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# CCE Staff

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Connie Ebel • Administrative Assistant  
Ruth Smith • Finance Assistant

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AG & NATURAL RESOURCES  
Sharon Bachman • Ag & Natural Resources Educator  
Megan Burley • Farm Business Management Educator  
Jolie Hibi • Administrative Assistant

**FARM TO SCHOOL**  
Becky O’Connor • Farm to School Coordinator

**TASTE NY STORE**  
Kristine Lowden • Taste NY Asst. Market Manager

**CONSUMER HORTICULTURE**  
Sharon Bachman • Ag & Natural Resources Educator

**4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**  
Sara Jablonski • 4-H Educator - Urban  
Tammi Kron • 4-H Educator - Livestock  
Teresa Tokasz • 4-H Educator - Clubs  
Lynn Riley • Administrative Assistant

**HARVEST NEW YORK - WNY**  
Cheryl Thayer • Ag Economic Development Specialist  
Esther Kibbe • Berry Specialist  
Anika Zuber • Dairy Processing & Marketing Specialist

**CORNELL VEGETABLE PROGRAM**  
Julie Kikkert, Robert Hadad, Christy Hoepting, Judson Reid, Elizabeth Buck, Caitlin Vore

**CORNELL LAKE ERIE REGIONAL GRAPE PROGRAM**  
Timothy Weigle, Kevin Martin, Andy Muza

**NUTRITION**  
EAT SMART NEW YORK!  
Nicole Maline • Project Manager  
Patty Hammond • Senior Nutritionist  
Xyricka Ferry • Senior Nutrition Educator  
Martina Hohl • Nutrition Educator  
Brittany Perry • Nutrition Educator  
Unique Brown • Nutrition Educator  
Melissa Kimbrell • ESNY Assessment & Evaluation

**EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM**  
Kathleen Clayton • Nutrition Educator

**HEALTHY CORNER STORE**  
Sheila Bass • Healthy Corner Store Coordinator

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**Extension Foundation**

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Tama Gresco-Saurs  
**TREASURER**  
Martha Filadora  
**MEMBERS**  
Richard Barber  
Holly Koss

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Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and educator recognized for valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities; and provides equal program and employment opportunities.
Board President & Executive Director’s Message

- Identified through the systemwide Cornell Cooperative Extension strategic planning process, the values of collaboration, community engagement, credibility, diversity and inclusion, partnership, and volunteerism are central to our association’s work in Erie County. We are committed to continually assessing and reevaluating our work, and the environment in which we offer programming to respond to needs in our community. New and/or growing program areas in 2018 include:
  - Healthy Corner Store Initiative and Farm to School. Read more about these exciting programs in the following pages.
  - Taste NY Market. In late August, the Lt. Governor and other elected officials celebrated the Grand Opening of the WNY Welcome Center in Grand Island, the location of a Taste NY Market operated by CCE Erie via a contract with the NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets. Taste NY offers new economic opportunities for producers in Erie County and WNY by showcasing local and regional food and beverages.

- With programming occurring in all areas of Erie County, CCE Erie educators are often on the road traveling to a variety of sites to offer workshops/trainings, and to businesses/organizations to provide technical assistance. The nature of the work has led us to house staff in offices in South Buffalo, downtown Buffalo, and at our main location in East Aurora. With a goal to create a hub for CCE Erie work, the Board of Directors Capital Project Committee renewed focus this year on finding a site to realize the vision of a CCE office/programming center. Satellite office space will continue to have value to our programming but a central location will offer improved visibility for the excellent programs offered in Agriculture, Nutrition, 4-H Youth Development, and Consumer Horticulture, which you can read about in this report.

- A most sincere thank you to the CCE Erie staff, volunteers, program participants, community partners, and county government who ARE Cornell Cooperative Extension of Erie County!

![Estimate of 2018 Operations Funding](image)

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**Nutrition**

**Eat Smart Western New York (ESNY)** is a nutrition education and obesity prevention program for low-income youth, adults, and seniors living in Western New York. Western New Yorkers eligible to receive SNAP (or other means-based programs like Medicaid or TANF) find fun and easy ways to eat more fruits and vegetables, drink fewer sweetened beverages, and be more physically active. Free workshops, cooking classes, grocery store tours, and community events throughout the year support these messages.

