



2016

Program Highlights

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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



Healthy Communities

A new school garden is created in Newfield through Finger Lakes Eat Smart NY.



Energy Warriors

An innovative program gives incarcerated youth hands-on training for green jobs.



Primitive Pursuits

Cornell's Arnot Teaching & Research Forest is the new home of expanded Primitive Pursuits programming.

FEATURES

3 Director's Message

A 2016 program update and a look ahead from Ken Schlather, Executive Director

4 Master Gardeners

CCE-Tompkins' Master Gardener volunteers help to pilot a new statewide training format.

5 Ag Marketing

New projects and online tools increase local meat sales, grant applications & farmer networking.

6 Rural Mini-Grants

Five communities design and implement community-building projects.

7 Parenting Education

Coalition for Families returns; Parenting classes are offered to CJC Day Reporting participants.

9 Natural Leaders

NLI workshop series helps non-profits diversify their staffs and boards.

10 Renewable Energy

Grant-funded solar and biomass projects help to expand renewables across our region.

12 4-H Urban Outreach

Ithaca's refugee youth find mentors and enrichment at four program sites.

14 Agritourism

CCE-Tompkins works with local tourism board to develop new agritourism opportunities.

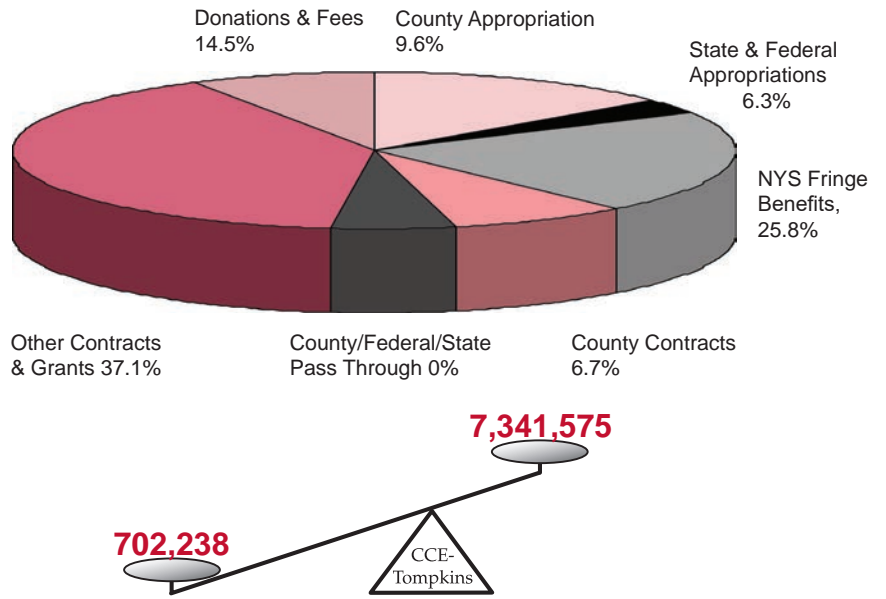


TOMPKINS COUNTY APPROPRIATION LEVERAGED THE FOLLOWING SUPPORT IN 2016

Cooperative Extension uses its unique partnership with federal, state, and local governments, adding volunteer involvement, fund raising and in-kind contributions to bring an 12-fold return in educational resources for each Tompkins County tax dollar received.

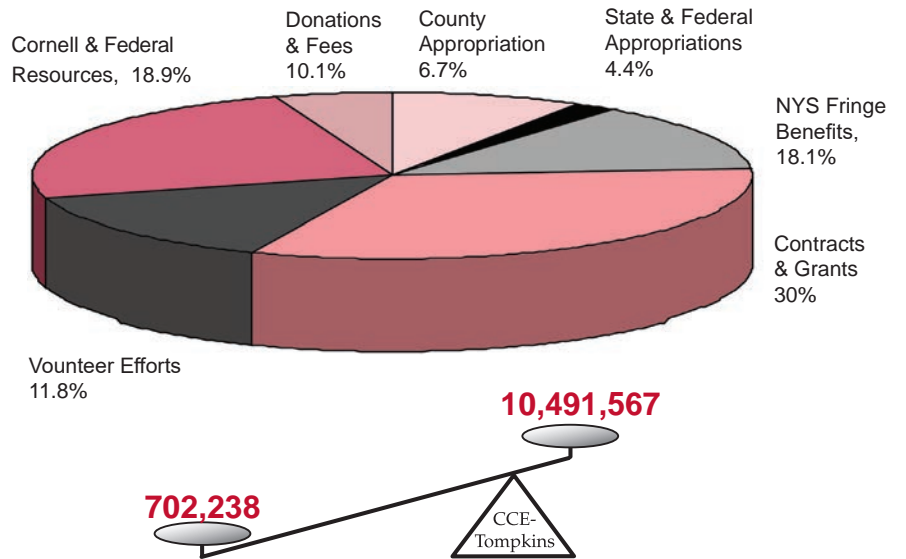
Direct Support Ratio 1 : 9.4

County Appropriation	\$702,238
State and Federal Appropriations	465,324
Fringe Benefits, NYS	1,893,944
County Contracts	497,011
County Fed./State Pass Through	0
Other Contracts/Grants	2,649,324
Donations & Fees	1,060,881
Total	\$7,341,575

