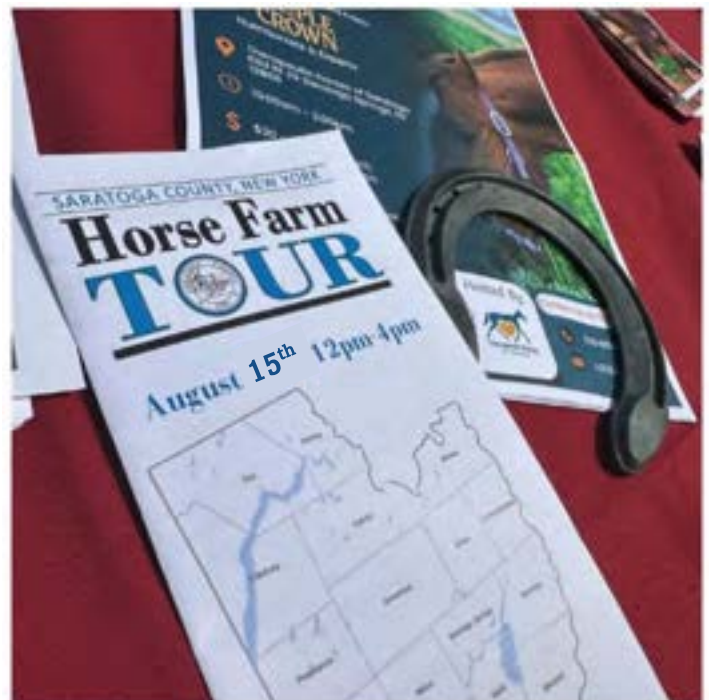
- Meet horses up close
- Explore local horse farms rarely open to the public
- Learn about therapeutic riding and equine education
- Enjoy a free family-friendly summer outing
- Discover the rich equine history of Saratoga County

Whether you are a lifelong horse enthusiast or simply looking for a fun and educational weekend activity, the Annual Horse Farm Tour promises an engaging experience for visitors of all ages.

Saturday, August 15, 2026 | 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Free and open to the public

For more information, contact Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County at (518) 885-8995 or visit CCE Saratoga County.

Come spend an afternoon in Saratoga County's horse country - we look forward to welcoming you!



CCE Equine, a division of Cornell cooperative Extension of Saratoga County, was established in 2006 through funds provided by the New York Farm Viability Institute. The program was created due to a need for equine education for adults in Saratoga County. Since then, CCE Educators have reached out to clientele in surrounding counties in the Capital Region and beyond.

For more information on CCE Equine, contact Nicolina Foti at nvf5@cornell.edu

Deadline Extended! Join us for the Unlimited Garden Fundraiser

Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, we've extended the registration deadline for the Unlimited Garden Fundraiser. Advance registration is appreciated but walk-ins are welcome, so there's still time to be part of this special evening celebrating the renewal of a beloved community space.

More than 30 year ago, the Unlimited Garden was established as a therapeutic garden serving individuals of all ages and abilities. Today, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County is bringing that vision back to life by transforming the garden into an inclusive destination where education, gardening, and wellness come together. Once complete, the revitalized garden will provide hands-on learning and enriching experiences for youth, families, veterans, and individuals with limited resources or accessibility needs.

Friday, August 14, 2026

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County

4-H Training Center

556 Middleline Road, Ballston Spa, NY 12020

The evening begins at **6:00 p.m.** with cocktails, mocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and guided tours of the garden, offering guests the opportunity to experience the space and envision its future.

Dinner will be served at **7:00 p.m.**, followed by live music, dancing, and a silent auction, with all proceeds supporting the restoration and future programming of the Unlimited Garden.

Tickets are **\$70 per person** and include dinner and one beverage. This event is for guests 18 years of age and older

To reserve your tickets, follow the link:

https://pub.cce.cornell.edu/event_registration/main/events_landing.cfm

to pay by credit card. While RSVPs before the event are preferred, **walk-in guests are welcome.**



By attending, you'll help create a welcoming community resource where people all ages and abilities can learn, grow, connect, and thrive. We hope you'll join us for an unforgettable evening in the garden.

Thank You to Our Current unlimited Garden Sponsors

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County gratefully acknowledges the generous support of:

Sean Hickey, Pompa Bros. Quarry, Dave, the Jennings Family, Neahr Excavating, Alden Outdoor Services, Koval Bros., LLC, Saratoga Sod, The Olde Bryan Inn, Saratoga Strike Zone, the Schultz Family, Tom Piwinski, Congressman Paul Tonko, Saratoga Economic Development Corporation, and Holmes Excavating, LLC.

CAR SEAT CHECK

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County is partnering with New Country Toyota of Clifton Park for a FREE car seat check to insure your car seat is properly installed. Nationally Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians and Instructors will be on site.

Tuesday, August 18 | 4 pm—8 pm

New Country Toyota of Clifton Park

202 Route 146, Mechanicville

To schedule an appointment, call 518-885-8995.

