

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Oneida County

✦ ANNUAL REPORT 2024 ✦



2025
CALENDAR

Oneida County CCE SNAP-Ed Nutrition created a “Market Sprouts” experience for elementary children. See inside for complete details.

Mary Beth McEwen **Executive Director**

I am excited to share the Cornell Cooperative Extension Oneida County (CCE Oneida County) 2024 annual report with our fellow community members and partners. The CCE Oneida County staff are unsurpassed in their commitment to offer relevant programming and bring research-based information to the people we serve. Their dedication and enthusiasm to share their expertise in the fields of agriculture, horticulture, nutrition, energy, youth development, childcare, parenting, urban renewal, and agricultural economic development is truly inspiring. At CCE we are all dedicated to empowering, encouraging, and equipping our community to cultivate a future of wellness, innovation, excitement, and growth.

The following pages of photos demonstrate ways CCE touches thousands of lives each year. Each day we strive to meet the emerging needs of our constituents. A few examples of this include: working with Oneida County Soil & Water and creating a new 4H Pond and Stream Safari program that brings youth back outside and into nature to teach them about our aquatic resources and highlight the importance of maintaining and protecting our water resources; working with Oneida County Government to provide guidance and resources to expand existing child care and create new child care options in the County; creating opportunities for regional farmers to reach new consumers and facilitating direct to consumer sales; promoting farm safety through manure management and gas safety programs; offering a variety of programming in local schools on topics such as nutrition, agriculture and dairy, energy, and social and emotional skills. At CCE we strive for excellence and relevance in our programming and will continue to work diligently to bring education and economic development to our region.

This calendar features some programmatic highlights from 2024, but it is impossible to share all that we do in just a few pages. We offer hundreds of programs each year reaching tens of thousands of participants. We use a variety of synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning methods to deliver programming. We host in-person trainings, farm tours, classroom visits, zoom events, and record YouTube videos to name a few. At CCE Oneida our goal is to make it convenient for people to participate in our programs and events and throughout 2025 we will continue to look for innovative ways to accommodate the needs of the community.

As 2024 comes to a close and we welcome 2025, I would once again like to thank our constituents, community partners, the Oneida County Executive, and the Oneida County Board of Legislators for their continued support. Finally, I would be remiss if I did not close by thanking the entire staff at Cornell Cooperative Extension Oneida County, our Board of Directors, and our wonderful volunteers for a job well done! Guided by a drive for service, compassion, and respect for one another and all members of society their dedication is unparalleled!

Best wishes for a wonderful 2025!
Mary Beth McEwen
Executive Director
Cornell Cooperative Extension Oneida County

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Oneida County



Association

Management

TEAM

Mary Beth McEwen, Executive Director
Carol Watkins, Health & Nutrition Issue Leader
Richelle Singer, Family Development Issue Leader
Celeste Oppito, Agriculture Senior Team Leader
Lisa Farney, Youth Dev. Program Leader
Bonnie Backman, SBN Finance Lead
Lori North, Director of Operations/SBN HR LEAD
Roberta Oram, SBN IT Lead
John Adams, Energy Team Co-Leader
Brittany Amore, Energy Team Co-Leader
Terri Harrison, Office Manager

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Oneida County

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of

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Extension Specialist

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.



Regional Clean Energy Hub

Partnering Organization



Cornell Cooperative Extension
Smart Energy Choices – Mohawk Valley



Meet Our Energy Team (left to right)

Nathan, Juliet, Dan, Josephine, John, Peter, Brittany, & Lucas

The Mohawk Valley Energy Hub Team covers 6 counties in the Mohawk Valley and has visited over 75 community events this past year to help educate the public on what types of energy help are available to them.

CCE’s Mohawk Valley Energy Advisors help guide residents through the process of making homes safer, more comfortable and more energy efficient by connecting them to resources, tools, and programs available in their community.

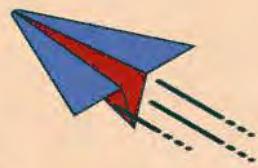
Free, one-on-one appointments are now available to discuss your energy options. Open to residents regardless of homeowner/renter status—especially households with limited resources who are facing higher energy costs including; multifamily building owners, small businesses, and non-profit organizations.

Visit the Energy website





January 2025



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 **Cornell Cooperative Extension**
Smart Energy Choices – Mohawk Valley

Oneida County Public Market

Energy Staff attends conference in Albany



Lucas & Juliet at an event



Forestport Elementary School



Little Falls Garlic Festival



Agriculture

2024 at the Oneida County Public Market (OCPM)

- Public attendance in 2024 was 16,843 (up 6% over 2023).
- SNAP and Double Up Food Bucks also increased to \$9,500 (a 9% increase over 2023).
- CCE's SNAP-Ed educators continued their partnership with the market featuring bi-weekly food demos during the summer months and monthly food demos at the winter markets.
- Other summer market highlights featured CCE Master Gardener Volunteers (MGV) sharing seasonal tips and advice on home gardening, pests, and diseases.