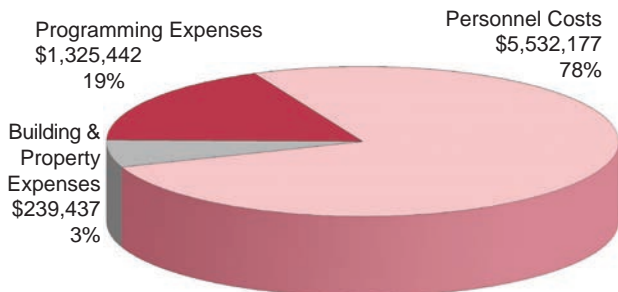


In-Kind & Direct Support Ratio 1 : 12

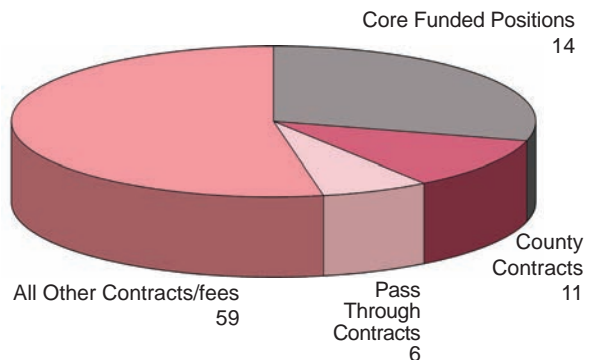
County Appropriation	\$702,238
State and Federal Appropriations	465,324
Fringe Benefits, NYS	1,893,944
Contracts/Grants	3,146,335
Volunteer Efforts	1,238,382
Cornell & Federal Resources	1,984,464
Donations & Fees	1,060,881
Total	\$10,491,567



2016 Expenses by Type



2016 Employees (FTEs) by Funding Source



BOARD OF DIRECTORS & PROGRAM COMMITTEES, 2016

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Jon Bosak, *Secretary*
Edd Farmer, *Treasurer*

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Extension Rep

Paul O'Connor



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Another year has passed and I am pleased to report on the work that your Cooperative Extension Association has done in 2016 to increase the vitality of communities in Tompkins County and to strengthen the skills and abilities of the people who live in them. In the following pages, we profile some but not all of our efforts. I hope that each article will provide some insight into the care and commitment our staff and volunteers bring to this important work.

Our efforts to enhance the local ag economy in 2016 included creating networking events where farmers could meet institutional buyers; expanding MeatSuite.com, an online database that connects consumers with livestock producers selling meat in bulk to 22 counties across the state; and holding workshops on how to apply for grants, get into agri-culinary tourism, or successfully transfer a family farm business to heirs.

Some of our work is directed toward helping residents create the changes they want to see in their communities. Almost 30 people were trained on how to facilitate Community Café conversations early in 2016. Those new skills were quickly put to use by several to build consensus and advance 5 grassroots community building projects in low-income rural neighborhoods. Mini-grants supporting those projects are described on page 6. Our F&CD staff hold monthly public meetings for families and service providers to focus on ways to make our county more supportive of families (p.7) while the Natural Leaders Initiative provides training that helps boards and organizations diversify their leadership (p.9).

For Tompkins County's most vulnerable groups, our programs fill gaps not completely addressed by other organizations. For instance, young people who are recent immigrants to Ithaca from SE Asia and the Middle East receive homework help, mentoring, and enrichment activities through afterschool programs offered by 4-H Urban outreach (p.12). Incarcerated teens are being trained for green jobs after their release, through our "Energy Warriors" program (p. 11). We are involved with other, more intensive re-entry efforts not profiled in this report but about which you will hear more later.

As in past years, our programs are delivered efficiently and at low cost, using county funds to attract other grants and contracts that multiply what we can accomplish with local tax dollars. Each county dollar invested with CCE-Tompkins yields over a 10-fold return in educational resources for our residents. Over 2100 volunteers support this work with their time and talents.

Ken Schlather
Executive Director

MASTER GARDENER TRAINING

CCE-TOMPKINS HELPS PILOT NEW FORMAT

In 2016, CCE-Tompkins was one of 4 counties to participate in a pilot project to revise the materials and delivery format of the New York State Master Gardener Volunteer Training program. Traditionally, this volunteer training has been delivered in a lecture-style format

Tompkins, Tioga, Broome and Chemung Counties, to develop a plan to revamp the training for the internet age.

In the pilot, Master Gardener Volunteer trainees received links to a variety of educational sources related to topics that would be covered in hands-on Saturday sessions usually held once a month. Pat Curran, Horticulture Educator at CCE-Tompkins, recorded 17 presentations on various categories of plants, including Trees for Sun, Native Perennials for Shade, and Invasive Plants which are now among training materials to be studied prior to the hands-on session on perennials and woody plants. This change in format allowed trainees to familiarize themselves with the topics to be covered in their monthly Saturday sessions, and enabled them to get more out of the training program overall.

The increased online content and scheduling of hands-on sessions for one Saturday a month also has made it easier to recruit participants who have heavy work loads or family commitments, thus broadening the diversity of this volunteer group.

Master Gardener Volunteer trainees receive a detailed survey after each Saturday session, and generally are pleased with the new format and schedule. Computer access problems have

not been a barrier to participation, and many trainees are excited by the number of optional links provided, that will allow them to continue learning on their own over the winter months. ☀



Agriculture Issue Leader Monika Roth (*center*) demonstrates pruning for Master Gardener trainees in 2014. The revised training format includes online study before monthly hands-on training sessions.

with few hands-on activities, and the training manual had not been revised for 10 years or more. Early in 2016, Lori Brewer, NYS Master Gardener Volunteer Coordinator, met with CCE Educators from

FARM SUCCESSION PLANNING SERIES

Farm Succession is often a complicated matter, with large land resources, facilities and equipment investments, and no identified or officially designated successor. Balancing the needs and desires of multiple children can be as difficult on senior family members as having no heirs at all.

