



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Cortland County

2019 Annual Report



Photo by JoEllen Roehrig

2019 Director's Message

Welcome to the 2019 Annual Meeting of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cortland County. As you will see in our annual report, we are doing well financially, but have challenges ahead. Additionally, we have had some staff changes, modifications to our programs as a result of grants, and promising growth in our programs, primarily in the area of camp and 4-H. In light of these changes, the Board has made the decision to conduct a short but comprehensive strategic plan to help us move forward for the next 3-5. There are a number of challenges to address.

Financial Status- Our financial status has shown areas of growth but also areas that are static. Our budget increased by \$210,749 over the past year, primarily as a result of receiving three grants – the J.M. McDonald grant for Camp Owahta, Farm-to-School grant, and a small grant to support our Relatives-As-Parents program. However, our two largest sources of funding, Cortland County Appropriations and State 224 funding, remained flat, as they have for over 16 years. This presents a continuing challenge for our association, requiring us to become more skilled at finding alternative sources of funding, primarily through grants, contracts, and fees.

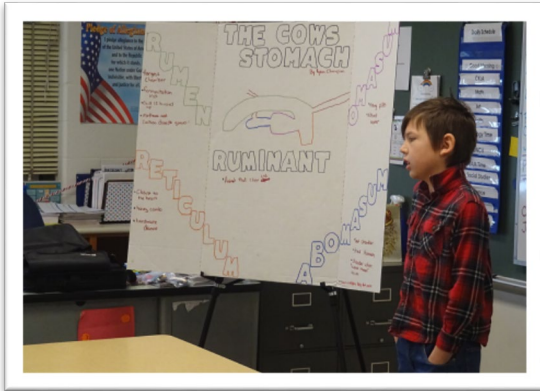
4-H Camp Owahta- The 2019 camp year saw a 12.9% increase in camper registrations. This, together with the 5.7% increase from the year before, shows that camp is having a resurgence. Certainly, in the community, I hear that message consistently. We also received a \$120,000 grant from the J.M. McDonald Foundation to address many infrastructure needs at camp, resulting in a new zero-turn lawn mower, new kitchen equipment, additions to the girls' wash room, electricity upgrades, modernization of our water system, a new dock, and other improvements. That said, we have not yet recovered from the losses of 6 years ago. Aggressive marketing is necessary to get us to that point, and we will be working with a marketing expert on a pro-bono basis in the coming year to address this.

Farm-To-School- We received a \$100,000 grant from New York State Ag & Markets to promote the use of local agriculture products in our schools in Cortland County. This first phase of the grant allows us to build awareness and interest in the use of New York State and Cortland County products in our schools. Though this grant has a specific purpose, the vision it provides in the use of local products to support our economy, create a sustainable environment, and improve nutrition has begun to have extended benefits in our association. 4-H Camp Owahta began to use locally-produced dairy products at camp, and we will be looking to bring other local agriculture products to camp in the future.

Staffing Changes - Abbie Teeter, an agriculture educator who worked closely with Fay Benson, accepted a new job and has left our association. We are beginning the process of finding her replacement. Also, after 18 years with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cortland County, Heather Birdsall, our Agriculture Team Leader, has moved on to another position. We will miss her expertise and all she brought to Cortland County. At this time, we will be looking at the current needs of our agriculture community to determine the best way to replace Heather. This position will be one of the major areas of focus for our upcoming strategic plan. Soon, you will receive an email with a link to our Strategic Plan survey. Please help us by taking a few minutes to respond to the questions. The Board will use the responses to the survey to help us determine the direction of our association over the next 3-5 years. If you would like a paper copy of the survey, you will be able to request that. Thank you to all of you for your continued support of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cortland County. Without your support, we would not be able to do the work that we do! CCE of Cortland is a great place!

David Rutherford, Executive Director

4-H GROWS HERE



2019 Public Presentation Program - Ryan Champion



4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT:

Rebecca Ireland-Perry, 4-H Team Leader

**Generosity ▪ Community Service ▪ Leadership
▪ Hands-on ▪ Belonging ▪ Life Skills
▪ Communication ▪ Citizenship ▪ Mastery
▪ Science, Technology, Engineering & Math
▪ Public Speaking ▪ Agriculture ▪ Healthy
Lifestyles ▪ Career Exploration ▪ Independence**

The primary goal of 4-H is to develop citizenship, leadership and life skills in youth through experiential learning opportunities and a positive youth development approach.

