

# Erie County Ag News

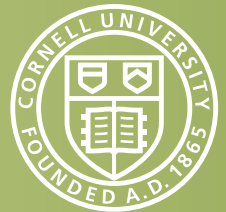
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Erie County

SPRING 2020



## IN THIS ISSUE

- Managing Blueberry Stem Gall Wasp
- Spotlight on Eden Valley Creamery
- SWNYDLFC Offers Winter Update
- Plant Health: Variety Selection
- WNY Buyer-Grower Conference
- Incubator Farms



## AG STAFF



**Sharon Bachman** [sin2@cornell.edu](mailto:sin2@cornell.edu)  
Agriculture and Natural Resources Educator  
Sharon wears many hats including Invasive Species Management Integrated Pest Management in the areas of fruit, field crops and forestry; Agricultural Environmental Management Practice Education; Soil Testing and Nutrient Management; Pesticide Use and Safety; Diagnostics in coordination with Cornell faculty and staff; and Master Gardener Technical Support.



**Becky O'Connor** [rao84@cornell.edu](mailto:rao84@cornell.edu)  
Farm to School Coordinator  
Becky focuses on helping Erie County Schools incorporate more New York grown and raised foods into their school meals as a part of their Farm to School Program. She also assists schools with implementing other aspects of Farm to School; including education and marketing.



**Elizabeth Buck** [emb273@cornell.edu](mailto:emb273@cornell.edu)  
Vegetable Specialist, Cornell Vegetable Program  
Elizabeth's programming focuses on Fresh Market Vegetable production with emphasis on weed and disease management. For a list of all CVP specialists, visit <https://cvp.cce.cornell.edu/specialists.php>.



**Cheryl Thayer** [cbt32@cornell.edu](mailto:cbt32@cornell.edu)  
Local Food Distribution & Marketing Specialist  
Harvest NY  
Much of Cheryl's programmatic work focuses on finding solutions to some of the more pressing systemic barriers that hinder the development of the regional food system in Western New York.



**Esther Kibbe** [ejp9@cornell.edu](mailto:ejp9@cornell.edu)  
WNY Berry Specialist with Harvest NY, with support from NYS Berry Growers Association  
Esther supports berry growers in Erie County and across Western NY by advising on production practices, especially site preparation and pest & disease management.



**Kathleen McCormick** [km864@cornell.edu](mailto:km864@cornell.edu)  
Agriculture Educator  
Kathleen assists next generation farmers in search of land, and farmers preparing for retirement, by connecting them with one another and to the tools, educational resources, and technical experts they need to achieve their goals.



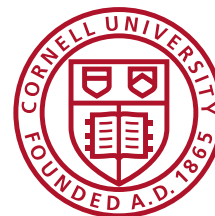
**John Whitney** [jrw44@cornell.edu](mailto:jrw44@cornell.edu)  
Agriculture Educator  
Drawing from his many years of diverse experience as the recently retired District Conservationist for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in Erie and Wyoming Counties, John will be assisting with program development and delivery, technical support, and training related to agriculture and food system awareness,



**Amy Barkley** [amb55@cornell.edu](mailto:amb55@cornell.edu)  
Livestock and Small Farms, SWNYDLFC  
Amy works on programming related to beef, sheep, goat, and poultry production; beginner farmer support; pasture and grazing management; meat quality trainings; and product marketing.

## Contents

- 2** Upcoming Ag Events
- 3** SWNYDLFC Livestock Specialist
- 4** NY Pork Producers Annual Meeting
- 5** Managing Blueberry Stem Gall Wasp
- 7** Spotlight on Eden Valley Creamery
- 9** Environmental Practices on Farms
- 10** International Workshop on Agritourism
- 11** SWNYDLFC Winter Update
- 13** 2020 International Year of Plant Health
- 14** Plant Health Series: Variety Selection
- 17** CORE Pesticide Training
- 18** Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Survey
- 19** You Don't Say...
- 22** Harvest NY Receives Grant
- 22** Finding Urban Land to Farm
- 23** QR Codes
- 25** Tree and Shrub Seedling Sale
- 25** Master Gardener Scholarship
- 26** 2020 Ag Enrollment Form
- 27** WNY Buyer-Grower Conference
- 29** Incubator Farms



**Follow CCE Erie on  
social media to  
receive up to  
date news and**

*Ag News design and layout by Jolie Hibit, CCE  
Erie Agriculture Administrative Assistant*

*Cover photo from pixabay.com*



# UPCOMING AGRICULTURAL EVENTS

## AROUND WNY

### Dry Beans Meeting

Tuesday, March 10 :: 9:00am - 12:00pm

First United Methodist Church

Batavia, NY

Join us for research and production updates on dry bean varieties and bean breeding, weed management, Western bean cutworm, and white mold disease.

Register at <https://cvp.cce.cornell.edu/event>.



### SWNY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Team Winter Update

Tuesday, March 10 :: 9:30am - 1:30pm

CCE Erie, Dard Hunter Hall

21 S. Grove Street, East Aurora

Meet the newly formed SWNYDLFC Team as they present timely and helpful information for your farm business.

See page 11 for registration information!

### CORE Pesticide Training

Thursday, March 26 :: 8:30am - 12:00pm

JCC - Carnahan Center

Jamestown NY

This course is designed for anyone who currently holds an Applicators License and needs CORE DEC re-certification credits.

See page 17 for registration information!



### Raspberries 101 Workshop

Wednesday, April 1 :: 5:30pm

CCE Wyoming

36 Center St, Room LC1, Warsaw, NY

This course, hosted by CCE Wyoming County, will help you get started growing raspberries, from selecting and preparing a planting site, to choosing varieties and planting them.

Register at <https://harvestny.cce.cornell.edu/>

### Western NY Buyer-Grower Regional Conference

Monday, March 23 ::

The Foundry Suites, Buffalo, NY

Provides networking forums and workshops to promote the ever-growing local food system in our region.

See page 27 for more information and registration details!

### Automated Milking System Discussion Group

Wednesday, March 4 :: 5:30 - 8:00pm

CCE Cattaraugus

28 Parkside Drive, Ellicottville

Join us for our next round of discussion groups focused on producers using Automated Milking System technology. The topic for this round will be "Daily Tasks and Routines" \$15/person, includes dinner.

Register at <https://swnydlfc.cce.cornell.edu/event.php?id=1070> registration details!

### 28th Annual Rural Landowners Workshop

Saturday, March 7 :: 9:00am - 3:00pm

Pioneer Central School

12145 County Line Road, Yorkshire, NY

The Rural Landowner Workshop is a regional program involving several agencies that provide educational information and outreach to landowners.

Register and find more information at <https://nysvga.org/register-for-meeting-online/>.

### Finding Urban Land to Farm

Saturday, March 28 :: 10:00am - 12:00pm

Journey's End Refugee Services

2495 Main St, Suite 530, Buffalo, NY

This workshop is for those interested in farming in the city of Buffalo, and what to consider when evaluating urban land for farming.

See page 22 for registration information!

# Amy Barkley Joins Southwest New York Dairy, Livestock and Field Crop Team as Livestock Specialist

Cornell Cooperative Extension's Southwest New York Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops Program (SWNYDLFC) is excited to welcome Amy Barkley as the Livestock Specialist. Amy will be working on programming related to beef, sheep, goat and poultry production; beginning farming support, pasture and grazing management, meat quality trainings, and product consistency and marketing. You can reach Amy at the Erie County CCE office in East Aurora: (716) 652-5400 ext 138 or [amb544@cornell.edu](mailto:amb544@cornell.edu).

Amy grew up on a small farm in Northeastern Pennsylvania, and earned her Bachelor's Degree in Animal Science with a minor in Poultry and Avian Science from Penn State University. After graduation, she attained her Master's Degree in Animal Science from Penn State, where her research focused in renewable, alternative bedding materials for broiler production and their impacts on broiler performance, welfare, and the environment. Following graduation, Amy worked in quality assurance for a national egg company, working with farms of all sizes across the nation to ensure compliance in food safety, nutrition, product quality, and animal welfare. Amy and her husband Zach reside in East Concord, NY on a farm which they are excited to make their own. In her free time, she tends to an extensive garden, small orchard, and honeybees, and loves cooking and baking. Amy is looking forward to working with area farmers to ensure their current and continued success. ■



Amy Barkley, Livestock Specialist with SWNY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Program.