ESNY engages partnerships to maximize impact on the environments where people learn, live, eat, play, shop, work and worship. ESNY facilitates trainings for Smarter Lunchrooms, a movement to create lunchroom environments that make healthy food choices an easy choice for students. ESNY also supports healthy corner store initiatives (including the Buffalo Healthy Corner Coalition) which bring healthy food options into convenience store settings. In addition, the program facilitates healthy food pantry activities, and school and community garden collaborations. During the 2018 fiscal year, ESNY rolled out a regional marketing campaign to promote “Small Changes Make a Big Difference” highlighting that a healthy lifestyle is built one healthy decision at a time. This campaign utilized TV, transit tactics, and various types of media to reach the target population and share programmatic resources.

**ESNY by the Numbers in 2017-2018**

- 2,242 total ¹direct events (workshops, cooking classes, grocery store tours)
- 19,400 total ¹direct ⁴unduplicated events
  - 9,945 – ⁴unduplicated adults
  - 9,433 – ⁴unduplicated youth
- 15,329 total ¹direct ³duplicated events
  - 7, 314 – ³duplicated adults
  - 8, 015 – ³duplicated youth
- 277 total ²indirect events
- 15,284 total ²indirect event contacts

¹ participant is actively engaged
² no direct participant interaction (ie mass communication, displays)
³ participants attended more than one class in the year with the same topic
⁴ first time participants attended an event on that topic

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**The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)** has been delivered through Cornell Cooperative Extension since 1969. EFNEP helps low income families and children improve their nutritional well-being through a series of 8 hands on interactive lessons where participants learn and are encouraged to improve their food and physical activity knowledge, skills, and behaviors. In the 2017-18 program year 283 families enrolled in the program and of them 275 graduated. Throughout Erie County, EFNEP classes are delivered at agencies that help families with medical issues caused by obesity and overweight, and poor food choices. With 62% of Erie County residents battling the challenge of being overweight, this programming hits home for participants, many of whom share their struggles of eating healthy and choosing the right foods for a balanced diet.

“I had a positive experience with Eat Smart New York because I personally was recommended by my doctor to eat healthier; so when I saw this specific ad it was like a weight off my shoulder...I had been searching all over the net for a free legit site with available source of recipes, advice, tips and resources located in Erie County...I feel as if this was a perfect program for all my needs and wants” – Sourced from Crowley Webb evaluation of ESNY

Small Changes

“I want to teach my children how to buy food and look for the best prices. –Anon

“I learned how to read labels, something I never really paid attention to before. I’m also teaching my eighteen year old daughter why it’s important to look at the label and to choose foods low in sodium and fat.” –Anon
The Healthy Corner Store Initiative (HCSI) of Buffalo is a collaborative effort of 16 community organizations. This unique approach brings expertise and resources to address disparities in food access by engaging residents in a healthy lifestyle through partnerships with neighborhood stores.

In certain Buffalo zip codes there is limited access to supermarkets or grocery stores, however there are over 375 corner or convenient stores spread throughout the city. Many city residents rely on these corner or convenience stores as the source for their daily food needs. Currently, HCSI has seven participating stores located in four council districts in the City of Buffalo. These stores report average EBT (electronic benefits transfer – payment cards for issued SNAP benefits) sales of $6,000 - $25,000 per month, depending on store location. With more resources, there is opportunity to expand the number of HCSI stores. As many as 250 corner stores are located in underserved areas with limited access.

During the past year, HCSI increased its capacity and reach, which raised awareness and participation among local communities and stores.

A gentlemen came in the store and agreed to complete a survey regarding fruit...for completing the survey he received a $5.00 HCSI coupon to purchase fruits and vegetables at the store. He stated, “This is great, where do I get the fruits and vegetables from?” We pointed out the HCSI cooler fully stocked with fruits and vegetables. “Nobody told me that this was here.” He then proceeded to buy a full day’s produce.

The investment of these resources in Buffalo neighborhoods directly benefits local communities (families, children, and seniors), by providing access to and encouraging, healthier food choices.