Today's 4-H program has three primary initiatives:

- **Citizenship**
- **Science, technology, engineering, & math**
- **Healthy living**

4-H Clubs: There were ten active 4-H clubs in Cortland County, and a total 4-H enrollment of 244 youth. 4-H clubs are the traditional method of youth development, with a diverse offering of projects to develop or enhance necessary life skills.

School Enrichment Programs: Youth programs targeted 2176 Cortland County Kindergarten through 6th grade students. Programs such as Ag Literacy, Ag Stravaganza, McMahan farm tour, incubation and embryology class projects, and Conservation Field Days provide exposure to agricultural education.

Cortland County Jr. Fair: A strong component of the 4-H Youth Development program, the 4-H Fair serves as the culmination of a year's worth of 4-H club activities. 4-H members showcase their projects, animals, and the valuable leadership skills they have developed during the past year. Participating in the fair provides great opportunities for teaching youth responsibility and decision-making skills, as well as providing an educational experience for the general public. 151 youth exhibitors having 804 total exhibits made this year's fair a success. Over 100 exhibits went on to the NY State Fair for further evaluation.



Junior Iron Chef Contest at the 2019 Cortland Jr. Fair

Grants: Through generous grants from both the Cortland Community Service Club and the CNY Community Foundation, we are able to enhance the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) learning opportunities of 4-H members

through new sewing machines, as well as robotics and computer equipment.



4-H Sewing Workshop at the 4-H office

4-H Youth Development provides a unique learn-by-doing model teaches our youth essential and transferrable skills that they'll use throughout their lives, such as communicating, problem solving, decision making, coping, and responding to the needs of others. In addition to mastering a variety of important life skills, 4-H members connect with caring adults in their community and make friendships that last a lifetime.

4-H CAMP OWAHTA:

Maria Gimma, Director



Summer 2019 marked the 67th year for 4-H Camp Owahta, with its successful integration of tradition and innovation under the direction of Maria Gimma and Christopher DeLage. It was a summer filled with fun, outdoor activities, leadership development, and the creation of long-lasting friendships for campers and counselors alike.

"Farm to Garden" This being our 5th year for farm to garden planting and cooking from their vegetable garden beds. The program is so successful under the direction of Horticulture

Educator Claudia Hitt, the campers experienced growing and identifying the vegetables growing in the garden along with preparing them in the mealtime menus. A significant grant was secured to upgrade bathrooms and cabins, work is underway to develop programs and connect within the community, yet keep the traditional experience of camp that so many love as well as extend the reach of camp into the spring and fall months.



For the first time we provided a new 2-week program *"Outdoor Adventure"*, to campers aged 13-16; a five-day backpack camping trip learning outdoor skills, including fire building and sleeping under the stars! The campers had the opportunity to cook meals over a campfire and learn outdoor living skills along with participating in the everyday camp programming.



Open Houses were held to meet and greet our director as well as the staff in May and June this year. Visitors were able to explore the camp grounds, participate in fun activities and enjoy snacks and stories.

This year the summer camp saw 121 day campers, along with 305 residential campers. Super Hero and Magic Weeks were well-loved this year, along with Olympics week, which is traditionally the most popular week of camp.

In addition to our traditional themes, nature activities, swimming, boating, and trips, 4-H Camp

Owahta is a place for children to be children – to play, relax, and develop relationships with counselors and adults in the community.

4-H Camp Owahta hosted SWCD Conservation Field Days and Environthon - which exposed camp to over 285 camp aged children. We also hosted a number of weekend groups and the Ham-radio club's annual international emergency preparedness awareness meeting.

Join us for Camp! Information can be found on our website at www.4-Hcamp.org and Facebook page!

HORTICULTURE:

Claudia Hitt, Horticulture Program Educator



The Horticulture office focuses on customer services, community outreach, adult and youth education and Master Gardener Volunteer supervision. *Ph* testing, soil texture analysis, pest identification, and find Cornell recommended solutions to Horticulture and natural resource questions are some of the services offered.