**The ONLY
YEAR-ROUND
FARMER'S MARKET
Every Saturday 9a-1p
mid May-December
and
Every other Saturday
mid January-April
at the Historic
Union Station
321 Main St. Utica**



**Cornell Cooperative Extension
Oneida County**

*Scan to visit the Oneida County
Public Market Website for
Upcoming Events*





February 2025

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Indoor Markets



Outdoor Markets



4-H Ag in the Classroom



Ag in the Classroom reached 10,057 students last year in Oneida County. CCE's Ag in the Classroom (AIRC) educator, Taylor McNamara connects children to the agricultural processes that bring food and fiber into their lives.

A signed Thank You to North Star Orchards for all their produce donations



Taylor at Connected Community Partner Expo in Rome

4-H Government Program



22 Students in the 4-H government program were matched with local officials and discovered first-hand how government works. Guest speakers, seminars, legislative meetings, committee meetings, public hearings, group projects, and field trips provided students with insight into the legislative process.



March 2025

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School ENRICHMENT!



Ag Literacy Week March 2024

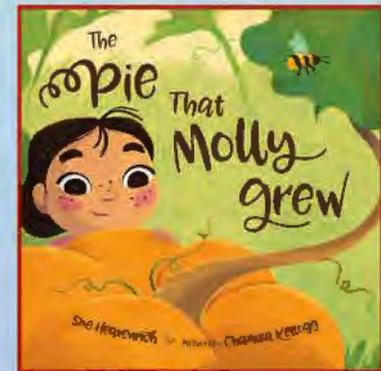
In this yearly celebration of New York agriculture, 2344 Oneida county elementary students heard the story "I Love Strawberries!" from volunteer readers last March. Farmers, FFA, 4-H members, and agri-business workers engaged students in a paired hands-on activity related to the book to extend Ag learning.

Through CCE's 4-H program, our Dairy in the Classroom (DITC) educator, Whitney Semans, reached 6,262 Oneida County students this past year through classroom visits (mostly grades 1st-5th), summer programs, and at the Boonville-Oneida County and NY State Fairs. Eight school districts in Oneida County welcomed our DITC educator this past year.

Most popular lessons included:

- Cheesemaking
- The Efficient Recycler
- Ice Cream Making.

Dairy in the Classroom



Ag Literacy Week March 17-21, 2025

Join Molly on the journey of bringing a pumpkin from seed to harvest to homemade pumpkin pie. All from the seed that Molly sowed.

Milking Parlor Demonstration



Making Butter with Dairy in the Classroom



Oneida County 
**FARM
FEST**

Horticulture/Master Gardeners



Nutrition/SNAP-Ed



School
ENRICHMENT!

530, 4th and 5th grade students from schools around Oneida County learned about life on a dairy farm at the 2024 Farm Fest Friday, May 31st hosted by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oneida County and DiNitto Farms in Marcy.

**Cornell Cooperative Extension
Oneida County**



April 2025

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Farm Fest, the annual outdoor event featured farm tours and Cooperative Extension programs; including Agriculture, 4-H, Nutrition, Child Care Council, Energy, Ag Economic Development, Horticulture, and more. Also represented were The Mid-York Beekeepers, Madison County Sheriff K-9 unit, Oneida County Soil and Water, Chobani Yogurt, Meet the Veterinarian, and more. Students learned how to make butter, how maple syrup and honey are made, played games, took a hayride, and visited the barns and milking parlor all while learning how much work goes into running and maintaining a dairy farm.



(above) Red CCE shirts show a sea of CCE staff and volunteers on hand to work the 2024 Farm Fest. **(right)** Students enjoy a free Chobani yogurt treat and then head into the milking parlor to see how the cows get milked.

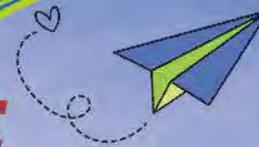




Agriculture

**IF YOU ATE
TODAY**

Thank a Farmer!



Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oneida County's Ag Team serves hundreds of farmers and agribusinesses throughout the year with Cornell University information and education on soil and crops, livestock and feed, farm bookkeeping, business planning, and safety. From soil sampling, and disease and pest scouting to technical assistance, CCE's Ag Team offers the guidance farmers need. **Discussion groups and Twilight Tours** hosted by local farms in the county, keep an open dialogue with farmers changing needs. **In addition to the Farm Flash**, which is mailed monthly, the CCE Ag Dept. sends 450 emails to update farmers on the latest Ag news.

