



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Director's Message

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Of Cortland County
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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.

Welcome to the 2020 Annual Meeting of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cortland County. How things have changed! In place of our annual dinner and celebration, we will be online, voting electronically, listening to our Keynote Speakers, and hearing about the work of CCE Cortland from our own homes. While this change is necessary to ensure everyone's safety, I will miss seeing all of you in person.

COVID-19 – CCE Cortland has diligently followed the directions of the CDC, Governor, and our local Cortland County Health Department to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Our office officially closed at the county office building in March, but we did not stop our work. Like so many others, our work moved to our homes, and became virtual. We all learned very quickly how to communicate, meet, and teach in a remote environment. We have had many successes, as you will read about in this Annual Report.

Financial Status – Like so many organizations and businesses, CCE Cortland has operated in a changing economic environment. It has been a challenge to our 2020 budget. Although there was a significant decrease in our revenues, there was also a decrease in our expenses. This was a tough financial year. As of today, we are maintaining a balance that is “in the black” and expect to end the year this way.

New Staff – We welcome our new Agriculture Team Leader, Dana Havas, to the CCE Cortland family. She comes to us with a strong commitment to working closely with our agriculture community. We are excited to have her on our team. She has hit the ground running, as you will read in her section of the Annual Report. Welcome, Dana!

Looking Forward to 2021 – We have found our stride in the new environment and will continue to work and teach in both an online and hybrid environment. As we move forward, we will be following the official guidelines of the CDC and the Cortland County Health Department. Included in our plan is an expectation to open Camp, to host the 2021 Cortland County Junior Fair, and to participate in the 2021 Great New York State Fair. Stay tuned. Things change quickly in our new environment.

Especially in these challenging times, we could not meet our mission without you – our CCE Cortland Community. Cortland County is a special community, and I am proud to be a part of it! I hope everyone has a happy and safe holiday season, and we will see you in the New Year!

David C. Rutherford – Executive Director

4-H GROWS HERE



Holiday Workshop 2019 Rose Mathy

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.

4-H program has three primary initiatives:

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

4-H Clubs: There were nine active 4-H clubs in Cortland County, and a total 4-H enrollment of 262 youth. 4-H clubs are the traditional method of youth development, and adding in independent 4-H members, the 4-H program provides a diverse offering of projects to develop or enhance necessary life skills.

4-H Events: Our year started out well in the fall of 2019, and we held our annual **Holiday Workshop**, and rolled over into **Public Presentations and Sewing Camp** in the beginning of 2020. Then 2020 became a challenging year as we navigated the uncharted territory of COVID-19, but we endeavored to provide positive 4-H experiences for our youth.



Public Presentations 2020 Ivy Phelps

We started our **Tractor Safety and Certification** course virtually with 14 participants, and once we could meet again in person, all successfully completed the course and obtained their certifications.

Virtual Contests: Regionally, we held virtual Dairy Quiz Bowl, Horse quiz Bowl, and Hippology contests, and District Public Presentations.

Since the Cortland Jr Fair was not held, we planned the **"Cortland Jr Unfair"**. One event that did go on during our normal fair scheduled time was the meat animal auction, which went very well. We held a combination in person and online auction, so the youth still had the experience of showing, marketing, and selling their project animal. In August, we held the rest of the **"Cortland Jr Unfair"** for 4-H members and their families only. We had evaluation of projects exhibited in the 4-H building, as well as one-day animal shows for dairy, rabbit, poultry, beef, swine, and meat goat. Our numbers of participants were smaller than if we had held fair, but we felt we needed to offer the opportunity for those youth that wanted to have the experience.



4-H Full STEAM Ahead! Exploring Our Natural Systems Workshop

We held two in-person workshop with youth up at 4-H Camp Owahta, where we took advantage of the beautiful outdoor space that camp has to offer.

