# Program Highlights

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Cooperative Extension TompkinsCounty

## 2005 Board of Directors & Program Advisory Committees



Shakoor Aljuwanti, Buffalo area organizer, spoke on "Building Community Leaders" at the 2005 Annual Meeting of the Tompkins County Association. Photo by George Gull.

Our Mission: To strengthen youth, adults, families and communities through learning partnerships that put knowledge to work.

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[Cover photo: Youth from the Urban 4-H Program at West Village harvest root crops at the Ithaca Children's Garden., a CCE-Tompkins affiliate.]

# A Message from the Board President

#### Dear Friends:

I am pleased to report to you at the end of my first full year as Board President on the state of our Association, and on the many worthwhile projects that were accomplished in 2005. As you will see in the following pages, CCE-Tompkins continues to deliver great value to communities throughout Tompkins County, using dollars received from county government to attract contracts and grants that create an additional 30 full time equivalent positions over those that the county supports with its appropriation, and an additional \$1.1 million from outside the county to our local economy.

The programs described here, from home weatherization to an upcoming 'Buy Local' campaign, will help keep dollars circulating longer in our communities – creating jobs and strengthening small businesses and independent growers. Lastly, several contracted

programs that we have not profiled provide direct and meaningful savings to the county. For instance, Compost Education helps households make a useful product while keeping over 5,000 tons of food and yard waste out of local landfills.

CCE-Tompkins benefits the county on two levels: by strengthening individuals and families, and by building capacity in the community. In all of our programs, we make use of our many collaborative connections in the community and at Cornell to bring together groups, organizations and businesses to find common solutions. Our greatest asset in doing this work is our network of trained volunteers who "give back" to their communities over 50,000 hours each year: as Master Gardeners, 4-H Club leaders, or as educators in a host of other programs. To all of you, we owe our warmest thanks!

My own connection with Cooperative Extension began when I volunteered in the Master Gardener program. Later, when Jacksonville faced a crisis with local well contamination, CCE-Tompkins and the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network helped bring our residents together to discuss options to address the problem. Those efforts ultimately led to the Ulysses water district that now provides our community with clean, safe drinking water. And the experience led to my increased involvement with this Association.

CCE-Tompkins helped us convene residents to share ideas and develop solutions that were appropriate to our needs, and they provided unbiased, research-based information that we could trust. This continues to be true across all of CCE-Tompkins' program areas. When CCE volunteers surveyed 240 homeowners last summer on why they did or did not take advantage of incen



2005 Tompkins County "Friend of Extension" Dan Winch, left, and Board President Dick Coogan hold the plaque listing award recipients.

Photo by George Gull.

across all of CCE-Tompkins' program areas. When CCE volunteers surveyed 240 homeowners last summer on why they did or did not take advantage of incentives and subsidies for energy efficiency expenses, we learned that they, too, considered Cooperative Extension to be a top source for reliable, trusted information to use in decision-making.

When you need objective, practical information you can depend on, I hope you will think of Cooperative Extension as the place to turn. Thanks for your interest and support, and best wishes for 2006!

Dick Coogan, Board President

# Tompkins' First Local Foods Week Leads to 'Buy Local' Campaign

Enjoying the rich variety of Finger Lakes food products while your food dollars strengthen our local economy is a "win-win" situation for consumers and producers alike. It was also the theme of the first "Local Foods Week", sponsored August 1-7, 2005 by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County.

Daily activities helped residents appreciate the economic, health and environ-



Members of the Community "Beautification Brigade" plant flowers on the Ithaca Commons. The program serves the entire county and is supported by the Tompkins County Room Tax . Photo by Dan Klein.

mental benefits of purchasing foods produced here in our area. 224 people took the Local Food Challenge — pledging to spend an average of \$15 on local products during the week – and were entered in a contest to win a basket of items donated by area growers. They

also could attend an open-air local foods cooking demonstration in DeWitt Park, visit one of several area farmers' markets, or learn to make and can salsa using fresh local ingredients at CCE-Tompkins.

Area restaurants joined the effort. Ithaca Bakery, Just a Taste, Les Ducs, Madeline's, Olivia, Simeon's on the Commons, Stella's Café and Willow offered nightly specials featuring Finger Lakes food products.

