

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Madison County



ANNUAL REPORT

2022 - 2023

Our Team

Larkin Podsiedlik, Executive Director
Susan McConnell, Finance Administrator
Tess Southern, 4-H Team Lead
Maryellen Sheehan, Ag & Horticulture
Resource Educator
Courtney Livecchi, 4-H Educator
Kate Preston, AITC Educator
Sarah Rosenthal, Ag Economic
Development Manager
Patty Stimmel, Ag & Garden Educator
Liza Bernard, Ag Project Coordinator
Erin Shantal, Operations Coordinator
Jamie Jones, Facilities Coordinator
Mary Helmer, TCE Coordinator
Susan Parker, Change Club Coordinator

Regional Staff

Nicole Tommell, Farm Business
Management Specialist
Dave Balbian, Dairy Specialist
Ashley McFarland, Livestock
Specialist
Erik Smith, Field Crops Specialist

Whitney Kmetz, SNAP-Ed
Betty Clark, SNAP-Ed
Neisa Pantalia, SNAP-Ed
Regina Arnold, SNAP-Ed

Local Experts. Local Programs. Big Impact.



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Our Impact

by the numbers



Ag & AED

125 FARMS
SERVED
with 1:1 technical
assistance



49 GROUP
WORKSHOPS

\$1.06M

IN TCE TAX
REFUNDS



*Community
Horticulture*

600 ATTENDEES AT
HORTICULTURE
WORKSHOPS

80 MASTER GARDENER
HELPLINE QUESTIONS
ANSWERED



4-H

7,500

YOUTH
CONTACTS

83

ENROLLED
MEMBERS

297

AG IN THE
CLASSROOM
VISITS



Over

2,500

HOURS OF
AG AND 4-H
PROGRAMS

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR FARMS

CCE staff supported a number of farm businesses through one-on-one technical assistance, from farm start-up topics like crop and business planning, through adding enterprises, supporting better lease agreements, and trialing new crops. One 2023 project was with Asha Laaya, the agricultural program of Deaf New American Advocacy in Kirkville. A new entity in 2022, Asha Laaya cropped over an acre of produce, selling at the Syracuse Regional Market and wholesale to Nepalese grocery stores across Syracuse. They participated for the first time in Open Farm Day 2023, had a booth at the NYS Fair Asian Village selling farm to table snack bowls, and have both a farm expansion and a lineup of farm to table cooking classes and dinners coming soon. CCE Madison helped Asha Laaya write a successful SARE Farmer Grant, re-work crop timing for tropical crops to succeed in CNY weather conditions, and supported translations around wash station, pack shed, and irrigation system design and installation options. Producer education is a staple of CCE Madison programs.



BRINGING CORNELL TO MADISON

This program year, CCE Madison strengthened ties with statewide agricultural experts to bring their expertise to more Madison County farmers. One step towards accomplishing this was by joining a group of specialty crop (fruit and vegetable) specialists in a new statewide research and article sharing collaboration. By writing research-based articles for the collaboration, we were able to use articles written by statewide vegetable experts from the Eastern NY Commercial Horticulture Program and the Western NY Vegetable Team and share them for the first time with growers in Madison County. We did this by launching a bi-monthly seasonal Growers' Email to share timely production news and practices and our Mad for Ag blog. CCE brought in Cornell experts to consult on a wide range of topics, including late blight and Christmas tree pests, benefitting farmers and strengthening relationships between Madison County and Cornell University.

Open Farm Day

Program Spotlight

27

MADISON
COUNTY FARMS

\$40K
IN SALES

2,500
ATTENDEES

and 3+
inches
of rain!



“ Open Farm Day was great. It is the best opportunity to see where you can buy local products from local farms! ”

CNY DAIRY, LIVESTOCK, & FIELD CROPS REGIONAL TEAM

From research projects on IPM and field crop trials to mental health first aid training, the CNYDLFC Team has covered an array of topics that support the agriculture industry. One of the most notable programs was a hands-on “Calving and Dystocia Workshop,” delivered both in English and Spanish to provide high-level training for farm employees and small producers. Veterinarians from Cornell University simulated calving difficulties to participants in both languages. Madison County farmers also had the chance to engage in research and grant funds with the team. The Dairy Advancement Program (DAP, Pro-Dairy) had several applicants and awardees for a range of farm business projects. Additionally, ongoing field research was done on 13 farms across Madison County. Over the next year, the CNYDLFC team is poised to continue field research and develop quality programs to fit producer needs, work to help formulate solutions to problems and be a champion for farm businesses in Madison County.



Agriculture is an important industry in Madison, Chenango, Fulton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Otsego, Saratoga and Schoharie Counties. The dairy, livestock and field crop industry represents over 70% of the agricultural product sold. Because the land resources in the region are naturally suited for dairy and field crop production, the potential for increased agricultural production exists.