Community outreach is obtained through youth education in county schools, 4-H activities, county fair and other organizations. Also presentations on the top of their choice are made to adults through garden clubs, church groups, senior centers, etc.

Customer services range from the soil services listed above to making home visits and of course finding solutions to the many and varied questions that come in.

This year the CCE Horticulture Educator and Master Gardener Volunteers reached out to 1097 youth and 88 adults. 76 community calls were answered and several articles written for the newspaper.

In today's "plugged in world" studies show that it is increasingly important for everyone, youth and adults, to spend time connecting with nature.

"What better way than through a garden".



HUMAN ECOLOGY PROGRAM

Barb Henza, Subject Educator II

Financial and Consumer Education Program -

The Financial and Consumer Education program of Cornell Cooperative Extension Cortland County works to strengthen the financial well-being and stability of families and individuals through programs that build the knowledge and decision making skills of participants.

Independent Living Skills -

Independent Living Skills (ILS), is a program for youth ages 14 to 21 years' old who are currently in foster care. Funded by a contract with DSS, the program provides a series of classes that teach the youth life skills necessary for them to start their adult lives once they leave foster care. Topics covered in the classes include employment readiness (resumes, interview skills, dress, completing required forms to start a job and reading a paycheck stub), exploring possible careers, financial management/basic budgeting, what are credit reports and why they matter, identity theft awareness, choosing a place to live, tenants' rights, connecting with community resources, healthy relationships, conflict resolution, dealing with emotions in a positive manner, nutrition and team building exercises. The youth also learn about nutrition through the preparation of a healthy meal at the beginning of each class. A new class for the 2019-2020 school year started on October 22.

Family Budget Education Program - The Family Budget Education program is provided in a one-on-

one setting for individuals and families who are experiencing financial difficulties. The program's focus is to assist the participants in finding possible solutions and then developing a course of action to begin to resolve the situation. Participants in the program learn how to work with creditors, read a credit report, establish a budget that meets their needs, prioritize their financial obligations and programs in the community that could assist them. Past participants in the program have found the information gained from the program to be practical and useful in helping them gain control over their personal financial situation and in building confidence in their ability to manage their finances in the future.

Credit and Job Seekers - Credit and Job Seekers is provided weekly as a component of a workforce readiness program held at the Cortland Works Career Center. As employers may check an applicant's credit report and use the information in the report in hiring decisions it is important that those who are actively seeking employment know what is in their report. The workshop teaches program participants how to obtain their report free of charge, what information is found in a credit report and where it comes from, what to look for in the report, how long negative information can remain in the report, who typically provides information to a credit bureau, the steps to take to dispute inaccurate information and have it removed from the report and the responsibilities of an employer if the report results in the individual not being offered a job as a result of the contents of their credit report. Participants in the workshops frequently take the opportunity to ask questions about other financial related issues such as how credit scores are calculated, when can wages be garnished, what actions a debt collector can take, how to re-establish or build a positive credit history and what is the difference between a credit union and a bank.

Parenting Education- The CCE Cortland Parenting education program offers educational opportunities and resources designed to promote healthy families through research-based non-biased information, education and practical skills building to individuals and families.

Parents Apart - The Parents Apart program is offered four times annually. The program provides 6 hours of parenting education with a focus on

meeting the needs of the children involved. Participants may choose to attend either two – 3 hour sessions held in the evening on two consecutive Thursdays or an all-day session held on a Saturday to accommodate parents who cannot make a week night class. Participants are referred to the program through the court system, DSS, the Public Defender's office and may also self- refer to the program. Participants who complete the full 6 hours of the class are issued a certificate of completion. Upon request, CCE-Cortland County staff will provide documentation of completion of the classes to the courts for any participants who require one. Surveys completed at the end of the classes indicate participants are using what they have learned to make the situation better for their children.