These workshops are a part of my **4-H Full STEAM Ahead!** Series. The first revolved around environmental science topics—invasive species, water quality, soils, and keystone species. Three MAT students from Ithaca College led the topic areas, bringing their knowledge while gaining teaching experience that is important for their graduate program.



Outdoor cooking workshop 2020

We also had an **Outdoor Cooking workshop**, where youth gained experience learning how to safely start fires, and cook outdoors utilizing dutch ovens and pie ovens. Looking forward, our focus remains on continuing a 4-H program that can meet the needs of our 4-H youth, support our 4-H leaders, and grow.

4-H CAMP OWAHTA:



After careful consideration, including consulting with Cortland County Government, NYS 4-H Camp Leadership, CDC guidelines, and community parents; Cooperative Extension of Cortland County made the decision to close 4-H Camp Owahta for the 2020 season. It was a difficult decision to make. We believe children benefit greatly by spending time together outside in nature; however, we could not create a program that guaranteed the safety of

children and counselors during the COVID19 Pandemic.

4-H Camp Owahta is a second home for many children, counselors, and families in Cortland County and surrounding communities, so I am aware of the disappointment and sadness that many of you felt. I felt it, as well. The loss of even one summer of fun at 4-H Camp Owahta was disappointing to many, especially those of you who were looking forward to beginning your leadership training in our Counselor-in-Training program. That said, the safety and health of our children was our most important responsibility. We missed all our wonderful campers and expect that we will see many of you next summer.

Though camp did not operate in this summer, we did a lot of work on the property. We replaced sinks in the boy's bathroom, began the process of replacing toilets in both buildings, painted, repaired buildings, added doors to the barn, and many other small projects to improve the property. While we hope that things can return to normal for the 2021 season, we are actively planning modifications that will provide all of our campers with the summer camping season they have come to expect while providing the kind of protections necessary to ensure the safety and health of our campers. *See you next summer!*

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.



SMARTENERGYCHOICES-CNY.ORG

Community Energy Engagement Program (CEEP)

- This year saw a return to working with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) for CCE Cortland. CEEP is a statewide NYSERDA program funded by the System Benefit Charges that are levied on all electric and gas bills from the major utilities, in our area, NYSEG

and National Grid. Working in cooperation with CCE Tompkins, CCE Cortland is acting as the program manager for the Central New York region. In that capacity, we are overseeing program reporting and implementation for a five county area including Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga and Oswego counties. This also involves overseeing the work of two Community Energy Advisors (CEA) working in Madison, Onondaga and Oswego Counties. In addition to providing program management, CCE Cortland County staff is also acting as the CEA for Cayuga and Cortland Counties. A key part of this effort is outreach to consumers in the five counties to promote the participation in the energy assistance programs targeted to the Low to Moderate Income households. CEAs work with referrals and consumers requesting information about the program to connect them to the resources that are available to them. In that role the CEAs have developed contacts with the NYSERDA approved energy contractors for the region and work closely with them to resolve any issues that may come up. Work began on this program in late April of 2020 and will continue through March 31, 2021. A Request for Proposals is expected in December for continuation of this program through 2025 and we will be submitting a proposal at that time. We were recently notified that there will be a continuation of this program through June 2021 pending the awarding of the contract to continue the program through 2025.

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 teens currently in foster care the life skills necessary for them to start their adult lives once they leave foster care. Topics covered in the classes include, financial management/basic budgeting, healthy relationships, managing a bank account, how to complete the FAFSA, Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking, and team building exercises. The youth also learn about nutrition through the preparation of a healthy meal at the beginning of each class. This year's class had five teens attending on a regular basis.

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 was 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. With the changes in how the Cortland Works Career Center is operating due to COVID-19, this has transitioned to Financial Friday at the Career Center with displays on financial topics for those who are using the career center and I have been working with the staff person coordinating that effort to identify resources that can be used.

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. This has gone to a virtual class for the rest of the year due to COVID-19.