What to bring to your car seat check:

- Your child (if possible)
- Your car seat manual
- Your vehicle owner's manual
- A cleaned-out vehicle (remove other items for easier access)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for **September 9, 2026 | 7 pm | Extension Office**

CCE Saratoga's Board of Directors

John Mancini - *President*

Liz Newsom - *Vice President*

Mark Preissler - *Secretary*

Jim Pettis, Jr. — *Treasurer*

Tom Venditti

Alex Guilmette

Ian Murray—*Board of Supervisors Representative*

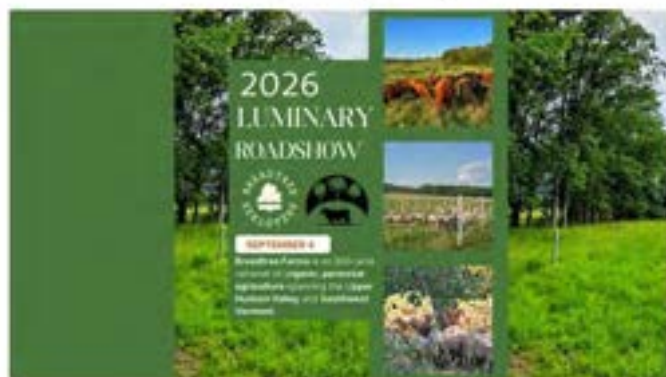
Danielle Hautaniemi - *Cornell Representative*



If you would like to attend, please reach out to Wendy at wlm8@cornell.edu.

2026 Luminary Roadshow with Trees for Graziers in New York

Friday, September 4, 2026 | 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
2129 Co Rd 153, Salem, NY



Join **Joshua Greene**, Director of Education for Trees for Graziers, for a full-day, hands-on workshop at **Singing Pastures Farm** exploring how well-designed silvopasture systems can improve livestock performance, farm resilience, and long-term profitability. Set on a working pasture-based livestock farm, this workshop will combine classroom discussion with an in-depth farm tour, giving participants the opportunity to see silvopasture principles in practice.

[EVENT DETAILS & REGISTRATION](#)

SAVE THE DATE

23rd Annual North Country Stormwater Tradeshow & Conference

When: Tuesday, October 20, 2026

Where: The Queensbury Hotel
88 Ridge St, Glens Falls, NY 12801



Do you farm or ranch and want to make improvements to the land that you own or lease?
NRCS offers technical and financial assistance to help farmers, ranchers and forest managers.



[Learn More](#)



Cornell **CALS**
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences



SAVE THE DATE 2026 Cornell Sheep and Goat Symposium

Cornell University
Ithaca, NY

October 23 - October 25
More information to follow



Take Part, Help Out!
Surveys

CAAHP Team Web Survey



As part of our efforts in each of CAAHP's member counties, we need to show that we are impacting the agricultural community and farm businesses. **Please take a minute to connect to our survey by clicking the button below to give us a little feedback.**

We appreciate your time and effort and will continue to provide valuable information, education and programming.

[CAAHP Web Survey](#)



Self-paced Farm Transition Planning

The Farm Transition Planning course is designed to provide farmers, agricultural professionals, and anyone involved in farming with the knowledge and skills needed to plan and execute a successful transition of a farm from one generation to the next. Farm transitions are crucial for the sustainability and prosperity of agriculture, and this course will guide you through the essential steps and considerations involved.

Learn more:

<https://www.maic-professional.org/course/farm-transition-planning>

Farm Damage from Flooding?



If your farm experienced damage from recent flooding - or from any future severe weather event - we encourage you to report it as soon as possible. If you have not already shared your information with Cornell, USDA, or the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSAGM), please use the [NYSAGM Agriculture Sector Disaster Damage Portal](https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/8c5bf33f24c8432e9d6550dabb18c207) to report your losses. The information collected helps NYSAGM assess the scope of agricultural impacts and advocate for potential recovery assistance.

Whether the damage affects your home, farm business, crops, livestock, equipment, or infrastructure, documenting and reporting these impacts is essential. Examples include damage to buildings, crop losses, inventory lost due to power outages, damaged fencing or equipment, and other weather-related losses. The more information that is collected, the stronger the case for disaster declarations and recovery resources. Your local Cornell Cooperative Extension office and the Central New York Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops Team will continue working with NYSAGM and the Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) to gather and submit damage reports.

If your farm has been impacted:

- **Ensure safety first.** Confirm that all people and animals are safe and inspect buildings and work areas for hazards before beginning cleanup. **In an emergency, call 911 – don't try to manage it all on your own.**
- **Document the damage.** Take photographs, keep detailed records, and estimate financial losses for crops, livestock, structures, equipment, fencing, and other affected areas.
- **Contact your insurance providers.** Notify your farm, crop, vehicle, or other insurance carriers to begin the claims process if needed.
- **Report your damage.** Share your information through the NYSAGM Agriculture Sector Disaster Damage Portal and notify your local agricultural support agencies. Every report helps build a clearer picture of the storm's impact and supports efforts to secure assistance for New York's agricultural community.
- NYS Ag & Markets Agriculture Sector Disaster Damage Portal: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/8c5bf33f24c8432e9d6550dabb18c207>
- Your local Cornell Cooperative Extension Association Office.
-Saratoga (518) 8995
- Anyone of our CNYDLFC Team specialist (calls/emails/texts/site visit requests all ok)
-Erik Smith (Field Crops, Team Lead): 315-219-7786
-Raevyn Saunders (Farm Business Mgmt): 680-316-2357
-Ashley McFarland (Livestock) 315-604-2156
-Alanna Homan (Dairy): 315-749-3486
- Your county USDA/FSA service center
-Saratoga: 518-692-9940
- Your county farm bureau manager
-Region 6: Natally Batiston: 518-937-0269

NYS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

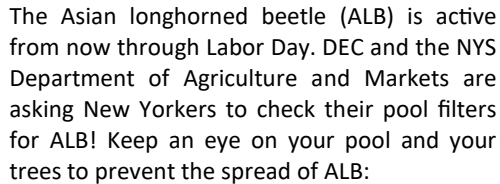
The Summer Wild Turkey Sighting Survey is Back!