*The Southwest New York Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Program (SWNYDLFC) is a new initiative that started in July 2019 as a partnership between Cornell University and the CCE Associations of the five county region that includes Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, and Steuben. SWNYDLFC Regional specialists work with Cornell Faculty and Extension Educators statewide to address the issues that impact the dairy, livestock, and field crops industries in New York through educational programming and events, consultations, and on-farm research. 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.*



***Foreign Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Planning  
Including a Disease Scenario Demonstration with Audience Participation***

The focus of the New York Pork Producers' Annual Meeting will be how to prepare for an on-farm crisis. The meeting will take place at the **Quality Inn, 2468 NYS 414, Waterloo, NY on Saturday March 21, 2020**. Registration will begin at 7:45 am with the program starting promptly at 8:30. Our featured speakers will be Cindy Cunningham –Vice President of Communications and Dr. Patrick Webb – Director of Swine Health Programs, both from the National Pork Board. The morning session will include a disease scenario demonstration with audience participation.

The afternoon will include Q & A session, Checkoff update as well as a NPPC update. The afternoon will conclude with the annual member meeting and board meeting.

Cost of the meeting will be \$10.00 per person, lunch included. To guarantee your spot please send your registration from, below or can be found on the website ([www.newyorkpork.org](http://www.newyorkpork.org)) and payment to New York Pork Producers. Registration deadline is **March 13**; there has been much interest in this training, it is suggested to register early! This meeting will include producers, state agency personnel, veterinarians plus others.

So far, the US has been fortunate to have strong biosecurity procedures at our borders to keep African Swine Fever at bay. The NY swine industry would be devastated if an outbreak occurred. Come and learn how to help protect your farm.

This one-day meeting will also feature a trade show and a silent auction. The silent auction always includes interesting, useful and fun items. A spirit of friendly competition reigns as participants enjoy bidding against each other. **Donations for the silent auction are open to everyone and are greatly appreciated!**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Registration Form – One registration per person**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to: New York Pork Producers**

**Mail: 5146 Transit Rd Depew, NY 14043**

**Upon receiving registration a receipt will be emailed.**

# Managing Blueberry Stem Gall Wasp in New York

Esther Kibbe, WNY Berry Specialist with Harvest NY

## The Wasp

In the past few months, several growers across WNY have observed stem galls in their blueberry fields. While somewhat uncommon, the blueberry stem gall wasp (*Hemadas nubilipennis*) is an insect native to Eastern North America. It is found in both low and high bush blueberry plants in the wild and in cultivated fields. In some regions and varieties the wasp can multiply to high levels, causing economic injury in commercial fields. The Jersey and Liberty varieties are very susceptible and have been hit hard in Michigan, while other varieties appear resistant or immune. (Fruit Grower News 6/18/19)

This wasp is very small and sometimes hard to spot, but the galls are more obvious. The galls are a protective structure for the developing eggs and larvae, where they feed and overwinter. The adults emerge from the galls in the spring, right around bloom time. Female wasps lay eggs in the blueberry stems, then stab the growing end of the stem several times, halting growth. The eggs hatch into larvae, which release hormones that trigger excessive tissue growth (the galls) that serves as the food for the larvae. Each gall will house multiple larvae. A grower in NY observed 2 periods of gall development, in the spring and later in the summer, but it is unknown whether this was a true 2nd generation, or simply some late-emerging adults. The wasps cannot fly far, so galls tend to appear in a limited area. Further spread is likely due to adults being blown to new locations.

Spray programs targeting other insects (such as cranberry and cherry fruitworms) may be suppressing this wasp in conventionally managed fields. Organic or low-spray operations have shown more frequent outbreaks of stem galls.



*Photo Esther Kibbe*



*Photo Esther Kibbe*





## Management

Blueberry stem gall wasps are only a concern in some susceptible varieties. There are no insecticides currently labeled (in New York) against this pest. However, there are some cultural control approaches, starting with planting resistant or tolerant cultivars, such as Bluecrop, Blueray, Spartan, Draper, Nelson and Elliott. Liberty and Jersey should be avoided. The susceptibility of other cultivars is not well documented.

If a grower has susceptible varieties with galls, the next cultural control is to prune out as many galls as possible during the winter. The galls should be burned or bagged and removed from the field. If the infestation is so severe that the entire plant is involved, consider removing the plants. There is some anecdotal evidence that eggs can be laid (and galls formed) on shallow roots as well as stems, so that adults could be emerging even when no galls are visible in the bushes, continuing the infestation. It is important to look for and remove galls while doing normal dormant pruning, to avoid a larger population developing to the point where economic harm occurs.

With the adult emergence coinciding with bloom, any potential chemical control would require extreme care to avoid harming pollinators. In Michigan, where this pest is a major concern, there is a special label for a pre-bloom spray, and some indication that petal fall sprays (after bees are removed) could reduce survival of larvae in galls. Similar special exemptions could be pursued in New York if growers are struggling with this pest. Contact Esther Kibbe (ejp9@cornell.edu) or Greg Loeb (gme1@cornell.edu) if you are dealing with blueberry stem gall wasp and would like Cornell to pursue a label exemption. ■

## Cornell Cooperative Extension Erie County



# 2020 EDUCATION DAY

Saturday, March 14, 2020

8:30am-3:00pm

Classics' V Banquet & Conference

2425 Niagara Falls Blvd,  
Amherst, NY 14228

### 🌿 Joseph Tychonievich, *renowned author*

*Rock Gardening: Reimagining a Classic Style*

*Great, Non-Wimpy Plants That You Don't  
Already Grow*

### 🌿 Joseph Han, *the English Gardener*

*Floriferous Design*

For more information, or to register visit  
[erie.cce.cornell.edu/gardening](http://erie.cce.cornell.edu/gardening)



# Spotlight on Eden Valley Creamery

John Whitney, Agriculture Educator, CCE Erie County

*This article is the second in a series focusing on vendors who are selling their wares at the Western New York Welcome Center's Taste NY Market. Thank you to Eden Valley Creamery team for taking the time to share their story and some marketing tips and strategies.*



Photo John Whitney

Eden Valley Creamery in South Dayton in Cattaraugus County is one of the newest farm-to-market, artisanal cheese and dairy product companies in New York State. The cheese plant and retail market is a value-added, diversified enterprise in direct association with the Eden Valley Organics dairy operation just down the road from the cheese plant and market. Eden Valley Creamery was established in 2017 and began marketing cheese early in 2019. The retail shop associated with the Dredge Road plant opened in July of 2019 and operates from 10AM-5PM, Monday through Saturday (closed on Sundays). Eden Valley Creamery (EVC) cheeses are among the many products being sold at the Taste New York Market at the Western New York Welcome Center.

Conor O’Gorman, a partner in the Eden Valley Creamery, explained they are just moving into phase 2 of their business plan as they expand product output and distribution. This phase includes bringing on Rachel Czarnecki as a Marketing Specialist. Rachel, a SUNY Fredonia Business Management graduate, has only been on the job for a few weeks.

Rachel plays many roles in the Eden Valley Creamery. She is busy updating the Eden Valley Creamery Web Page, scheduling and staffing marketing events,

contacting grocery stores and farm markets, running the Dredge Road retail location, coordinating product distribution to marketing outlets, and even assisting with cheese production and packaging under the guidance of master cheesemaker, Josh Meabon. She said she is still in the brainstorming phase of her marketing work.

Eden Valley Creamery is currently producing fully organic lines of Havarti, Swiss, Gouda, and Cheddar-based cheese curds. The semisoft Havarti and the popular cheese curds are available in a variety of flavors. Curds produced so far include plain, garlic, sour cream & onion, horseradish, and, of course, since the creamery is in Western New York, “Buffalo.” They all have that popular, fresh cheese curd “squeak.” Details about these cheeses can also be seen on the Creamery’s web page.