The week culminated in "Eastside Wine & Dine", a SLOWFOOD event in which diners sampled fare at three of Cayuga Lake's east shore wineries: Long Point, King Ferry, and Six Mile Creek.

Other supporters included: Agway in Ithaca, Gimme! Coffee, Greenstar Cooperative Market, the Ithaca Farmers' Market, Purity Ice Cream, Tompkins County Public Library, and Wegman's market.

Buying locally produced foods – at grocery stores, restaurants or the farmers' market – can have a big impact on our local economy. In fact, if all Tompkins County residents spent just 10% of their grocery and dining dollars on local foods, it would create over \$29,000,000 of economic value for our region!

Your purchases also directly benefit local growers. On average, the farmer receives only 10 to 19 cents of every supermarket dollar. Buying local food gives farmers a greater share of the profit from their products and, because family farmers also shop with area merchants, that money circulates in the community longer, helping to strengthen the local economy.

Local foods are also fresher, and require less energy to produce. "Most fruits and vegetables in the U.S. are harvested four to seven days before they reach the supermarket, and travel an average of 1300 miles before they reach your table," says Lael Gerhart, Community Food Educator at CCE-Tompkins.

## On average, the farmer receives only 10 to 19 cents of every supermarket dollar.

"Since about 90% of the energy used in the world food system goes to transportation, packaging, and marketing, choosing local produce at farm stands, farmers' markets, pick-your-own farms and grocery stores dramatically cuts many of these costs."

Pick up a Local Food Guide Today! CCE's South Central NY Agriculture Program has created a free 24-page guide that lists area farms, u-pick produce venues, farmers' markets, roadside stands, CSAs, and other outlets for fresh local produce, meat, honey, maple syrup, and valueadded specialty products. "Our goal is to get these guides into every home in the county," says Debbie Teeter, Senior Agriculture Program Coordinator for CCE-Tompkins. Copies are available at the CCE-Tompkins Education Center.

Get involved in Buy Local Efforts! In December 2005, 30 local farmers, market vendors, restaurateurs and other interested community members met at CCE-Tompkins to help plan and launch a multifaceted "Buy Local" campaign in 2006. For more information, contact Lael Gerhart at 607.272.2292 or lsg8@cornell.edu.

## Farm Business Specialist Delivers more than Numbers

If you've been thinking of making the jump from a small farming venture into a full-time business, but you're not sure how long it will take for your efforts to turn a profit, Jacob Schuelke just might be your best local resource.

As Farm Business Management Specialist with the South Central NY Dairy & Field Crops Team, Schuelke helps new and aspiring farmers develop business plans and calculate how long it will take for their operations to become profitable. He also works with existing farmers on a range of management issues that impact the farm's bottom line.

Both efforts translate into a much more vibrant agricultural economy for Tompkins County and the South Central New York region.

Schuelke is a member of the South Central NY Diary & Field Crops Team, a group of four specialists in various farm disciplines who serve Broome, Cortland, Tioga and Tompkins counties. Together the team addresses questions on field crops, grazing management, dairy production, and the broad spectrum of business issues associated with successful farming. Schuelke is based in the Tompkins County Cooperative Extension office, though he travels frequently to the other counties the team serves.

Schuelke offers educational workshops and also consults with farmers individually, helping them with budgets and financial projections, enterprise analysis, income and sales tax considerations, property tax exemptions, estate transfers, long term financial planning and other issues.

One tool at his disposal is the Cornell Dairy Farm Business summary, a powerful program for projecting dairy profitability. "Going organic" can result in greater dairy profits, but the process should be carefully planned and adequate cash flow budgeted if the venture is to succeed. A plan covering several years, that demonstrates a profitable outcome, helps farmers secure the bank loans they need to make changes of this kind. The loans bring new revenues into the community, and the more money the farmer ultimately makes, the stronger the local farm economy is as a result.

As with many other Cooperative Extension programs, Schuelke's services are provided free-of-charge. "A private consultant could charge from \$1000 to \$3000 for a comprehensive farm financial plan, and that's simply not within the reach of a small farmer or someone contemplating entering the business," Schuelke said.

The need for this information among small farmers keeps Schuelke busy. In 2005, he led six workshops that reached a total of 175 participants. He also completed four dairy farm business summaries for Tompkins County farms, ten plans for

new businesses and thirteen economic analyses on a variety of topics.