Photo credit: Cathy Jo Rogers

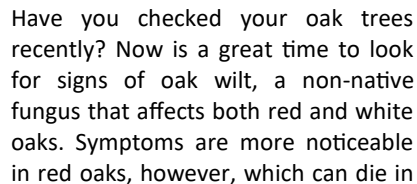
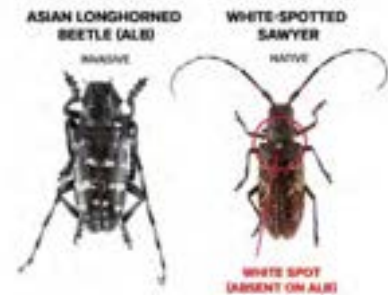
During the month of August, the DEC conducts the Summer Wild Turkey Sighting Survey to gather information about our state's turkey populations. Observations submitted by you provide valuable information to DEC biologists. Every sighting counts - even from your daily drive!

- Submit your August sightings
<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/cfb18609c3bc494995be29f0d906df81>
- To see how survey results from previous years help DEC monitor wild turkey productivity, please visit the [Fall Turkey Harvest and Productivity Dashboard](#).
- Did you know? Baby turkeys are called "poults", and they can walk the day they hatch.



- No pool? You can still help! Be on the lookout for ALB exit holes, sawdust accumulating at the base of trees, oozing sap, or pits in bark.

- Report online at agriculture.ny.gov/reportALB
- Email asianlonghornedbeetle@agriculture.ny.gov and include images of the insect an the location it was found (GPS coordinates preferred)
- Call the ALB hotline at (866) 702-9938
- Submit a report to [NY iMapInvasives](http://NYiMapInvasives)



- Signs of oak wilt are most obvious in July and August.
- Infected red oaks will drop more than half of their leaves, and leaves may begin to turn brown from the outside edge moving inward.
- While it is normal for oaks to change color and drop their leaves in fall, when observed during summer, these could be signs of oak wilt.

Be on the lookout and if you see signs of oak wilt anywhere in New York, make a report! Submit a reporting form or email photos and location information to DEC at foresthealth@dec.ny.gov.



Mocktails in the Garden

Join Jessica Luse and Brenna Kavakos
as they introduce growing your very own
fresh herbs to create refreshing mocktails for
the summer season!



SEPTEMBER
2ND

6PM-8PM

All proceeds benefit
the Unlimited Garden
fundraiser!

\$25



Registration by 9/1 can be made by emailing
Jessica Luse at jmh452@cornell.edu

Payment can be made by credit card or mailing your
check to CCE-Saratoga County

50 West High St, Ballston Spa NY 12020

<https://www.paypal.com/ncc/payment/Y76L6ZX5S6EB6>

Pay here

Location: 4-H Training Center
556 Middleline Rd,
Ballston Spa, NY 12020

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Saratoga County



Cutting Back on Salt Doesn't Mean Giving Up Great Flavor!

Learn simple ways to make every bite delicious with herbs and spices.



Cutting back on salt doesn't mean giving up great flavor. Herbs, spices, vinegars, and fruit juices can add brightness, depth, and complexity to your favorite dishes - without relying on extra sodium. Discover simple ways from Mississippi State University Extension to use these flavorful ingredients to enhance

your meals and satisfy that "something's missing" feeling.

ADD HEALTHY FLAVOR WITH HERBS AND SPICES!

You can keep foods flavorful and healthy, too!

Using spices and herbs to season foods can make them tasty, without adding fat, salt, and sugar.

Buying

Herbs are the leaves of a plant, and spices are made from the roots, bark, berries, and seeds of a plant.

You can buy herbs fresh or dried. Dried herbs can also be crumbled or ground. You can find fresh herbs in the produce or salad section of your grocery store. You can find dried herbs in the spice aisle. Generally, you can use either fresh or dried, whatever you have on hand.

You can buy spices ground or in a cracked, crushed, or flaked form. You can find spices in the baking needs or spice aisle in your grocery store.

Citrus juices, like lemon juice or orange juice, and vinegar also add a lot of healthy flavor. They aren't really herbs or spices, but they are tasty!

Measuring

Generally, dried herbs have a much stronger flavor than fresh ones. Here is how to convert measurements from one form to the other.

- 1 Tablespoon of finely cut fresh herbs equals
- 1 teaspoon of crumbled dried herbs equals
- ¼ to ½ teaspoon ground dried herbs

Cooking

When you are cooking, start with ¼ teaspoon of ground spices or ground dried herbs for about four servings of food, 1 pound of meat, or 2 cups of soup or sauce.

Adjust as needed for the flavor level you want. Add just a little at a time. Remember, you can always put more in, but you can't take it out!