Relatives as Parents Program(RAPP)

The Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) is a new program for Cortland County. The program is available to anyone who has taken on the role of parent to a family member's or someone else's children in their absence due to addiction, death or incarceration. The program is built around a peer support group for the adults, activities and programs for the children and parenting education classes to help families work through the issues involved with being in a kinship relationship. CCE Cortland staff has established a Community Advisory Board to assist with the outreach and recruitment for the program. Staff have worked to raise community awareness of the program through presentations with various community groups, community based agencies and churches, building a network of frontline workers who can introduce the families they work with to the program. As the program enters its second year a schedule of activities and classes will be developed for the families referred to RAPP.



SOUTHERN TIER REGION EAT SMART NEW YORK PROGRAM

Neisa M. Pantalia, Nutrition Educator

Nutrition Education in Cortland County - The Southern-tier Eat Smart NY team has been continuing to expand their reach in Cortland Co. through the effort of collaborative partnerships. Nutrition educator Neisa Pantalia visited many different sites on a regular basis, delivering programming to residents of all ages.

Career Works Employment Connection-A community non-profit service that provides support in assisting people to obtain employment. To help individuals better use their resources and stretch their food dollars, provided pop up tours each week. The tour discusses the pros and cons to produce, nutrition facts labels and the MyPlate while dissecting every food group.

Riverview apartments- A series of Cooking Matters lessons were taught at Riverview, a Catholic Charities housing development. Created lessons on a variety of MyPlate topics and then cooked a recipe together in the kitchen off of the community room.

4-H Camp Owahta - Connected with staff and campers teaching some Dig in Gardening Lessons with the kids. The youth were able to try a variety of vegetables from colored carrots to kohlrabi. Their farm-to-garden provided produce from the raised beds that Claudia Hitt had planted to use in recipes.

Salvation Army- Every year the salvation army in town has a day camp, they asked me to come this year and do some presentations for the kids.

FE Smith School- I went towards the end of the school year and did some presentations from the CATCH curriculum.

Seven Valleys Tech Academy- I have been working with one of the high school teachers and been presenting lessons with high school on the MyPlate and Healthy eating on a Budget.

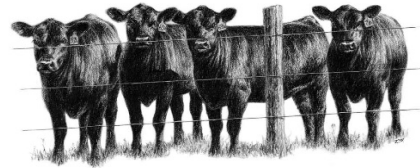
Cortland Free Library- Created lessons from the MyPlate, Healthy Eating on a Budget and Food Safety. Fidelis partnered and funded a recipe for one lesson.

Syracuse Recovery Services- Presented to clients about the MyPlate and Rethink your Drink during staff meetings.

AGRICULTURE PROGRAM:

Sr. Team Leader- Heather Birdsall

Agriculture Annual Report CCE of Cortland Agriculture Program continues to wear several hats. The Agriculture program educates the non-farming community about agriculture, educates the non-dairy livestock community about production, management and marketing of their livestock and also provides diverse programs for the multitude of land based enterprises that abounds in our County.



To better serve the needs of farmers and rural land-owners in Cortland, CCE is a partner in the South Central NY Area Ag Team (**SCNY Ag Team**) which serves Cortland, Chemung, Tompkins, Tioga and Schuyler Counties. Extension Agriculture Educators provided unbiased, researched based information on sustainable production, management and marketing practices in livestock, vegetable, fruits, agribusiness and agro-forestry through workshops, office and farm consultations, webinars and special events.

Because of this unique relationship with the SCNY Area Ag Team, Cortland County residents have the ability to acquire the most up to date educational information that pertains to their land based enterprise.

Educational Agriculture Awareness: Do you know where your food comes from?? CCE of Cortland, provides a host of educational events that encourage a better understanding of agriculture by the general community. Over 2700 youth and adults in 2019 have been connected with this important agriculture information. Some of the programs geared towards the youth in our community include a 2nd grade Ag Literacy program, 4th grade Ag-Stravaganza, 5th grade Dairy Field Trip, and 4-H Camp Owahta Farm to Garden program.



