Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Columbia & Greene Counties

2012 Annual Report

Board of Directors

James Story, Jr., President

Nathan Chittenden, V. President

Betsy Braley, Treasurer

Robin Smith, Secretary

Cathi Annese

Joseph Behn

John Bowen

Janice Fingar

Joseph Gilbert

Joseph Hanselman, Jr.

Donald MacCormack

Bruce Meyers

Jane Miller

Jason Post

Fari Raad

Ken Tsukada

Donna Williams

Patty Handel, Greene County Legislative Representative

Betty Young, Columbia County Board of Supervisors Representative

Charles Fausold, Cornell State Specialist

Cornell Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities.

From the Board President & Executive Director

Since September 3rd, Chuck Brooks has proudly served as the Association Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia and Greene Counties. Chuck has appreciated your warm welcome and support as he learns about the work and culture of Cornell Cooperative Extension, as well as the many programs and services we provide to our community.

On January 1, 2012, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia County and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Greene County were consolidated into one new association—Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia and Greene Counties. By working together, we will strengthen our operations as well as the programs and services to the residents of our service area. We expect that consolidation will enable us to:

- Sustain ourselves in the future and achieve financial stability by achieving the economies of a larger, more effective organization as well as working together to achieve greater success in securing competitive grants and contracts.
- To achieve positive outcomes of our programs and services in a variety of ways including through providing a better service delivery system, expanded programs, sharing administrative functions and costs, and greater visibility and influence resulting in increased effectiveness.
- To promote excellence by retaining and attracting talented staff, by providing opportunities for networking and staff development where employees can also contribute their ideas for a better organizational structure in response to changing conditions in the Cornell Cooperative Extension system.
- To develop a shared business strategy that helps to increase volume and/or capacity to serve, to reach new markets for our programs and services, and to increase the potential to raise financial support to strengthen our association activities and facilities.

We believe we have met all these expectations – and even more!

This spring we intend to complete a Long Range Strategic Plan that will develop a vision for the future for our association. We will identify the steps needed to achieve success in the goals and objectives for our programs and services to the residents of our service area including Agriculture and Food Systems; Natural Resources, Sustainable Energy, and Climate Change; 4-H Youth Development/Children, Youth, and Families; Nutrition, Food Safety and Security; and Community and Economic Vitality.

Our staff are here to educate, to share the success of research studies, to use their training and experience to improve the lives of the people they work with – and, to create stories in the hearts of our youth and adults that will last a lifetime. No matter how our organization changes in the future we can never change our history and the stories and traditions that will continue to remain with us. We can only move forward and create new stories in the hearts of adults and children just as Extension in NYS has done for over 100 years.

Thank you for your commitment and support of our association for the past year. We know we will be able to count on you all for the future.

James Story, Jr., Board President

Charles M. Brooks, Executive Director

AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

2012 was another extraordinary year for the Agriculture and Community Horticulture Programs. We finally and formally "fused" the two county systems into Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia and Greene Counties, and began doing business as a fully integrated association. Combining the directives, the staff personnel, and the missions has become a grand exercise in cooperation. Cooperative is our middle name, after all, and in 2012, all sorts of cooperative spirit was demonstrated.

The 12 newly-trained Master Gardener Volunteers were pressed into service at both locations, in helping the "veteran" MGVs with community programs, representation at fairs and events, teaming up to help put together plant swaps, sales, and "give-aways," helping with office walk-ins and telephone assistance, and with educational programs. Drawing to the strengths of the individual units made for a synergistic effectiveness of the combined units.

Notable efforts included a series of programs directed at helping folks in Prattsville and Lexington adversely affected by Tropical Storms Irene and Lee. There was a large unified effort in putting together the annual Spring Gardening Day at Columbia-Greene Community College and yet another in the Fall landscaping class. MGV personnel greeted the public and answered questions at both the Greene County Youth Fair and the Columbia County Fair.

The unusual weather during the growing season brought with it a host of unusual insect and weed pests and growing conditions completely atypical of a normal Northeast season. There was an abundant amount of learning that took place this growing season, both with the patron- clients, as well as with the MGVs. In all, the Columbia-Greene Consumer Horticulture and the MGV programs collectively reached a total of 1,448 people through efforts of staff and volunteers from the Extension Education Center and the Agroforestry Resource Center.

The 2012 growing season started way early and then reversed itself back to very cold temperatures. Many of the blossoming trees and plants lost their chance at a good harvest because of the late freeze. The cold weather then gave way to hotter and drier weather that persisted until August, wreaking havoc on planting preparations, on germination potentials, and growing conditions for 2/3 of the season. Yields of hay and other non-irrigated crops were about 1/2 of normal in the region. The late rains finally falling on parched pastures were welcomed by livestock owners who had actually begun to feed hay in the summer. The strange droughty weather led to a smaller than normal hay and grain crop and higher spot prices for both.