2024 AGRICULTURE EVENTS

Apple Grafting Workshop
Master Food Preserver
Manure Safety Training
Farm Fest (4-H event)
Crop Congress
Grain Marketing & On-Farm Storage
DEC Pesticide Review
Mental Health First Aid Training
RBDG Workshops
Beef Month

(Events totaled 400 attendees)

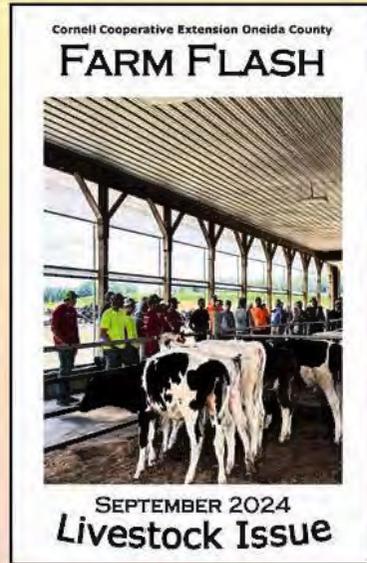




May 2025

Agriculture

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Use the QR code to get the most up to date farm news. Read Farm Flash Online



Farm Flash is mailed to 672 farms and agri-businesses each month.

Cornell Cooperative Extension Oneida County along with New York Center for Ag Medicine and Health (NYCAMH) held a manure management and gas safety seminar (Farm Safe Seminar) August 2024 at Collins Farm in Rome, N.Y.



Agriculture



FARM TO SCHOOL POSTER CONTEST

OPEN TO GRADES
K - 12!
 JUDGING CATEGORIES:
 K - 3RD
 4-6TH
 7-9TH
 10TH - 12TH

DRAW AND WIN!



Grades 10-12

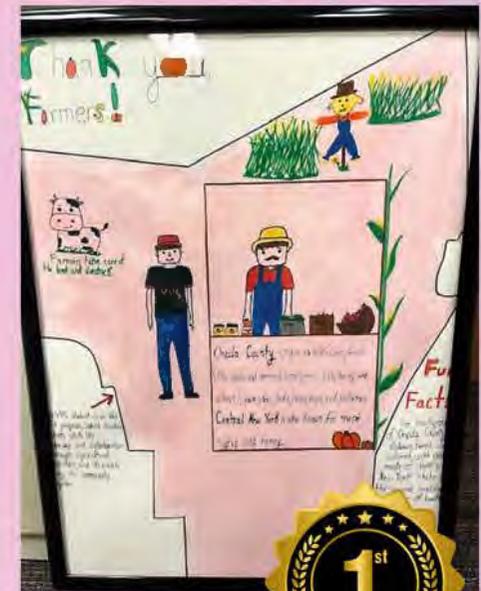


Grades 7-9



National Farm to School Network increases access to local food and nutrition education to improve children's health, strengthen family farms, and cultivate vibrant communities.

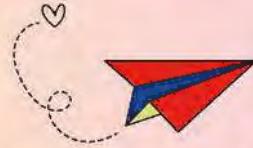
Photo above: Amanda Vinci, CCE Ag Team, gives children a chance to try pears at Jefferson Elementary School.



Grades 3-6



Agriculture



What we do and who we serve.

Farm Business

- Amish
- Farm Visits
- Beginning Farmers
- Bookkeeping
- Safety
- Succession Planning
- Marketing
- Technical Assistance

Dairy/Livestock

- Beef Month
- Twilight Tours
- Discussion Groups
(Large Herd, Young Farmer, Beef)
- Technical Assistance

Soil, Crops, and Land Use

- Soil Sampling
- Farm Visits
- Crop Congress
- IPM – Disease and Pest ID
- Technical Assistance



SAUQUOIT, N.Y. — Oneida County Cooperative Extension's Agricultural Team hosted 2024 Twilight Farm Tours. The last in a series of four on-farm events was hosted by Carter Collins of Valley View Ag, L.L.C in Sauquoit. Sarah Welsh from the New York Center for Ag Medicine and Health (NYCAMH) in Cooperstown, NY, used a "dummy" to show the impact of someone being entangled in an operating tractor power take-off (PTO). She also demonstrated the importance of rollover protection (ROPs) on tractors to save lives.