“Our cheeses begin with a fresh tank of morning milk hauled directly from Eden Valley Organics farm to the Creamery plant,” Conor explained. Josh then takes over, pasteurizing the milk before moving into the cheese making phase for whichever variety is being produced that day. Aged cheeses go into cold storage. Fresh cheeses, like the curds are packaged for immediate distribution and sale.

Rachel explained that she sees the main focus of her marketing efforts at this point in their business development as building brand recognition. That’s why events are such a big part of their current promotional effort. While time consuming, this is especially critical because the pricing for fully hand crafted, organic farm to market products is a bit higher than competing commercial, mass-produced brands. Eden Valley Creamery believes the quality and experience justifies the premium prices and customers are willing to come back to their products after they’ve sampled them.





Photo John Whitney

In addition to being sold at the Taste NY at the Western New York Welcome Center on Grand Island, Eden Valley Creamery Products are available in multiple outlets with more being added regularly. A current list of locations where EVC products can be purchased can be seen on Eden Valley Creamery Web Page.

Rachel said the Eden Valley Creamery team is working to expand sales to restaurants, delis, and other markets as the production and distribution system expands. Product delivery is part of the current challenge. To keep prices down, staff look for ways to complete deliveries as part of their daily travels between the business partners' associated farm locations, staff residences, and customer hubs.

Word-of-mouth is critical to EVC's early success. Eden Valley Creamery also has an active social media campaign through Facebook and Instagram. Packaging is designed to reflect the homegrown, farm-to-market product theme.

Owners of the Eden Valley Creamery include brothers Gerald (Jerry), Richard (Rick) and Ronald (Ron) Mammoser, David Franklin, and Conor O'Gorman and his brother and EVC managing partner, Brendon. Eden Valley Creamery and Eden Valley Organics are part of a diversified collection of businesses associated with Eden Valley Farms based in Eden, New York.



Photo John Whitney

Updating the Eden Valley Creamery marketing plan is one of the next business activities Rachel will be taking on. While it is challenging to fit in these planning activities, Rachel knows it is critical to the continued growth, development and success of the Eden Valley Creamery. ■



Photo John Whitney



## **New York State Agriculture Department Announces Efforts To Increase Environmental Practices On Farms Across The State**

**NOTE: A number of farms in Erie County have participated in these funding opportunities in prior cycles. If you are interested, be sure to contact the Erie County Soil & Water Conservation District ASAP, phone 716-652-8480, to discuss initiating an application.**

### **Two Funding Programs Totaling \$1.3 Million will Support Protection of New York's Natural Resources and Help Farmers Maintain Standards for the NYS Grown & Certified Program**

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets today announced the availability of \$1.3 million for two programs to assist New York farmers increase environmental protections on farms across the State. Funds will support the conservation of water resources, improvements to nutrient management strategies, and help New York farmers in producing agricultural products at high environmental standards under the New York State Grown & Certified program.

Commissioner Ball said, "New York State continues to be a leader in environmental protections, including on its farms. I am proud of the support we have been able to provide to our Soil and Water Conservation Districts and to our farmers, which enables them to implement projects that prioritize our natural resources and ensure great care is taken for the land and waterways."

### **High-Efficiency Agricultural Irrigation Water Management Systems**

The Department is currently accepting applications for

the \$700,000 Irrigation Water Management Systems program. The program was created to help farmers make important improvements to their irrigation systems and improve water conservation, nutrient management strategies, and crop production yields.

High-efficiency systems, such as micro-irrigation systems (e.g. trickle, drip, and low-flow emitters) target water within the root zone of the crop. These systems preserve water resources and can be used to transport nutrients reducing the potential of runoff and groundwater contamination. Proper irrigation also enhances the quantity and quality of most crops.

### **Implementation of Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) Plans on NYS Grown & Certified Farms**

The Department is also making available \$600,000 to support the implementation of Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) plans, which is a cornerstone for participation in the New York State Grown & Certified program. By participating in the NYS Grown & Certified program, farmers are certified as enrolled in AEM and committed to producing products using the highest environmental standards in order to protect and improve New York's natural resources, including the water quality.

Specifically, funding provided to on-farm projects under this program will help farmers implement Conservation Practice Systems, which will improve soil health and manage nutrients and other agricultural inputs for greater crop availability. Although these Conservation Practice Systems have upfront costs, by implementing them, the farm will not only conserve

natural resources but also improve efficiency and their economic bottom line.

The maximum award amount is \$50,000 per farm. Districts are not limited to the number of applications that may be submitted, however, only one application per farm is permitted.

New York State Grown & Certified promotes New York's agricultural producers and growers who adhere to food safety and environmental sustainability standards. More than 3,000 farms are participating in the Grown & Certified program, representing over 750,000 acres of farmland.

The Irrigation Water Management System and AEM Plans on NYS Grown & Certified Farms programs are funded through the Oceans and Great Lakes Initiative, as part of the Environmental Protection Fund. New York State County Soil and Water Conservation Districts are eligible to apply for funding. Proposals must be submitted in the Grants Gateway by 4:30 pm. on April 6, 2020.

New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee Chair Dale Stein said, "These two distinct funding opportunities share the same goal in helping our farmers continue to implement innovative best management practices that protect the State's natural resources while improving their competitiveness and profitability. These grants allow our farmers greater opportunity to conserve water, use smart nutrient management strategies and care for the soil." ■



*Photo from NYS Department of Ag and Markets*

## INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON AGRITOURISM

October 27-29, 2020

BURLINGTON, VERMONT



**#IWA2020**

International Workshop  
on Agritourism

### **Please Join Us!**

**The 2020 International Workshop on Agritourism (IWA)** will be held October 27-29 at the Hilton Burlington Hotel in downtown Burlington, Vermont, USA. The University of Vermont Extension local host committee is working on developing an exciting program for participants which will include educational sessions on pertinent industry topics, poster presentations, hands-on workshops and farm tours, networking events, and time with our exhibitors and sponsors. We invite you to extend your trip on either end of the Workshop to explore the bountiful farms, culinary experiences, arts, and other attractions in Vermont and surrounding states and provinces. Mark your calendar and make plans now to attend!

### **Who should attend**

Farmers, researchers, agricultural service providers, tourism experts and others interested in agritourism are invited to share their knowledge and experience.

Connect with us on social media:

Facebook @IWA2020 - RSVP to the Facebook event!

Instagram @iwa2020vermont

Twitter @IWA2020Vermont



# Cornell Cooperative Extension Program Offers Winter Update

Katelyn Walley-Stoll, Farm Business Management Specialist with the SWNY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Program

**Meet the newly formed Southwest NY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crop team as they present timely and helpful information for your farm business!**

Cornell Cooperative Extension's Southwest New York Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops Program (SWNYDLFC) is excited to host a series of Winter Updates in East Aurora, Jamestown, Ellicottville, Belmont, and Hornell. These events will offer timely and helpful information to dairy, livestock, and field crop producers and an introduction to their newly formed program. The cost to attend is \$20/person, including lunch, light refreshments, and handouts; and each event will run from 9:30am – 1:30pm.

Meetings will be held across the region over the next month:

**March 3rd** - Allegany County: CCE-Allegany; 5435A County Road 48; Belmont, NY 14813.

**March 10th - Erie County:** Roycroft Campus - Dard Hunter Hall; 21 South Grove Street; East Aurora, NY 14052. (This meeting location is tentative – those who pre-register for this event will be notified of any changes).

**March 31st** - Chautauqua County: Carnahan Center @ JCC; 241 James Avenue; Jamestown, NY 14702.

The meeting agenda includes updates from each of the team's specialists, as well as information from each county's Cornell Cooperative Extension Association and the Farmland for a New Generation program. Amy Barkley, Livestock Management Specialist, will provide timely resources for soil sampling to improve

pasture management by discussing best practices, report interpretation, and helpful tips for soil amendments. Joshua Putman, Field Crops Specialist, will give a "2020 Pest Update" discussing this season's problem pests and their potential impact on crop production. Alycia Drwencke, Dairy Management Specialist, will share helpful tips and research based recommendations for optimizing calf care to promote healthy and efficient production. Katelyn Walley-Stoll, Farm Business Management Specialist, will offer an update on the new Farm Labor Laws that are impacting our New York Farm Businesses and information on programs from Cornell University to aid in farm financial analysis. Concluding the day's event will be a lunch discussion on regional programming needs, challenges, and opportunities the industry faces.