- 25 monthly scheduled tabling/education events
- 20 HCSI store tours with local residents
- Healthy Corner Store Initiative Store exterior posters for two locations after one month
- 3,571 potential SNAP-eligible exposures

We shared information about the Healthy Corner Store Initiative and available resources that are in the store (with a woman who came in for a tour). (She) was shown the healthier choices that are identified in the store, including the GOOD FOR YOU shelf tags, HCSI cooler with fresh fruits and vegetables, and HCSI healthy choice grab and go baskets with fruits, vegetables, and healthy snacks. After the tour the participant stated, “I didn’t know all this was going on in this store, I will definitely shop here now!” The participant then held up the wheat bread and some fresh fruits as she went to the counter to pay for them.
4-H is a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship, and life skills as they work in partnership with caring adults.

4-H is positive youth development, hands-on learning, and based on research.

**4-H grows in Erie County in:**

- Healthy Living
- Civic Engagement
- Agriculture
- STEM

**In the 2017-18 program year:**

- 683 youth and 166 volunteers enrolled in Erie County 4-H; 33 active 4-H Clubs.
- A club mentorship program was started and 3 new clubs were chartered by May, 2018.
- Cornell Cooperative Extension’s Signature Program, New York 4-H Youth Community Action Network (Youth CAN) promotes civic engagement and workforce development among high need teens in Buffalo and Lackawanna:
  - 40 youth participated in college and career prep and civic engagement by becoming change agents in their communities. Partners are Global Concepts Charter High School in Lackawanna; Buffalo Public School #156 Frederick Law Olmsted; Buffalo Public School #207 Lafayette International; and Tapestry Charter School in Buffalo. Projects conducted by the groups included: production of a documentary "Who We Are: Youth Perspectives on Modern Discrimination"; Mental Health Awareness Day; raising awareness about recycling at Tapestry, Tapestry designated as Environmental Champions by the City of Buffalo.
- 151 youth participated in 4-H Science, Technology, and Engineering clubs at community centers throughout Buffalo through the Community Development Block Grant funded 4-H STEM After-School Program.
- 13 teens participated in Healthy Youth Positive Energy (HYPE) an after-school 4-H Club focused on promoting wellness for Buffalo students; HYPE teen leaders conducted a survey about access to halal, kosher, and vegetarian foods at four Buffalo schools; presented results to Buffalo Public School Food Service Director.
- Eight youth from Pratt Willert Community Center formed a FIRST Robotics First Lego League team to learn how to build and program Lego EV3 robots.
- 93 youth participated in summer STEM programs at Buffalo summer camps.
- 68 after-school educators trained in Positive Youth Development and 6 educators trained in Computer Science Education.

"My most memorable Youth CAN experience was volunteering at Kevin Guest House [a residency for family members of people in the hospital] because I helped cook ... This program has been very significant to my life because I would never have experienced these opportunities and built so many connections without 4-H Youth CAN."

- Youth CAN teen

"My most memorable Youth CAN experience was staying at Cornell for summer college... Without this program, I wouldn’t be the person I’m proud of being today, and not as deep and open-minded"

- Youth CAN teen

- 23 4-Hers attended State Teen Action Representative Retreat (STARR) at the NYS Fair grounds (3 served as planning committee members and event facilitators; 6 led workshops); 17 4-Hers attended Career Explorations at Cornell; 6 4-H members attended 4-H Capital Days in Albany.
- Jr Iron Chef had 25 participants at BPS #59 Southside Elementary; 32 youth participated in the Duds to Dazzle Competition; Textile review had 20 youth participants.
- 120 people participated in National Youth Science Day at Seneca Babcock Community Center, October 2018; theme was Incredible Wearables.
Over 300 youth participated in Public Presentations countywide:

- 16 Erie County 4-Hers participated in district presentations.
- 3 Erie County 4-Hers participated in the State Communication Institute.

3 Japanese Exchange students were hosted by 4-H families in August.

2,335 pre-K through 7th grade students made ice cream and butter, learned about plants, candled eggs, and learned about bees in Ag in the Classroom programs with the support of NYS Senator Gallivan.

At the Erie County Fair: 664 animals were exhibited by 164 4-H Livestock program youth, and there were 2,083 youth development entries.

115 still exhibit went to the NYS Fair; 17 received purple rosettes (the most awarded to any county) and 1 received a blue rosette, recognized as best overall in its class.