Neisa M. Pantalia, Nutrition Educator

Nutrition Education in Cortland County - The Southern-Tier SNAP Ed team formally known as Eat Smart NY has been continuing their reach in Cortland County. This year began the second five-year grant period referred to as SNAP-Ed II. Contracts for this five-year cycle started October 1, 2019 and ends September 30, 2024. At the discretion of OTDA, this multi-year cycle may be shortened if it is determined that modifications to the program structure are necessary.

During the 2019-2020 program year, Nutrition Educator Neisa Pantalia visited Cortland County on a weekly basis. She delivered programming to

residents of all ages, through collaborative partnerships within the community.

Career Works Employment Connection - A community non-profit service that provides people with support, assistance and the necessary skills to obtain employment. Using the Cooking Matters Curriculum, Neisa was able to teach individuals how to better use their resources and stretch their food dollars. The curriculum's Grocery Store Tour is a fun, interactive approach to assist participants in identifying the pros and cons of the different varieties of produce (fresh, frozen and canned); learn how to read a nutrition facts label and to explore ways to eat healthy on a budget using the USDA MyPlate.

Seven Valleys Tech Academy- Neisa worked with one of the high school teachers presenting lessons in the Senior Seminar class on the MyPlate and Healthy Eating on a Budget.

Horizon House- The mission of Horizon House is to offer individuals whose functioning has been impeded by a severe/enduring mental illness, the opportunity to obtain and maintain the clinical stability, community-based support and life skills necessary to live in the community and pursue their personal life goals. Neisa started teaching lessons based on the MyPlate and included short food demonstrations using foods that are frequently offered at most food pantries.

March 2020 Throughout COVID 19- Neisa continued providing SNAP-Ed assistance through social media, paper copies of newsletters, USDA tips sheets, recipes and materials at Catholic Charities, Loaves & Fishes and food pantries.

AGRICULTURE PROGRAM:

Agriculture Team Leader- Dana Havas

This year was a new one for Agriculture in CCE-Cortland - not only because of the how the COVID-19 pandemic affected our programming efforts but also because of the lack of an Ag agent for the first half of the year. As the country shutdown in March, our efforts to replace Heather Birdsall were waylaid until June when we were able to start interviewing for the Agriculture Team Leader Position. By July 13th Dana Havas was hired into the role of Ag Team Leader, and we are excited about the fresh perspective she will bring to the position. With this

role standing empty for such a long period of time the community needs which it responds to were ripe for redefinition. To address this one of the exciting things Dana developed a 5-year CCE Cortland Ag Team Plan of Work (PoW) with a focus on the Non-Dairy & Non-Field Crops Agricultural community of Cortland County.

The PoW defines the scope of CCE-Cortland Agriculture Team's efforts and will be used in developing the implementation plans over the course of the next few years. The PoW will be reviewed and revised yearly and completely reworked every 5-years.

Six primary topics were identified in the PoW, and programming will be developed to address sub-topics and issues relevant to these themes.

- General Agriculture
- Agriculture Awareness
- Agricultural Business
- Agricultural Marketing
- Non-dairy livestock
- Mixed Vegetables, fruit, and other horticultural & tree crops

COVID-19 response - The safety of our farmers and farm-workers is always high on our list, and this year it became even more so as COVID-19 entered our lives. Farmers are frontline workers, and this year the real value of small family farms was made evident on a national scale as the larger distribution and processing chains broke down or were inaccessible for a time. To help farmers and farm-workers stay safe and in business we distributed free sanitizer and masks through a series of pick-up events and one-to-one distribution efforts; alerted our farm owners time-and-time again of the need to develop a NY Forward Safety Plan and helped those who requested assistance in doing so; stated in many a conversation, email, and Facebook post how our farmers could access federal aid through the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) program, and together with the Cortland County Farm Bureau we sent out letters to farmers in our community that included information on how to respond if a seasonal farmworker worker tests positive, including housing resources and relevant contacts.

