

Greene County Agricultural Society, Inc.

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P.O. Box 84 ~ Greenville, NY 12083
www.thegreencountyouthfair.com

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Prepared by President Alex Johnk and Board Member Andrea Macko



Our Mission

The Greene County Agricultural Society, Inc. is responsible for organizing the annual Youth Fair and furthering agricultural education within the community.

What We Do

Held for four days each July, the Greene County Youth Fair is one of the last free fairs in the U.S. The fair honors the accomplishments of local youth who will keep our agricultural legacy alive for years to come.

We are part of the New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs, whose goal is to promote agriculture, horticulture and domestic arts. All members of the Greene County Agricultural Society are volunteers and no one receives a paycheck.

The Greene County Agricultural Society meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Greenville Public Library Community Room. Meetings are open to the public.

2017 Directors

President Alex Johnk • Vice President Sam Essex

Treasurer Janet Partridge • Secretary Patty Ross

Directors: Carl Kohrs, Alice Zabel, Donna VanOrden, Cindy Shanley, Wayne

Myhre Rebecca Johnk, Fawn Landry, Kathy Schlenker, Lynette Terrell, Diane Lewis, Linda Tripp, Terry McGee-Ward, Andrea Macko, Karen Pautz, Jessie Shields, Shelby Minshell, Laurie Jennings, Melissa Feltman

Why Ag Education?

Agriculture is one of New York State's top industries. In fact, New York's farm economy generates more than \$4 billion each year.

As our population continues to shift to a more urban and technology-based demographic, it is the responsibility of Agricultural Societies to educate the public on the importance of food production and its future.

Many families come to the fair for the music, rides, fireworks and, of course, the food, and leave with a newfound knowledge of agriculture. Fairs and livestock shows are the original flagship for agriculture promotion in our society, and events like the Greene County Youth Fair help the children of today become the experts of tomorrow.

Fair kids go on to become not only farmers, but pursue careers in veterinary medicine, engineering, teaching, public service and many other agricultural careers. Equally as important, because agriculture is one of our state's top industries, young adults have the opportunity to pursue these types of careers without being forced to leave New York State.

Quick Facts:

Greene County, Youth and New York's Farm Economy

- Of Greene County's roughly 48,000 residents, approximately 17 percent (8,160) are under the age of 18.¹
- Greene County has a median household income of \$49,864.¹
- Approximately 11 percent of Greene County residents live below the poverty level.¹
- 37.5 percent of Greene County children qualify for free or reduced-price meals in their school district.²
- In 2016 approximately 155 local youth exhibited at the Greene County Youth Fair, an increase from 2015 when approximately 125 local youth exhibited at the Greene County Youth Fair.
- An estimated 20,000 people attend the Greene County Youth Fair each year.

New York is a leading agricultural state, worth \$6.36 billion in 2015. Below is the latest data available, provided by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets and Farm Credit East.

In 2014 there were 35,537 farms in New York State and 7,183,576 acres in farmland.

Dairy and milk production accounts for nearly 26,000 jobs in New York State. Grain and oilseed farming employs nearly 15,500. Veggie and melon farming is responsible for 7,750 jobs. All sectors of agriculture in New York State is responsible for 197,745 jobs.

New York's National Ranking in 2015

- 1st— yogurt, cottage cheese, sour cream
- 2nd— apples, cabbage, snap peas, maple syrup
- 3rd— dairy cows, milk production, grapes
- 4th— squash, pears, calves
- 5th— tart cherries, onions, corn silage, sweet corn

Cash receipts by commodity in 2015 was:

- Livestock--\$3.3 billion (dairy, cattle, hogs, poultry, etc.)
- Field Crops--\$887 million (hay, soybeans, wheat, etc.)
- Vegetables--\$344 million (cabbage, sweet corn, onions, etc.)
- Fruit--\$361 million (apples, grapes, strawberries, etc.)
- Other--\$637 million (floriculture, Christmas trees, maple, etc.)