The Central New York Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Team was formed to work with these important industries. This extension team's mission is to provide high quality educational programs that address the needs of dairy, livestock and field crop producers in these eight counties. The region-wide team consists of a Dairy Specialist, a Livestock Specialist, a Farm Business Management Specialist, and a Field Crop Specialist. CCE Madison staff regularly connect producers with regional staff and co-host programs.



Nicole Tommell,
Team Lead &
Ag Business
Management
Specialist



Ashley McFarland,
Livestock
Specialist



Erik Smith, Field
Crops Specialist

SEED TO SUPPER

The Seed to Supper (S2S) program, supported by the Master Gardener Volunteers and S2S volunteers, had a fantastic year in 2023. About 35 people, our largest group since we began the program, attended classes and workshops across Madison County, increasing their food security and learning how to harvest and prepare what they grew with the help of SNAP-Ed Educators. Participants adopted beds in the CCE Teaching Garden in Morrisville to grow and harvest vegetables all year long. The Teaching Garden played a vital role in bringing together all S2S location participants for workshops and workdays. With the help of staff and volunteers, the garden produced an abundant harvest this year that we were able to set out in our Tiny Free Farmstand for community members to take.

Fifteen people attended Seed to Supper at the Canastota Public Library where we offered an evening class for working participants. CCE Madison was our second location with about 8 people participating, and CCE ran a modified S2S program at Heritage Farm for the adults there who use their services. We had a great core of seasoned volunteers this year who ran the program entirely on their own to impact food security and health for many residents!



SELF-SUFFICIENCY SERIES

In fall 2022, CCE held our first ever Self-Sufficient Homestead series which brought about 40 individuals to classes such as: Farming Through the Seasons, Poultry Processing, Plant Propagation, Soap-making, Cheese-making, several food preservation classes, and Beekeeping. It was a very successful series that brought in many Madison County residents interested in these skills and many attendees are now regulars at the programs offered and interest in these topics remains high. The most successful of all the classes was the on-site Poultry Processing workshop hosted by David Taylor at Thistle Dew Farm in Canastota. Over 20 people came to try their hand at butchering chickens and learned a lot of good skills and tips through David. Abe Yoder's two-part Beekeeping class was also very well attended.

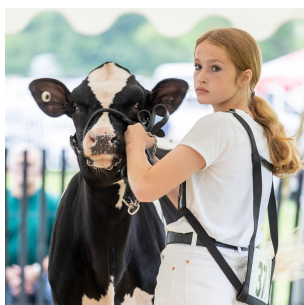
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Through hands-on learning, youth build not only confidence, creativity and curiosity, but also life skills such as leadership and resiliency to help them thrive today and tomorrow. 4-H is the youth development program of Cornell Cooperative Extension in Madison County. All youth activities offered by Madison County CCE fall under the 4-H umbrella, whether they happen after school, in the summer, as a workshop, or as a club, camp or special event. 4-H programs are offered in a wide variety of formats and places because they are designed to fit the needs and interests of the diverse young people who live in our rural and urban communities.

4-H programs are available for youth and teens ages 8-18 and Cloverbud programs are available for youth ages 5-7.

This year, Madison County 4-H brought back some summer time fun! At the beginning of August, CCE hosted 30 youth for a week of summer day camp. Each day had a different theme: Agriculture, STEM, Natural Resources, Explorers Day, and a Field Trip to Madison Lake! If that doesn't sound busy enough, we also collaborated with the regional SNAP-Ed Educators to help the youth make healthy snacks for the group every day and we practiced mindfulness and thoughtful movement with Anita from Bueno Movement. Lastly, our youth were able to learn from adult mentors like CCE Madison Board Member Mat Webber and Madison County Board of Supervisors Member Melissa During!

In addition, 4-H Camp Scholarships were awarded to 6 youth for the opportunity to attend 4-H sleep-away camp across the state.



DAIRY IN THE CLASSROOM

Through Agriculture in the Classroom, students in classrooms across the county experience hands on lessons about dairy foods, production, and the dairy industry as a whole. New York Agriculture in the Classroom Dairy Grant Program is funded by the Dairy Promotion Order through dairy farmer check-off dollars. Some of the lessons that youth participate in over the year are butter making, blind milk tasting, rumination navigation, and having the chance to visit a local dairy farm!

During the 2022-2023 school year, CCE's Ag in the Classroom Educator reached 6 districts, 8 individual schools and 500+ youth per month.

"It was fun trying new things; I didn't know I liked whole milk!"

– Morrisville-Eaton 3rd Grade Student

TAX COUNSELING FOR THE ELDERLY

The Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program provides a valuable free service to seniors and people with disabilities in Madison County. Funded through an IRS grant and local private funders, volunteers are trained and certified by the IRS to confidentially and accurately prepare taxes for vulnerable members of our community, helping them to maximize their refund and avoid for-profit tax preparation services, which can sometimes be predatory.

During tax season 2023, over 20 volunteers scheduled tax appointments, greeted clients, and completed tax returns for 1,221 clients, totaling \$1,059,361 in refunds for seniors and people with disabilities. Over 70% of TCE participants intend to use their refund to reduce debt or increase savings.