The Hudson-Mohawk RC&D Council once again contracted with our local Extension staff to formulate grazing plans for four area farmers and an additional plan in the greater RC&D region. The contract also included 25 follow-up visits to the regional farms that have grazing plans in operation. We also worked closely with NRCS to help the farmers with grazing plans to access federally funded programs that assist in cost-sharing for fencing and watering systems.

Even with the dismal growing season, the Hops Demonstration Project was highlighted in the fall, with two of the cooperating producers marketing the 2012 hops harvest to local microbreweries. This was the first harvest

marketed thusly in more than 80 years.

A full-house informational meeting was hosted in June to help area farmers explore the feasibility and potential for growing, processing, and marketing a bio-fuels crop - Miscanthus.

A Field Day concentrating mainly on forage crop production was held at the Valatie Farm. It was well attended, and good production values were seen, even with the droughty season.

A Pasture Walk concentrating on small ruminant pasture breeding systems was conducted at the Gansvoort Farm in Clermont in collaboration with Dutchess County CCE and Cornell University .

Early in the year, we co-sponsored a well-attended conference for beginning and transitioning farmers entitled "Farming Our Future."

The two regional agriculturally-oriented programs, the Capital District Vegetable and Small Fruit Program and the Capital Area Agriculture and Horticulture Program were fully engaged this year in assisting our producers with their world-class expertise. Several cooperatively-produced programs and activities were offered through the year with the "A-Teams," and 48 referrals made to them.

In 2012, the Agriculture Program of CCE Columbia & Greene connected with 356 farmers through phone consultation, farm visits, and "to and fro" referrals with the aforementioned cooperating agricultural teams.

Mick Bessire, Resource Educator

NATURAL RESOURCES, SUSTAINABLE ENERGY, CLIMATE CHANGE

There were numerous exciting new projects and staff added to the Environment, Natural Resources, Sustainable Energy and Climate Change Program area in 2012, as well as continued success with existing efforts. Education and outreach efforts involve targeting the various audiences that influence our natural resource base. This included partnering with organizations and agencies with similar goals, many whom support our efforts financially.

During 2012, we hosted over 50 programs and reached over 1,500 participants in our service area. Here are some highlights of our accomplishments:

- Our new Extension Educator and forester, Ron Frisbee, researched the application of the Massachusetts Extension's Woods Forum to the problem of engaging woodland owners with their woods. Ron developed a format for use of the Woods Forum in New York, with assistance from our wonderful Master Forest Owners volunteers. The primary benefit of the Woods Forum is that the event brings together woodland owners in targeted communities where connections are made during discussion of issues common to most woodland owners and resources are provided to participants for follow up.

- Extension Educator Elizabeth LoGiudice conducted a needs assessment of communities located in the Catskill Creek Watershed that were impacted by Tropical Storms Irene and Lee. This project provided an opportunity for Liz to make new connections in the municipalities, and to learn about their flood recovery and floodplain management needs. Results of the needs assessment were shared with the NYS DEC Hudson River Estuary Program. This effort lead to the creation of the Hudson Estuary Watershed Resiliency project, which will provide educational assistance to municipalities and streamside landowners in the Catskill Creek watershed, Greater Stockport watershed and other target watersheds in the Hudson Valley.

- Theresa Mayhew, Extension Educator, whose focus includes water quality, conducted a "We All Live in a Watershed" program for youth that was part of Olana's Panorama Summer Camp in July. Some of the work that resulted was incorporated into a CCE exhibit on water quality and displayed at the Columbia County Fair.

- Responding to the increasing threats posed by invasive species,

Richard Burstell, Program Educator, established a regional network of CCE Associations in the Catskill Mountain Watershed region, focusing on early detection. An "invasive species" is a species that does not naturally occur in a specific area and whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. Early detection is a

crucial strategy in preventing the further establishment of invasive species in new areas and helps deal with invasive species in the most cost effective ways.

Marilyn Wyman, Issue Leader

4-H Youth Development, Children, Youth & Families

Cornell Cooperative Extension's 4-H Youth Development Program engages school-age youth throughout Columbia and Greene Counties. Our 4-H Club Program hosts 40 4-H clubs with over 400 club members. More than 250 adults volunteer their time to work directly with these youth as they explore and participate in hands-on activities in project areas such as rabbit, the environment, foods and nutrition, photography, dairy cattle and gardening. As many as 200 additional volunteers provide support in the areas of fund raising, judging and chaperoning.