Registration is required at least 4 days prior to your preferred location's event to allow for accurate lunch and supply counts, as well as weather related updates. To register, call Kelly Bourne at 585-268-7644 ext. 10. Email [klb288@cornell.edu](mailto:klb288@cornell.edu) or [kaw249@cornell.edu](mailto:kaw249@cornell.edu). Or visit: <https://swnydlfc.cce.cornell.edu/events.php>. Pay the \$20/person registration fee with a card by registering online. For accommodations, please contact Katelyn Walley-Stoll, 716-640-0522 or [kaw249@cornell.edu](mailto:kaw249@cornell.edu) at least one week prior to the event.

If you would like more information about this topic, please call Katelyn Walley-Stoll at 716-640-0522 or email [kaw249@cornell.edu](mailto:kaw249@cornell.edu). ■



*The SWNYDLFC program from Cornell Cooperative Extension will offer timely and helpful information to dairy, livestock, and field crop producers for their farm businesses in Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, and Steuben Counties.*

## **SWNYDLFC Winter Update Meeting Agenda**

**9:30am** - Doors Open & Registration (Registration information on page 11)

**9:40am** - Introductions. Welcome from the team and program overview.

**9:50am** - Local CCE Association Updates Timely information from Executive Directors and County Agriculture Educators.

**10am** - Kathleen McCormick, Agriculture Educator, CCE-Erie. Farmland for a New Generation New York supports a network of Regional Navigators that provides training and on-the-ground customized support for farmers and landowners in regions across NY.

**10:15am** - Amy Barkley, Livestock Management Specialist, SWNYDLFC. Soil Sampling for Pasture Management is a way to optimize the quality of your pastures. We will discuss best practices, interpreting your report, and helpful tips for amending pasture soils.

**10:45am** - Joshua Putman, Field Crops Specialist, SWNYDLFC. 2020 Pest Update - What pests should you be looking out for this season and how could they potentially impact your field crop and forage production?

**11:30am** - Alycia Drwencke, Dairy Management Specialist, SWNYDLFC. Optimizing calf care is an important part of your operation to promote healthy and efficient production. We will discuss some of the management strategies that support optimal calf care on farm.

**12pm** - Katelyn Walley-Stoll, Farm Business Management Specialist, SWNYDLFC How are the new Ag Labor laws affecting your farm business? Learn about tools and resources to help you manage these new regulations along with information about financial analysis for your dairy or livestock farm.

**12:45pm** - Lunch Discussion. Join us for an informal discussion on regional needs, challenges and opportunities the industry faces, and programming ideas for Cooperative Extension.

# UN Declares 2020 International Year of Plant Health

USDA

## Calling for effort to protect plants against the introduction and spread of invasive pests

Plants make the oxygen we breathe and give us 80 percent of the food we eat. But plants are under attack by invasive pests. These pests destroy up to 40 percent of the world's food crops and cause \$220 billion in trade losses each year according to the United Nations (U.N.). That leaves millions of people worldwide without enough food to eat and seriously damages agriculture—the primary source of income for rural communities.

To bring worldwide attention to this challenge, the U.N. has declared 2020 as the International Year of Plant Health. They are calling on people, organizations, industries, scientists, and governments to work together to protect plants against the introduction and spread of invasive pests. The U.S. National Plant Protection Organization—the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Plant Protection and Quarantine—is leading the effort in the United States.

"At USDA, we do all we can for our farmers, ranchers, foresters, and producers so that they can continue to feed and clothe this nation and the world," said USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs, Greg Ibach. "That's why we're urging everyone to take this issue seriously and to do their part. Protecting plants from pests and diseases is far more cost effective than the alternative."

According to USDA, everyone can help avoid the devastating impact of pests and diseases on agriculture, livelihoods, and food security. You can get started today by taking a few important actions, including:

- Don't move firewood. Instead, buy heat-treated firewood or responsibly gather wood near the place it will be burned to ensure tree-killing beetles hiding inside can't spread to new areas.
  - Always declare food, plants, or other agricultural items to U.S. Customs and Border Protection when returning from international travel so they can make sure these items are free of pests.
  - Contacting your local State Office before you buy seeds or plants online from other countries to find out if they need to be inspected and certified as pest free or meet other conditions to legally bring them into the United States.
  - To learn more about the International Year of Plant Health and how you can help stop destructive invasive plant pests, visit USDA's website at [www.aphis.usda.gov/planthealth/2020](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/planthealth/2020). ■
- Look for and report unusual signs of pests or disease in trees and plants to your local Extension, State department of agriculture, or local State Office.



*Photo pixaby.com*



# Plant Health Series: Variety Selection

Elizabeth Buck, Vegetable Specialist, CCE Vegetable Team

The UN has declared 2020 the International Year of Plant Health, and the USDA followed up by declaring a focus on plant-impacting invasive species. As a confirmed plant nerd, I found this quite exciting (Hooray!). If you also frequently find yourself thinking about how to keep crops happy and healthy, I'll be writing a series of articles outlining ways you can participate in The Year of Plant Health. The first is about using seed source and variety selection to avoid plant disease challenges.

They tell me don't bury the lede, so here's your summary, right up front. Please do read beyond it, I did endeavor to put some useful detail into the article.

- Start with clean seed from a reputable seed company!
- Know which diseases are challenging based on your field history and common foliar diseases.
- Select varieties with appropriate disease packages for your challenges. Consider varieties with broad race resistance when applicable.
- The more diseases you can address with variety selection, the further ahead you will be.

## Choose Reputable Seed

What chance do you stand to raise a healthy, economically profitable crop if it carries a bacterial or viral infection in the seed? Can you have a decent potato crop if the tubers carry Dickeya black leg or late blight? Odds are not good. In both cases you'll have decreased plant population, lower vigor, and suppressed yield along with increased management costs. You'll also have a real risk of spreading seed-borne diseases from one infected seed lot to an entire crop of transplants in the greenhouse or from one field to the next with passing equipment, crews, insects, or air currents (dispersal method is disease specific).



*Photo pixaby.com*

Only buy seed from reputable seed companies. If a disease certification program exists for your crop, only buy certified seed – I'm looking at you, potatoes! If there is a common seed-vectored disease concern, specifically ask potential seed providers what they do to screen for, prevent, and treat their seed to ensure a clean, disease-free product. For example, I'd ask a garlic seed provider if they have tested for garlic bloat nematode. I'd ask a tomato seed provider if they have hot-water treated their seed to kill bacterial pathogens. A reputable seed company will be able to provide detailed answers to these questions. They will also stand behind their product and will work with you in a transparent way if they discover a problem in one of their seed lots.

If you're saving seed yourself, or buying from someone who does, there are best practices that should be followed to avoid carrying problems between years. And please, please, don't save your own potato seed if there was late blight in your or a neighboring county last year. Your neighbors really don't want you to be the responsible for starting the 2020 outbreak.

*Continued on page 15 >*



*Continued from page 14 >*

## Select Resistant Varieties

I think selecting resistant varieties is the easiest and most fun way to preserve plant health. You get the fun of looking through the seed catalogues, while plant breeders have done all the work! There has been a lot of work to develop crop varieties that are resistant or tolerant to common diseases. For those farming organically, disease resistant varieties is your very best management tool.

The varietal improvements related to plant health are referred to as the crop's "disease package." The language describing the disease package can be a little confusing, because there are different definitions for "resistant" and "tolerant." When I say resistant, I mean plants that won't get sick or will have such little disease you have to work to find it. When I say tolerant, I mean plants that hold up better than most varieties to high disease pressure scenarios. Tolerant plants may still get sick, but they will outlast their susceptible counterparts, have less severe symptoms, and will realize more of their yield potential. Susceptible plants are the ones that don't have any enhanced or proven ability to fend off disease. Ask your seed supplier how they define resistant vs. tolerant.