SNAP-ED NUTRITION EDUCATION

Madison County is served by the regional SNAP-Ed program. SNAP-Ed teaches individuals on a limited budget to shop and cook healthy meals. During this past year SNAP-Ed reached 483 individuals in Madison County. Morrisville-Eaton Edward R. Andrews Elementary School is a CATCH school, which stands for “Coordinated Approach to Children’s Health.” This means that they have turned the entire school into a whole-child wellness approach for healthy eating and physical activity. Each month during the school year the SNAP-Ed team does CATCH nutrition lessons including Water Wednesdays, and Taste-Test Thursdays. The school works together with SNAP-Ed to create a healthier culture within the school for the children to learn and reach their full potential. To help support eating fresh and local, Common Thread CSA awarded SNAP-Ed a full season farm share of fresh vegetables to use for the program. This helped significantly save on food costs for this grant-funded program, and provided about 600 pounds of fresh vegetables that children and families were able to sample using SNAP-Ed approved recipes throughout the year.

CHANGE CLUB

The Change Club Project, led by Texas A&M and Cornell University, is a community-based civic engagement initiative spanning New York and Texas. Its core focus is to elevate the health and fitness levels of residents. Educator Susan Parker has been guiding the first group through the first year of research and community engagement.

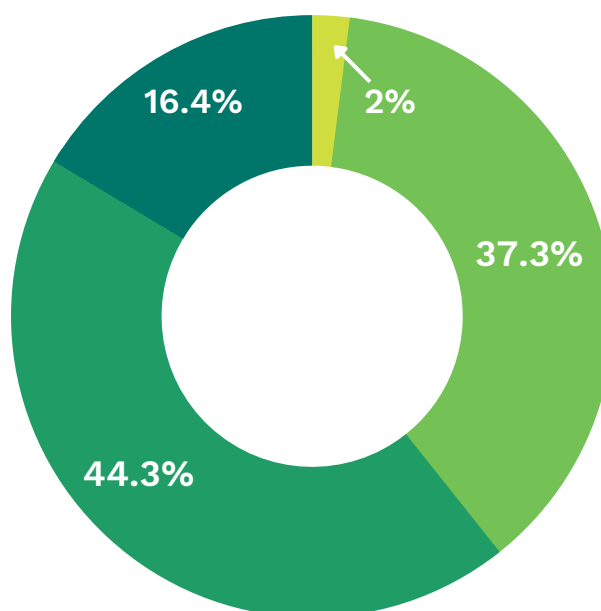
In Canastota, more than 200 community members have volunteered to participate in a 3-year study designed to enhance healthy living at the community level. Additionally, 14 individuals have committed to being Change Club members, with the shared goal of improving health and fitness accessibility in the area. Hamilton is the next community to start a Change Club in 2025.

The Canastota Change Club's mission is to address the pressing issue of community health and fitness in an era dominated by sedentary lifestyles. The team has developed an innovative project that includes free snowshoe rentals, senior garden beds, a fun run, and a passport walk-about program. This project empowers individuals to promote healthier living in an era marked by sedentary behavior.

2022 Financial Support Summary

County Support	\$453,001
State Support*	\$381,324
*includes value of in-kind NYS benefits	
Federal Support	\$19,987
Other Financial Support**	\$167,200
**includes grants, program revenue, donations, and temporarily restricted funds	

- State Support - 37.3%
- County Support - 44.3%
- Other Income - 16.4%
- Federal Support - 2%



THANK YOU, FUNDERS AND DONORS!

Grants & Contracts

New York State
USDA NIFA
Madison County
Internal Revenue Service
American Farmland Trust
NY Agriculture in the Classroom
Texas A&M University
Cornell Garden-Based Learning

In-Kind Donors

Bentley Seed Co.
Botanical Interests
CNY Latino
Stewarts
Riches Apiary
Commission on Economic Opportunity
Price Chopper

Event Sponsors

Community Action Program for
Madison County
Gorman Foundation
Organic Valley Cooperative East
Smokin' Brothers, Inc
Farm Credit East
Dairy Farmers of America
Jewett's Cheese House
Flour and Salt Bakery
Farm Credit East
Dougherty's Pharmacy
Parry's
Troyer's Country Store
Curtis Lumber
Partnership for Community Development

Donors

Harry's Barn
NYS Beef Council
Madison County Farm Bureau
Tractor Supply Co
Vincent Costelli
David Haley
George Ostrander
Edward and Mary Kloss
Susan Anderson
Barbara Miller
Robert Purple
Terrie Carter
Ruth Rowe
Janice Stafford
Beatrice Little
Roger Brownell
Gerald Saliba
Karen Ferrari
Patrick Powers



THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS!

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Diana Curtis
Jason During
Melissa During
Amy Kelsey
Jenny Mills
Aimee Walrath
Kayla Warren
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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.



Take a class, get involved, donate to support our mission, and sign up to receive emails by scanning the QR code or visiting our website at www.ccemadison.org

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