It almost seems surreal to think back to January and February 2020 and how we were planning for the county fair, hosting the Southern Tier Crop Congress, preparing for 4-H events such as the Skill-a-Thon and Public Presentations and scheduling Agriculture Literacy week.

By March 15, we were working remotely and trying to navigate the new realities of our world. While preparing to write this, I Googled “The Meaning of the Number 2020.” While I don’t study or know anything about numerology, it struck me how well the number “2020” related to different ways the staff of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Allegany County handled their professional lives during this pandemic and the sudden shift in how we do our jobs.

The article that I read stated that “the energy represented by the number 2020 has a resonance of focus and relationships.” Several characteristic interpretations containing the following ideas that I saw staff, the community, and volunteers demonstrate include:

- **Relationships** – I like to think we are a tight and supportive group. What I saw during COVID was how relationships blossomed within untraditional networks and across programmatic lines. An example of this is seeing 4-H, agriculture, nutrition and volunteers working food distributions to ensure food was reaching families in need.

- **Pragmatism** – Pragmatism is a practical approach to problems and affairs. We learned to “meet people where they” are and we found the best solutions to providing education while balancing home life. We learned how to teach online, making and editing videos. We sang happy birthday on staff ZOOM calls. We learned to be more forgiving of one another, recognizing that we were all dealing with our own individual challenges.

- **Teamwork** – The concept of teamwork was exemplified by our staff who worked together to ensure everyone was safe, while still serving our community. Through the efforts to bring dairy products to the community while local farms were dumping milk not needed by restaurants and schools. When the county fair and livestock auction needed to be adapted, I saw resilience and grace in our staff who worked together with volunteers to solve complex issues.

While none of us want to repeat 2020, it leaves me with a sense of gratitude that we could grow individually and collectively, finding new ways to care for one another despite the seemingly insurmountable obstacles put in front of us.

Sincerely,

**LAURA HUNSBERGER**
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COVID-19 RELIEF DAIRY DRIVE AT WHITESVILLE CSD.
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SOUTHWEST NEW YORK DAIRY, LIVESTOCK, & FIELD CROPS TEAM
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CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION IS AN EMPLOYER AND EDUCATOR RECOGNIZED FOR VALUING AA/EEO, PROTECTED VETERANS, AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AND THAT PROVIDES EQUAL PROGRAM AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.
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.
ABOUT 4-H
The goal of 4-H is to develop citizenship, leadership, responsibility and life skills of youth through experiential learning programs and a positive youth development approach. Though typically thought of as an agriculturally focused organization as a result of its history, 4-H today focuses on citizenship, healthy living, science, engineering, and technology programs.

THE NEW NORMAL
Like for most, COVID-19 had an enormous impact on our 4-H Program. Our hand on, learn by doing model needed to be completely restructured. Thankfully we are a “think out side the box” program as well. With all the challenges COVID-19 presented our 4-H volunteers, members and staff were ready with alternatives. Much of our programming now relies on a virtual platform, despite the limitations this presents, it also invites new and innovative collaborations. 4-H programs throughout the state have been working together closely to offer all our members a wide variety of programming options.

PROGRAMS

PRODUCED IN NEW YORK COOKING CONTEST
This educational event gives youth an opportunity to showcase food preparation and presentation skills. Youth gain skills in ideal nutrition practices while adapting recipes, learning about nutritional value of ingredients and planning well balanced meals.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS
4-H Public Presentations is a program in which youth learn to create a presentation and develop the skills needed to present it before an audience. They learn about the research process and the steps needed to organize information into an interesting presentation.

LIVESTOCK SKILL-A-THON
Is a quiz competition where all the questions are about beef, sheep, swine, and meat goat topics.

CLOTHING REVUE
The purpose of the 4-H Fashion Revue is to cast the spotlight on youth in sewing, needlework and fashion projects.

DAIRY & HORSE BOWL
These are quiz competitions where students use a game-show style buzzer in order to be acknowledged and answer questions. All questions are related to either horse or dairy topics.