Lest anyone get the impression that Schuelke is "all business", he also worked with Tompkins County Learning Partners and the Cornell Migrant Program to set up a new program in which Cornell University students provide free English lessons to Hispanic residents of the county, many of whom work on dairy farms. The program started with one farm and four participants in 2005, and will expand to four farms in 2006 reaching an estimated 30 Tompkins County residents.

For individuals contemplating a farm enterprise, the

legalities and logistics of what is involved can be found in publication written by Schuelke and colleague Monika Roth, Agriculture Development and Marketing Specialist for the Southern NY Agriculture Program. A free Guide to Starting a Farm Business in New York State is available online at: http://scnyat.cce.cornell.edu/ dairy/busmgt.htm

For more information on workshops for beginning farmers, contact Roth at (607) 272-2292 or email mr55@cornell.edu



Jacob Schuelke, Farm Business Management Specialist, consults with future farmers on "What Cows Eat" at the 2005 Farm City Day.

# Youth Map Community Assets by Sarah Hofius

Mowing lawns, baby-sitting or flipping hamburgers are typical summer jobs for teens.

That wasn't the case for Casey Gray last summer. The Ithaca teen strengthened her leadership skills, made new friends,

> and with her help, Ithaca may one day get its own teen center.

Gray, 16, was one of 12 teens in the Youth Mapping Project, a program run through the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County's 4-H Youth Development Program. The goal of the project was to assess the youth-friendliness and youth-asset building capacity of several places within Tompkins County.

The 12 teens divided into three groups and, along with

other members, Gray researched what teens wanted to see in Ithaca. Gray said the city is very college-student friendly, but not necessarily teen friendly.

The groups used the 4-H *Public Adventures* citizenship curriculum to organize their mapping efforts. The curriculum provides steps on establishing group rules and roles, identifying an issue, engaging the community in the process, creating an action plan and strategies, and evaluating the final results.

Gray and her group members interviewed their peers about what was needed in Ithaca, and unprompted, 75 percent said a teen center was the biggest need. Gray said she had no problem approaching people, teens and business owners alike, to ask them questions about the proposed teen center.

"I'm not the shy type," said Gray, a junior at Ithaca's Lehman Alternative Community School. Now, the group is looking for funding to make the plan reality. "I'm confident this summer I'll get a lot done with it," Gray said.

Not only would the teen center benefit teens, it would benefit business owners as well, Gray said. Business owners would not have to deal with as many teens hanging out on The Commons or causing trouble simply because they have no place to go or nothing to do, she added.

Teens from Dryden and the Village

at Ithaca also worked on specific projects. The Dryden group, in an effort to reduce drug use, made a map of things for teens to do around the Dryden area. The Village at Ithaca group worked on obtaining a lifeguard at a local swimming hole.

In the fall, an extension of the summer Youth Mapping program was offered. The new program, called "*Young, Diverse Leaders,*" gave teens a chance to continue developing the plans for the teen center, as well as to create preliminary plans to educate Ithaca residents on decreasing heating costs. The group members also worked on leadership, communication and cooperation skills.

"We're very excited to offer this curriculum in Tompkins County to any youth development program that would



Teens in the Youth Mapping Project, Summer 2005.

like to partner with us" said Barbara Baker, 4-H Youth Development Program Leader. "The youth are gaining valuable life skills by learning to take action in their communities."

That action is getting noticed. The members of the Ithaca mapping group won the Distinguished Youth Award from the Tompkins County Legislature in January. The award recognized the group's efforts as role models for other teens. "It was just a great feeling," Gray said.

Sarah Hofius is an Ithaca College journalism major and work-study student at CCE-Tompkins.



Casey Gray

## Teens Set Goals to "Kick Up" Fitness

Whether it's by making fruit kabobs or jumping rope, youth from across Tompkins County are learning healthier eating and exercise habits, thanks to a local company's support.

Two years ago, CCE-Tompkins applied to the National 4-H Council for a grant funded by Cargill Inc. to bring new fitness and nutrition programs to youth. Though the proposal was turned down, the project sparked the interest of administrators at the local Cargill Deicing Technology site in Lansing, New York. That interest has developed into funding for cooking clubs and fitness programs for area youth.