Tolerant and resistant plants will perform better when faced with moderate to high disease pressure and are the most appropriate choice for fields with a

known history of soil-borne disease. Verticillium and fusarium tolerances are important advancements for New York crops because we tend to have wet growing conditions! Some crops, like cucurbits, offer genetic resistance to common viruses. Other disease packages focus on addressing foliar diseases. For example, there are several late blight resistant tomato varieties available for slicer, roma, and cherry tomatoes. Spinach, basil, and cucumbers have all been bred to be resistant to their respective species of downy mildew. Many squash, zucchini, and pumpkin varieties offer tolerance to powdery mildew. Growers using disease tolerant or resistant plants almost always enjoy delayed or fewer fungicide applications, which saves money and time.

On occasion, there is a tradeoff between varieties with a strong disease package and susceptible varieties with highly desirable horticultural traits. One trade-off may be that the resistant/tolerant variety may yield later or less than a susceptible variety when disease pressure is low. In tomatoes, a few of the late blight resistant varieties can be a bit lack-luster in taste. In such situations, the resistant/tolerant variety should be used as a risk-reduction tool. Tomatoes are a valuable crop and so a less flavorful tomato is far better than no tomatoes. Late blight has become an annual problem in NY. Thus, it is a good practice to plant a small section of one field



to late blight resistant varieties to best prepare for all scenarios.

## Why are there so many options for a certain disease within a crop?

Understanding the concept of “disease race” is the last piece to successfully using tolerant and resistant varieties. Several plant diseases have different sub-populations with varying traits, called races or strains. Late blight is a good case-study. To date, there have been 25 races of late blight identified in the United States. Each race is like a breed of cattle. Some races infect potato and tomato similarly. Some races are very aggressive on potato and leave tomatoes alone, or vice-versa. Its like how we separate cattle into dairy, beef or dual purpose. Other races have developed resistance/tolerance to specific fungicides or have other special traits like being able to infect nightshades or petunias. That’s like the specific attributes of each cattle breed – a high production Holstein, a high butterfat Jersey, or a heat tolerant Brahman-cross beeper. A few races have simply disappeared with time, while others have haunted producers for decades, as happens with breeds of cattle.

Each race becomes unique because it is slightly genetically different. Oftentimes, the functional difference between disease races is related to the race’s ability to overcome the genetic resistance of a host plant. Again, let’s use late blight as a case study. There are several different tomato resistance genes

available in commercial varieties. Many late blight races cannot overcome any of the common tomato resistance genes.

A few races have developed a biological work-around to one of the resistance genes. Those races can cause disease on some resistant varieties but not on others. Most late blight resistant tomato varieties have more than one resistance gene bred into them, so even if a race overcomes a single resistance gene, there is another that prevents or substantially limits (slows) late blight progression.

Seed companies will tell you how many races a variety will stand up to. In the case of spinach downy mildew, the catalogue may list something like DM races, 1-8 and 14. Fusarium or verticillium listings may give an abbreviation of the disease name and a race number like Fus2. It can be helpful for the prevalent race of the disease, to know which resistance genes can be expected to work well. This is one reason why we want to hear about late blight outbreaks – so we can get the race tested.

Here’s your one sentence wrap up that encompasses all the points in a practical way: **When you’re selecting your resistant tomato varieties from a reputable seed dealer for your hedging-the-bets planting, look for a package that will withstand the common NY late blight race (US-23) and don’t forget to ask them about what they do to prevent seed-borne bacterial disease contamination. ■**



Photo freepik.com



# 2020 Core Pesticide Training

Josh Putman, Field Crops and Forage Specialist with the SWNY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Program

CORE pesticide trainings and DEC exams will be conducted in 2 locations this Spring! This course is a continuation of the outstanding work that Tim Weigle did for producers in NY prior to his retirement. The general idea behind this course is to provide a basic overview of the CORE manual and what to expect on the CORE exam that **MUST** be passed for the Certified Applicators License. This course is also designed for anyone who currently holds an Applicators License and needs CORE DEC re-certification credits. Following the training, the DEC will be on-site to administer both the CORE and proper category exams.

Thursday, March 26, 2020  
8:30AM - 12PM  
CCE-Chautauqua  
JCC-Carnahan Center  
241 James Avenue  
Jamestown, NY 14702

Thursday, April 2, 2020  
9:00Am – 12:00PM  
CCE-Steuben  
20 East Morris Street  
Bath, NY 14810

Cost: \$20



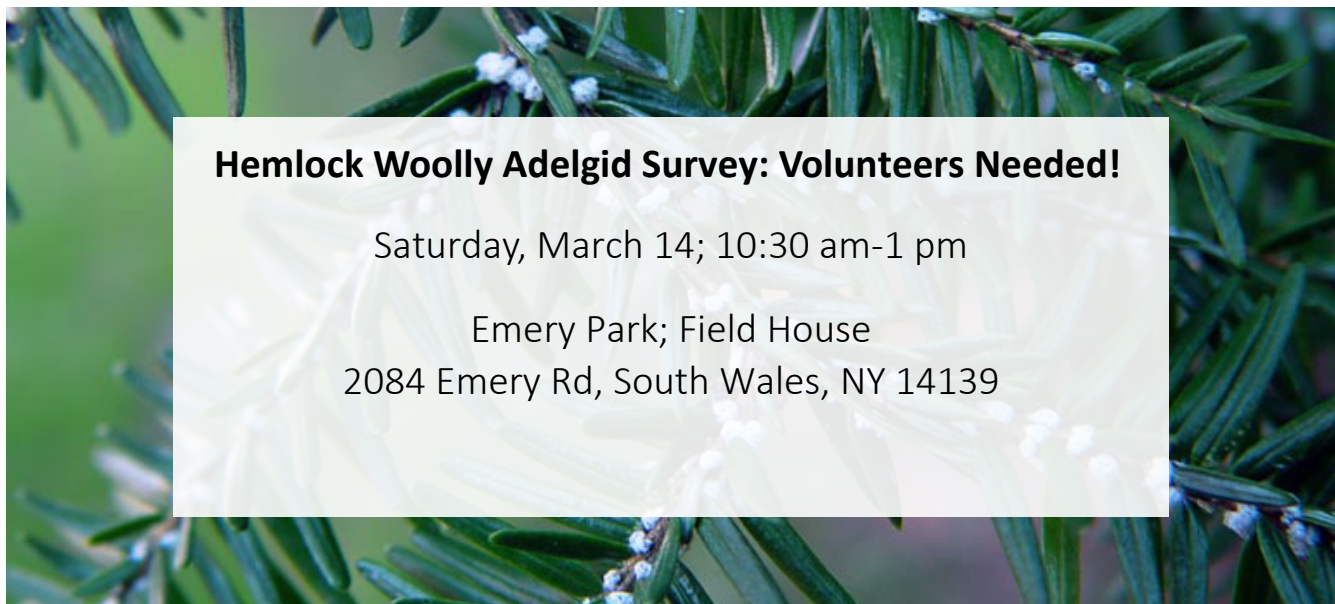
*Photo by Justin James Muir*

Josh Putman, Southwest NY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Program will provide an overview of the basic information involved in the pesticide application certification process and will present the basics of Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

## Please note that:

- **Registration is required (see below)**
- **Growers MUST REGISTER SEPARATELY, DIRECTLY WITH THE DEC for the exam.**

**To register, contact Kelly Bourne  
585-268-7644 ext. 10  
klb288@cornell.edu.**



## Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Survey: Volunteers Needed!

Saturday, March 14; 10:30 am-1 pm

Emery Park; Field House  
2084 Emery Rd, South Wales, NY 14139

The Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) is a hugely important tree species upon which entire ecosystems depend. This species provides stream habitat for trout species, creates habitat for countless native plant and animal species, and enhances any outdoor recreation experience. Unfortunately, these majestic trees are under attack from the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA), an invasive, aphid-like insect.

Slowing the spread of HWA is the most important way we can help preserve our hemlock forests. The early detection of emerging infestations is a great way to do this, but we need volunteers like you to help!



This event will feature an indoor education event, then we will head outside to learn to survey for and identify Hemlock Woolly Adelgid in the field.