General Agriculture - One of the needs Dana heard about time and time again when talking with members of Cortland County's Agricultural

Community was the need for an avenue from which information could be shared between CCE & the community, and between the community members themselves. CCE is in a unique position in that its agents have access to a vast array of resources, and they are essentially paid to network with and utilize those resources for the betterment of the communities they serve. To immediately open an avenue of communication between CCE and the Cortland agricultural community Dana quickly organized a monthly e-newsletter (the Cortland County Ag Update), the first newsletter was sent on July 25th just 12 days after she started her position as the Ag Team Leader. Since the first Cortland County Ag Update, readership has steadily grown, and response has been overwhelmingly positive.

Issue month	Issue date	Readership
July	25 th	61*
August	25 th	88
September	24 th	109
October	27 th	101**

* No social posting made this month

** New data without social posting data

Cortland Ag Coffee Hour - Another sub-topic Dana quickly addressed was the need to build opportunities for the community to share knowledge. To address this Dana organized a monthly Cortland Ag Coffee Hour. At each coffee hour a guest is invited to discuss at topic relevant to the agricultural community, with plenty of time given for the community members to chat, catch-up, and network. While attendance has been low (three farmers at each of the two gatherings so far) Dana is not deterred. The second Coffee Hour had 7 people signed-up to attend before it was made virtual as the COVID-19 cases in the county increased. Regardless the feedback has been, again overwhelmingly positive, and the farmers who have attended express strong interest in attending future Coffee Hours.

Month	Topic	Attendance
September 2020	Drought Insurance	3
October 2020	Farmer Grants & Loans	3
January (2021)	Land Access	

Agriculture Awareness:

Advocating (advocating for agriculture) is an important part of our mission. Educating the community about agriculture, its practices, and how to access it not only helps farm businesses, it also helps to improve food security in our community, keep land in agricultural use as open space, and builds a friendly relationship between agriculture and its neighbors.

Working with CCE Tompkins County Dana developed a monthly Virtual Farm Tour event for the months of September and October, on hiatus during the holiday season. The focus of September and October was apples (including Hollenbeck's Cider Mill in Virgil NY), and pumpkins and other winter squash (including Villnave Family Farm in Homer NY) respectively. Over 50 people, from all throughout the region, registered to attend these events. Besides the hour long event that included three virtual farm tours and Q&A's registrants received access to an online magazine that included information on where to find local producers and markets, facts about growing and nutrition, recipes and more. Both the video tours and the magazine were also made publicly available on our website, YouTube channel, and Facebook page.

Moving Forward: - Partnerships and collaborations are important in building effective and successful efforts, we are working together with other organizations to help build a stronger agricultural community. Together with Cortland County Soil & Water we are leading an effort to organize an annual Legislative Farm Tour (fall 2021) a much-needed event as the Livestock Law proposed this past year made evident. Seven Valleys Health Coalition has been awarded a 3-year USDA grant with the focus on local foods promotion and food security, and we are excited to be included in the conversations that will help to steer their efforts in doing so. We are also leading a team that includes the CNY Living History Museum, Experience Cortland, Cortland County, and Faculty from SUNY New Paltz to collect oral history from our Cortland County farmers. These interviews will be archived and used to develop exhibits and other engaging media. Of course CCE Cortland continues to develop programming to address the educational needs of our agriculture community as identified in the PoW including a lambing and kidding workshop in the early winter of 2021; BQA certification in the late summer; a 'Building your Brand' workshop in the

spring; and Coffee Hours throughout the year that will cover a variety of topics.



Farm To School:

**Emily Fusco, AmeriCorps Service Member
Nutrition Education in Cortland County**

The Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cortland County has been very successful in implementing various aspects of the Farm to School program throughout the past year. After running a successful community outreach program during the summer of 2019, which educated 339 adults about the goals of Farm to School, the program kicked off in the Fall of 2019 by gaining recognition through a News Article in the Cortland Standard. The news article was titled "*Farm to School Taking Root*" and it informed an additional 13,500 adults about the program.