New York's Farm Economy

Employee compensation --\$427 million
Energy costs --\$343 million
Property taxes --\$236 million
Maintenance & repairs --\$188 million
Marketing & transportation --\$133 million

¹ U.S. Census Bureau

² Council on Children and Families, Kids' Wellbeing Indicators Clearinghouse

History of the Greene County Youth Fair

Alfred Partridge, leader of the Ashland Blue Ribbon 4-H Club, organized a 4-H Club Fair at the Sutton Hollow School in Ashland in 1949 to give his club members an opportunity to display their

projects before family, friends and the community. From this small beginning, the youth fair has developed into the showcase it is today.

Alfred's club held its second fair in 1950 at the Sutton Hollow School. The next year, the fair was in Jewett and other 4-H Club members in the area joined in.

From 1952-1956, the 4-H Club Fair, as it was then known, was held at the VFW Hall on Route 23 near Windham.

In 1954 the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets recognized the fair as an agricultural fair and donated \$5,000 annually to be given in premium money to the exhibitors. Another \$500 was appropriated by the Greene County Board of Supervisors. By this time, the fair was officially called the Greene County Youth Fair and open to all youth who lived or attended school in Greene County.

By 1957 the fair had expanded to two dairy tents, a poultry and rabbit tent, and a sheep and goat tent. A new home was found at the Durham Central School, currently the Durham Elementary School, on Route 145. In addition to the tent space outside, there was ample space in the school for food and clothing exhibits, vegetables, flowers, entomology, arts and crafts.

During the late 1960s, a trade tent was added by the local merchants, as was a horse show, and the fair became a three-day event.

The Greene County Youth Fair stayed at the Durham School for 38 years, with the exception of 1973 when, due to alterations at the school, the fair was held at the Durham Town Building on Route 81.

In the fall of 1995 a committee was formed to find a new home for the fair, which by that time was in its 41st year. The Town of Cairo was more than willing to offer the use of Angelo Canna Town Park as a location centrally located in the county, and a new chapter in the fair's history began.

The fair was extended to a four-day event in 2001 and that same year Senator John Bonacic helped obtain a grant for a new public address system at the fair.

In 2002 the youth fair had a new attraction. An agricultural tent, bustling with activities to educate and entertain visitors of all ages. Part of the tent was filled with youth displays and agriculture, as well as forestry and conservation displays for adults.

In 2003 the Greene County Agricultural Society was incorporated for the purpose of running the fair.

It is impossible to know how many young people have been involved in exhibiting and participating in the Greene County Youth Fair over the years. There are statistics indicating more than 2,000 exhibits had been made numerous years.

So, Alfred Partridge's dream of a youth fair dedicated to the talents and interests of all of the youth of Greene County has come true. He worked many years for this project, but he would be the first to acknowledge all of the willing people who worked side-by-side with him. The list is endless.

Today, the fair attracts more than 20,000 people and is one of the only fairs in New York State to offer free admission and entertainment. The Greene County Youth Fair remains a celebration of the talents of local youth, enabling them to strive for higher goals and receive support from family, friends and their community.

Today's Greene County Youth Fair

A priority of the Greene County Agricultural Society has been and always will be to keep admission to the Greene County Youth Fair free for all ages.

Today's Youth Fair offers a wide variety of entertainment, attractions, music, rides, food, vendors, fireworks, firematic and police displays, a talent show, pie eating contest, classic car show, farmers market, and so much more. Of course, the focus of the fair will always be agriculture, but as society – and kid's interests – change, we need to get creative about how we attract them to the fair and ultimately expose them to agriculture.

The 2017 fair, scheduled for July 27-30 at Cairo's Angelo Canna Town Park, will offer a wide variety of entertainment and educational exhibits, including magic shows, animal demonstrations, singing and dancing troubadours, Western horse shows, exotic animals and more.

Today's Greene County Youth Fair

How is the Fair Funded?

In 2015 the cost to run the fair was \$67,145. This represents all costs associated with the fair, including entertainment, insurance, tents, marketing materials and premiums.