CCE-Tompkins applied for and received a Northeast Extension Risk Management Education grant to organize and offer a series of workshops in 2016 to help local farm families learn more about farm succession, identify their priorities, develop a farm succession plan, and formalize it. Twenty-three people (representing nine farm

families) participated in workshops and one-on-one meetings to learn more about farm succession planning and work toward developing and formalizing a farm succession plan. Some families had done little more than think about farm succession while others already had done some initial planning. Three farms had no heir. The diverse group was able to move through the information together, and in the end, seven of the participating farms formalized farm succession plans. Farm Credit East, FarmNet, and a regional attorney specializing in farm transfer collaborators as consultants on this project. ☀

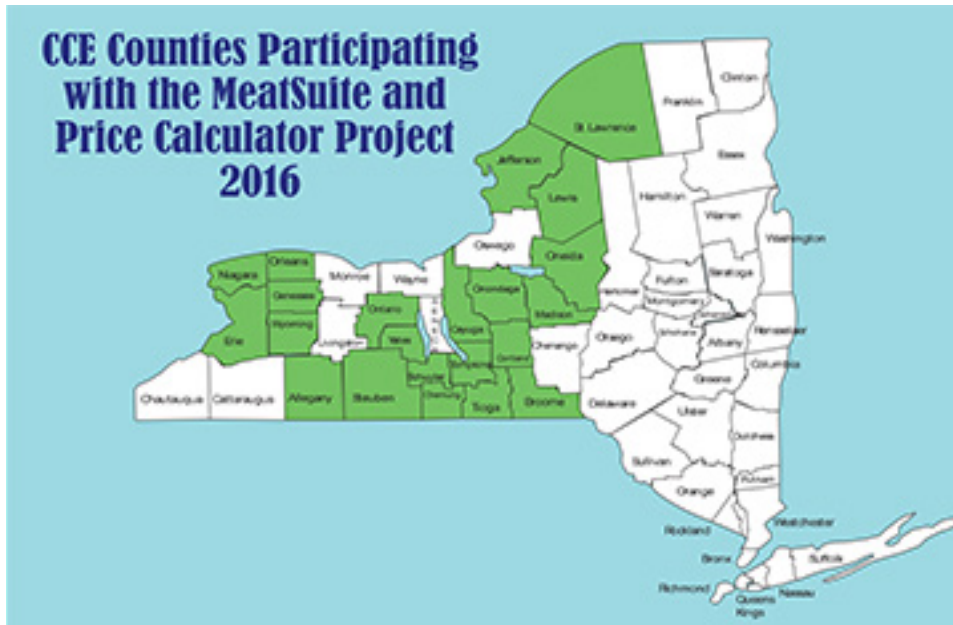
FINGER LAKES MEAT PROJECT

EXPANDS RANGE, BUILDS NEW ONLINE TOOLS

In 2013, the MeatSuite website was created by SCNY Cornell Ag Educators to help local livestock farmers in this region to increase their “freezer trade” (the sale of whole, halves, quarters of animals and bulk bundles of meat). This free, online tool helps consumers locate high quality, locally produced meats to purchase in bulk, by entering their zip code and type of animal and quantity of meat they’d like to buy. The MeatSuite can be found online at MeatSuite.com and now includes 185 farm listings in 22 counties throughout New York State.

In 2015, a USDA Farmers’ Market Promotion Program grant enabled CCE to develop new “Meat Lockers” in Ithaca and Corning. These walk-in community freezers allow consumers to rent space where they can store and regularly access their local bulk meat purchases. Together, the MeatSuite and Meat Lockers comprise The Finger Lakes Meat Project.

In 2016, the MeatSuite expanded to a total of 22 counties, a 16 county increase for the project. A New York Farm Viability (NYFV) Grant provided funds for Matt LeRoux, Ag Marketing Specialist at CCE-Tompkins, to offer workshops on “Profitable Meat Marketing” for farmers in Jefferson, Columbia, Washington, Yates, Tioga, Wyoming, Chautauqua, Oneida, Cayuga, Schuyler, and Broome Counties. Attendees came from more than 140 farms in 44 counties.



MeatSuite now is supported in 22 New York counties, with additional participating farms in some neighboring counties.

New York Farm Viability funds also support the development of an online pricing tool called the “Meat Calculator” which when complete will enable livestock farmers to enter information specific to their farming operations in order to develop profitable pricing for their products. To learn more about these projects, please visit the Finger Lakes Meat Project at: <http://fingerlakesmeatproject.com/> ☀

INCREASING FARM VIABILITY THROUGH FARMER GRANTS & BUYER NETWORKING

NYS Grants. A growing number of New York State grant opportunities were available to farmers in 2016, including the New Farmer Grant Program and the Southern Tier Ag Industry Enhancement program. Additional grants for energy conservation and alternatives also are available to farms. A key challenge for farmers is learning about these new programs and understanding the application process. To address these needs, CCE-Tompkins/South Central NY Ag Team held 3 grant workshops and supported 23 farmers who submitted grant applications. This involved one-to-one consultations and business plan and grant reviews. At least 8 of these grants have been awarded to date for a total of over \$410,000 invested in area farms. 11 grants are pending and if awarded would represent an additional \$600,000 in grants to improve farm infrastructure to help the farms operate more efficiently. Some examples of investments made include new post harvest handling facilities, coolers, hay and equipment barns. The impacts will provide benefits in both farm efficiency and crop quality. ☀

June Farmer & Buyer Networking. On June 21, CCE-Tompkins held a “Farmer & Buyer Networking” event. 24 farms and 14 wholesale buyers attended. Each participant told the group about their operation and products that they sold/bought as well as the general scale of their business. Next, participants mingled over refreshments in order to develop new relationships that might lead to new sales accounts for the farms. The event was planned by CCE-Tompkins staff, with co-sponsorship from the Ithaca Farmers’ Market and Groundswell Center. ☀

NEIGHBORHOOD MINI-GRANTS

RURAL RESIDENTS DESIGN LOCAL PROJECTS

A modest investment in community building projects can have a big impact on the people who are involved, as demonstrated by a 2016 Neighborhood Improvement Mini-Grant program created through the efforts of parenting educators from CCE-Tompkins' Family & Community Development (F&CD) program.

to be a learning experience for the applicants rather than a traditional funding competition. Five applications were received, approved, and funds were distributed to community groups, for projects that were as interesting and diverse as the neighborhood groups that submitted them.



Young residents of the Congers Mobile Home Park in Freeville enjoying activities at the mini-grant funded community picnic.