Educational programs, generally providing six hours of participation, have been taken to school classrooms, community libraries, summer recreation sites and afterschool programs. Over 2,600 youth participated in these programs that covered topics such as rural and farm safety, environmental science, healthy eating and active living, and GPS.

Following are just three examples of the many youth involvement programs that took place in 2012.

- Six 4-Her's in Columbia and Greene Counties are leading a "Revolution of Responsibility" to bring about positive change in their communities through a unique team public presentation program. This team program provided a powerful youth voice that spoke to county legislators and supervisors as well as CCE stakeholders. Their message was the importance that 4-H plays in the lives of 4-H youth and how it has given them the ability to give back to their community and grow individually.

- Did you know that the New York State insect is the 9 Spotted Ladybug? It was once a very common sight, but over the last 20 years, it has been quite rare. Groups of youth participated in the Citizen Science Project entitled the Lost Ladybug Project (LLP). LLP studies the biodiversity of ladybug populations in North America, including that of the rare 9 Spotted Ladybug. Participants engaged in learning activities which sharpened their skills in entomology, Ladybug identification and searched for ladybugs their communities. Over 75 Ladybugs were found this summer from three different sites. The data the youth collected was submitted to the LLP website, helping entomologists' gain a greater understanding of ladybug species in our service area.

- A new partnership was developed between Cornell Cooperative Extension, Questar III, the Tech Valley Career Pathways Consortium, and Columbia-Greene Community College to present an intensive agriculture career experience for youth entering Grades 9 and 10. The Homegrown Business Challenge was developed after focus group meetings with agriculture businessmen, educators, and economic development specialists. This five-day "summer camp" included field trips to many ag operations and ended with team presentations of proposals for a new agricultural product or service. Several local business professionals were involved as mentors. Post-event evaluations indicated that a majority of the participants would recommend this experience to a friend, and fifty-percent of the participants chose to continue their learning by participating in the 4-H AgriBusiness Career Conference.

Linda Tripp, Issue Leader

Protected Under
18 U.S.C. 707

NUTRITION, FOOD SAFETY AND SECURITY

EAT SMART NEW YORK! (ESNY!)

Eat Smart New York's (ESNY) goal is to promote health by helping low-income individuals establish healthy eating habits and a physically active lifestyle. Poverty is a risk factor for numerous health problems including heart disease, diabetes, cancer, poor pregnancy outcomes, and obesity. Positive changes in nutrition and physical activity are needed to avoid negative consequences of these health conditions. There are two types of ESNY! programming. The first type is delivered in individual homes as a one-on-one program. In-home lessons are one hour lessons scheduled as part of a six-lesson series.

Nutrition Educator Charity Lanthier advises patrons of the Hudson Price Chopper about the importance of family meals during our annual Family Mealtimes Matters campaign.

The second type is delivered as a group lesson at partnering community agencies. The group lessons can be part of a six-lesson series or stand-alone lessons. Group lessons can also range in time from 20 to 90 minutes long. All lessons are free of charge. Lessons are derived from one or more approved curricula and delivered using a research-based and thoroughly tested method of instruction. During 2012, education was delivered to 491 adults, with 129 completing the six-week lesson series. Education was also delivered to 97 youth participants. Of the adults who completed a six-week lesson series:

- 100% improved in at least one behavior construct
- 98% improved in at least one nutrition practice
- 90% improved in at least one food resource management practice
- 49% improved in at least one food safety practice

PARENTING EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Parenting Education Program consists of two distinct programs designed to provide parents with the knowledge and skills necessary to be effective parents. The two programs are the Home-Based Parenting Education Program and the Parenting Skills Training Program.

The Home-Based Parenting Education Program works intensively with families in the home who have been referred exclusively by the Greene County Department of Social Services and other social service agencies. The experienced parenting educators, Christina Murell and Peggy Henne, provide hands-on practical education covering a wide variety of parenting topics.

The Parenting Skills Training Program entails a 16 week series of classes that are open to the general public and cover a variety of topics. They take place at the Department of Social Services and are offered twice a week. During 2012, education was delivered to 65 families through the Home-Based Parenting Education Program, impacting 128 children who are considered at risk of suffering abuse or neglect. Of the 65 families, 23 met their goals and graduated the program, with 27 families continuing on into 2013. The Parenting Skills Training Program reached 38 individuals, with 24 completing all 16 classes and receiving their certificates of participation.

Rebecca Polmateer, Team Coordinator

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES PROGRAMS provide individuals and families with timely and research-based knowledge and skills to meet the challenges of every-day living.