In summer 2004, the local Cargill site donated jump ropes and water bottles and helped cover the food costs of "cooking clubs" for youth 5 to 8 years of age at the Urban 4-H Summer Camp and the Greater Ithaca Activities Center (GIAC) led by CCE-Tompkins Nutrition staff. In 2005, Cargill again helped sponsor handson nutrition classes for 79 youth who attended 4-H Summer Camp and other summer programs in Dryden, Lansing, Newfield and Ulysses.

The central message in each session was that good nutrition and physical activity can be fun -- and they were. In the 4-H "Color Me Healthy" cooking club, for example, youth were introduced to new foods by color, and encouraged to include more colors in their diets. During the first session, they made "rainbow fruit kabobs", an exercise that also teaches how to follow directions since the fruit must be put on the skewers in a particular order for the kabobs to appear to make a rainbow when placed side by side on a tray.

Measuring ingredients and flipping pancakes were also skills youth learned. They also made recipes that they could make again with their families. Having youth prepare the food is key to having them eat and enjoy it. As one nutrition educator commented, it was interesting to see the number of youngsters who said, "I don't like that", but then would eat all of what they had made!

The success of these summer programs convinced Cargill to fund a new initiative: a pilot of the "*EatFit*" curriculum at four after school sites during the

#### 2005-2006 year.

"*EatFit*" was developed by Cooperative Extension nutritionists at the University of California-Davis to help improve the eating and fitness choices of middle school students. It has been widely used in California public schools.

"We offer the program as *Kick It Up!*, which has more cachet among teens but it's still a local adaptation of the '*EatFit*' curriculum," says Linda Schoffel,

...it was interesting to see the number of youngsters who said, "I don't like that", but then would eat all of what they had made!

Rural Youth Services Program Coordinator.

In "*EatFit*", kids first assess their current eating and fitness behaviors, identify some specific goals they will work on in each area, then sign a contract to pursue those goals. Group lessons cover nutritional basics, diet analysis, energy and calories, label reading, exercise, fast food, the importance of eating breakfast, and media influence.

The program includes an interactive website (at www.eatfit.net) that helps youth assess their behaviors, and they track their progress in a magazine-style workbook that supports the lessons. There are take-home materials, and youth learn healthy recipes that they can make at home, like fruit pizza, smoothies, and minestrone soup. The local program is being augmented at some sites with a pedometer walking program, field trips to fitness facilities, and guest visits by local fitness professionals.

The curriculum was popular with youth at after school program sites in the Town of Ithaca, and Groton that tried it out in Fall 2005. West Village and Parkside Gardens sites in Ithaca will pilot the program in spring 2006.





## **Compost Education Reduces Landfill Waste**

Reducing our impact on the environment is a big goal that can be accomplished in small steps. Turning food and yard waste into compost is one of them.

"Composting is easy, cost-effective, and can be a fun and educational experience for the entire household. Plus you get a great product in return!" says Adam Michaelides, Compost Program Manager for CCE-Tompkins.

Michaelides is clearly enthusiastic about the program, and hopes that one day all residents will include composting as part of their waste management strategy. That goal is shared by the Master Composters, a group of 70 trained volunteers who bring energy and creativity to the wide range of education and outreach efforts the program



Master Composter volunteer Kaitlin Rienzo-Stack (right) explains home composting with worms (vermicomposting) to some young visitors at 2005 Farm City Day.

provides. Master Composters do 20 hours of formal coursework and 20 hours of volunteer work during their training period. They then are required to provide at least 40 hours of community outreach, ideally over the course of the first year, to support the program's goals. This year, Master

Composters and Michaelides staffed

education booths at the Ithaca Festival, Farm City Day, Spring Garden Fair/Plant Sale, at several sites during Earth Week, America Recycles Day, and at other local events. They host an annual spring "Compost Fair" that guarantees fun for the whole family while providing information on all aspects of composting.