For many years, F&CD educators have offered free parenting skills classes, Community Café trainings, and other workshops and educational events for families in the rural communities of Groton, Dryden and Newfield in Tompkins County. Since each of these towns has high numbers of students who qualify for federal free-and-reduced lunch programs, the educators could apply for funds to support projects in limited-income rural communities. A grant of \$2500 from the Children & Youth Fund of the Community Foundation of Tompkins County enabled F&CD to distribute mini-grants of \$500 each to five community-identified projects that would create community engagement and enhance healthy neighborhoods for youth and their families.¹

With the assistance of Binghamton University MSW intern Danielle Bannister, F&CD educators developed a mini-grant application process and provided guidance, mentoring and support to the applicants as needed. The process was designed

One mini-grant was awarded to “Newfield Library Science Saturdays” which proposed “to provide Newfield families an opportunity to interact with their children and each other in a casual setting in the community but outside of school.” Judy Burrill, a parenting educator with the Family Resource Center Tompkins program, supported the collaborators as they developed the proposal, which focused on bringing the Sciencenter’s Physics Bus to Newfield for four visits, occurring one Saturday per month. This project was very popular and reaffirmed that families are looking for and excited about opportunities to engage in activities close to home in Newfield instead of having to travel to Ithaca. The proposal was submitted by the Newfield Public Library and Newfield Recreation Program, in collaboration with Newfield Central School, teacher Wendy Wright, The Cornell Center for Materials Research and the Finger Lakes Library system.

In Groton, a \$500 mini-grant supported “GrotonCon,” a kick-off party for the Groton Public Library’s Summer Reading Program. The event, which featured a balloon artist, face painting, a costume station, games, music, and refreshments, was described as a huge success with over 126 children signing up for the Summer Reading program on that one day. According to the Groton librarian, the “...excitement continued all summer with record attendance at our programs. We were filled with children all summer long and gave away more books than ever.” The mini-grant proposal was submitted by Groton Public Library with Groton Business Association, Groton Youth Commission, Groton Cub Scouts, Groton Girl Scouts, Friends of the Groton Public Library and Heroes and Villains Comic Store (Cortland).

An isolated rural mobile home park in Freeville was the site of a third mini-grant funded project. Residents at the Congers mobile home park wanted to create new social connections in their small community that would result in it becoming *continued on page 15*

1. Additional grant funding was leveraged from the Park Foundation-Community Needs/Health and Human Services, and the Office of Children & Families and the NYS OCFS Children & Family Trust Fund.

PARENTING EDUCATION

REACHING COMMUNITIES IN MANY WAYS

Tompkins County Coalition for Families (CFF) is a monthly gathering that offers families and service providers an opportunity to exchange information and to focus on creating family-centered services, enhance collaborations, and explore policy issues that affect local families. Each meeting features a presenter and dialogue on current issues. Over 100 people attended CFF meetings in 2016, to hear the following presenters/topics: an overview of the Community Cafe conversation program; Southern Tier Aids Program (STAP); Heroin in Tompkins County; Ways to be a Mindful Family; Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study; Self-Care; Enough Abuse Campaign (EAC); Tompkins County Learning Partners; The Advocacy Center; Welcoming Refugees; It's Not Just Jenna (film); and the Ultimate Reentry Opportunity (URO)-Barriers to Reentry program.

CFF experienced a service gap when its coordinator retired in 2015. It now is coordinated by graduate and undergraduate interns in CCE-Tompkins' Family & Community Development issue area. CFF meetings are free and open to the public, meeting every 3rd Thursday



Family & Community Development staff and interns decorate the gardens and walkways around the CCE-Tompkins Education Center with pinwheels in April 2016 as part of the national Pinwheels for Prevention® campaign designed to raise awareness of child abuse prevention.

at 8:30am at CCE-Tompkins Education Center. Visit cctompkins.org for information on upcoming topics. ☀

CLASSES FOR CJC DAY REPORTING PARTICIPANTS

As part of CCE-Tompkins' mission to help strengthen and support families and communities, a staff member from the Family & Community Development (F&CD) program offers weekly classes on "Healthy Families & Relationships" at the Tompkins County Community Justice Center (CJC). Class participants are members of the Tompkins County Probation Department's "Alternatives to Incarceration" day reporting program, an at-risk population within our community.

F&CD's strength-based approach works well with individuals dealing with the legal system and the complications it creates in their lives. Protective factors addressed through these classes include increased connections to concrete community supports, increased social connections between participants, strengthened resilience, and increased knowledge of parenting and child development.

CCE-Tompkins Parenting Educator Jennifer Gray informs

participants of additional supports and resources, and has been linking Day Reporting program participants to CCE-Tompkins' parenting classes, facilitated visits, and other educational opportunities. She often has been told by participants that "Healthy Families &

"You are giving people a chance to do things that really make a difference to them."

Relationships" is one of their favorite classes and that they acquire information, insights, and tools that help them to make positive changes in their lives. Participants enjoy this class and spontaneously share feedback: "I really look forward to your class. I always get something valuable out of it." When talking about choosing positive relationships, one participant remarked, "Boy, I wish I'd had this discussion a few years ago, it would

have saved me a lot of grief." Another participant recently told Gray, "I'm really impressed by what you are doing. This is what I want to do. You are giving people a chance to do things that really make a difference to them." ☀

CREATING HEALTHY SCHOOLS

FINGER LAKES EAT SMART NY GARDEN IN NEWFIELD

The Newfield Central School District was identified in a New York State obesity prevention report as being “high need” due to a large number of SNAP-eligible students and its location in what is considered a “food desert” (with the closest grocery store located 6 miles away and accessible only by car or bus). Although Newfield is an agricultural community, many traditional skills

The three garden sites on the school campus include the original 20’x20 school house garden at the entrance to the school that was planted with garlic in fall 2016; the high school courtyard garden which has 7 raised beds and primarily grows culinary herbs and greens; and the pool house garden consisting of a 25’x 50’ in-ground garden and 7 raised beds that produce a wide array of organic produce. This is the future location of the new high tunnel greenhouse to be constructed in 2017 to provide year-round growing capabilities.

In July and August, three youth employees were hired through Workforce New York to manage and maintain the gardens. They received guidance from Josh Dolan, FLESNY Garden Specialist, who observed that their gardening skills increased substantially over the growing season. Newfield High School science teacher Andrew Battles will take over management of the gardens and programs in the 2017 growing season.