**Master Gardener Volunteers (MGV), Horticulture
and The Parker F. Scripture Botanical Gardens**



This past year, 30 MGVs were actively enrolled in the program. MGVs clocked in 1,514 volunteer hours, as special speakers at clubs, teaching classes, tabling at events and working in the Parker F. Scripture Gardens.

Garden renovations continue this year and included a new wooden table and benches built by the Adirondack High School Carpentry class. The table was added to the pergola, along with a new white vinyl flower planter.



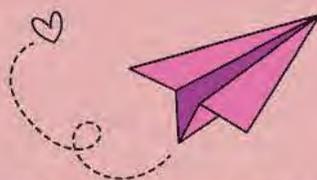
**Cornell Cooperative Extension
Oneida County**

**GARDEN
PROJECTS**
And Helpers



June 2025

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**Scan to Read
Cornell
Garden
Fact Sheets
Online**

Gardening Highlights from this past year:

- Spring “Garden Fever” classes-two sessions
- 633 Home and Garden calls/inquiries
- Hands-on yoga and classes in the gardens
- Ongoing Parker F. Scripture Garden Renovations
- Summer butterfly release in the Butterfly House
- All-America Selections Garden: MGV’s and Child Care Council participated in the “Film a Tour” Landscape Challenge and received an “Honorable Mention”.



MVCC students and instructors
Parker F. Scripture Botanical
Gardens

Fall 2024, MVCC
Utica students construction class, along with their instructors, got experience installing concrete pads and sidewalks in our gardens. They received hands on education and CCE acquired some beautiful walkways.

**THANK YOU
MVCC UTICA!**





For More
Photos
Scan QR
Code



2024



July 2025



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Ag Team member, Marylynn Collins helping SNAP-Ed Nutritionist, Jamie Bacher, mix a healthy smoothie, and having a good laugh!

Fun at the Fair!



CCE's Energy Hub Team



4-H Youth Development



4-H Horse Program

Cornell Cooperative Extension's 4-H program continues to reach thousands of children and adults each year through 4-H clubs, Ag in the Classroom, Dairy in the Classroom, Conservation Ed Days, the annual Farm Fest, the county and state fairs and other special classes and programs. **459 Oneida County elementary students** visited the CCE building and gardens through our "Touring Teacher" field trips.



THE FAIR
THE GREAT NEW YORK STATE FAIR

4-H Youth Development

Oneida County
4-H Members
proudly display
the ribbons they won
at the
2024 New York
State Fair



Cornell Cooperative Extension
Oneida County

Scan to Read 4-H On The Move



August 2025

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Oneida County 4-H Members have items on display in the 4-H building at the NYS Fair. Judges award ribbons for the projects.



CCE's Child Care Council supports high-quality child care in Herkimer, Madison, and Oneida Counties



**Serving 3 counties with:
Family assistance to find
licensed/registered child care:**

Oneida County: 501
Madison County: 68
Herkimer County: 64

**Technical assistance and
support to child care
programs, both basic and
intensive.**

Oneida County: 339
Madison County: 155
Herkimer County: 153

**Exciting
News !**

Thanks to Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente and his Child Care Taskforce, the CCE Child Care Council has been granted funding which provides start-up money for Family and Group Child Care Programs. In the last quarter of 2024, over \$15,000 has helped provide start-up items for new child care facilities. Within a couple of months of the start-up funding, 5 child care programs have opened, creating 40 openings for children in Oneida County with more openings coming soon.

Photo: Child Care Council Staff-Halloween 2024



September 2025



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Children Love the CCE Music Garden



Photos: Left and Middle: Marian Brigham and Lindsey Behr bring their social emotional lessons to children through summer programs and kindness lessons and Yoga exercises. Right: Each year CCE's Child Care Council brings Santa, the dog therapy program and fun presents to the Thea Bowman children.

Library Connection

In 2024, 21 library connection sessions provided portable parenting education and resources to 156 caregivers.

This project connects with families at local library story-times and events.

The Library Connection has worked closely with the Mid-York Library system, which covers the same 3 Counties as the Child Care Council.

Through this project, the Child Care Council has had a presence at 10 libraries and 1 non-library facility.

The project began as a collaboration with Kim Kopko, Director of The Parenting Project: Healthy Children, Families & Communities at Cornell University and the Child Care Council.



Above: Child Care Council's Courtney Jones rubs elbows with the Boonville Fair VIP

Below: Child Care Council's, Marina Bridgham and McKenna Clark, visit with parents and children at the Oneida County fair over a fun make and take table for the kids.