Farm To School:

Emily Fusco, AmeriCorps Service Member

In 2019, CCE of Cortland County was awarded the New York State Agriculture and Markets Farm to School Grant. Farm to School is a sustainable food system that focuses on increasing school's access to local food and increasing nutrition and agriculture education to improve children's health, strengthen local family farms, and foster vibrant communities with strong economies. In the Summer of 2019, we launched our outreach campaign for the program. Presentations and tabling events were held at the Rotary club, Ag-Stravaganza, Cortland County Jr. Fair, Cortland Farmers Market, Homer Farmers Market, Anderson's Farm Market, Open Houses for school districts, and Wellness day. Contacts were established with the Cortland County School Districts administrative staff and teachers. In collaboration with Main Street Farms, educational lessons and taste tests have begun. So far, a total of 1,252 students have been educated by the farm to school program and eight different schools have been reached within the Cortland County School Districts.

Local Foods: Over the past year and a half, educators from CCE of Cortland have begun working closely with Seven Valley's Health Coalition and Cortland Harvest to help promote Cortland County Local Foods and their producers. Farmer Networking meetings were held to hear their needs and ideas.

Agriculture and all of our farmers play a significant role in Cortland County economy, we at CCE were pleased to once again co-host the Cortland County Agriculture Celebration Dinner and the Farmer Appreciation Luncheon.

Ag. 2019:

Jan. – March Preparation and meetings
 So. CNY Area Ag Team
 Jr. Fair- Fair & YQCA pre-planning
 Business After Hours meetings
 NYS Fair – Youth Beef Meetings
 Meet Your Representative
 Ag Literacy Readings at Schools

May – July Ag Celebration Dinner for Farmers
 NYS Ag & Markets produce Safety Certification Program, Albany, NY.
 Farmers Market Site educating Farm to School grant CCE focus.

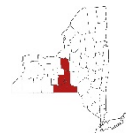
June 5 & 6 4th Grade - Ag-Stravaganza Program
 June 11 & 12 5th Grade – McMahon Dairy Field Trip
 YQCA-Techniques and education to youth who market their animals
 2019 county youth fair.

June 25th Co-Presenter the Cortland Co. Farm to School program to Noon Rotary

June 26 & 27 Prepared Farm to Garden at 4-H Camp Owahta, educational Ag based programming to interface with campers on site.

June 26 Set Up – County Youth Fair
 July 12 Co-Presented Farm to School at the Marathon After School Program

July 16 Cortland Co. Wellness Committee
 July 18 Farm Visit- Cattle Handling Facilities



Cornell Cooperative Extension

South Central NY Dairy and Field Crops Program

Strengthening the dairy industry, enhancing farm profitability, and helping producers meet their goals.



Crop Management Education Supports Profitability & Sustainability - Forage quality remains a key driver of production and profitability on dairy farms, and it can often be improved with low- or no-cost solutions. Our team delivers training and support for dairies to produce adequate forage quantity and quality. Through workshops and individual consultations, our Field Crops Specialist educates producers on current trends and technologies, Integrated Pest Management, and nutrient management, all within a broader framework of economic viability and environmental stewardship.

Our field crops program also covers industrial hemp, NY's newest crop. We provide technical expertise to help producers cultivate hemp and navigate the permitting process.

Dairy Management Education Targets Herd Health & Performance - 98% of US dairy farms participate in the FARM (Farmers Assuring Responsible Management) Program. These producers must meet animal welfare standards and ensure that employees receive animal care training. Our team helps farmers keep up with industry standards by organizing herd health and management trainings. On-farm workshops provide hands-on opportunities for farm operators and their employees to learn and practice key skills.

Our Dairy Specialist also works one-on-one with individual farms to improve facilities and procedures.

Benchmarking facility measurements and other animal welfare indicators helps farmers to identify opportunities for improvement.

Business Management Education Builds Planning & HR Skills - Farmers need accurate information about business performance to make good decisions. We educate and support producers to improve record keeping systems, and we facilitate participation in financial benchmarking programs. Access to financial data helps producers make sound financial decisions and plan for the future.

Farmers are scrambling to keep up with new labor laws as employees are becoming harder to find. Our Business Management Specialist trains farms to implement employee onboarding and other HR best practices, including compliance with new sexual harassment prevention regulations. Improving labor management on farms has potential to boost employee performance while reducing exposure to liability.

Public Outreach Enhances Consumer Perceptions of Agriculture - Community relations are a growing concern for farmers, who face increasing public scrutiny. Public perception of agriculture shapes consumer preferences,

regulations, and evolving industry standards. These, in turn, may affect production practices and requirements for market entry.