Please register in advance:

[erie.cce.cornell.edu/events](http://erie.cce.cornell.edu/events)

Attendees are encouraged to dress appropriately for the weather and wear warm, sturdy footwear. In the event of poor weather, the event will be held on Sunday, February 9 and registrants will be notified via email.



Questions can be directed to WNY PRISM at [wnyprism@buffalostate.edu](mailto:wnyprism@buffalostate.edu) or by calling (716) 878-4708.

Photos Credit: Chris Evans, University of Illinois, Bugwood.org and U.S. Forest Service, Steve Norman.



# You Don't Say...

Timothy X. Terry, Harvest NY



It's inevitable, at some point in time you're going to have to hire a contractor to carry out a project or simply to complete a portion of it. Remember, the best use of your time and talent is to manage and operate an agricultural enterprise. Therefore, unless it is a small project or fix you're better off hiring the work done. This is especially true if it requires specialized tools, equipment, or expertise – you don't want to be messing around with that 3-phase, 480 volt line.

Granted, hiring a contractor can be a source of stress and anxiety. It's unfortunate that a few unscrupulous individuals have forever tainted the public's general perception of contractors. However, it is possible to have a mutually beneficial and honest relationship with a contractor.

Just as in real estate where the three most important things are location, location, location, the three most important things in contracting are communication, communication, communication. Here, what you don't say is just as important, if not more so, as what you do say.

## 1. Never tell a contractor you aren't in a hurry.

This will almost assuredly move your project to the bottom of the list. A better alternative would be to communicate a timeline, an expectation of project milestones, and a completion date. This gives the contractor some flexibility in scheduling and gives you some assurance of timely completion. Setting milestones – dates by which certain phases of the project need to be completed -- keeps the project moving forward. Without this measure some contractors may start a project just to keep you happy/ quiet and then disappear for 3-4 weeks. That said, you might need to exercise a little grace. For example, if your project is inside and this is the first sunny and dry week in two months they may be else-where trying to complete other projects that have been stalled because of the inclement weather.

Additionally, you could stipulate a time penalty -- \$X lost per day beyond the date a project is to be completed – as well as “drop dead” dates for initiating and/or completing the project. In this case, if the project was not started or completed by certain dates the contract becomes null and



void and you are free to secure another contractor to do the work. Again, you may need to cut them a little slack if the weather has been a factor. Make sure none of these dates are on or over a holiday weekend.

## **2. Never tell a contractor they are the sole bidder.**

When I worked for the Soil and Water District and NRCS, it was policy to require at least three bids. This gives you a true appreciation for the market. It also encourages contractors to assemble their bids with a very sharp pencil. Now some of you may have built quite a relationship with a contractor over the years. This is not a bad thing. You call, they come over, get it done PDQ, and for a fair price. However, giving a go-getting newcomer a chance can be a good thing – potentially gives you a good back-up when your primary is not available and it keeps your primary's bids on the up-and-up.

## **3. Never agree to a “Gentleman’s Agreement”.**

Unfortunately, gone are the days when things could be done on a handshake. This is not only a function of trust but of complexity, as well. There was a time when things were simpler, choices were fewer, timelines shorter, and everyone knew what everybody was talking about. Today, however, there are a myriad of choices and even minor misunderstandings can have major implications. Moreover, who's going to remember specifically what was said or understood three or four months later when timelines get crunched, skies threaten to snow, and tempers begin to flare.

Instead, write out very detailed contracts with specific expectations (completion dates, milestones, etc.) and a list of expenses and payment schedules (more on this next month).

## **4. Never tell a contractor your budget.**

If you do they will usually make the bid fill the budget even if it could be done for less. Better to have them submit a bid for the work you need to have done. Better yet, have a copy of the design that you give to each bidding contractor (see #2). That way you can compare apples to apples when reviewing the bids. You may also want to provide a bid sheet that further breaks the bid down into labor, materials, and activities (sitework, erection, etc.). This gives you even more discernment when comparing bids.

Many contractors will up-charge on the materials. This is not unreasonable as they will be expending time, effort, and possibly equipment to get them on-site. Expect 10% - 20% and this may be a function of the size of the order. Smaller orders may have a larger upcharge because of fixed costs – it takes just as much time and effort to drive down to the lumber yard and haul back six- 2x4's as it does a full pallet of them. You could secure the materials yourself to save the upcharge. However, after doing this a few times you may come to appreciate the contractor's efforts.

## **5. Never delegate materials choice to the contractor.**

This differs from the previous paragraph in that this is the selection of specific materials and finishes. This is where you tell them what materials to purchase; even where to purchase it and the price to pay for it. In some cases this may not even be an option as the engineer may have already specified in the design documents the particular materials to be used to meet structural standards.

In the absence of this the contractor may use materials leftover or recycled from other jobs; that may be inferior, overpriced, or just plain not right for the job. You may ask the contractor for his input or experience with certain materials, but ultimately it is your choice and responsibility.

## **6. Never pay a contractor upfront.**

While it is necessary to pay something upfront, like earnest money, to secure the contract and for the contractor to purchase the materials, it is foolhardy to pay the entire amount upfront. You have now given away all your leverage requiring them to do a good job and complete the work. Worse yet, they may disappear and not do any of the work.

This is where detailed contracts and payment schedules are worth their weight in gold. Usually a payment schedule is based on reaching a milestone in the project and often matches up with quarters or thirds of the project. Once a milestone is completed (foundation poured, frame erected, etc.) a check is cut to the contractor for ¼ or ⅓ of the total amount. If appropriate, you may require a passing inspection on the milestone prior to payment. Withhold final payment until the project has



*Good contracts start and end with clear expectations on the part of BOTH parties.*

been completed to your satisfaction. Satisfaction may include passing a final inspection, and in the case of CAFO projects, an in-your-hand copy of the as-built.

Make every effort to be sure any subcontractors on the project are getting paid. Just because you're paying the general contractor doesn't necessarily mean the subs are getting paid. Failure to pay the subs could result in a lien on your property even if you've paid everything in full. A better practice would be to pay the subs directly, but this should be spelled out in the contract.

### **7. Never, ever, hire anyone illegally.**

Some contractors may offer to bring in people who aren't legally licensed to do the work to keep costs down. DON'T DO IT! You open yourself and your business up to a huge liability, especially if someone gets hurt. Ask your contractor to provide documentation of a business license and proof of insurance. Likewise with any subcontractors brought in by the general contractor (GC). They should be licensed and covered under their own policy or the GC's policy.

There you have it. Seven practices to avoid when working with contractors. They aren't difficult but they can be

missed if you're in a hurry. Take your time. It takes time to do things right. If you're not careful you may get taken advantage of.

Conversely, most contractors are honest and hard-working. They have a business to run, employees to pay, and often, a family to take care of. Don't be difficult, pay promptly for work successfully completed, and don't ask for freebies outside of the contract ("Since you're here could you..."). It's right and fair for them to make a profit...it just doesn't all have to be off of you.

**Bonus Tip:** Having worked on both sides of the contract I can tell you that little things to keep the crew happy go a long way toward successful and timely completion of a project. Coffee & donuts or fresh cookies at breaktime, even iced tea and lemonade on a hot day cost little but score big points and usually yield an extra effort to make sure things are done just the way you like them. It also means they may move your name up on the list the next time you have a project to do. Truthfully, no one wants to go work on the project of the local curmudgeon who tries to micromanage the work and reprimands anyone taking a breather. ■

# Harvest NY Receives Local Food Promotion Program Grant!

## Harvest NY Quarterly Report

This three-year grant award will enable Harvest NY to expand its Local Foods program area, with the specific goal of increasing institutional procurement of local farm products. The funds will primarily be used to hire a Farm to Institution Program Coordinator to work with Harvest NY Specialist, Cheryl Thayer, and expand upon the work currently underway. The primary institution targeted through this project will be public K-12's, though assistance will be provided to any interested institutional partner. The Harvest NY Local Foods team will partner with eight county-level Cornell Cooperative Extension offices in Western NY to provide direct assistance and education to farmers and food producers interested in selling to institutional markets, and to institutions interested in localizing their food supply chain. Further, the Local Foods team will create resources and host educational workshops that will benefit stakeholders across the State. By expanding Farm to Institution programming across the region, the project will ultimately (1) strengthen the local economy via the institutions' investment of millions of dollars into the local food and farming sectors; (2) benefit tens of thousands of consumers through increased healthy food access; and (3) leverage millions of dollars in state reimbursement to strengthen individual school districts. ■



Lindsay France (UREL)



RJ Anderson (CCE)



RJ Anderson (CCE)

## Finding Urban Land to Farm

Kathleen McCormick, Agriculture Educator

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Erie County (CCE Erie) and Journey's End Refugee Services are co-hosting a workshop for people interested in farming in the City of Buffalo. The workshop will begin with a presentation about what to consider when evaluating urban land for farming. Then hear about the experiences of people who found land and are currently growing in the city. There will be plenty of time for questions and answers. Stay for a snack and to network with others interested in urban farming.