If you are using crumbled dried herbs or fresh herbs, use more.

Red pepper and garlic powder

Start with 1/8 teaspoon for cayenne pepper and other hot peppers and for garlic powder. Adjust as needed for flavor you want.

Remember that the flavor of red pepper becomes more intense as it cooks.

Doubling a Recipe

If you are doubling a recipe, **do not** double the herbs and spices. Increase those amounts by 1½ times. Then adjust as needed for the flavor you want.

Using Fresh Herbs

If you are using fresh herbs, add them near the end of cooking or just before you serve the food. Cooking fresh herbs too long can reduce their flavor.

Add delicate fresh herbs just a minute or two before the food is done. Or sprinkle them over the cooked food before you serve it. Delicate fresh herbs are basil, chives, cilantro, and dill leaves.

Add sturdier fresh herbs about 20 minutes before the food is done. Sturdier fresh herbs are dill seeds, rosemary, tarragon, and thyme.

Meat, Chicken, and Fish!

Beef: Bay leaf, garlic, marjoram, onion, pepper, sage, thyme

Chicken: Garlic, ginger, lemon juice, marjoram, oregano, paprika, pepper, poultry seasoning, rosemary, sage, tarragon, thyme

Fish: Curry powder, dill, dry mustard, garlic, lemon juice, marjoram, paprika, pepper

Lamb: Curry powder, garlic, rosemary, mint

Pork: Garlic, onion, sage, paprika, pepper, oregano

Veal: Bay leaf, curry powder, ginger, marjoram, oregano

Vegetables

Carrots: Cinnamon, cloves, marjoram, nutmeg, rosemary, sage

Corn: Cumin, curry powder, onion, paprika, parsley

Green beans: Curry powder, dill, garlic, lemon juice, marjoram, oregano, tarragon, thyme

Greens: Garlic, onion, pepper

Peas: Ginger, marjoram, onion, parsley, sage

Potatoes: Dill, garlic, onion, paprika, parsley, sage

Summer squash: Cloves, curry powder, garlic, marjoram, nutmeg, rosemary, sage

Winter squash: Cinnamon, garlic, ginger, nutmeg, onion

Tomatoes: Basil, bay leaf, dill, garlic, marjoram, onion, parsley, pepper

Rain Catchment & Management in New York State



Saratoga and Warren Counties average roughly 40 inches of rainfall a year, yet most of that water runs straight off roofs and pavement into storm drains instead of into the gardens and lawns that need it. Rainwater harvesting—capturing water from rooftops for later use—offers homeowners a simple way to put that resource to work.

Why it matters. Rain barrels reduce stormwater runoff, which otherwise carries soil, fertilizers, pesticides, road salt, and other pollutants into local waterways. Captured water also recharges groundwater and eases pressure on wells and municipal supplies. In 2017, the EPA reported that 30% of daily household water use went to outdoor purposes, and by 2024, 48 states had experienced drought conditions—making stored rainwater a valuable buffer during dry spells. There's a financial upside too: Saratoga County residents paid roughly \$24,000 a day for municipal water in 2022 alone. On top of that, rainwater is naturally soft and free of the chlorine and fluoride found in treated tap water, making it gentler on plants.



restrictions due to drought conditions.

How a system works. A typical rain barrel setup has seven components: a catchment surface (the roof), conveyance (gutters and downspouts), pretreatment (a screen to filter debris), storage with an overflow outlet, an access hatch for cleaning, a distribution outlet (hose or drip line), and a base that lifts the barrel for gravity-fed access. Systems can run "dry" (draining completely between rains) or "wet" (retaining standing water in the conveyance line, which can stagnate).



Keeping water clean. Screens block leaves, needles, and insects; barrels should be emptied weekly to prevent mosquito breeding and periodically scrubbed. Dark-colored containers help suppress algae growth.

Water chemistry. Ideal irrigation water falls between pH 5.0 and 7.0. Rainwater tends to run naturally acidic and soft—a University at Albany study at Whiteface Mountain measured rainwater at pH

5.3—while municipal tap water is treated to be more alkaline (often above pH 8.0) to protect pipes. In a personal test, the author's collected rainwater measured pH 6.0 versus 8.2 for her well water. High pH paired with high alkalinity can affect calcium and magnesium levels in soil over time; growers can adjust with acids (phosphoric, citric, vinegar) to lower pH or wood ash and eggshells to raise it.



Choosing a system. Roof size and shape, the area you need to water, how far you'll need to carry water, and your budget all factor into the right setup. Simple barrels run from bargain-bin buckets to a few hundred dollars, while large cistern-style tanks can cost \$2,000 or more. Systems are typically disconnected or drained for winter.

Real-world example. The author's own rain barrel, purchased for \$138, was set up on a few bricks with an added flexible gutter—and was two-thirds full after the very first rain.



Sources include NOAA Climate at a Glance, Penn State Extension, Cornell Cooperative Extension, UMass Extension, the EPA, and a University at Albany atmospheric study at Whiteface Mountain.

What's Causing the circles in my lawn?

Answer: Fairy rings

Have you ever noticed a near-perfect circle of lush green grass or a ring of mushrooms growing in a lawn? While these patterns may seem concerning or even supernatural, they are caused by soil-dwelling fungi and are commonly referred to as fairy rings.