HORSE COMMUNICATIONS
Is the same as the 4-H Public Presentations program, however all topics are equine related.

COUNTY FAIR
For a week in July each year, 4-H youth have an opportunity to share and showcase the projects they’ve been working on, at the County Fair. Highlights include: 4-H livestock shows, Market Animal auction, plant science projects, entomology displays, and public presentations.

THE NEW YORK STATE FAIR
Youth from almost every county come together to show off the work they have done over the past year. From cows to cooking, and pigs to photography, there are hundreds of projects on display at the fairgrounds.

THE STORY PROGRAM
The Science & Technology Opportunities for Rural Youth grant continues despite the challenges presented by COVID-19. Modifications have been made to reach our audiences and will continue to offer exciting STEM based programs for our youth.

4-Her, Sydney, and her vegetable garden.
BE A PART OF AMERICA’S LARGEST YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION.
EFNEP PROGRAM

EFNEP is a federally-funded nutrition education program for families delivered through Cornell Cooperative Extension Services of Allegany County. The program helps participants: increase their ability to select and buy food; learn skills in food preparation, storage and sanitation; and better manage their food budgets.

The EFNEP program provides nutrition education to low-income families and children throughout New York State with hands-on, interactive workshops to help participants improve food and physical activity behaviors, food resource management, food safety and food security.

WORKSHOP SERIES INCLUDES:

- Food Nutrition Education in Communities (9 weeks)
- Healthy Cents (9-12 weeks)
- Breastfeeding (10 weeks)

THE NEW NORMAL

Pre-COVID-19, programs were delivered with hands-on workshops either in a classroom setting or in participant’s homes. During COVID-19: program delivery has been virtually using Zoom, outdoor settings and in a classroom setting allowing for social distancing with no hands-on food demonstrations.

We have been collaborating with The CORE Learning Center (Literacy West) in Allegany County. This has been helpful as several participants do not have internet capabilities and they have 2 large classrooms which allows for social distancing.

We are in the process of starting a collaboration with BOCES in Belmont. We have been recording cooking videos and with the help of their Graphics Arts class; they will be editing the videos to make them ready for Facebook and/or YouTube.
SNAP-ED PROGRAM

Our goal is to provide tools, tips and tricks that help make nutritious food choices within a limited budget and to choose active physical lifestyles. Our motto is "Save Time, Save Money, Eat Healthy."

SNAP-Ed’s main activities are providing face-to-face nutrition workshops as well as virtual lessons. Both forms of communications provide information to both youth and adults in the form of single or a series of classes. Workshops can involve cooking demonstrations or just information on making healthier choices, better beverage choices and learning to eat healthy on a budget.

THE NEW NORMAL

SNAP-Ed has made great strides and innovative ways to reach our SNAP eligible participants, which has become more important than ever. Nutrition workshops are being delivered through Zoom in the classrooms, Food Pantries, Salvation Army, Catholic Charities, and the YMCA among a few. Through our online workshops we have been able to reach a wider audience. Additionally, we are offering nutrition information and cooking demonstrations to older students and parents in their home.

The new SNAP-Ed NY website offers a wealth of information and videos. There is now an open Google Calendar on the website, which allows people to access classes they may not have attended previously due to travel restrictions or a variety of other reasons. Audiences that we may not have reached before, are now able to see when nutrition workshops are being offered and can join by the Zoom link provided.