Some of the produce grown was used by FLESNY nutritionist Megan Szpak in a weekly “Cooking Matters for Teens” class. Students in the class harvested produce fresh from the gardens to make themselves a

healthy vegetable-based meal. 80% of students who participated in the program improved their vegetable consumption. Students also were responsible for harvesting and delivering produce to the local food pantry every other week. Most of the 300 lbs. of produce grown in 2016 was donated to the Newfield food pantry.

In October, FLESNY partnered with Cornell Garden-Based Learning to provide a one day “Take Root” workshop for educators to provide them with greater skills in curriculum development, successful program management and hands-on gardening skills. The “Take Root” workshop was attended by 25 educators, including teachers from Newfield.

Collaborators on this project included the Newfield Central School District Wellness Committee and Newfield Food Pantry. This project was funded by USDA SNAP-Ed support for the Finger Lakes Eat Smart NY program, the Newfield Community Foundation, and an online crowd-sourced fundraising effort to support greenhouse construction. A video about these efforts can be found online at <http://fingerlakeseatSMARTNewYork.org/types/garden-based-learning>. ☀



FLESNY Garden Educator Josh Dolan (right) guides Newfield students in a gardening activity.

related to cooking, nutrition and gardening have not been passed on to its young people.

To address this need, Newfield Central Schools partnered with the Finger Lakes Eat Smart NY (FLESNY) and CCE-Tompkins educators to offer regular garden-based nutrition education and hands-on gardening activities during the 2015-2016 academic year. Goals of this effort were to provide: 1) produce to the local food pantry, and, 2) nutrition education at the school. Programs took place in three distinct garden sites that have been developed at the school since 2013.

During the school year, FLESNY offered weekly garden-based nutrition programs using the “Dig In!” and “Great Garden Detective” curricula. Garden activities were held in classrooms and in the gardens for pre-k, kindergarten, 1st and 3rd grade students, and 12th grade environmental science students. The in-school programs were regularly attended by 150 students. In April, FLESNY partnered with the school to organize a garden work day to construct 6 new raised beds, with 75 volunteers participating.

NATURAL LEADERS INITIATIVE

CULTIVATING DIVERSE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

The Natural Leaders Initiative's "From Scarcity to Abundance: Cultivating Diverse Leadership" five-workshop series was piloted in 2014, and was repeated in 2015, 2016 and 2017. The series prioritizes staff, board members and volunteers with local organizations working on issues related to environmental sustainability.

In spite of good intentions and much effort, the staff, boards, membership and participants in many local organizations are white, middle-class and highly educated. Diversity, while widely seen as a goal, is not always a "priority" and is not yet a reality. After consulting with many organizational leaders who felt they lacked the skills and confidence to change that reality, the Natural Leaders Initiative (NLI) developed this series.

"From Scarcity to Abundance: Cultivating Diverse Leadership" builds on other available training resources by aiming for organizational-level impact. It teaches staff and board members to build diverse relationships, recognize diverse leadership, and intentionally use organizational resources to simultaneously further the organization's mission along with its goals for diversity and inclusion. It assists participants to explore and change both personal and organizational attitudes, behaviors and norms; gain a greater understanding of the intersection of sustainability and social justice; make more intentional decisions about how to prioritize and integrate diversity and inclusion efforts into their work; and shift the time spent crafting "outreach" strategies into the more productive activity of systematically building and strengthening mutually beneficial, long-term, trusted relationships with impacts across the organization's work, hiring and leadership.

Participants in the 2016 series (like those in the two previous cohorts) pointed both to new understandings, behaviors and relationships stemming from their participation, as well as to what the Building Movement Project has called "5% shifts," changes in organizational behavior that do not ask organizations to reinvent themselves, but that, over time, lead to significant and sustained sector change.

The Board president at a local sustainability organization used what she learned in the NLI workshops to stimulate conversations, begin to shift perspectives in regard to diversity and inclusion, and develop new programming partnerships.



The executive director of another sustainability organization reported that the workshops catalyzed and strengthened her decision to create a new staff position specifically to integrate relationship-building, equity and diversity education into all their programming. A participant of color reported that the series helped her "feel more comfortable talking with others" in her organization about systemic racism, bringing up issues related to how her organization does its work, and having honest conversations about it. Finally, a young white staff member just entering the work force reported that the series gave her a "lens" to look at her work through; taught her to frame ideas she cared about in organizational language, giving her "a cover to make change"; showed her how to use the abundance in her organization to say "let's figure out how we can make this happen" rather than to say "I can't"; and helped her feel more confident working in diverse communities.

Many participants noted the importance of having multiple people from an organization attend the series, either together or over multiple years, in order to create a critical mass of shared understandings to impact the organization's culture and behavior.

Funding for this program was provided by the Park Foundation, with additional support from CCE-Tompkins.

The series will next be offered in early 2018. For more information on the Natural Leaders Initiative and its leadership development opportunities, please visit cctompkins.org/nli or call NLI at 272-2292 x167. ☺

SOLAR & BIOMASS PROJECTS

HELPING TO EXPAND RENEWABLE ENERGY IN OUR REGION



Firing up the new pellet boiler at Schaefer's Gardens Greenhouse, one of the 2016 demonstration sites in this project

Wood pellets are a local, renewable, low-carbon heating option that is underutilized in our region. Making greater use of this resource can help keep energy dollars in our communities, create local jobs, result in better forest management and increased forest biodiversity, and help solve energy issues including our transition away from fossil fuels.

Through a Cleaner Greener Communities grant from NYSERDA, CCE-Tompkins has been working with various key stakeholders to build the necessary infrastructure for a bulk (loose) pellet

delivery system in the Southern Tier, including delivery trucks, anchor demonstration sites and identification of additional potential end-users, regional storage silos, market analysis to better understand the barriers and solutions to them, and a campaign to educate consumers about the latest high-efficiency, low-emissions pellet-fired heating systems.