For those interested in comparing home composting designs, demonstration bins in a variety of styles are on display and in use at the CCE-Tompkins Education Center, the Ithaca Community Gardens and 4-H Acres on Lower Creek Road. All sites have instructive signs that explain the composting process, and free lessons are offered at the Community Gardens site every last Saturday of the month from June through October. Free "Compost with Confidence" classes cover how to get started, troubleshooting, compost uses, indoor composting, and outdoor winter composting. Apartment dwellers and residents without yards can take up "vermicomposting" - using worms, shredded newspaper, and a bin to turn home vegetable scraps into a rich soil amendment for houseplants. Fifty people attended worm workshops in 2005. These are very popular classes as children may attend with an adult, and households paying \$10 leave with a bin and starter population of worms.

Master Composter volunteers lead the majority of these classes. Michaelides staffs the compost hot line (affectionately called the "Rotline") at CCE-Tompkins to provide advice and encouragement for new and experienced composters.

These diverse efforts are paying off. In 2005, almost 1400 households in Tompkins County reported that they compost, and are officially on the CCE-Tompkins' Compost Map.

The Compost Education Program also has helped establish "group composting" sites at local non-profits, summer camps, public and private schools, and several apartment complexes. Perhaps most impressive is their success with "Festival Composting" at two large events (Grassroots and Apple Harvest Festivals) and three smaller ones (Groton Old Home Days, MuseFest in Enfield, and Newfield Old Home Days). Thousands of pounds of pre- and post-consumer food scraps were diverted from the waste stream while thousands of festival-goers learned how they too can compost.

Michaelides gives much credit for these successes to the volunteers. "Master Composters and compost volunteers put in over 1700 hours in 2005. That's almost one full-time position," he says proudly. "Their efforts leverage county dollars and greatly extend the work our progam is able to do." The Compost Education Program is funded through a contract with Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Division. For upcoming classes and the 2006 Compost Fair, visit www.ccetompkins.org or contact Adam Michaelides at 272-2292 or acm1@cornell.edu

## Free Workshops Throughout New York Offer Tips on Saving Energy and Money by Susan S. Lang

Turn off computers and their peripherals when not in use. Unplug such "vampire" appliances as satellite TV systems and VCRs that suck electricity even when they are off. Replace light bulbs with compact flourescent bulbs. Install weather stripping on doors leading to the outside or garage. And, of course, turn down the thermostat when leaving home.

These are just a few of the energy- and money-saving tips being given out around the state in hundreds of free EmPower New York workshops on saving energy and money. In 2005, 28 Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) offices offered more than 335 workshops on saving energy and managing money with some 3,000 participants in 30 counties serviced by New York State Electric & Gas (NYSEG) and National Grid. Another 135 workshops are scheduled for future months (see <www.ccetompkins.org/ EmPowerNY> for schedule).

"There are many low- and no-cost energy-saving strategies that can save money so that renters and homeowners can apply the savings to other household expenses," says Ann Gifford, the program's team coordinator of consumer and financial management education at CCE-Tompkins County. Gifford developed the workshops on energy efficiency and financial management education and provides statewide leadership for the workshops with Barbara Henza, financial and consumer educator at CCE-Cortland County.

Cornell housing and energy expert Joe Laquatra, the Reed Professor of Design and Environmental Analysis (DEA) at Cornell, oversaw the development of energy workshop materials. Laquatra heads up the Consumer Education Program for Residential Energy Efficiency, a related New York Program that promotes energy-saving incentives for homeowners, landlords and builders. Laquatra and Mark Pierce, DEA extension associate, assisted with CCE educator training so that trained staff could implement the workshops in local communities. "Participants rave about how helpful and informative they are," Gifford says. "They often comment how there should be more people attending them."

Noelia Springston, who was worried about this winter, attended an energysaving workshop last fall. After the workshop, she caulked and weather stripped doors and windows, put up plastic storm windows and plugged up socket covers. "It seems basic, but after the workshop, we were motivated to make adjustments."

"Save Energy, Save Dollars" workshops focus on energy efficiency and offer such free take-home tools as weather stripping, caulk, plastic storm windows and faucet aerators.

Both "Making Ends Meet," which focuses on household planning, and "Exploring Credit Issues," which assists consumers in debt management, provide free calculators and other money management tools. Although the workshops are open to the public, they require preregistration and attendance is limited.

EmPower New York workshops are



Ann Gifford, the EmPower NY program team coordinator and a consumer and financial management educator at CCE-Tompkins, poses with an insulated window and other materials used for workshops about saving energy.