PROGRAMS

- Adult Curricula
- Eat Smart, Live Strong
- MyPlate for My Family
- Eat Health, Be Active
- Cooking Matters
- Store Tours
- Youth Curricula
- CATCH Cafeteria
- Serving Up MyPlate
- Cooking Matters Kids/Teens
- Eat Fit
- Cookshop
- PSE (Policy, Systems, Environmental)
- SNAP-Ed Farm to Community Site
- School Wellness, Smarter Lunchroom
- Community Prevention Training

SNAPEDNY.ORG

SMALL CHANGES, BIG DIFFERENCE

SNAPEDNY.ORG/SOUTH-WESTERN-REGION

Facebook.com/SNAP-ED-NY

“I HAVE NOT FAILED. I’VE JUST FOUND 10,000 WAYS THAT WON’T WORK.”
ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT
The Agriculture and Natural Resources Department provides assistance to agri-forestry and commercial farms; for aspiring or beginning farmers, transitioning farmers, or those seeking exit strategies. We also provide assistance with diagnostic services such as: insect & plant identification, soil, tissue & water testing, and feed analysis for both commercial businesses as well as residents within the county.

MAIN PROJECTS
Dairy remains the largest agricultural sector in Allegany County. In the past 12 months, 85% of dairy operations have attended programs and/or received services offered through extension.

We also brought back the popular Southern Tier Crop Congress program by working with the newly formed SWNY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops team. Program covered updates in field crop, forage production, and provided information about the newest products on the market. DEC recertification and CCA credits were available for attendees.

The Annual Rural Landowners Workshop was held in March with 118 attendees. The opening session "Don’t Get Ticked, NY" with Dr. Amara Dunn, Biocontrol Specialist NYS IPM Program appropriate as ticks have been prevalent in 2020. Best Practices on a Small Wooded Acreage, Crop Tree Mgmt., Invasive Species, Pollinator Habitat, & Deer Mgmt., were also covered.

COVID was not the only challenge in 2020. The coldest spring on record since 1965 delayed the growing season. Added weather challenges later in the season of drought for some sections of our county. There were many questions from both farmers and residents regarding replanting and shorter season crop varieties in the spring followed by summer weed control and disease inquiries.

As in past years understanding regulations for direct marketing of farm products was a hot topic for 2020, compounded by disruptions in supply chain and panic buying early on in the pandemic. CCE’s comprehensive workshops cover rules and regulations for sale of farm and certified kitchen products direct to consumers. Additionally, one-on-one consultation were offered to guide producers on how best to meet the growing demand for locally-produced foods.

THE NEW NORMAL
Face-to-face programs were limited in the 2020 growing season however we were able to support farmers throughout the pandemic. Agriculture staff, considered essential workers, were available by phone, email, conference call and appointment at the office or on-farm. We worked hard to assist with submitting of forage, water or soil test samples and developing farm plans for food safety and NY Forward COVID-19 reopening. Resources were also provided to Farmers Markets within the county to help them complete COVID plans and open safely.

Additional, online trainings were offered this year statewide. Efforts across the Cornell Cooperative Extension system have created an opportunity to bring expertise from across the state to farmers in our county.

LYNN BLIVEN PROVIDING NYS HAND SANITIZER TO FARMS.
1,100 FAMILIES SERVED IN DAIRY DRIVE THRU

430 FARM EMPLOYEES RECEIVING FREE SANITIZER

120 FOOD BOXES FOR FARMS

63 FARMS ASSISTED IN NAVIGATING REGULATIONS

2 FARMS BECAME GAP CERTIFIED

PROGRAMS OFFERED
- Beginning a Successful Small Farm Operation Workshops
- Beef Quality Assurance
- Beef Cattle Behavior & Handling
- Small Farm Irrigation Training
- Beef Quality Assurance Transportation
- Southern Tier Crop Congress
- Produce Auction Winter Grower Meeting
- Beginning Farmer Sheep Production & Business courses
- Rural Landowners Workshop
- Equine Pasture Management
- Farmers Market Meetings
- Dairy Drive Thru Events
- GVPB COVID training
- Dairy Calf Health and Cattle Locomotion online training
- Direct Marketing Beef: Pre & Post Harvest Considerations
- On-Farm Poultry Processing
- GVPB Summer Grower Meeting
- Livestock Pasture Walk
- Dairy Pasture Management

LYNN BLIVEN: CELEBRATING 30 YEARS WITH CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION.
ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT
We aim to assist the community, answering questions pertaining to agriculture/horticulture issues, whether it be commercial farming, personal small scale gardening, invasive species identification/management, soil testing and educational programs.