Our team supports outreach events that bring consumers onto dairy farms to learn about the industry. We also provide public relations training for farmers, and teach them how to be "ag-vocates" for themselves and their industry.

SMALL DAIRY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Fay Benson, Small Dairy Support Program Director

Abbie Teeter, Small Dairy Support Program Coordinator



CORNELL SMALL DAIRY SUPPORT, LOOK BACK 2019

It was a busy year for the Small Dairy Program housed at the CCE of Cortland. Both Fay Benson and Abbie Teeter worked on many projects both local and across the Northeast. The end of the year got even busier for Fay since Abbie took a job with Organic Valley Dairy to be their Western NY Field Representative. Abbie will be greatly missed because her abilities matched up nicely with the lack of Fay's abilities.

The following are a brief review of the projects worked on this year:

The Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship Program, four years ago New York joined 9 other states in providing the only nationally approved apprenticeship program for agriculture. Of our 22 Approved Masters, 6 are paired with Apprentices. In addition to the two Apprentices preparing for graduation, two have just celebrated their one-year anniversary in the program and two have begun the program within the last few months. The Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship requires 3700 on the job training hours and 300 hours of related instruction including dairy and grazing focused college courses, local pasture walks and discussion groups,

and bi-monthly meetings with their Education Coordinator.

CCE of Cortland houses this State program and both participants and supporters of DGA recognize the need for the apprentice program because dairies who adopt grazing as part of their management have shown that they can lower their cost of production and remain viable. In addition, New York has more organic dairies than any other state. Without this program, new and young farmers are difficult to find and train since there are few educational programs that teach grazing in the state.

NE SARE Grant on Grass Based Dairy: This year we wrapped up data collection on this 3-year project. There have been many requests for reports on our work because the grassed based dairy market has been the only dairy market that has been growing and taking on new dairies across the Northeast. Fay gave talks in New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont and at the National Grazinglands Conference in Reno NV.



Participants at this years "Grasstravaganza" measure soil compaction in a pasture at Cobleskill.

NE SARE Grant on Pasture Soil Compaction: This new three-year grant started this spring involves training educators across the Northeast on identifying and remediating pasture soil compaction. It also provides funds to take the soil health trailer across the region to help educators provide training to their stakeholders on the same topics.

The New York Soil Health Trailer: The trailer had its busiest year yet with reaching over 4000