**Pre-registration is required. There is no cost to attend.**

Register at [erie.cce.cornell.edu/events/](http://erie.cce.cornell.edu/events/) or contact Jolie Hibit at (716) 652-5400 x176 or [jah663@cornell.edu](mailto:jah663@cornell.edu). For more information, please contact Kathleen McCormick by phone (716) 652-5400, x146 or email ([km864@cornell.edu](mailto:km864@cornell.edu)).

**Saturday, March 28, 10:00 am – noon**  
**Journey's End Refugee Services**  
**2495 Main Street**  
**Suite 530**



# QR Codes are Popping Up Everywhere!

John Whitney, Agriculture Educator, CCE Erie

You've no doubt noticed those two-dimensional blocks of black squares on a white background (there are colorful options, too). You may even have pointed your smartphone or tablet's camera at a few of them. Like bar codes on products and shelf labels in the grocery store, QR codes are machine-readable optical labels which embed locator information such as Universal Resource Locator (URL), Universal Resource Identifier (URI), tracker, contact information, identifier data or other information. Unlike bar codes, QR codes can be scanned from any direction and can include significantly more content. They help users avoid the need to type in long text strings or numbers or to remember whether to use a forward slash or a backslash, etc. in order to reach a link. For an example, use your mobile device to scan Image 1 to be directed to CCE-Erie's home page.



**Image 1 –  
Cornell Cooperative Extension – Erie Home  
Page**

QR stands for Quick Response. QR codes were invented in 1994 by the Japanese Company, Denso Wave, originally for the purpose of tracking vehicles and parts on Toyota's automotive assembly lines. Potential uses and applications rapidly expanded from commercial and industrial applications to consumer, business, marketing and entertainment uses.

Take a look at your marketing plan and think about

the ways QR codes could help. Would potential customers benefit from quick access to your website or a specific section of your website? Could a QR code direct users to a newsletter, contact form, or customer loyalty program link? How about coupons or recipe links? Maybe you'd like to easily direct potential customers to your contact card, provide directions, or initiate a social media chat or text chat. Would customers benefit from quick access to videos or images or your Facebook or Twitter page on their mobile device. QR codes can readily direct users to links for sharing product or event information.

QR code generators are available in both free and fee-based versions. Free versions will work for most needs. Follow the site's guidance for the type of code you want to generate. Some examples include:

**QRStuff**

**Kaywa**

**Pageloot**

**QR Code Generator**

Once generated, QR codes can be downloaded and saved for various uses including but certainly not limited to brochures and pamphlets, signs, posters, banners, displays, product packaging, or shelf tags. Billboards along busy highways are probably NOT good applications.

While they are easy to generate and use, some cautions are appropriate. Always practice safe computing and make sure your QR code was properly generated by a reputable service. Test it. Also, don't forget if you change a link tied to a QR code, the QR code will no longer work (there are ways to address that for advanced users and certain applications). It is also possible for QR codes to include hidden dangers. Users also shouldn't automatically trust QR codes. While your QR codes may be perfectly safe, users may be reluctant to use them because they've heard about the real possibility of QR codes leading to malicious sites or downloading malware.

Frequent users of QR codes should be sure anti-malware tools are installed and up to date on their devices, especially if they are using downloaded QR scanning apps. They should also watch for messages about website security before continuing on to the link. Most security advisors say never log in or submit personal details to any unknown website you access by QR code. Image 2 is a link to a brief article about security risks that come with QR codes.



***Image 2 –  
Security Risks that Come with Use of QR  
Codes***

Of course, not everyone has mobile devices, knows how to use them for QR code scanning, or chooses to use QR codes. QR codes should be seen as a supplement to promotional materials, not a replacement.

This next example, Image 3, will lead you to an article titled “8 Great Ways to Use QR Codes for Marketing.” It also includes some “bad uses.”



***Image 3 –  
Marketing Land: 8 Great Ways to Use QR  
Codes for Marketing***

Image 4 is a link to a Penn State Extension article on the use of QR codes for agricultural marketing. In addition to the tips and suggestions within the article, it includes a few examples and additional references



***Image 4 –  
Penn State Extension: Using QR Codes for  
Agricultural Marketing***

Quick Response codes can be an effective way of engaging customers. With some up front planning and well thought out deployment, QR codes can be useful in your marketing and promotion. You may even find it convenient to use them more yourself. Here’s one last example (Image 5):



***Image 5 –  
CCE-Chemung: Agricultural Marketing  
Resources***



ORDERS DUE MARCH 13, 2020

Planting tree and shrub seedlings will:

- Provide wildlife food and habitat
- Protect water quality
- Shelter crops and landscape
- Reduce air pollution
- Stabilize erodible land
- Reduce heating/cooling expenses

*2020 Conservation*

## TREE & SHRUB SEEDLING SALE

ERIE.CCE.CORNELL.EDU/RESOURCES/CONSERVATION-TREE-SHRUB-SEEDLING-PROGRAM



## 2020 MASTER GARDENER SCHOLARSHIP

For more information visit  
[erie.cce.cornell.edu](http://erie.cce.cornell.edu)

Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Erie County





# Renew your Ag Enrollment Today!

## Mail form with payment, or pay on line.

### Cornell Vegetable Program

Current Acres in Vegetable Production: \_\_\_\_\_

Interests for Vegetable Program

Enrollees: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check each of the crops/interests that apply to you. This information is used for direct mailings of meeting notices and pest alerts.

<input type="checkbox"/> Asparagus	<input type="checkbox"/> Peppers/Eggplant
<input type="checkbox"/> Beans, Dry	<input type="checkbox"/> Potatoes
<input type="checkbox"/> Beans, Snap	<input type="checkbox"/> Pumpkins/Gourds
<input type="checkbox"/> Beets	<input type="checkbox"/> Squash, Summer
<input type="checkbox"/> Broccoli	<input type="checkbox"/> Squash, Winter
<input type="checkbox"/> Cabbage	<input type="checkbox"/> Sweet Corn, Fresh
<input type="checkbox"/> Carrots	<input type="checkbox"/> Sweet Corn, Processing
<input type="checkbox"/> Cauliflower	<input type="checkbox"/> Tomatoes
<input type="checkbox"/> Cole Crops, Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Vine Crops
<input type="checkbox"/> Cucumbers	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Vegetables
<input type="checkbox"/> Garlic	<input type="checkbox"/> Agribusiness
<input type="checkbox"/> Leafy Greens/Lettuce	<input type="checkbox"/> Direct Market
<input type="checkbox"/> Melons/Cantaloupe	<input type="checkbox"/> Fresh market
<input type="checkbox"/> Onions	<input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse,
<input type="checkbox"/> Peas	<input type="checkbox"/> Edible
	<input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse, Ornamental
	<input type="checkbox"/> High Tunnels
	<input type="checkbox"/> Organic Processing

### SWNYDLFCP

### SWNY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crop Program

Interests for SWNYDLFCP Program

Enrollees: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check each of the interests that apply to you.