Through September 2016, CCE-Tompkins energy educators have helped one demonstration site to get on-line and successfully meet all NYSERDA requirements for systems >300KBtu. Another smaller system is under development at an historic museum. A 30-ton storage silo has been installed at Ehrhart Energy in Trumansburg to serve a large regional customer base (mainly residential pellet boilers, with a few commercial boilers in their system already) and they have an experimental delivery truck on the road. Working with the NYS Wood Energy Team, we helped coordinate 2 workshops for interested commercial building owners, educating dozens of potential consumers about the benefits of heating with wood pellets. *This project has been supported with funding from NYSERDA and collaborations with Ehrhart Energy, Mesa Bioenergy Supply, Schaefer's Gardens, Hanford Mills Museum, Charlie Niebling of Innovative Natural Resources, Inc., and Elizabeth Keokosky.* ☀

REGIONAL ENERGY OUTREACH

CAMPAIGN REACHES STEUBEN, CORNING RESIDENTS

Under Governor Cuomo's Reforming the Energy Vision (REV) initiative, renewable energy is being promoted heavily throughout New York State. In many areas, solar energy is a popular and familiar choice, however there still are counties where adoption, and even general knowledge, of solar energy is lacking. Limited knowledge about the benefits of solar energy and factors to consider before adopting it, prevents many residents from switching to solar energy to reduce emissions and to save money on their electricity expenses. They also may be unable to identify capable installers and make educated consumer decisions.

In 2016, with funding from NYSERDA, CCE-Tompkins Energy Educators created an outreach and education campaign for Steuben and Chemung Counties to encourage residents to learn about solar energy and consider adopting solar as their energy source. Energy educators worked with volunteers in Steuben and Chemung Counties to create a campaign that included educational workshops, press releases, news stories, and tabling events that educated residents on the available solar energy options, the solar installation process, and local installers who would be willing to offer free assessments. More than 25 tabling events and workshops were held over a six-month period, reaching more than 350 residents. Of those contacts, 151 residents signed up for free home assessments from local installers of their choice, and 26 residents signed contracts to install a solar array on their home or business. This led to more than 200kW of solar energy being installed in the region. ☀

ENERGY WARRIORS PROGRAM

INCARCERATED YOUTH PREPARE FOR GREEN JOBS

Energy Warriors (EW) is an introductory course in green technology created by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County and the NYS Office of Children and Family Services. The program is designed to prepare incarcerated youth for continuing education and jobs in green construction and renewable energy technology when they are released and return to their home communities. At the end of the course, students are able to perform basic weatherization, energy benchmarking, level one walkthrough auditing and renewable energy system installation. The ultimate goal is to create a “pipeline” between New York State’s juvenile justice facilities and contractors who specialize in green energy maintenance and technology. Participants – or ‘Energy Warriors’ -- are young people in NYS Office of Children & Family Services juvenile detention facilities, including the Finger Lakes Residential Center in Lansing, the MacCormick Secure Center in Brooktondale, Youth Leadership Academy in South Kortright, and the Brookwood Secure Center in Columbia County. In 2016, 82 incarcerated youth took part in the program.

Participating youth receive both academic and hands-on instruction in green building, energy efficiency, renewable energy, and weatherization. The EW curriculum introduces youth to basic building science and energy efficiency practices and skills, and exposes them to career opportunities in energy efficiency. In the first 10 sessions, students learn essential lessons about energy efficiency and conservation, including introductory renewable energy activities and topics related to solar and wind power. In the second 10 sessions, students master more detailed weatherization skills that provide career-oriented tasks and knowledge.

After completing the 20 session program, students have the opportunity to receive industry standard certifications and trainings from professionals in the field. These specialized trainings provide youth with widely recognized industry standard credentials in the field of green technology, while teaching skills necessary to obtain jobs and further their education in clean energy.



Youth respond to guest speaker Dr. Dorothy Cotton, a close associate of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., during the graduation ceremony for the NYSWDA weatherization certification training.

Participating youth receive academic and hands-on learning in green construction, **energy efficiency,** renewable energy and weatherization.

Students who complete these trainings can use them to apply as competitive candidates for employment in green building and other construction trades. Specialized certifications include OSHA 10 (a 10-hour course from the U.S. Department of Labor that gives

construction workers a general overview of workplace hazard and safety protocols) and the New York State Weatherization Boot Camp (a 4-day course that covers insulation installation, air sealing, BPI standards, blower doors, and infrared camera operation).

At the conclusion of the Energy Warriors program, staff members work with the Office of Children & Family Services to connect youth aged 16 and older with job and/or educational opportunities in their home communities. Building upon their success in EW, students are prepared to enroll in educational programs, apply as

competitive candidates for jobs in green energy, and/or utilize the skills they have mastered in EW to serve their communities and be successful in school, work, and their futures. EW reentry also works to make connections with both statewide services and local non-profit organizations, in which EW students in any community in NYS can participate when they return home. ☀

4-H URBAN OUTREACH

PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR IMMIGRANT YOUTH

Young people who are recent immigrants to Ithaca are receiving homework help and a range of enrichment activities, through afterschool programs offered by 4-H Urban Outreach.

For over 35 years, 4-H Urban Outreach has offered youth programs in Ithaca's downtown neighborhoods, helping young people from disadvantaged communities to increase their academic

States. Many struggled to understand the culture and language, and were frustrated when their parents were unable to help them with their school work. Recently, children from other Middle Eastern countries have joined the program. Through SIFE, they all now receive homework assistance and support for their language, literacy, math, science and social skills from 4-H staff and volunteer

adult mentors. While most participants are foreign-born, any child at Belle Sherman school is welcome to attend. As many as 22 children participate in the SIFE program. The program meets on Mondays and Tuesdays from 2:00-4:00pm and many of these children also choose to attend the Northside afterschool program described below.

At Lehman Alternative Community School (LACS) 4-H Urban Outreach offered homework help, STEM activities, literacy support, arts, nutrition education and hands-on activities for 16 youth during the 2015-2016 school year, and 32 youth during the summer of 2016. A highlight of 2016 at LACS was the "Children Sing Their Stories" project, in which a grant from the Tompkins County Community Foundation enabled noted local musician Samite Mulondo of Uganda to visit

the program and teach the children how to write and sing songs about their personal experiences. A performance of the children's work is scheduled for Spring 2017 in the new LACS Amphitheater.