59 animal program educational opportunities for youth in beef, sheep, swine, dairy, goat, horse, dog, rabbit and poultry programs, educating on livestock industries, YQCA (Youth for the Quality Care of Animals), showmanship, livestock judging, skillathon, challenges, marketing, other topics.

Ag Literacy week reached 1,106 students in grades K-4 in 6 different school districts and libraries educating students about the journey our food takes from Farm to Table. The book this year was “Before We Eat: From Farm to Table”.

The Pheasant Raise and Release program had 600 day old chicks dispersed to Erie County 4-H youth in June with 435 being released into natural habitat in September.

There were 19 market animals purchased and then resold to benefit the 4-H program’s development and purchase of educational materials for various program areas.

Youth in the poultry program raised 15 turkey and 72 chickens that were donated to the Food Bank of Western NY.

9 leaders and 151 youth participated in the 4-H Horse Program:

- The Horse program continued to help make the program grow by offering unique educational opportunities, shows and competitions, and continued to stress the importance of safety.

Partnered with the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens again in the spring and fall, educating the public about animals and the 4-H program.

Held 2nd Annual Pie and Cookie 4-H Fundraiser in conjunction with the livestock market sales at the fair; generated $12,000 to support the Erie County 4-H Program. 4-Hers making cookies for the fundraiser participated in a workshop prior to the fair to learn the science of cookie making.

5 youth participated in the classroom portion of the Tractor Safety program.

2 Erie County 4-Hers are members of the NYS Livestock Skillathon team and will travel to Louisville, KY in November to compete nationally.

10 youth participated in the new Llama/Alpaca 4-H program.
Harvest New York’s goal is to spur agricultural economic development in New York State with specialists in the following areas: Dairy Food Processing and Marketing; Local Food Distribution and Marketing; Urban Agriculture; Farm-Based Beverages; Livestock Processing and Marketing; Farm Strategic Planning. Harvest New York is funded by New York State.

**Increased market opportunities for NYS farms agricultural businesses:**

- Worked with the Buffalo Public School District to support increased access to healthy food options offered to students.
- Offered a two-day GAP training to all growers interested in selling their produce through Eden Valley Growers/Food Hub. The food safety training attracted nearly 30 area produce farmers, some of whom went on to get third-party certified.
- Provided assistance to the NYS craft beverage industry to support its continued growth.
- Held Twilight Field to Pint tour following the life-cycle of a pint of New York craft beer, with educational opportunities at each stop.
- New project funded by the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County, and the General Mills Foundation, targets access to community supported agriculture (CSA) shares for low-income consumers in Buffalo.
- 13 people attended Preventive Controls for Qualified Individuals Workshop in East Aurora. This 2.5-day workshop communicated new FDA requirements for food safety plans to dairy and food processors.
- Discussion with 12 employees of Sorrento Lactalis regarding food safety and food quality factors in their Buffalo facility.
- 5 hour workshop in Buffalo to assist Upstate Niagara with food safety plans in 3 different plants.
- From January through October 2018, the Harvest New York Dairy Processing Specialists taught over 622 employees and generated over 9,000 contact hours.

The Cornell Vegetable Program is one of the premier regional agricultural Cornell Cooperative Extension programs in New York, serving 13 western and central NY counties. The Cornell Vegetable Program provides educational programs and information to growers, processors and agribusiness professionals, arming them with the knowledge to profitably produce and market safe and healthful vegetable crops, contributing to the viability of farms and the economic well being of New York State. Specifically, the program focuses on food safety, variety evaluation, market development, pest management, and cultural practices.

**Program highlights in Erie County:**

- The WNY Fresh Market Vegetable Twilight Meeting was held in Eden Valley on June 29th.
- CVP specialists presented at 3 Urban Ag Workshops hosted by CCE-Erie Co.
- As part of a CCE-regional agriculture team, Erie Co. growers were eligible to participate in 30+ educational programs held throughout the region during the past year.
- A two-year research program on wildlife management in sweet corn and cucurbits was completed. A video and final report on management of bird damage in sweet corn is available at [https://cvp.cce.cornell.edu/submission.php?id=512&crumb=pests|pests](https://cvp.cce.cornell.edu/submission.php?id=512&crumb=pests).
- The second year of a Precision Irrigation research project with University at Buffalo collaborators was completed, with several Erie Co. growers participating.
Research was conducted to evaluate vegetable production for both rural and urban farms.