What are Fairy Rings?

Fairy rings are caused by around 50 species of fungi. The fungi do not attack grass roots; they feed on decaying organic matter (tree stumps, roots, thatch, construction debris, etc.) buried in the soil. As the fungi consume this material, they grow outward from a central point, typically forming a relatively uniform circular pattern. The rings typically range in size from 2 to 15 feet across but can reach over 50 feet.

The Different Types of Fairy Rings

Fairy rings most commonly appear as a band of dark-green, fast-growing turf. They may also appear as a ring of thin, brown, or dead grass. After periods of rainfall, mushrooms or puffballs may emerge along the ring edge, marking the boundary of the fungal colony.

There are three different types of fairy rings that can develop:

- **Type I** is the most problematic type of fairy ring. In these rings, dense fungal growth in the soil creates a water-repellent (hydrophobic) layer that prevents water from reaching landscapes.
- **Type II** fairy rings produce dark green, vigorously growing grass. This happens because nitrogen and other nutrients are released into the soil as fungi break down organic matter.
- **Type III** fairy rings appear as rings of mushrooms with little to no visible change in turf (for better or worse). These fairy rings are most commonly seen after heavy or prolonged rainfall.

How Do I Get Rid of Fairy Ring:

In most cases, fairy rings do not damage turf and are cosmetic 'problems', and management is not necessary. While the rings may persist for several years, they will eventually disappear as their food source is exhausted or environmental conditions change.

Managing fairy rings typically focuses on masking symptoms and improving soil conditions rather than eliminating the fungi:

- To prevent fairy rings from forming in the first place, potential food sources such as tree stumps, large roots, and construction lumber should be removed from an area before planting the lawn.
- In turf that has Type I fairy rings, soil can be core aerated to help break up fungal mats and improve water infiltration.
- If Type II fairy rings are an issue, nitrogen can be applied to green-up the other turf in a lawn to mask the presence of the fairy ring.
- For Type III fairy rings, mushrooms can be removed by hand-picking (wear gloves), raking, or mowing when they appear.
- Fungicides are typically not effective at managing fairy rings and should not be used to manage them.

It is important to remember that these fungi are performing a natural and beneficial role, breaking down organic material and returning nutrients to the soil. While the patterns they create may be unusual, they make great conversation starters, and perhaps a chance to spot a fairy or two.



Type I fairy rings badly damage or kill turf.



Type II fairy rings stimulate growth resulting in lush dark green growth.



Type III fairy rings produce a ring of mushrooms

Growing milkweeds for monarch butterflies

You can support the survival of monarch butterflies by growing milkweeds in your home landscape or garden.



Monarch butterfly nectaring on common milkweed. Photo: Duke Elsner, MSU Extension



Monarch caterpillar on common milkweed. Photo: Duke Elsner, MSU Extension

The monarch butterfly is one of the most widely recognized butterflies in North America, well known for its spectacular migrations. The caterpillar stage feeds only on the leaves of plants in the milkweed family. In recent decades, the availability of milkweed for monarchs has greatly reduced because of changes in the way we use land from gardens and lawns on up to forests and fields. This has contributed to a severe decline in the population of this beautiful butterfly.

Anyone with a bit of garden space to spare can help the monarch population recover. Planting milkweeds on your property will “provide food plants for monarch caterpillars and nectar sources for adult butterflies. In addition to supporting the monarch, milkweed species are important sources of nectar for dozens of other butterflies and numerous pollinating insects such as native bees and honey bees.

Which milkweeds to grow

There are over 100 milkweed species in the United States, but typically only a few species will be adapted to the climate and growing conditions in a particular area. Therefore, it is important to choose the correct milkweed varieties to grow on your property. Some milkweeds can spread rapidly by means of underground rhizomes, so be cautious about planting these where space is limited or other plants may have trouble competing.

Planting milkweeds



Butterfly weed with a large of butterflies. Photo: Duke Elsner, MSU Extension



Swamp milkweed flowers. Photo: David Lippert, MSU, Bugwood.org

Milkweeds can be started from seeds or as young container plants. Older milkweed plants are very difficult to transplant, so this approach is not recommended.

Milkweed seeds can be collected from existing plants or purchased from commercial suppliers. Seeds need a three-month period of exposure to cold (cold stratification), so it is a good practice to plant seeds in autumn. Container plants can be planted in spring, but it is advisable to wait until the threat of spring frost has passed.

Types of Milkweed for Zones 4 & 5

1. Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*)

- **Life Cycle:** Perennial
- **Approximate Mature Size :** 3 to 5 feet; up to 8 feet
- **Bloom Time:** June to August

2. Whorled Milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*)

- **Life Cycle:** Perennial
- **Approximate Mature Size:** 1 to 3 feet
- **Bloom Time:** May to September

3. Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)

- **Life Cycle:** Perennial
- **Approximate Mature Size:** 2 to 3 feet
- **Bloom Time:** May to September

4. Purple Milkweed (*Asclepias purpurascens*)

- **Life Cycle:** Perennial
- **Approximate Mature Size:** 2 to 3 feet
- **Bloom Time:** May to July

5. Poke Milkweed (*Asclepias exaltata*)

- **Life Cycle:** Perennial
- **Approximate Mature Size:** 2 to 6 feet
- **Bloom Time:** May to August

6. Green Comet Milkweed (*Asclepias viridiflora*)

- **Life Cycle:** Perennial
- **Approximate Mature Size:** 1.5 to 2 feet
- **Bloom Time:** June to September

7. Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)

- **Life Cycle:** Perennial
- **Approximate Mature Size:** 3 to 5 feet
- **Bloom Time:** June to October

For more information and pictures of milkweed in zones 4 and 5 visit the link: <https://birdwatchinghq.com/milkweed-in-new-york/>

SARATOGA COUNTY TO HOLD FREE RABIES VACCINATION CLINIC

DOGS, CATS, AND FERRETS WELCOME.