Photo by Kevin Stearns, Cornell University Photographer.

a program of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and are funded by a system benefits charge (SBC) paid by electric distribution customers of participating utilities. NYSERDA offers a wide range of energy efficiency programs and information for households seeking assistance in reducing their energy bills.

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Eagle Broadcasting East Hill Car Wash Eddydale Farm Audrey Edelman Associates G. W. Ehrhart, Inc. **Emerson Power Transmission Empire Livestock** Equine & Pine, Inc. Cazenovia NY Fessenden Dairv. LLC First National Bank of Groton First Niagara Bank First Pioneer Farm Credit Flower Fashions by Haring Freebrook Farms Friendly's Restaurants-District Hqtrs. FYE Genex Breeders Cooperative Gimme! Coffee **Glenwood Pines** Googer's Bakery & Coffee Shop Greenstar Cooperative Market Groton American Legion & Auxiliary Groton Business Association Groton Rotary Club Hal's Deli The Hangar Theatre Hardie Farms, Inc. Hewitt Brothers, Inc. History Center of Tompkins County Holt Architects, P.C. Helen Thomas Howland Foundation Ichthyological Associates, Inc. Integrative Massage Therapy Ithaca Agway Ithaca Agway Feed Store Ithaca Bakery Ithaca Beer Company Ithaca Farmers' Market Ithaca Produce Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art Kiwanis Club of Ithaca, Inc. Lost Dog Café M&T Bank Magic Garden Maguire Ford Mansour Jewelers Maxie's Supper Club Mazourek Farms Michaleen's Florist & Garden Center Millbrook Farm Moosewood Restaurant Museum of the Earth/PRI Napoli Pizzeria NYSEG O'Hara Machinery/Ag Trac P&C Market - Hancock Street Papa John Pizza/Patriot L.L.C. Parkside Gardens Company The Pike Company Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc. Pizza Hut

Pizza Hut Pleasant Valley Electric, Inc. Plenty of Posies Purity Ice Cream RadioShack Ramada Inn Reed's Seeds Regal Entertainment Group Rotary Club of Ithaca Round House Mill The Sciencenter The Service League ShurSave of Trumansburg

Significant Elements Silk Oak Simeon's On The Commons Six Mile Creek Vinevard Snow Top Farm of Danby Social Service League of Ithaca, Inc. Sola Prints & Framing/Sola Gallery Solla Designs Pottery Southern Tier IBA Specialty Trophy Stick & Stone Farm Stone Horses The Sub Shop Taste of Thai Express Telmani Farms Bakery Time-Warner Cable Tompkins County Dairy Princesses Tompkins County Farm Bureau Tompkins County Soil & Water Conservation District Tompkins County Solid Waste Tompkins Trust Company **Treeforms Amish Furniture** Triad Foundation, Inc. Trumansburg Middle School Trumansburg Rotary Club TSC Tractor Supply **Turek Farms** United Way of Tompkins County Veronica's Perennial Nursery Walmart-Cortland Ward & Murphy Attorneys at Law Wegman's Markets Wheaton's Sheet Metal Shop, Inc. Wings Over Ithaca



Bill Foster, left, Debbie Gross, and youth collect insects in Six Mile Creek as part of an ongoing water quality monitoring project, offered in partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County.

# **County Appropriation Leveraged the** Following Support in 2005

Cooperative Extension uses its unique partnership with federal, state, and local governments, adding volunteer involvement, fund raising and in-kind contributions to bring a 9-fold return in educational resources for each Tompkins County tax dollar received.

## **Direct Support** Ratio 1:4.7

County Appropriation	\$654,815
State and Federal Appropriations	101,960
Fringe Benefits, NYS	749,065
County Contracts	246,148
Co. Fed./State Pass Through	172,027
Other Contracts/Grants	1,110,013
Total	\$3,055,288

## In-Kind & **Direct Support** Ratio 1:9.1

County Appropriation	\$654,815
State and Federal Appropriations	101,960
Fringe Benefits, NYS	749,065
Contracts	1,528,188
Volunteer Efforts	902,000
Cornell & Federal Resources	2,019,424
Total	\$5,955,452





## 2005 Employees (FTEs) by Funding Source



**TompkinsCounty**