**Cornell Cooperative Extension
Oneida County**



CCE's Child Care Council, Master Gardener Volunteers participated in the statewide Cornell Vegetable Varieties for Gardeners citizen science project. Cultural Roots of Eastern Europe was the theme. Other partners included, Arc of Oneida-Lewis Counties who assembled and installed 4 new metal garden beds. (see photos to the left) Funding of renovations in the vegetable garden were made from a \$3000 Whole Kids foundation grant. The money spent also included the purchase of an accessible wooden garden table.



Above: Child Care Council's Tatum Richardson hands out Busy Bags for the kids. **Below:** Rome residents came out to get some much-needed help after a July tornado.



CCE Child Care Council staff joined with Connected Community Schools, Oneida County Dept. of Family and Community Services, the Willow Network, the Rome Fire Dept. and local law enforcement on Saturday, Oct. 12th, 2024 at Strough Middle School in Rome for SIDS Awareness Month



**Cornell Cooperative Extension
Oneida County**

CCE's Child Care Council hosted a School's Out Program in the beautiful Parker F. Scripture Gardens this past summer.



CCE SNAP-Ed Nutrition staff reports a successful 2nd year working with the New York Food for New York Families Grant

Farm to Housing Season 2 of Grant

\$5,096 total value of produce
392 households received NY Produce
10 low-income housing sites in Oneida County

Local Farm's Produce

West End Farms
Kingfisher Farms

Housing Sites

Rome

Colonial I&II
Madison Plaza
Dewitt Clinton
Liberty Garden

Utica

Link at Sunset
Starting Line
Gillmore Village

Camden

Millstream Manor
Camden Apts

Above: Kristen Obreza (center) and Rachael Krawiec (to her left), SNAP-Ed educators, share a nutrition and cooking lesson with local seniors. (2 Photos to the right:) Show some of the produce giveaways that took place for the Farm to Housing Grant.





SNAP-Ed
Nutrition

October 2025

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In June 2024, *The MVPC Mile* is born, on the campus of Mohawk Valley Psychiatric Center (MVPC) in Utica. SNAP-Ed, in partnership with MVPC’s Corner Rehabilitation and Recovery Center Program, mapped out the route, had signs printed by a local printing company, and worked with MVPC to install the signs. The signs included the mental and physical benefits of moving more. The MVPC Mile was launched in July with over 40 staff-client participants joining in a kick-off walk. SNAP-Ed continues to provide direct education to the Corner program and has incorporated walks with the participants as part of the ongoing nutrition classes. MVPC staff report using the mile for employee wellness.



**Scan to Get
Amazing
SNAP-ED
Recipes
Online**



SNAP-Ed educator, Leah McCaskey, uses a My-Plate to teach elementary school children how to properly fill their plates.

CCE's SNAP-Ed, Nutrition and Eat Well Play Hard (EWPH) Programs

- Staff hosted **146 in-person adult education sessions** reaching **725 adults**.
- **7,623 youth participated** in lessons on good nutrition through **1,103 in-person youth education sessions**.
- Through grocery store tours and Farmer's Market demonstrations. Educators visited 28 Farmer's Markets and **reached 791 participants**.
- **More Farmer's Markets are now accepting SNAP/EBT**. The Vienna Farmer's Market got on board this year and CCE SNAP-Ed educators brought nutrition education to this market.



Farm to Library

Central Region SNAP-Ed NY partnered with Upstate Family Health Center (UFHC) with grant funding provided through Forward Leading IPA (FLIPA) to implement a six-month food education and healthy eating program. The program consisted of three interventions including grocery store tours, virtual nutrition classes with food demonstrations, and food box delivery with food items provided to make SNAP-Ed recipes.

Oneida County's SNAP-Ed staff coordinated donations of surplus produce from seven local farms and distributed it to community members through two local libraries: Utica Public Library and Jervis Public Library (in Rome). Community engagement was further strengthened with the nutrition education opportunities provided by the libraries. The Farm to Library program was especially impactful in July of 2024, when a tornado hit Rome and disrupted many families.



MARKET Sprouts

Free kids' Farm Market at Columbus Elementary

This exciting nutrition educational experience included:

- A **6-week nutrition series** by SNAP-Ed educators.
- Included lessons from Farm to Plate.
- Recipe and storage information for produce.
- A food demonstration and tasting.
- **Local grower, West End Farms**, provided fresh produce for the kids' farm market experience.
- **87 fourth-grade students** shopped for fresh produce to take home to their families.
- **Market Sprouts** featured cabbage, apples, corn, honey nut squash, butternut squash, string beans, and bell peppers.

*SNAP-Ed
Nutrition*



The smiles say it all! These children loved shopping at Market Sprouts and the CCE SNAP-Ed staff loved setting up the experience for them!