SEPTEMBER 22, 2026
Registration will open September 1.

Location:
4-H Training Center
556 Middleline Road, Ballston Spa

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT
SARATOGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
(518) 518-7460

TIMES:

- **Cats** | 5:30 - 6:30 PM
(Must be in a carrier)
- **Ferrets** | 5:30 - 6:30 PM
(Must be in a cage or carrier)
- **Dogs** | 6:30—7:30 PM
(Must be on a leash)

By Appointment Only!

www.SaratogaCountyNY.gov/Rabies

Public Health Law § 2141 requires dogs, cats, and ferrets be vaccinated against Rabies. All vaccination certificates are written for one year unless prior proof of vaccination is provided. Owners must provide proof of vaccine to receive a three-year certificate for their animal.

CORNELL IPM Program

What's Bugging You?

Not all things that buzz, crawl or slither are pests. Figuring out WHAT is bugging you is the first step.

Each month at New York State Integrated Pest Management's "What's Bugging You? First Friday" events, experts share practical information and answer questions on using integrated pest management (IPM) to avoid pest problems and promote a health environment where you live, work, learn and play. We end with an IPM Minute, and cover a specific action you can take in the next few days to help you avoid pest problems. **Events take place online from 12:00 pm to 12:30 pm.**



SEPTEMBER 4: Mosquitoes are still active | Is that a bee?

What you need to know about mosquito biology and IPM as we head into fall. And how to tell the difference between a wasp and a bee...and why it matters. [Register here.](#)



OCTOBER 2: Fall clean-up for your flower and vegetable beds | Leaf piles and ticks

Removing plant material from vegetable beds can reduce future pest issues, but leaving plants in flower beds can help beneficial insects. Learn best management practices for both types of beds, and what you should do to reduce your risk of encountering ticks when managing leaves. [Register here.](#)



Safe Food for Babies and Children: Choking Dangers

Every child is at risk of choking. Older infants and children less than 5 years old easily can choke on food, toys and household objects. A single choking incident may result in death, permanent brain damage due to lack of oxygen and other complications associated with airway blockage.

Children and infants do not grind or chew their food well and may attempt to swallow food whole. Large pieces of food easily can lodge in the throat and result in choking. Children are likely to choke on small, round, pliable objects that conform to the shape of the throat. The following foods and household items can be choking hazards:

Common Choking Hazards

Foods	Household Items
Hot dogs and sausages	Coins
Chunks of meat or cheese	Toys with small parts
Whole grapes	Small balls and marbles
Hard, gooey or sticky candy	Balloons
Popcorn	Arts and crafts material
Peanuts and nuts	Ballpoint pen caps
Raw carrots	Watch batteries
Fruit seeds	Jewelry
Apple chunks	
Chewing gum	

Julie Garden-Robinson, Ph.D., R.D., L.R.D.
Food and Nutrition Specialist

Tami Totland, R.D., L.R.D.
Program Assistant (former)



Choking Prevention Tips

- For infants to age 1, cut up foods into small pieces no larger than ¼-inch. Toddlers generally can eat foods cut in ½-inch pieces or slightly larger.
- Watch infants and young children when they are eating. Eating while walking, running or laughing may lead to a choking incident.
- Parental supervision during mealtime is essential. Remind children to chew food thoroughly, take small bites and eat slowly. Siblings should not be put in charge of feedings.
- Keep dangerous toys, foods and household items out of children's reach.
- Learn how to provide emergency first aid for choking infants and children. The American Heart Association and American Red Cross provide courses on basic life support and CPR.

NDSU EXTENSION

North Dakota State University
Fargo, North Dakota

For more information on choking, visit the American Academy of Pediatrics Web site at: www.aap.org. For more information on nutrition and food safety, visit the NDSU Extension website: www.ag.ndsu.edu/food

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Homesteading



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION AND OUTREACH

Vacuum Sealing and Canning Food in Jars are NOT the Same Thing.

Vacuum sealing food in jars is not the same as canning. Canning relies on high heat to sterilize food and kill dangerous bacteria (like botulism), making food shelf-stable. Vacuum sealing simply removes air to reduce oxidation and help maintain freshness. It does not eliminate bacteria or make fresh or moist foods safe to store at room temperature. Learn the proper uses for vacuum sealing and the important

Vacuum sealing food is generally a safe and effective means of extending the shelf life of food in the refrigerator or freezer by preventing oxidation and reducing moisture loss. However, it creates an oxygen-free environment that can promote the growth of *Clostridium botulinum* bacteria if not stored properly. Always store vacuum-sealed food in the refrigerator or freezer, not the pantry unless it is truly a pantry item. Vacuum sealing is also known as reduced oxygen packaging (ROP).