MAIN PROJECTS

STORY PROGRAM
A [flexible] 8 week program aimed to challenge children grades 6-12 outside of school. The goal is to engage them in developing solutions to problems that are related to agriculture. Topics include: environmental science, alternate energy, engineering and robotics, and plants and animal science.

MASTER GARDENERS
A group of passionate gardeners, with expertise based around horticulture. They volunteer their time to help the community by answering gardening/horticultural questions, presenting educational programs and running programs like the soil pH clinic. The community at-large is then more prepared to also excel in gardening, invasive species, plant identification, and growing techniques.

PROGRAMS OFFERED
- Classes on: Pruning, Composting, Gardening, Spring Bulbs, Potatoes, Perennials, Weeds, Invasive Species, & Composting
- Soil pH clinics: twice a year, free pH tests
- Forest Wood Walks: Tree identification and more
- Information booth at local farmers markets
- Master Gardener Helpline

THE NEW NORMAL
Since COVID – 19 the Master Gardener Volunteers have had to make a switch from their usual face to face interactions and hands on presentations/programs to going strictly online. Horticulture is a very hands on topic, a lot of the difficulty that comes with online presentations is inability to constantly be interacting with those in front of them. On a brighter note, the Master Gardeners are progressively improving, our Master Gardeners are stepping up during a difficult time and the amount of participants that attend our zoom presentations is gradually getting larger.

2x PER YEAR FREE SOIL pH CLINICS
400 MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER HOURS
37 MASTER GARDENER HOTLINE CALLS
11 VIRTUAL / IN-PERSON PROGRAMS

YOU DON’T HAVE TO BE GREAT TO START, BUT YOU HAVE TO START TO BE GREAT.
ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT
Simply put, Farm to School programs help connect K-12 schools with local farms. One way to do this is to serve locally sourced ingredients in the cafeteria. Another avenue is through Ag in the Classroom, or teaching students about food and farming through hands-on learning.

MAIN PROJECTS
- The NY 30% Initiative
- NY Thursdays
- NY Ag in the Classroom
- Farm to School Processing Partnership
- Farmers Market Nutrition Promotion Outreach
- Tower Garden Indoor Hydroponic Growing Systems

THE NEW NORMAL
All of America’s front-line workers, including farmers and school cafeteria staff, have been stressed more than ever throughout the last nine months. There has been an uncertainty for many Cafeteria Managers about school food regulations, what they should be serving, and whether students will be in-person or remote on any given day. Luckily, we are resilient in Western New York. The ground work this program has been laying since 2018 has proven itself useful to keep Farm to School alive during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of our educators are continuing to incorporate agricultural and garden-based concepts in their curricula and our Cafeteria Managers are continuing to serve local ingredients as much as possible.

It is a precarious time for Farm to School. This department is available when school or community personnel need assistance, but we are maintaining a respectful distance knowing that feeding and teaching children in general is something to not take for granted at the moment. Our current operational focus is planning for next year, writing grants, developing new curriculum, conducting evaluation research on local food procurement, and keeping our school stakeholder as up to date as possible with an ever-changing game board.

SERVICES OFFERED
TEACHERS
- Creating networking activities for teachers
- Lesson planning
- Guest teaching
- Grant writing
- School/community relations
- Marketing

CAFETERIA MANAGERS
- Finding local products
- Grant writing
- Highlighting cafeterias in the local news
- Deciphering the NY 30% Initiative
- Developing new recipes
- Tracking NY purchases
- Procurement assistance
- Administrative advocacy
- Staff training
INDOOR/OUTDOOR SCHOOL GARDENS