In 2016, 4-H Urban Outreach piloted its newest program at Northside Community Apartments at the request of the Ithaca Housing Authority. This new afterschool program meets Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 2:00-4:00pm each week and provides a safe space where staff and volunteers offer homework assistance, computer literacy support, weekly art and STEM projects, and field trip experiences for youth aged 5-to-13+. The Ithaca Housing Authority provides meeting space and partial funding for the program.

Northside Apartments is a very homogenous complex and many families live there throughout their children's school years. Most households do not own cars and face financial challenges that make it difficult for their children to have learning experiences outside of the immediate neighborhood. 4-H Urban Outreach helped to address this need in 2016 through projects and field trips that included visits to Cayuga Nature *continued on next page*



Volunteer mentor Pat Haggerty (standing) introduces children in the SIFE program to the code.org website, where they later learned to write code to draw similar complex patterns.

and life skills. Begun in 1979 as a summer program for children in Ithaca's West Village apartment complex, 4-H Urban Outreach has evolved over the years to meet the changing needs and profiles of local youth.

4-H Urban Outreach currently offers 4 programs: at Belle Sherman Elementary School, Lehman Alternative Community School (LACS), Northside Community Apartments, and a summer program that serves youth from all three sites. Each provides a safe learning environment where children can socialize, get homework help from volunteer adult mentors, take part in art and STEM enrichment activities, and experience fun and educational field trips that contribute to their success in school, with their families, and in their communities. Programs are offered free-of-charge, with support from local grants and private donations, and with the involvement of more than 75 adult volunteers.

In 2008, the 'Students with Interrupted Formal Education' (SIFE) program was started at Belle Sherman Elementary School to serve children of Karen-speaking immigrants from Burma. Most of the children were refugees of war before coming to the United

4-H PRIMITIVE PURSUITS

Since 2001, our Primitive Pursuits program has offered all-outdoor wilderness education and nature immersion programs in Tompkins County. The program now serves pre-school and school-aged youth in after-school, in-school and homeschool settings, while new trainings have been developed for adult mentors.

In 2016, a total of 1050 youth took part in Primitive Pursuits programs. Of those, 105 underserved youth in Ithaca, Enfield, Dryden, Caroline, Newfield, Trumansburg and Danby received 2,102 hours of free weekly nature-based programming, provided through a partnership with 4-H Rural Youth Services and 4-H Urban Outreach (both at CCE-Tompkins), the Joint Youth Commission, and the Ithaca YMCA. 84% of youth participants in Primitive Pursuits programs showed an increase in self-confidence, 92% showed greater knowledge of nature, and 87% of parents reported their children showing more comfort in being outdoors.

Also in 2016, Primitive Pursuits began leasing the field campus facilities at Cornell University's 4,200 acre Arnot Teaching & Research Forest in VanEtten as a new program site. The addition of this unique natural site has allowed the program to add overnight camps for youth aged 11-15, and a 'Wilderness Year' outdoor program for



Rustic cabins at Cornell's Arnot Teaching & Research Forest, now being leased to Primitive Pursuits as a new site for year-round programming.

adults. When not being used by Primitive Pursuits programs, the Arnot Forest lodge and cabins are available for rental to groups for workshops, retreats, conferences, weddings and other celebrations. Submit a rental inquiry form at <http://primitivepursuits.com/arnot-forest> or call Primitive Pursuits at (607) 272-2292 extension 195. ☀

Center, The Museum of the Earth, Eastlake Recreation Center, bowling, archery lessons at Cornell University, a trip to an apple farm, and dinners at Sumo Restaurant and the Noodle House. The Ithaca Physics Bus, Cornell's Naturalist Outreach Program, Primitive Pursuits, Finger Lakes Eat Smart NY, and other local groups brought educational enrichment activities to the Northside program site. Youth also received regular lessons from a chess master; wrote, directed, costumed and shot a video of their first play; and held a public show of their artwork that was attended by 60 friends, family and community members.

A special highlight of the year was a 3-day/2-night camping trip to Cornell University's Arnot Forest near Van Etten. Thirteen children aged 12-to-17 from Northside Apartments participated in what for many was the first time they had ever been camping and the experience was very positive for all. One of the girls

"The teens are bright, kind, motivated, and very interested in learning about college and career paths that may be open to them."

said she had never felt so "free" in her life and several of the teens agreed. Not a single complaint about the lack of internet service was heard for over 2 days. The youth went canoeing, hiking, learned to make a camp fire, helped prepare a meal, and brainstormed ideas for future events. Camping was their first choice for a future field trip.

A Teen Program soon was added at Northside to support this vulnerable age group with mentoring, leadership skills training, college and work references, and to encourage college and workforce readiness. The Teen Program provides a unique opportunity for teens to serve as positive role models for younger children, to learn leadership skills, and begin to build a resume. According to Ramona Cornell, the 4-H Urban Outreach program manager, "The

teens are bright, kind, motivated and very interested in learning about college and career paths that may be open to them." Teens in the program receive references for future *continued on page 15*

AGRICULINARY TOURISM

DIVERSIFYING LOCAL TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES

Visitors our region increasingly are interested in agriculture and culinary tourism, as seen in the popularity of the Ithaca Farmers' Market, in new farm-to-table restaurants, and in other events that focus on food and farming. While interest is strong, however, only

Market Promotion Program (FMPP) grant to train farmers on ways to expand their businesses to include agritourism. The grant funded a one-day conference in March 2016 at Coltivare Restaurant in Ithaca that was attended by over 100 people. The event was open to local

and regional farmers with an existing agritourism enterprise or who were interested in learning more about starting one. Tourism professionals and experienced agritourism farmers spoke on ways to attract visitors that ranged from traditional farm stands or U-Pick operations, to offering overnight accommodations, or hosting special events such as weddings and parties. Business topics including insurance, business planning and marketing were covered and afternoon sessions focused on hosting visitors, readiness and logistics, and marketing.