Some of the major benefits for choosing vacuum sealing over bags or containers include:

- Reduced dehydration and freezer burn
- Better preservation of color, texture and flavor
- Ability to personalize portions of bulk items
- Reduce food waste

While there are advantages to vacuum sealing, there are risks. [Michigan State University](#) warns of the following:

- Vacuum packaging does NOT replace food preservation, it is merely a different packaging method. In other words, refrigerated foods still require refrigeration, or freezing. It is also NOT a replacement for home canning.
- Although bacteria that cause spoilage may not have access to the food to turn the food to slime or mold or a smelly blob, other pathogenic bacteria can survive. *Clostridium botulinum* is a very dangerous pathogen that can survive without oxygen. Unlike bacteria that spoil food, disease-causing bacteria may not change the color or look of the food.
- A clean, sanitary environment is critical to keep food safe, so take precautions when using this method at home.
- Food will still spoil; it does not prevent spoilage.
- There is a heightened danger with ROP fish. Fish must be removed from the package before thawing.
- Vacuum sealer manufacturers recommend that you do not package raw onions, fresh mushrooms or fresh garlic due to botulinum concerns.
- Some foods do not seal well, such as bakery foods and liquid products.

Vacuum sealing is not a sterilization process and lacks a “kill step”

to eliminate pathogens like *Clostridium botulinum*. It only removes oxygen to slow spoilage by aerobic bacteria, molds, and yeasts. Therefore, it is critical to rely on proper sanitation, immediate freezing/refrigeration, and strict hygiene to prevent dangerous anaerobic bacterial growth. To avoid risks when vacuum sealing follow these safe food handling tips:

- Vacuum sealing food does not replace the need to pressure can or water bath home canned foods that are stored at room temperature.
- Keep vacuum sealed perishable items that need refrigeration (fresh produce, meat and fish, semi-dried foods, and moist bakery items), in the refrigerator or freezer.
- Use a vacuum sealer to extend the shelf life of properly dried nuts, fruits and vegetables and meat jerky. The removal of the oxygen will help these foods continue to taste fresh.
- Wash your hands before and during the sealing process. Keep utensils, cutting boards and counters clean.
- Try not to touch food with your hands; use clean spoons or tongs to handle food.
- Don't allow the food you are vacuum sealing to be out of the refrigerator before or after you seal it; thaw frozen food in the refrigerator.

Remember to always follow safe food handling practices and enjoy the benefits of vacuum sealing foods.





Pickling Cucumbers



Pickling is one of the oldest ways to preserve food. You simply ferment vegetables in a salt brine or vinegar solution, and store them when the process is complete. Pickling is the best way to keep cucumbers once the harvest is over.

Pickle Recipes

There are a few different ways to pickle. Either ferment vegetables in a brine for many weeks, or fresh-pack the produce in a vinegar

solution in Mason jars, seal them using a boiling water bath, and let them ferment in the jars for four to six weeks.

To ferment in a salt brine, use stone crocks or kegs, or clean, watertight, hardwood barrels lined with enamel, glass or paraffin. Although pickles will keep fairly well stored in such containers, for safety reasons you should transfer fermented pickles to canning jars and process them for storage.

Use slightly under-ripe pickling or dual-purpose cucumbers that grow just 2½ to four inches. Their small size and thin skins make them ideal for curing.

One key to crispness is to use only fresh, just-harvested cukes that you've picked in the morning before the sun has warmed them up. Vegetables stored in the refrigerator lose quality with each hour that passes after they've been picked. The ingredients you use for the pickling brine are also important to ensure crisp, flavorful, evenly-cured vegetables.

Salt

Use only pure, granulated salt with no noncaking material or iodine added. This is sold as pickling salt, barrel salt or kosher salt. Do not use table salt or iodized salt.

Vinegar

Use a 4-to 6 percent acidity cider or white vinegar. If the label doesn't list the acidity, don't use it for pickles or relishes. Use as much vinegar as the recipe specifies; the amount of acidity is crucial to safe processing.

Water

Soft water is best for pickling. You can soften hard water by boiling it, skimming off the surface scum and letting it sit for 24 hours. Don't disturb the sediment at the bottom when you use this softened water.

Boiling Water Bath Canning

Once your cukes and pickling ingredients are ready, use the fresh-pack method or a salt-brine fermentation. Follow these steps for boiling-water-bath canning. If your canner instructions vary from these, follow the instructions that came with your canner.

Assemble all utensils.: Canner with rack, Mason jars, lids, tongs or jar lifter, cooling racks and nonmetallic spatula.

Use only Mason jars for home canning. They're made by a number of manufacturers and are safe because the glass is heat-tempered and can seal perfectly. Always use brand new dome lids for canning. The rubber compound loses its ability to seal perfectly after one use. Metal screw bands and Mason jars may be reused.

Examine and clean all equipment. Check all bands for rust, dents or nicks and the jars for chips or cracks. Don't use them for canning if they aren't perfect. Wash all equipment in hot, soapy water. Rinse in clear, hot water. Keep jars and screw tops hot. Keep dome lids in hot water until ready to use.

Follow recipe instructions for filling jars, leaving ¼ inch headspace for pickles. Once jars are filled, release air bubbles by running a rubber spatula around the insides of the jars. Wipe jar tops and threads clean with damp cloth. Put lids on jars, rubber side down, and screw bands on firmly, so they're "fingertight."