Erie Co. growers participated in weed and disease management research for organic snap beans and table beets.

As part of a statewide trapping network, sweet corn insect pheromone traps were placed in Eden Valley and weekly reports were given to the growers and reported to the network coordinator.

Additional research in WNY by CVP specialists included mite & disease control in garlic, broccoli variety trials, ground barriers for swede midge insects in cole crops, food safety research, and optimizing the growth of vegetables in high tunnels, among others.


A fact sheet on Cleaning Produce Washing Equipment: Conveyor Washing System was completed and is available at https://cvp.cce.cornell.edu/submission.php?id=605&crumb=food_safety(food_safety).

The Lake Erie Regional Grape Program (LERGP) is a cooperative program between Cornell and Penn State Universities, Cornell Cooperative Extension Associations in Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Erie, and Niagara Counties, and Penn State Cooperative Extension - Erie County

LERGP extension team is leading the $1.35 million Vineyard Improvement Program.

LERGP extension team is the lead for the Outreach and Adoption portion for the $6 million grant project “Efficient Vineyard” which involves New York, Pennsylvania and California.

16 Coffee Pot meetings – 266 growers attended.

Publications - Lake Erie Vineyard Notes Newsletter (8) and LERGP Crop Update (28).

Podcasts – 51 new podcasts added bringing the total to 92 http://lergp.com/podcasts/.

23 growers participated in applied research projects involving grape rootworm, NDVI loaner sensor project, NEWA, grape berry moth.
Farm Business Management

General

• Collaborated with the Cornell Vegetable Program to include marketing topics in two fresh market vegetable growers meetings for 80 WNY vegetable growers, 20 of whom were from Erie County.
• Developed HR (Human Relations) curriculum (Good to Great-Improving Agriculture Labor Management) with the Cornell Farm Worker Program and the Eastern NY Cornell Vegetable Program. One eight hour workshop held at CCE Erie for 8 farm businesses with a total of 250 employees in Erie and Niagara Counties.
• In collaboration with the Erie County Dept. of Environment and Planning, provided an educational workshop for 30 municipal planning board members about Ag District Law; participants also received a tour of Phillips Family Farm.
• Developed a 4 Day Business Planning Workshop, Jumpstarting the Next Generation, with 10 Erie County farmer participants.
• Received funding from Towards Sustainability Foundation to do an organic vegetable field trial on two urban farms (Greenshoots for New Americans and GroundWork Market Garden) and the Lake Erie Regional Grape Program Research Farm. An urban farm field day was hosted following the trial with 8 urban farmers in attendance.
• The Erie County Ag News was one of 4 finalists in the National Association of Agriculture Agents. 120 farms in Erie County receive the Ag News.
• 300 people attended Sundaes on the Farm at Phillips Family Farm in North Collins. Plans are to hold an annual, county-wide, agricultural education event to inform consumers about farms and food production.
• Hosted by a CCE Erie Intern completing her Farm Business Management degree at SUNY Morrisville. She developed several videos and helped organize Sundaes on the Farm.

Beginning Farmer

• Individually consulted with 15 beginning farmers (beginning farmer is defined as a farmer who has been farming for less than 10 years) in Erie county on business and market planning.
• Hosted 2 Beginning Farmer Discussion Group workshops with 40 attendees.
• Hosted the first of 3 workshops with American-Farmland Trust, titled Putting Down Roots. 13 people attended including 4 refugees from Buffalo. These workshops are designed to prepare beginning farmers to find land in Erie County.

Refugee beginning farmer

• CCE Erie partnered with Journey’s End Refugee Services to provide technical assistance to improve and expand an urban farm for 12 refugees: 2,500lbs of produce was harvested with a profit of $8,800.
• Consulted and developed business and marketing plans for the Somali Bantu Community Farm in East Aurora - a rural farm with 30 Somali Bantu families working together to grow, harvest, and sell vegetables and cut flowers.