Once the 2019-2020 school year began, the program shifted its focus from informing and gaining support from the community, to making contacts with schools and scheduling educational activities. We began by attending school open houses and tabling events at Homer, McGraw, Marathon, and Cortland school districts to make connections with teachers and faculty. These tabling activities reached 80 adults and created wonderful connections to get the program into classrooms. Over the course of the school year, the program provided educational services or taste tests to the students of Appleby Elementary School, Marathon High School, Homer Junior High School, Cortland Junior High School, Cortland Senior High School, Randall Elementary, and St. Mary's Catholic School. In total, these educational services reached 915 students. The educational activities provided include cooking with local food, the impact supporting local food has on the local economy, environment, and social equity, as well as providing taste tests for the students to try local food recipes. Additionally, the farm to school program participated in the Cortland County Youth Leadership Health Habits Day. At this event, the program taught an additional 50 students from various schools in Cortland County about the

importance of local food and had them participate in making a cabbage salad.

In March, the Farm to School program presented at the Cortland Counts Conference which had 88 people attend, and an additional 1,700 people watched the live stream. The presentation focused on explaining the three different components of Farm to School; Education, Procurement, and School gardens. It then discussed how the further development and implementation of these components can educate students about the importance of fresh local foods and persuade them to form healthy habits from a young age, thus helping to fight obesity and other health issues.

At the end of the summer of 2020, the *Farm To School program* partnered with the United Way to distribute 200 at home grow kits for students to learn how to grow lettuce. This activity was meant to allow students the flexibility to grow the lettuce at home due to COVID-19. The Cortland Standard published an article called "At-home grow kits: Farm-to-School tool" which is able to inform an additional 13,500 people about the activity. The program provided supplies for 90 additional grow kits to the Homer Junior High School 6th grade Home and Career Skills class. Although the kits are going to be started in class, they can easily be brought home if COVID-19 causes schools to shut down again.

Lastly, COVID-19 has caused the program to seek ways to educate students about the local food system without the ability to provide in-person lessons or taste tests. Due to this, the program has shifted to creating virtual farm tour videos. The videos are being shared on the CCE Cortland-Ag YouTube channel, the CCE-Cortland webpage, and with Cortland County teachers. Worksheets have been created to complement the videos and reinforce the knowledge with the students. So far, the videos have reached 100 people, 90 of whom are Cortland County students and 10 are from our YouTube views. We hope to continue creating these videos and educating the student of Cortland County about the various types of farms and local foods in their region.

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 finding Cornell recommended solutions to Horticulture and natural resource questions are some of the services offered.

This year it has been the phone and the computer that have kept the Horticulture office connected with the community. Learning new skills from Zoom to Slack to video editing, have been a challenge and a Godsend.

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 Hort Educator and Master Gardener Volunteers outreached to 468 youth and 346 adults. 94 community calls were answered and several articles written for the paper.

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.

Youth Education - 468

Holiday Workshop, Pressed Plant Pictures, 4-H Heritage Garden, Racker Center's Youth Back to Nature Garden Club, Marathon Ag Fair and McGraw Tree Lighting.

Adult/ Family Community Education - 346

Wellness Day, Pressed Plant pictures, Live Arrangements, Cultivating Communities start up and McGraw Teachers Day.

4-H Program

The 4H and MGW Plant Sale - 2019 Holiday Workshop and the Cortland Co. "*UnFair*".

New York State Fair- 4-H Youth Building Horticulture Superintendent-NYS Fair was cancelled this year but planning for the event took place.

Community Calls - 94

- Home visits - diagnosing problems for Ph testing and soil types.
- Pest and plant ID - weeds and insects and other plants.



Asian giant hornet (AGH), or *Vespa mandarinia*

Monthly Articles in Paper and Seasonal Supplements / Static Displays - Indirect Hort-2000 per article, 7 articles per year = 14,000 people.