Place the rack on the bottom of a canner half full of water, and bring it to the boil. Only fill as many jars as the canner will hold in on batch. As each jar is filled, place it carefully in the rack. The jars should not touch each other or the side of the canner.

Add hot water, if necessary, so the jars are covered with at least one to two inches of water. Cover and turn up heat under canner. Start timing when the water reaches a boil. Follow timing instructions for each recipe.

To complete the processing, remove the jars and place them upright on a rack or thick towel in a draft-free area, allowing enough room between jars for air to circulate.

Testing Your Pickles

Do not tighten the metal rims - you may break the seals. After 12 hours of cooling, test the seals. These three tests are recommended for checking the seals on dome lids:

1. As the jar contents cool and a vacuum forms, the lid pulls down into the jar and makes a "kerplunking" sound.
2. The lid will be concave or dished and should stay that way; as long as the vacuum is present you can feel the slight dish.
3. Push down on the lid with your thumb. If there's no give, the jar is sealed. If it makes a clicking sound, the seal isn't complete.

If some jars have incomplete seals, reprocess the contents, using a new lid and a clean jar. Or, simply put the jars in the refrigerator and use these pickles first.

Wipe the jars with a clean, damp cloth; label clearly; carefully remove the outer screw-rims; and store jars in a cool, dry, dark place.

Continued on next page

Pickles...cont'd from previous page

Don't open the jars for several weeks - - this will allow the flavors of the herbs and spices to develop fully.

Before serving, check pickles or relishes for signs of spoilage, sliminess, softness, frothing or a foul odor. Don't eat any pickles you think are bad; don't even taste them. Throw them out if there's the slightest doubt as to whether they're good.

Dill Pickles

Harvest tiny two- to three-inch-long cukes for dill pickles.

Per quart jar:

- 1 Tbsp salt
- 1 tsp mustard seed
- 2 heads fresh dill or 1 Tbsp dill weed
- 1 cup vinegar
- 2 cups water

Wash quart jars. In each jar put salt, mustard seed and dill. Sort the cucumbers according to size and put similar-sized cukes in each jar, so they pickle uniformly. Use only small cucumbers or spears. Leave an inch of headspace at the top of the jar.

Measure vinegar and water for each filled jar and heat to boiling. Pour hot liquid into jars, leaving ¼-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process 10 minutes in hot water bath.

Crock Pickles

1 gallon crock:

- Firm green cucumbers cut into spears
- ½ pound canning salt
- 5 cups vinegar
- 5 cups sugar
- 1 small handful pickling spice (in mesh bag)

Fill the crock with cucumber spears. Mix canning salt in enough

boiling water to cover spears. Cover them with a weighted-down plate or lid and let stand one week. Drain thoroughly. Add enough boiling water to cover the cukes. Let stand 24 hours and drain well.

Mix together vinegar, sugar and pickling spice. Bring to a boil and pour over pickles. Let stand 24 hours, then drain again, saving the syrup. Repeat this procedure once a day for four days, bringing the syrup to a boil each time.

After the fifth day, put pickles in canning jars and add hot syrup to fill jars leaving ½-inch headspace. Seal and process in a boiling-water bath 10 minutes.

Large batches are easy to make. Use a larger crock, and proportionately more cucumbers and other ingredients.

Watermelon Rind Pickles

- 8 cups watermelon rind (1 large watermelon)
- ½ cup salt
- 2 quarts water
- 2 cups vinegar
- 3 cups white or brown sugar
- Lemon, sliced thin
- 1 stick cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon allspice
- 1 teaspoon whole cloves

Remove skin and pink from rind. Cut rind into 1-inch cubes or chunks. Soak chunks overnight in brine mixture of ½ cup salt and 2 quarts water. Drain and rinse in fresh water. Drain again. Place rind in saucepan and add more fresh water to cover; simmer until tender, then drain. Make syrup of vinegar, brown sugar, lemon and spices. Simmer 5 minutes. Add to rind and cook until clear. Pack rinds into hot jars and fill syrup, leaving ½-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process in hot water bath for 10 minutes.



NYS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Hunting licenses for the 2026-2027 season on sale now!

[Purchase your license](#) online, by phone, or in person at any license issuing agent.

Please note that DEC adopted new deer hunting regulations that modified Deer Management Permit (DMP) application process and allowed an unlimited number of DMPs to be transferred between hunters.

Under the new DMP application process, hunters can apply for up to four DMPs: two in Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) with limited DMPs and two WMUs with unlimited DMPs. For WMUs with limited DMPs, the DMP application and issuance process will work through the typical lottery and order of selection process.

Unlimited DMPs will be available in 23 WMUs ([See Map](#)). All hunters who apply for DMPs in these WMUs will receive them. DMPs that are used to harvest antlerless deer in these WMUs will be replaced with a bonus DMP upon harvest report, allowing hunters to continue harvesting antlerless deer. Used and reported bonus DMPs will also be replaced with additional bonus DMPs. There is no fee to obtain bonus DMPs.

Visit <https://dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/deer-bear/antlerless-deer-hunting> to apply for DMPs and for more information on the regulation changes.

Good luck this fall, and HuntSafeNY!

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