Ag Economic Development

What Ag Economic Development Includes

Oneida County Public Market

Utica Train Station

May-Dec every Saturday 9a-1p

Jan-April every other Saturday 9a-1p

Upstate/Downstate

Food System Specialist

2024 EVENTS

Farmland Protection

NY Food Days

F2S Poster Contest

Taste of CNY

Grants

Farm to School

SARE

Farmers Market Promotion Program

Farmers Market Resiliency Grant

LFPP

Meat Processing



The Annual Taste of CNY was held on Saturday, November 2nd, 2024 at North Star Orchards Greenhouses in Westmoreland. The event featured 16 vendors along with apple and cider tastings. Over 600 people attended this yearly event, hosted by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oneida County. Visitors enjoyed tasting products before making their purchases. TASTE of CNY has become a Yearly Event!



Cornell Cooperative Extension
Oneida County

November 2024

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Ag Economic Development



Oriskany: May 9th was New York Food Day for several local school districts, held in partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oneida County (CCEOC). **Nineteen districts throughout Oneida County** served New York State-grown, processed, and produced items for the school lunches.

CCE Oneida County and Upstate Growers and Packers in Clinton was part of a larger effort involving 1200 produce filled boxes being given out to families in Queens, NY. It's all part of CCE Oneida County's Upstate-Downstate Program which works to bring upstate produce to downstate markets. Photo left: Myron Thurston (4th from left) works to get local farmer's produce to New York City.

Menus featured a variety of New York State items including beef, corn, cheddar cheese, sour cream, milk, apples, and Miss Milla's chocolate chip cookies. These items were sourced through various businesses across New York including; Roc Star Ice Cream, Headwater Food Hub, Upstate Niagara Food Cooperative, Inc., Great Lakes Cheese, Milestone Mill, Empire Custom Processing, LLC, and Kilcoyne Farms.

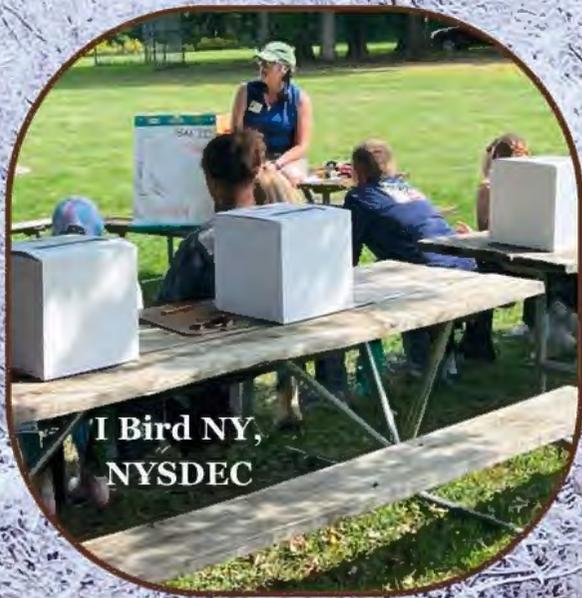


1200 Food Boxes Distributed to those in Need

Conservation Ed Days



September 2024:
695, six grade students
from Oneida County
schools took part in
Cornell Cooperative
Extension's Annual
Conservation Ed Days,
a 2- day event at Delta
Lake State Park in Rome.
Students had to visit 10 of
15 conservation stations
to complete their
education.