Master Gardener Volunteer Coordinator

Interview existing MGV annually for renewal agreements, Bi-Weekly communications with the group - Supervise 14 volunteers by creating a Schedule and hold monthly meetings.

Lead for MGV Projects and MGV Facebook page

MGV Report - Master Gardener Volunteers have volunteered hours to the following projects. 297 hours of Community Service and held 32 community contacts (COVID-19 shut us down).

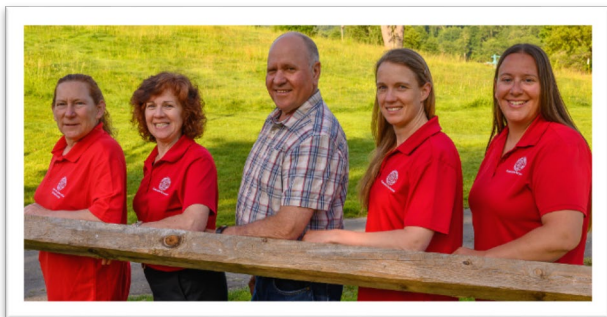
In 2020 the MGV were involved in many Community Gardens -Masters Rain Garden at the fairgrounds, Court House Gardens, County Office Building Gardens and Oak Crest Garden. This group of MGV are involved in the outreach and education, with the Horticulture office.



Cornell Cooperative Extension

South Central NY Dairy and Field Crops Program

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



Janice Degni, Melanie Palmer, Fay Benson, Mary Kate MacKenzie and Betsy Hicks.

COVID-19 Impacts and Dairy Team Response

- One of the strengths of the South Central NY Dairy and Field Crops Team is our ability to respond quickly to emerging issues, and develop educational programming to address evolving industry needs. The coronavirus pandemic brought unprecedented change and uncertainty to dairy producers this spring, and our team's actions over the past few months illustrate our adaptability and responsiveness to the needs of our farmers.

With the arrival of COVID-19, our farmer audience required sound information about the disease and strategies to reduce the risk of an outbreak on their farms. We provided information from trusted sources, including Cornell Ag Workforce Development and the CDC, and interpreted that information specifically for the dairy context.

On March 28, a blog post- **Biosecurity for People: 7 Steps to Protect Farm Workers from COVID-19** was viewed by 700 people. The New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH) featured it on their website. To reach Hispanic farm workers with this information, Janice used print and email communication tools to share Spanish language resources.

As our economy began to experience the impacts of COVID, the positive 2020 outlook for the dairy industry quickly reversed itself. The decimation of restaurant sales and dairy exports hit the dairy industry hard, with the USDA All Milk price falling 20% in one month, from \$18.00 per CWT in March to \$14.40 per CWT in April. In April, we heard unprecedented reports of milk dumping from farms in our region. In response to the oversupply for milk, Dairy Farmers of America, our region's largest milk co-op, announced a new base excess program. Farmers would be paid for 85% of the volume of milk that farmers produced in March.

During this time, Mary Kate working with a statewide network of farm business management specialists worked to identify farmer needs and share resources. Donette set up a Mailchimp.com to streamline email communications, and we shared regular updates on COVID safety, dairy markets, and government policy responses. The whole team coordinated with PRO-DAIRY specialists to share timely resources from managing cash flows during low price cycles to feeding milk to cows. We fielded calls from farms interested in selling cattle, and

others looking to purchase whole herds to expand their DFA base.



Herd Manager Training

Another COVID blog post on April 7, **From our Team to Yours: COVID-19 Resources for Dairy Farmers**, provided a concise list of publications and resources relevant to the dairy industry, including some in Spanish.

The government has enacted economic relief programs in response to COVID-19, several of which apply to farms. We have used a multifaceted communication approach, including Mailchimp.com, Facebook, website, blogs, and phone calls, to alert producers to new state and federal aid programs. We have shared resources developed by other CCE colleagues on the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL), and Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP).

Mary Kate has provided individual assistance to more than a dozen farms on topics related to PPP, EIDL, employee management, price risk management, value added processing, and other concerns directly related to COVID-19.