CCE was contacted by the City of Hudson Treasurer to offer "Save Energy, Save Dollars" and "Making Ends Meet" EmPower workshops to city residents that were behind in paying their property taxes. If they attended one of these programs, they could enter into a special repayment program with the city. Similarly, CCE was approached by Registrar staff at Columbia-Greene Community College to present "Making Ends Meet" to help students receiving financial aid better budget those funds. Both collaborations proved successful with 35 individuals taking advantage of those offerings.

During 2012, CCE reconnected with Head Start classrooms in Chatham, Hudson and Philmont, as well as the Mental Health Association of Columbia & Greene Counties, providing consumer programs that dealt with home safety, improving spending habits and making more informed consumer decisions. CCE FCS staff has also been involved with the Greater Hudson Promise Neighborhood program, serving on its Supporting Parents working group.

Theresa Mayhew, Resource Educator

REGIONAL PROGRAMS & BUSINESS SYSTEMS

CAPITAL AREA AGRICULTURAL AND HORTICULTURAL PROGRAM (CAAHP)

The CAAHP program is a regional program supported by the Cornell Cooperative Extension associations of Albany, Columbia-Greene, Schenectady and Washington Counties as well as Cornell University. This regional agricultural team provides agricultural producers, processors, and the industry with high quality educational programs and cutting edge research-based information so they profitably produce and market safe and healthful agricultural products in an environmentally sound manner. In addition to on-site services to local farms and other agriculturally related services, the CAAHP provides local programs and workshops in the counties.

CAAHP Staff:

Sandy Buxton
Farm Business Management

Aaron Gabriel
Field Crops

Tom Gallagher
Livestock Production Systems and Marketing Venues

Steve Hadcock
Beginning Farmers and Market Development

Chuck Schmitt
Horticulture and IMP Programs

EASTERN NEW YORK COMMERCIAL HORTICULTURE PROGRAM (ENYCHP)

Beginning in January 2013, the Northeastern NY Fruit Program, Capital District Vegetable and Small Fruit Program, and Hudson Valley Fruit Program will come together to form the Eastern NY Commercial Horticulture Program (ENYCHP). ENYCHP will be the premier regional agricultural Cornell Cooperative Extension program in New York, serving a large multi-county area in the Eastern side of the state.

With nearly 11 specialists, the ENYCHP specialists work together with Cornell faculty and extension educators statewide to address the issues that impact the vegetable and small fruit industries. The ENYCHP provides educational programs and information to growers and agribusiness professionals, arming them with the knowledge to profitably produce and market safe and healthful vegetable crops, contributing to the viability of farms and the economic wellbeing of New York State. Specifically, the program focuses on food safety, variety evaluation, market development, pest management, and cultural practices.

ENYCHP Staff:

Chuck Bornt
Team Leader & Vegetable Specialist

Laura McDermott
Small Fruits, Leafy Greens, Labor, High Tunnels, and Food Safety

Crystal Stewart
Small and Beginning Farms, Organic, Root Crops, Brassicas, and Garlic

Mike Fargione
Small Fruit and Berries

Steve McKay (retired 7/1/12)
Small Fruit and Berries

SHARED BUSINESS NETWORK (SBN)

In the Fall of 2011, the Shared Business Network (SBN) was developed and implemented for Cornell Cooperative Extension associations statewide. This new SBN infrastructure allows associations to have access to competent, knowledgeable "leads" in the areas of Finance, Human Resources, and Information Technology while reducing administration costs for the benefit of the CCE program development in our service area.

The SBN leads will have access to training, trouble shooting, and business practice development with on-campus administrators. The functional leads will work directly with association staff to address needs as they arise. The vision is to create a structure that will provide increased effectiveness at reduced transaction costs to better position CCE in ways that will enhance sustainability of programming in difficult economic times. This mechanism provides CCE administration with information from the field on topics such as which options will work best, how to deploy a change, how to fix a problem, etc.

When an association experiences a business related problem or question, the appropriate SBN functional lead is the first contact and serves in the role of relaying information to CCE Administration when needed. Our CCE mission continues to focus on business operations being done to support local programs and services. While our current SBN includes CCE associations in Putnam, Dutchess, and Ulster, in 2013 we will be transitioning to becoming a member of the Capital District SBN including Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Saratoga, Washington, Warren, and Fulton/Montgomery CCE Associations.