“I just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate your help and encouragement as I continue to work on the Somali Bantu Community Farm. It is a huge learning curve for me and not a day goes by where I am not quoting some advice you have given me along the way. Thank you! I am truly grateful!” - Anon
Agriculture and Natural Resources

WNY Forest Pest Taskforce

★ Held 5 WNY Forest Pest Taskforce meetings for stakeholders, private landowners, municipalities, industry reps, homeowners.

★ 38 people attended a forest pest workshop at Chestnut Ridge Park covering surveying for ecologically and agriculturally important invasive species and new technology to use in monitoring.

“I will pass along to other interested people and try to ID and locate infestations of Spotted Lanternfly and Hemlock Woolly Adelgids - participant at September Forest Pest Workshop

Monitoring for Invasive Fruit Fly

★ Completed sixth year of trapping for the invasive fruit fly pest, spotted wind drosophila (SWD), making one of the earliest in-season catches of SWD in the state.

★ One of the bio-control options being looked across the state is to attract hummingbirds to fields to feed on the SWD.

Bio Control Match Making

★ Completed year 2 of a three year project, Managing Lily Leaf Beetles through Parasitoid Release of Lily Leaf Beetle Biocontrol.

★ Continued to monitor and maintain the 50 oriental lily bulbs established at the Parkside Lodge near the Buffalo Zoo.

★ A bio-control release is planned for 2019, will continue to educate area gardeners about how bio-control will help them protect their lilies without pesticides, and once established in the region will spread naturally.

Bedding Plant School

★ 77 people attended Bedding Plant School (with many obtaining pesticide recertification credits), a partnership with the NY Flower Industries Association and area growers. Workshop focused on novel pest control strategies for commercial greenhouses, fertility programs for healthy plants, using bio-control in greenhouses, and scouting methods.
CommuniTree Steward Project

• The Buffalo Green Fund generously supported the third annual series of Erie County Communi-Tree Steward (CTS). Other local partners include the City of Buffalo, Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, Re-Tree and area horticulture businesses.

• 24 people completed the five-part series in March and April, bringing the total number of trained Stewards up to 52.

• The class series covers all aspects of caring for juvenile trees - biology, establishment, maintenance, pruning and ID.

• Assisted the Arbor Day Foundation in holding free tree distribution. Olmsted Parks and NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation, along with CTS volunteers, assisted in finding 250 young trees new homes to help replace the ash trees being lost to the Emerald Ash Borer.

“Great Classes! Glad I signed up. Looking forward to the volunteer opportunities!”  
– participant in the 2018 CommuniTree Steward Classes funded by the Buffalo Green Fund

Seed to Supper (S2S)

• Selected to partner with Cornell Garden Based Learning campus based staff on an Engaged Cornell project to serve as a member of the Seed to Supper Leadership Team for the current academic year.

• 18 community members, Master Gardener volunteers, and CCE staff members participated in a 5-part Seed to Supper series hosted by Food for All. Training included how to facilitate S2S workshops, and how to train adults to garden on a budget. Trained facilitators began projects in at least three locations.

Master Forest Owner (MFO)

• Interested woodlot owners are trained at Cornell and then offer free, customized assistance to woodland owners so these owners can reach management goals for their properties. This program is valuable as 94% of Erie County’s forested acres (196,400) are privately owned.

• Coordinated a woodswalk with NYS Forest Owner Association in Springville.

• Provided regular email notification regarding forestry education-related events and trainings for distribution to interested county residents; developed new marketing messages to increase awareness of the work of Master Forest Owners.

Master Naturalist

• Worked in collaboration with the Department of Natural Resources at Cornell University to establish a regional team of Master Naturalist volunteers from Erie/Niagara counties to lend assistance on regional
conservation issues and projects.

Collaborating with WNY PRISM, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, and WNY Land Conservancy, Master Naturalist volunteers work to improve, restore and protect local aquatic and terrestrial resources. Citizen scientists play an important role in identifying areas where invasive species are emerging, and monitoring can help to ensure a timely response to an invasion.

Farm to School (F2S)

CCE Erie’s Farm to School Program supports NY farmers by connecting schools and students with local foods and food system education. Funding for this program is from the NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets Farm to School program.