We still face considerable uncertainty about the path of the virus and the economy going forward. Given the ongoing risks, our team will continue to adapt our communication and programming, explore new technologies, and stay connected with farmers as best we can.

No one says it better than Andrew Novakovic, Cornell Professor Emeritus, who thinks *“we’ve seen the worst of the price drops, which is great, but my guess is that markets will be unsettled for the foreseeable future and that the pandemic is not done playing games with us.”*

SMALL DAIRY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Fay Benson, Small Dairy Support Program Director

The Small Dairy Support Program has been housed at the Cortland CCE Office for the past 17 years. It is a grant supported program started by Fay Benson, which seeks outside funding to provide education and research which supports small dairies in Cortland and across the state. Currently the Cornell South Central NY Dairy Team provides a portion of Fay’s salary and programming efforts but up to 80% or more of the funds for the program come from outside sources. An indirect fee of 10-12% of the outside funds go to Cortland CCE administration costs.

During the pandemic much of the outreach has been curtailed and much of Fay’s work has switched to video production, print media articles and virtual presentations. Some direct contact with farmers has continued though (SARE). He also attended three outdoor pasture walks this summer.

Indirect or virtual presentations included:

- Custom Grazing Dairy Heifers article in *Progressive Dairyman*
- Organic Forage Resilience with video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GmD_NjdOXjI
- Ithaca Elementary Class presentation on grazing and soil health: Included video

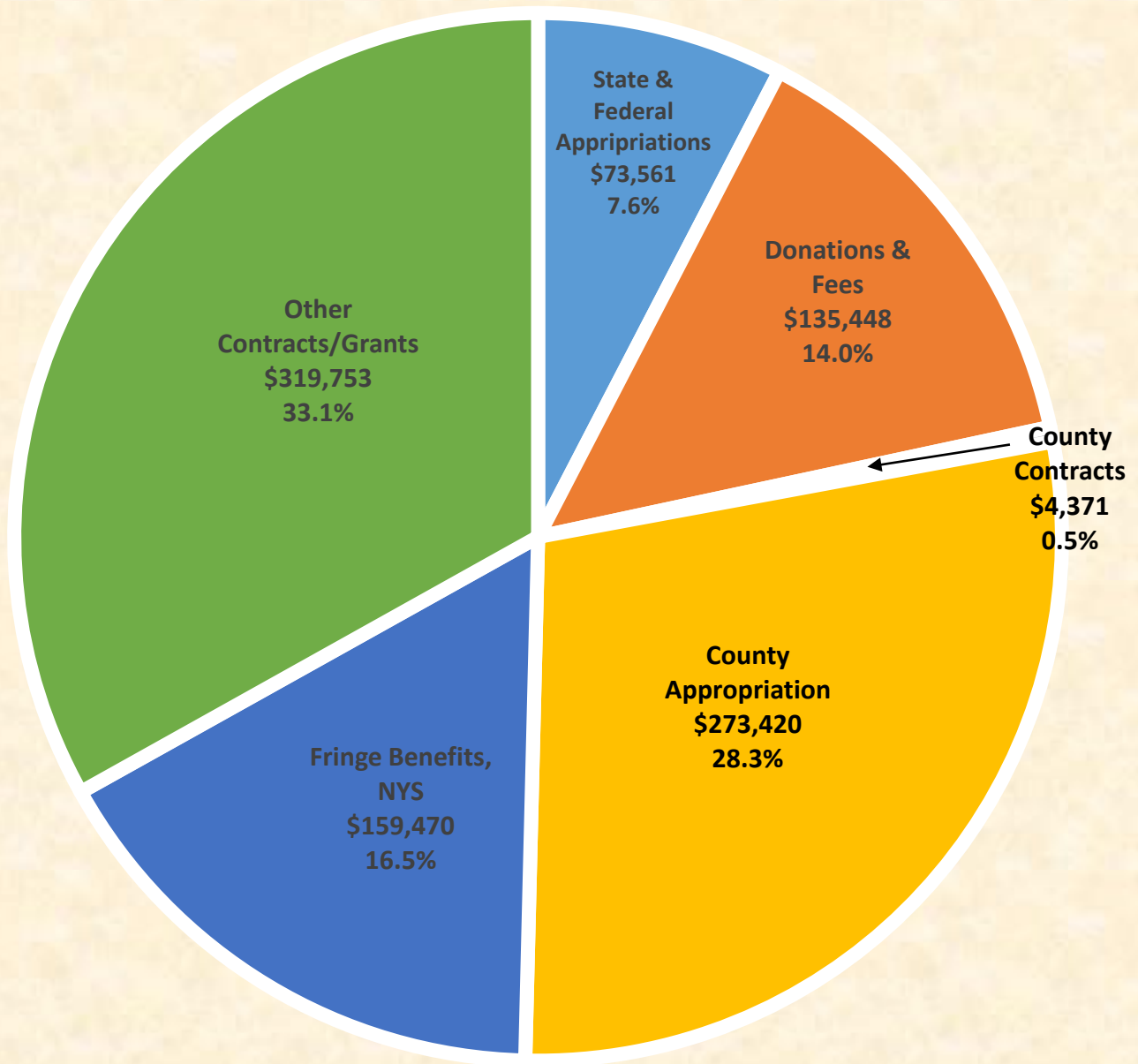
Direct Presentations:

- Regular visits to three farms for data collection on a pasture soil compaction grant from UDSA’s Sustainable Research and Education.
- Three outdoor pasture walks
- Individual pasture visits to four farms

Winter Programming (all virtual):

- NY Organic Dairy Task Force December 8th
- NY Certified Organic Discussion Group; Jan. 12, Feb. 9th, March 9th.
- NE Pasture Consortium Video meetings every Wednesday in February and March

Total Expenditures \$966,023



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OF CORTLAND COUNTY

CCE – CORTLAND BOARD

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CCE – CORTLAND STAFF

David Rutherford	Executive Director
Dana Havas	Agriculture Team Leader
Rebecca Ireland-Perry	4-H Team Leader
Barbara Henza	Subject Educator II
Claudia Hitt	Horticulture Educator
Emily Fusco	AmeriCorps Service Member
(vacant)	4-H Camp Owahta Director
Jackie Hartnett	4-H Admin. Assistant II
Cathy Heller	Finance Coordinator

Beau Harbin - County Legislator

Paul O'Conner – Cornell State Ext. Specialist

Renee Smith Mooneyhan - Cornell State Ext. Specialist

PROGRAM COMMITTEES

Matt Sharpe	Mary Mackey
Colleen Currie	Yvonne Moore
Syd McEvoy	Eric Law
Joel Riehlman	Laura Rath Brown, DVM
JoEllen Roehrig	Brandon Brown
Jean Sutton	Neal Helms
Olivia Hersey	Mary Dykeman
Linda Helms	Susan Prier
Pat Twentyman	Lindy Glennon
Shirley Marshall	Mary DeMunn
Martha Bush	

SCNY DAIRY AND FIELD CROPS

A. Fay Benson	Small Dairy Support Specialist
Janice Degni	Team Leader/Area Field Crops
Donette Griffith	SCDFC Admin. Assistant II
Betsy Hicks	Area Dairy Management Specialist
Melanie Palmer	Agriculture Educator
Mary Kate MacKenzie	Farm Business Management Specialist

MASTER GARDENERS:

Claire LeRoux	Lori Megivern
Claudia Hitt	Wendy Compagni
Nancy Meo Henry	Miriam Astacio
Dianne Higgins	Patrizia Sione
Kathy Taylor	Pat Twentyman
Sarah Chilson	Donna Evans-Orr
Kathy Homestead	Kim Dupcak
Charlotte Altmann	

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