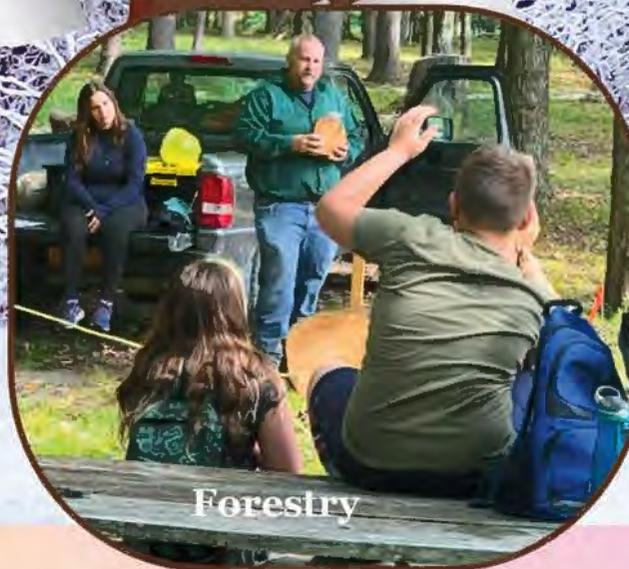
I Bird NY,
NYSDEC



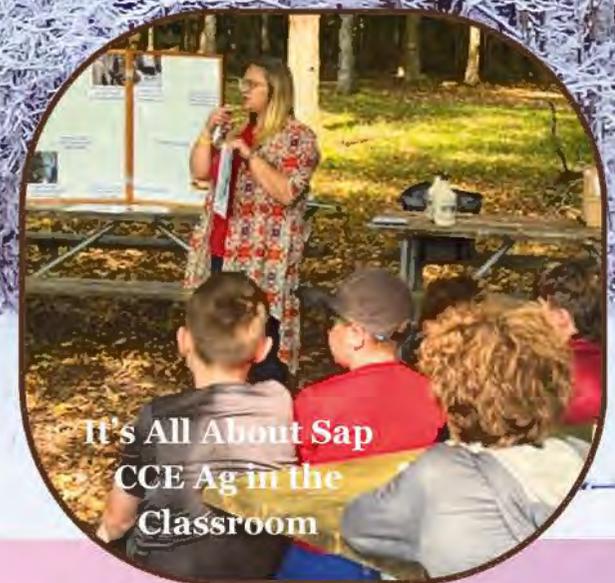
Encountering Wild
Animals, NYS DEC



Conservation on the Farm



Forestry



It's All About Sap
CCE Ag in the
Classroom



December 2025

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Benefits of Clean Energy

Conservation Ed Days



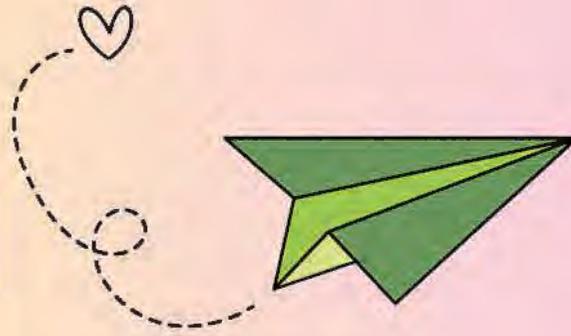
Conservation Ed Days Poster Winners



Sports Fishing in Oneida County

Financial Support

2024



CCE Oneida County's operating budget in 2023 totaled \$8,586,036.

As we come to the close of 2024 the operating budget totals \$9,085,417 reflecting an increase of \$ 499,381 or a growth of over 5.8%.

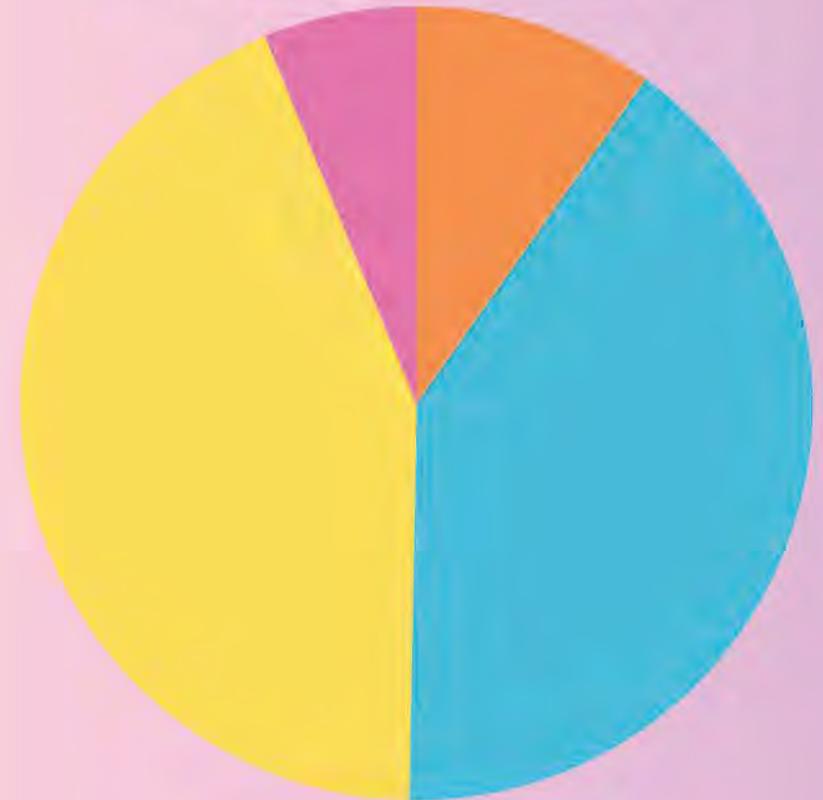
***Other** income sources include: NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, NYS Department of Health, Office of Children & Family Services, Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance, NYS Energy Research and Development Authority, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Leatherstocking Shared Business Network, The Community Foundation, and Cornell University.