In an evaluation of the conference, attendees reported that the 3 most important things they had learned were the importance of collaboration, social media, and how important it is to be authentic! Further networking and training opportunities were also requested by the audience.

A final product of the conference an updated version of the publication, 'Getting Started in Agritourism,' written by Monika Roth of CCE-

Tompkins and Jim Ochterski, formerly of Schuyler County Cooperative Extension. Each conference participant received a copy. The publication can be downloaded from the CCE-Tompkins website ² and also is being distributed via the Vermont Tourism Extension program.

The FMPP grant also supported follow-up assessments of individual farms to determine what each needed to successfully host visitors. Of the farms initially surveyed in February 2016, 22 had requested farm assessments, and an additional 14 farms signed up after the March agritourism conference. To date, a list of farms with agritourism potential has been developed that includes 9 pick-your-own farms, 17 farm stands, 33 farms that could be open by appointment for tours, 12 food manufacturing businesses, 22 horticulture businesses, 8 beverage businesses, and 2 farm Bed & Breakfast operations.

The final phase of the FMPP grant will be the development of agriculinary tourism events and packages in 2017. ☀



CCE-Tompkins' annual Farm City Day opens a working farm to the public for the day.

a few farms actively promote their offerings to visitors, and most are unsure of how they can take advantage of the new popularity of "agriculinary tourism".

The Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Plan identified agriculinary tourism as an opportunity to diversify local tourism offerings,¹ and a Task Force was formed to develop specific strategies to strengthen this tourism sector. CCE-Tompkins' role in this effort was to gauge local interest in tourism within the farm and food communities, and to identify what information and support would be required to build farm trails and vacation packages for prospective visitors.

A survey of over 100 area farms showed that most local farms do not market their offerings, nor are they set up to host visitors properly. Farmers also said that they lacked knowledge of what opportunities to develop, how to manage risk, and how to attract visitors.

To address these deficits, CCE-Tompkins and the Tompkins County Planning Dept. partnered on a successful USDA Farmers'

1. See: '2020 Tourism Strategic Plan' at <http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/tourism/tourism/plan>, Strategic Tourism Planning Board (2012)

2. To download the revised "Getting Started in Agritourism" (2016) booklet, visit: <http://ccetompkins.org/resources/getting-started-in-agritourism>

4-H Urban Outreach from p. 13

jobs and college applications that describe their volunteer activities and their contributions to providing safe learning environments for youth in their communities.

In 2015-2016, 4-H Urban Outreach served 74 youth in the SIFE, LACS, Summer and Northside/Teen programs. More than 75 volunteers support these 4 programs by serving as mentors and homework helpers, working one-on-one with the children or leading STEM, art, nutrition, environmental or cultural presentations for groups. Cornell University student mentors come from diverse fields, classes and organizations, and Cornell offers these volunteers the chance to write small grants to fund special projects for the children. Ithaca College provides volunteer student mentors for the program from their teaching program.

All of these student mentors talk with the children about going to college, the importance of learning STEM and reading skills, and the fun activities of college life. The children admire their mentors and they also want to go to college when they grow up. Seeing diverse students who look like them succeed in college lets the children know they can go to college and have a successful career in our community. Local business people also come to share information about their careers and the skills needed to be successful in their particular line of work.

Project collaborators include teaching and administrative staff at Belle Sherman Elementary and LACS; ICSD transportation department; Ithaca Housing Authority; Cayuga Nature Center; The Community Foundation of Tompkins County; Cornell Public Service REACH Program, Finger Lakes Eat Smart NY; Finger Lakes Independence Center; Friends of the Tompkins County Public Library; The Ithaca Physics Bus; Multicultural Resource Center; The Naturalist Program at Cornell University; New York State 4-H; Park Foundation; Primitive Pursuits; The Sciencenter; Tompkins County Youth Services Department; U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP); Chris Aston; Brian Duff; Dylan Dingler; Claire Fox; Allegra Giovine; Henry Hansteen; Mike Herbster; Tami Snyder; Eh Tha Yooi Lee; Gabriella Lobue; Mimi Melegrito; Renee Morris; Saige O'Connor; June Ong; Amy Somchanhmvong; Kathy Weinberg; Rob Weinberg and other volunteers.

For more information about the 4-H Urban Outreach Program, to get involved, or to provide support, please contact Ramona Cornell at (607) 272-2292 ext. 149 or email rlc263@cornell.edu. ☀

Mini-Grants from p. 7

a more welcoming place for diverse individuals. Two community café events helped residents decide on a free community-wide picnic where all residents could interact and begin to build community. Feedback from parent leaders after the project was positive.

Other funded projects were "Gardening Festival & Game Nights" at the Poet's Landing subsidized apartment complex in Dryden; and the "Our Children's Future" program at West Village Apartments in Ithaca.

F&CD educators were very pleased with the results of all the projects and hope to offer additional community Cafés and Mini-Grants in 2017 with local and state grant support. ☀

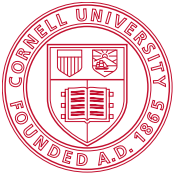
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FARMERS' MARKET SNAP USE INCREASES DESPITE LACK OF INCENTIVES

Since 2009, CCE-Tompkins has enabled and promoted Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program (SNAP) aka Food Stamp use at farmers' markets in Tompkins County. Even with the loss of helpful incentive programs such as "Healthy Bucks" in 2015, the number of SNAP dollars spent at markets in 2016 (excluding the weekend Ithaca Market) increased to \$2,823, representing an increase of 3% over 2015. This was made possible through community partnerships with Loaves and Fishes, a number of local food pantries, and the Farmers' Market Federation of New York. ☀



Adam Michaelides (left) with Jay Smith, member of the Master Composter class of 2016, in the Compost Education booth at the Tompkins/Cortland Builders & Remodelers Assn. annual Home Show.




Cooperative Extension

Tompkins County

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