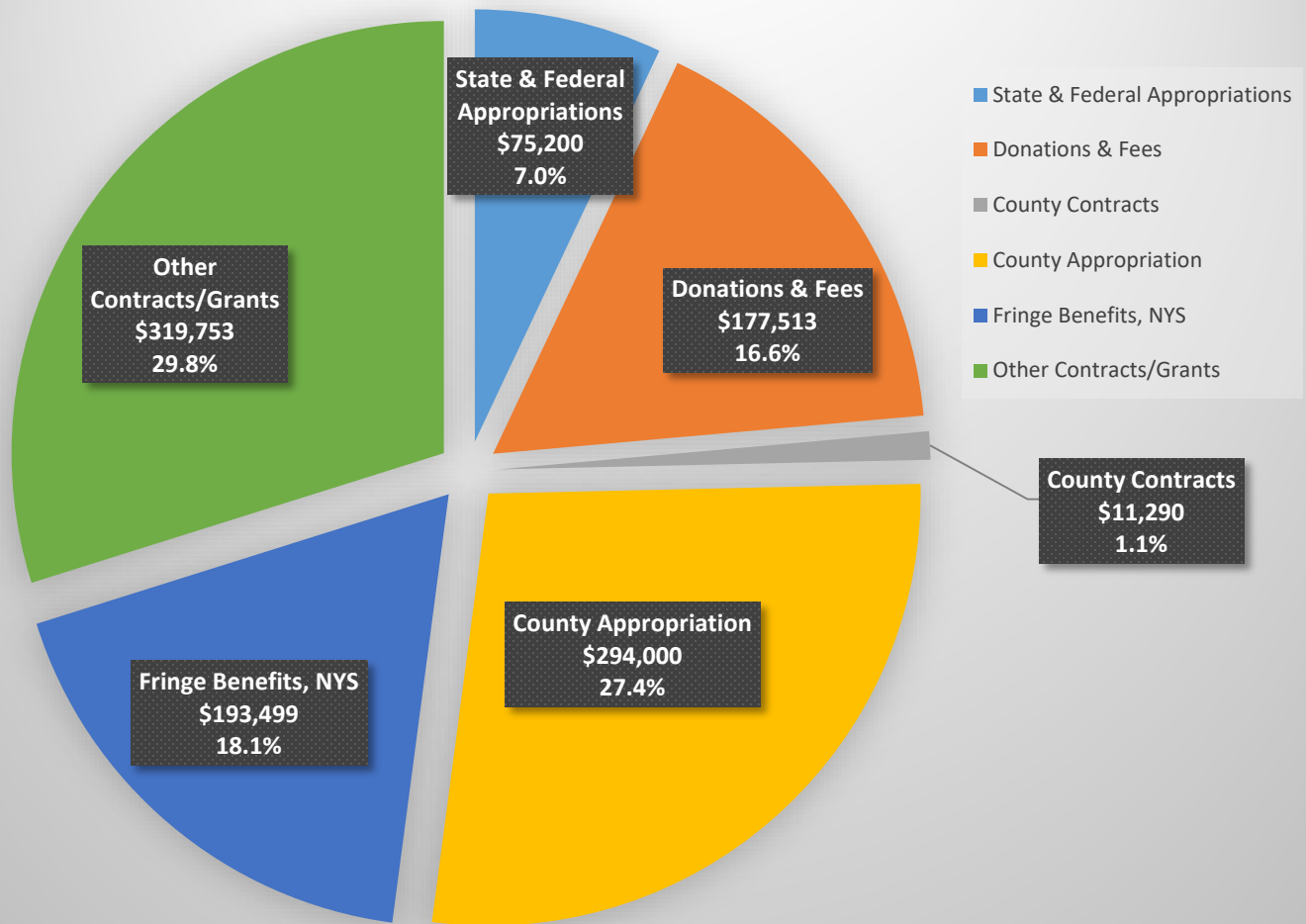
participants at events where it was used. In addition to the travel across the Northeast pastures by the NE SARE grant.

The trailer was at a number of county's open farm day events including, Onondaga, Tioga, and Albany. It was also at Empire Farm Days and the NY State Fair.

4/26	Soil Health Training	Hoosick Falls, NY
4/27	Climate Wise gardening	Ithaca, NY
4/30	Armed to Farmed	Honeoye Falls
5/3	Soil Health Training	Jasper, NY
5/22	Beef Tour-NY Beef Council	Union Springs
6/1	Water Festival	Cortland, NY
6/3	Groton High School	Groton, NY
6/17	Putting Carbon in its Place	Cornell Univ.
6/18	Finger Lakes Graziers Walk	Penn Yan, NY
7/10	Harris Seed Trail	Rochester, NY
7/16	Musgrave Organic Field Day	Aurora, NY
7/18	Glynwood	Cold Spring, NY
7/21	Sundaes on the Farm	Tioga County
7/25	Grasstravaganza	Cobleskill, NY
7/31	Organic Vegetable Field Day	Ithaca, NY
8/1	Organic Orchard Field Day	Ithaca, NY
8/6-8	Empire Farm Days	Seneca Falls, NY
8/14	Building Resilience into Organic Forages	Truxton, NY
8/15	Agricultural Stewardship	Greenwich, NY
8/21	Stonewall Farm	Keene, NH
8/22	NYS Fair	Syracuse, NY
9/2-5	Events in Maine	Maine
9/8	Open Farm Days	Berne, NY
9/21	Onondaga "On Farm Fest"	Manlius, NY
10/16	SARE Pasture Walk	Lindley, NY
10/18	SARE Pasture Walk	N. Bingham, PA
10/24	Armed to Farm	Geneva, NY



Total Expenditures \$1,071,753



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Our Mission:
Cornell Cooperative Extension puts knowledge to work in pursuit of economic vitality, ecological sustainability and social well-being.

We bring local experience and research based solutions together, helping New York State Families and communities thrive in our rapidly changing world.



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

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