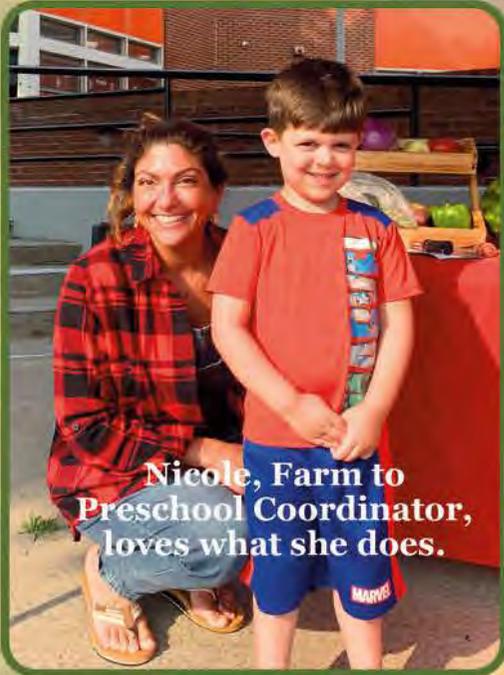
CCE Oneida County's Program Leads estimated **volunteer hours** to be approximately 2,244 in 2024. The 2024 value of volunteer time was set at \$33.49 per hour making the value of those hours \$75, 152.

**Cornell Cooperative Extension
Oneida County**

Oneida County (10%)	\$ 892,078
New York State (40%)	\$3,677,238
Federal Support (43%)	\$3,948,522
Grants/Other* (7%)	\$ 567,579
<hr/>	
Total Support	\$9,085,417

Oneida County New York State
Federal Support Grants/Other*

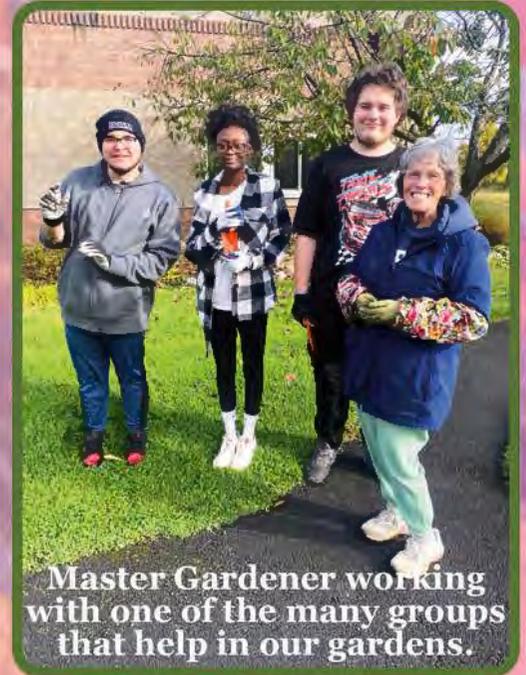




Nicole, Farm to Preschool Coordinator, loves what she does.



Employee Pumpkin Contest Winners



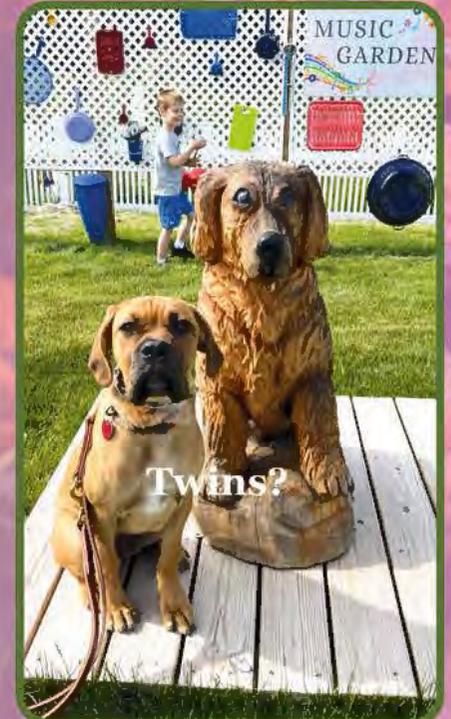
Master Gardener working with one of the many groups that help in our gardens.



Xena, our favorite Energy Dept Employee



Staff at Earth Day clean Up in Garden



Twins?

2024 Staff December Holiday Party



Cornell Cooperative Extension Oneida County
121 Second Street Oriskany, NY 13424
Phone 315-736-3394



Scan to visit our website
cceoneida.com

Reach the Home and Garden hotline by dialing extension 333 or email homeandgarden@cornell.edu

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