- A Farm to School Coordinator was hired to work directly with Buffalo Public Schools, Eden Central Schools, Alden Central Schools, and the Springville-Griffith Institute. The focus has been on increasing the volume of NY foods purchased by and served in schools, and improving awareness of and engagement in the Farm to School program.
- Held a regional training for 21 Food Service directors focused on procuring, serving, and promoting local foods.
- 4 guides and fact sheets were created to help schools purchase and serve more foods, and to help farmers learn about ways they can sell to schools.
- Worked with schools and regional distributors to determine best options for increasing the volume and availability of local products for schools.
- Assessed statewide interest in new farm to school NY products: grape and apple juice, 100% beef hot dogs, and beef Bolognese.
The CCE Master Gardener Program builds on community members’ passion for gardening by providing them with environmentally sound, garden-based educational opportunities. These trained volunteers then share their knowledge with fellow community members. Through the Program, volunteers gain knowledge of, and confidence in, applying science based gardening practices that prepare them to be peer educators. The Master Gardeners build relationships with community audiences to integrate local experience and research based knowledge in planning for and initiating steps to manage gardens, lawns, and landscapes with an emphasis on food security and environmental stewardship.

For a second year, the Master Gardener program participated in the Cornell Vegetable Variety Trial Garden. A number of counties across the state grow the same vegetable varieties and report to an on-line system how the plants perform in local growing conditions. These gardens were maintained with the Community Garden beds in the Seneca Babcock neighborhood, which is overseen by the Seneca St. Community Development Corporation. Youth visiting the garden enjoyed the ground cherries. In addition, some of the plants were grown in the WNY Food Bank garden, which provided an outdoor teaching lab for a neighborhood youth program to learn about gardening practices and where their food comes from.

A Snapshot:

* 85 active Master Gardeners
* 17 apprentices who are completing a two-year Program Apprenticeship
* 30 community projects
* 4,481 service hours provided to our local communities, along with 1,514 hours spent completing training to improve themselves as Master Gardeners
* Volunteer service estimated at over $100,636 in value.
* An additional 915 hours were spent fundraising to support the program’s educational efforts.
* Six public gardening workshops reached over 250 individuals with environmental sound gardening best practices.
* Program volunteers staff a garden question hotline throughout the year fielding over 1000 questions, conducting nearly 88 soil pH tests and processing over 55 diagnostic samples.

"Thank you for your prompt response and all your help. I will use the list of disease resistant tomatoes that you sent to select varieties for planting next year. It is nice to know that help is available so close to home.” - this person was assisted by hotline staff

"I just wanted to touch base to thank you for your help this spring with my backyard garden and the soil test results.... We ended up with over 400 tomatoes from about 15 plants, so it was a great! I appreciate your assistance!” - Anon
A Look Back: Annual Report 1916

On August 26th, 1916, the Department of Home Economics of the Erie County Farm Bureau began the active work in the field. It was organized as one of the projects of the Farm Bureau. The activities were put in charge of a man known as the supervisor of the Home Economics Department, who was responsible to the Farm Bureau Manager and the Executive Committee of the Farm Bureau Association. The Farm bureau was to supply the man for the first eight months only and was paid by private subscriptions. Money was raised to finance this work, and the surplus went to gain the efficiency of the work and the consumer.

On September 2nd, 1916, the first meeting was held in Hamlin, Erie County. There were 12 members present, and the meeting was called to order. The purpose of the meeting was to organize the Farm Bureau Association, the purpose of which was to develop the fundamental principles underlying various activities.

A new organization was formed, and the Farm Bureau Association was incorporated. The organization was divided into three main departments: Home Economics, Agriculture, and Extension Work. The Home Economics Department had the responsibility of generating new ideas and promoting rural improvement. The Agriculture Department focused on the production of crops and livestock. The Extension Work Department was responsible for the dissemination of information and knowledge to the rural community.

The meetings were held on a regular basis, with the attendance varying from 10 to 20 persons. The meetings were well-attended, with a total attendance of over 100 throughout the year.

The annual report highlighted the progress made in the department, including the establishment of a home demonstration club, the promotion of home economics, and the advancement of rural education. The report also acknowledged the efforts of the Farm Bureau Association in promoting the well-being of the rural community.

In conclusion, the annual report of 1916 reflected the dedication and hard work of the Farm Bureau Association in promoting the interests of the rural community. The organization continued to grow and expand, with the aim of improving the lives of farmers and their families.