The fair is run completely by volunteers and no one receives a salary or stipend. Funding comes primarily from donations, as well as proceeds from fundraisers and vendor fees.

In addition, the Greene County Legislature allocates funds toward the operation of the fair and has done so at the following levels:

2007 - \$36,993

2008 - \$32,960

2009 - \$35,362

2010 - \$29,498

2011 - \$26,549

2012 - \$24,284

2013 - \$24,284

2014 - \$24,284

2015 - \$24,284 + A generous one-time contribution of \$25,000

2016 - \$28,822

Budget

2017 Budget	2014 Actual	2015 Actual	2016 Actual
Income			
County Appropriations	\$24,284	\$24,284	\$28,822
\$28,000			
NYS Ag & Markets	\$6,734	\$9,874	\$10,664
\$8,000			
Vendor Fees & Rides	\$11,938	\$10,635	\$11,796
\$12,000			
Donations & Fundraisers	\$19,213	\$23,529	\$20,169
\$25,000			
TOTAL INCOME:	\$62,169	\$68,286	\$71,451
\$73,000			
Expenditures			
General Expenses	\$1,860	\$3,835	\$1,735
\$2,500			
Premiums	\$7,000	\$8,000	\$8,045
\$8,000			
Ribbons/Trophies	\$4,160	\$2,340	\$3,860
\$3,000			
Insurance	\$3,853	\$4,044	\$3,680
\$4,000			
Tent Rentals	\$18,076	\$17,716	\$21,295
\$21,000			
Equipment Rentals	See Livestock	(See Livestock Supplie	(See
<i>Livestock Supplies)</i>			
Printing/Mailing	\$2,330	\$1,412	\$1,455
\$2,000			
Publicity	\$1,943	\$2,769	\$3,465
\$7,000			
Livestock Judges	\$1,075	\$1,600	\$975
\$1,500			
Entertainment	\$28,875	\$16,875	\$25,175
\$20,000			
Livestock/Equip. Supplies	\$6,516	\$8,554	\$9378
\$4,100			
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$75,688	\$67,145	\$79,063
\$73,100			

Reserve Balance as of April 1, 2016 - \$35,983

**Note: 2015 County Appropriations do not include a one-time contribution of \$25,000, which has been allocated for future investments into the fair. So far we have spent \$3,244 on sound system upgrades and \$1,505 on new rabbit cages. We invested \$1050 of the money to have a promotional video for the fair produced. We also intend to use the money to replace the wood floor on one of our equipment trailers, to buy additional swine pens, and to purchase new pedal tractors. We are also researching building a mobile fair office and storage trailer using a manufacturer based in Coxsackie.*

The Future of the Greene County Youth Fair

It has been said, quite simply, “If you ate today, thank a farmer.”

Unquestionably, the agricultural industry has changed enormously from the time our nation was founded. Technology, population shifts, nutritional awareness and even social change such as the industrial revolution has played an enormous role in how food is produced today. And it will continue to change.

By 2050 – only 34 short years away – the agricultural sector is going to face enormous challenges in order to feed the 9.6 billion people that the United Nations predicts will inhabit the planet. Feeding this many people will require a food production increase of 70 percent. Who will be the farmers, scientists and agribusiness leaders working to ensure the world is fed three decades from now? The youth of today.

This means that organizations like the Greene County Agricultural Society need to continue its mission to educate and encourage local children and teens to be involved in agriculture. We are fortunate to have locally involved partners in this mission, such as 4-H and Future Farmers of America. But we must constantly continue to find new, creative and unique ways to attract youth and families – and generate funds to do so.

Going forward, the Agricultural Society recognizes that one of the keys to generating new ideas is to encourage participation from new people. Our meetings are open to the public and we welcome new members.

Any questions may be directed to greenecountyagsociety@gmail.com

The 2017 fair is July 27-30 at Angelo Canna Town Park in Cairo. See you at the fair!