$100,000 + SPENT ON LOCAL FOOD AT SCHOOLS

6 /12 DISTRICTS SPENT 30% OF BUDGETS ON LOCAL FOOD

$90,000 IN FARM TO SCHOOL FUNDING

4 DISTRICTS RAISE ANIMALS AT SCHOOL

YOU NEVER FAIL UNTIL YOU STOP TRYING.
THE CORNELL VEGETABLE PROGRAM

In Allegany County, the largest fresh market vegetable outlet is the Genesee Valley Produce Auction in Centerville, NY. At the outset of the COVID-19 outbreak, CVP specialists Reid and Buck, along with local CCE Ag Educator Lynn Bliven actively reached out to NYSDAM to ensure that Produce Auctions were classified essential businesses. We worked as primary contacts to ensure compliance with NYSDOH and CDC guidance. As the target audience has limited-to-no phone or internet access, a personalized and print outreach effort was made. By educating auction management the CCE team was able to help this business begin their season on the right side of the regulations and stay open. Signage, COVID-19 policy, and NY Forward Business safety plans were provided with support to implement compliance.

322 CONTACT HOURS
36 FARM CONSULTATIONS IN COUNTY

SOUTHWEST NEW YORK DAIRY, LIVESTOCK, & FIELD CROPS TEAM

Our objective is to collaborate with County CCE Educators to meet the needs of dairy, livestock, and field crop producers across the five county region of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, and Steuben. We strive to bring timely, research based information to producers to promote best management practices and success with their businesses.

PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

The SWNYFLC Team’s main activities are to perform farm consultations, applied research within the region, and develop educational materials and programs to meet the needs of producers with timely, research based information.

- Southern Tier Crop Congress
- Produce Auction Grower Meetings
- WNY Farm Show Pasture Management Presentation
- Automated Milking System Discussion Group
- Virtual Dairy Discussion two part series
- Virtual Poultry Management Series with 4 sessions
- SWNY Beef Industry Virtual Summit
- On-Farm Dairy Processing Webinar
- Virtual Pasture Management Series with 3 sessions
- CORE Pesticide Training Virtually offered 4 times
- Dairy and Beef Farm Business Summaries
- Nutritional Variability of Forages on Dairy Farms
- Risk Management on Farms Grant Project
- Western Bean Cutworm Moth Monitoring
- Weed Mgmt. in Field Crops - Monitoring and Research
- Beginning Farmer Training Program for WNY Minority and Low-Resource Farmers

1,709 DIRECT FARM CONSULTATIONS THROUGHOUT REGION
4,882 PARTICIPANTS (EVENT & DIRECT)

DON’T LET YESTERDAY TAKE UP TOO MUCH OF TODAY.
**GRANT AWARDS**

- **New York State Department of Education, 21st Century Community Learning Center GVCS.**
  CCE Allegany is a partner with Genesee Valley School to deliver 4-H programming in an extended school day setting. *Funded $5,000/annually. Duration: September 2017 - June 2022.*

- **NYS Department of Education via Senator Cathy Young.**
  Implementation of an Ag in the Classroom Program
  *Funded $20,000. May 2019 – March 2020*

- **Appalachian Regional Commission (via Southern Tier West).**
  Job and Life Skills Boot Camp: Seek It and Keep It!
  *Funded: $83,758. September 2018 – February 2020*

- **NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets Farm to School Grant**
  From Carrots to Curriculum: Assessing the Feasibility of a Farm to Cafeteria Program.
  *Funded: $43,000. March 2018 - 2020
  *Funded $89,911. January 2020 - December 2021*

- **The Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation - STEM 2035:**
  SE Michigan and WNY Out-of-School.
  The STORY Project: Science and Technology Opportunities for Rural Youth.
  *Funded: $250,000 for the 4-county area ($56,991 for Allegany) September 2018 – 2021*

- **Appalachian Regional Commission (via Southern Tier West)**

- **New York State Office of Temporary Disability and Assistance (OTDA)**
  Southwestern NY SNAP-Education Program.
  *Funded: $300,000 annually. Oct. 2019 – Sept. 2024*