SBN Leads:

Leah Cadwallader, *Human Resource Lead*

Sean Carbine, *Information Technology*

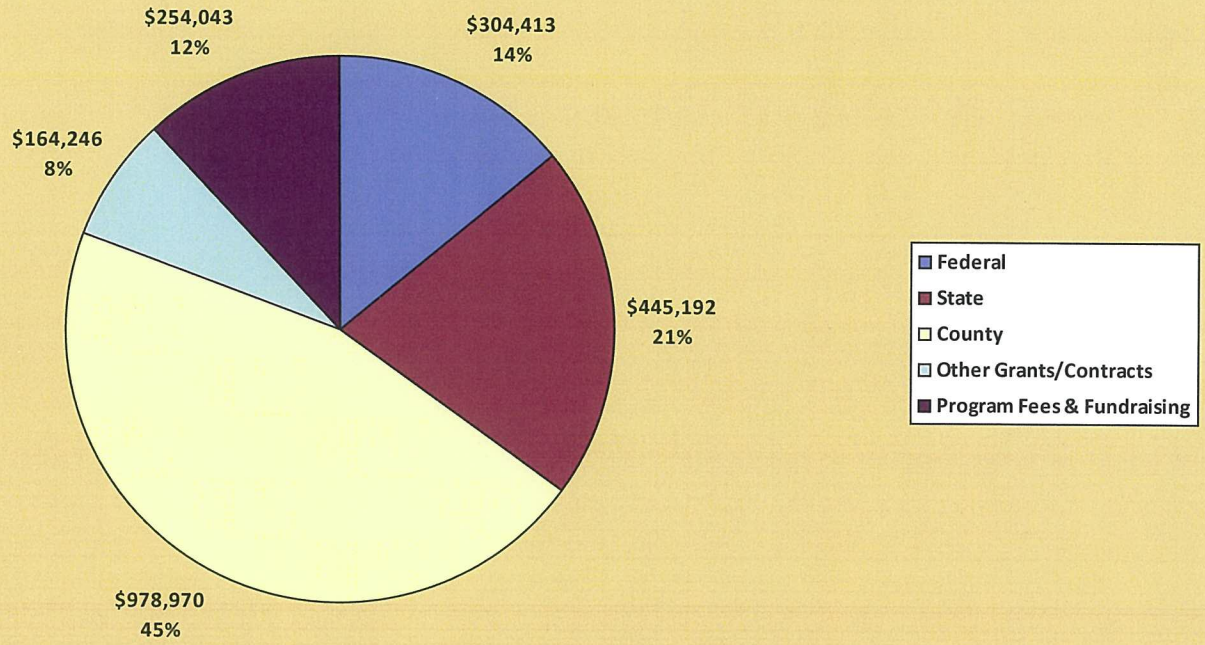
Roxanne Churchill, *Finance*

Linda Keech, *SBN Supervising Executive Director*

ASSOCIATION STAFF

Chuck Brooks, Executive Director	Administration
Evon Antonio, Finance Manager	Administration
Mick Bessire, Resource Educator	Agriculture/Horticulture
Richard Burstell, Program Educator	Agriculture/Horticulture
Lauren Daniel, Nutrition Program Educator	Community Health & Wellness
Ronald Frisbee, Resource Educator	Natural Resources & the Environment
Donna Garafalo, Account Representative	Administration
Margaret (Peggy) Henne, Parenting Program Educator	Community Health & Wellness
Beth Horton, Program Educator	4-H Youth Development
Charity Lanthier, Program Educator	Community Health & Wellness Nutrition
Elizabeth LoGiudice, Community Educator	Natural Resources & the Environment
Theresa Mayhew, Resource Educator	Natural Resources & the Environment
Angelo "A.J." Melino, Facilities Coordinator	Buildings and Grounds
Christina Murell, Parenting Program Educator	Community Health & Wellness
Donna Peterson, Program Educator	Agriculture & Horticulture
Rebecca Polmateer, Team Coordinator	Community Health & Wellness
Kelly Radzik, Resource Educator	4-H Youth Development
Eileen Simpson, Administrative Assistant	Administration
Crystil-Lee Skoda, Community Educator	4-H Youth Development
Angela Tallarico, Senior Administrator	Administration
Linda Tripp, Issue Leader	4-H Youth Development
Emily Warrington, Administrative Assistant	Administration
Eileen West, Nutrition Program Educator	Community Health & Wellness
Marilyn Wyman, Issue Leader	Natural Resources & the Environment

2012 FINANCIAL SUPPORT



For more information on Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia and Greene Counties and the programs we offer, visit our website **www.ccecolumbiagreene.org.** You can also "like" us on Facebook—look for Cornell Cooperative Extensions of Columbia and Greene Counties.

Agroforestry Resource Center
6055 Route 23
Acra, NY 12405
518.622.9820

Extension Education Center
479 Route 66
Hudson, NY 12534
518.828.3346