<input type="checkbox"/> Beef	<input type="checkbox"/> Swine
<input type="checkbox"/> Dairy	<input type="checkbox"/> Field Crops
<input type="checkbox"/> Goats	<input type="checkbox"/> Beginner Farmer
<input type="checkbox"/> Horses	
<input type="checkbox"/> Poultry / Eggs	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sheep	

## ENROLLMENT FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **GO GREEN** Check here if you prefer to receive your newsletters and updates through the email provided.

**CCE ERIE AG ENROLLMENT \$25 (Required)**

**ADDITIONAL ENROLLMENT OPTIONS:**

**Cornell Vegetable Program (CVP) Optional**

☐ Electronic Veg Edge Newsletter \$55

☐ Paper copy of Veg Edge Newsletter \$90

**Lake Erie Regional Grape Program (LERGP) Optional**

☐ Electronic Vineyard News \$55

☐ Paper copy of Vineyard News \$80

**SWNY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crop (SWNYDLFC) Optional**

☐ Electronic SWNYDLFC Newsletter \$55

☐ Paper copy of SWNYDLFC Newsletter \$80

**Berry News Quarterly Subscription Optional**

☐ \$10

**MAKE A TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION:**

☐ Contribution to CCE Erie Ag Program

☐ Contribution to Cornell Vegetable Program

☐ Contribution to SWNY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Program

**TOTAL ENROLLMENTS +CONTRIBUTIONS:**



### CCE Erie Ag Enrollment

Interests Agriculture Enrollment

Receive announcements about upcoming classes & current developments of interest to you by checking the topics below.

**General Management, Marketing, and Misc.**

<input type="checkbox"/> Bees / Honey	<input type="checkbox"/> Beginning Farmer
<input type="checkbox"/> Flowers	<input type="checkbox"/> Farm Business Mgmt
<input type="checkbox"/> Forestry	<input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Production
<input type="checkbox"/> Grapes	<input type="checkbox"/> High Tunnel Production
<input type="checkbox"/> Hops	<input type="checkbox"/> Master Gardener
<input type="checkbox"/> Hemp	<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Training
<input type="checkbox"/> Maple	<input type="checkbox"/> Farm to School
<input type="checkbox"/> Small Fruit & Berries	<input type="checkbox"/> Organic Production
<input type="checkbox"/> Tree Fruits	<input type="checkbox"/> Pesticide Certification
	<input type="checkbox"/> Marketing Opportunities
	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Farming
	<input type="checkbox"/> Veteran Farmer
	<input type="checkbox"/> Value Added Product
	<input type="checkbox"/> CommunitTree Steward
	<input type="checkbox"/> Farm Transitioning

**Cornell Cooperative Extension of Erie County (CCE-Erie County) works with all farms and farmers existing and beginning. We are your local connection to Cornell University.**

- PAYMENT OPTIONS**
- PAY PAL online at [erle.cce.cornell.edu/agriculture](http://erle.cce.cornell.edu/agriculture)
  - CHECKS payable to: CCE-Erie County  
21 South Grove Street  
East Aurora, NY 14052
  - CASH at CCE Erie County Office M-F  
8:30am-4:30m
- Mail entire form with payment!**

Enroll online using QR Code!

# Western NY Buyer Grower Conference, March 23rd, Buffalo NY

Cheryl Thayer, Harvest NY

Field & Fork Network and Cornell Harvest NY announce the Western NY Buyer-Grower Regional Conference at Foundry Inn & Suites in Buffalo on March 23, 2020. The business-to-business conference is open to all agriculture, culinary and food trade professionals as well as development finance professionals. The one-day conference provides networking forums and workshops to promote the ever-growing local food system in the Western NY region, including discussions and a keynote presentation featuring a talk on finding capital for your food system business.

## Workshop 1 (concurrent sessions)

### Market Channel Assessment

Matt LeRoux, Agriculture Marketing Consultant  
This workshop will cover the factors of market channel performance, how to evaluate market channels, and how to maximize your effort in each channel through marketing strategy. The target audience for this workshop is farmers of varying sizes.

### Finding/Buying Local Foods

Cheryl Thayer, Cornell Harvest NY  
Finding local foods poses many challenges for today's chefs and food buyers. This workshop will feature some innovative ways to tap into the local food supply that will work for any business model. The target audience for this workshop are food buyers interested in sourcing products from local farmers.

### Keynote:

Defining the Food System Asset Class, Toby Rittner, Council of Development Finance Agencies. With funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Council of Development Finance Agencies (CDFA) is researching how traditional development finance tools – such as bonds, TIF, tax credits, RLFs, and more – can be utilized to develop and enhance local food systems. The premise of this project is to suggest and then prove

that, if organized and defined properly, the food system can become a defined asset class worthy of traditional investment, similar to the way roads, bridges, schools, libraries, and other critical infrastructure pieces are financed. During this session, CDFA will present their approach to create the food system asset class by sharing the CDFA Food Finance White Paper Series and presenting pilot projects as case studies.

## Workshop Session 2 (concurrent sessions)

### Supply Chain Facilitation I

The best way to learn about local supply chains is to hear from those who have made it work. This workshop will focus on small-scale supply chains – restaurants, small grocers, etc. Speakers include: Tim Bartlett, Lexington Cooperative Market; Caitlin LoVullo, Lexington Cooperative Market & Cornerstone Orchards; Gina & Gary Wieczorek, Produce Peddlers.

### Finding Capital to Support Your Food System Business I

Toby Rittner & Allison Rowland, Council of Development Finance Agencies  
Food systems are a critical component of local economies. Although financing for food and agriculture businesses may be perceived as difficult to access, communities throughout the country are financing their food system with various innovative strategies to support local markets, first time farmers, new food enterprises, and neighborhoods lacking access to fresh foods. This session will explore the various development financing tools available for food-related businesses and projects, such as access to capital lending sources for food businesses, bonds for farmers, tax credits for food processors, and many other financing tools used to support the local food system industry. Creative and tangible food system financing case studies will be presented alongside the fundamentals of development finance.



### Workshop Session 3 (concurrent sessions)

#### Supply Chain Facilitation II

The best way to learn about local supply chains is to hear from those who have made it work. This workshop will focus on large scale supply chains – school districts, hospitals, etc. Speakers include: Bridget O’Brien - Wood, Buffalo Public Schools; Dave Walczak, Eden Valley Growers & Western NY Food Hub; others are TBD.

#### Finding Capital To Support Your Food System Business II

Hear from funders and food business entrepreneurs about the challenges on finding the right funding to support your food system business. Speakers include:

Joel Moyer, Fair Food Fund; Bob Doyle & Yanush Sanmugaraja, Westminster Economic Development Initiative; Genga Ponnampalam, Go Veggies; and Michele Liddle, The Perfect Granola.

For more information about the conference and registration, please visit:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/western-ny-buyer-grower-regional-conference-tickets-76047146061>.

**Cornell Cooperative Extension**  
**Harvest New York**



Field & Fork Network



# Farm Incubators: A Low Cost Launchpad for Farm Businesses

Kathleen McCormick, Agriculture Educator, CCE Erie



Photo by Lori Joyce

Ask people who want to farm what's holding them back and you'll likely hear land, money, and know-how mentioned. Starting a farm business is costly. First, there is the land and infrastructure. The average cost of these has surged in the past few years. The estimated value of a farm in Erie County went from just over \$400,000 in 2012 to nearly \$700,000 in 2017 (*2017 Census of Agriculture: New York*). Then there is the cost of equipment. A commercially viable produce operation will need a tractor or tilling implement, harvest boxes, deer fencing, a small greenhouse, a cooler, a place to wash produce, and a reliable vehicle. Even buying everything used will mean spending thousands of dollars. Lack of skills and experience is another major challenge for beginning farmers. In New York, 55% of beginning farmers are 45 years old or older (AFT Farm Transition Report). These older beginners are often career changers with business experience, but without production skills. Younger beginners often lack both. Immigrants may come to this country with years of farming and business experience, but without a good understanding of how farms and businesses operate in the United States.

Farm incubators are trying to help beginning farmers overcome these challenges. Individual farm incubators vary in the specifics of who they serve and what they require of participants, but in general all offer no- or low-cost access to land, infrastructure,



Photo by Lori Joyce

equipment and training. Minimizing start-up costs, lets beginning farmers save their nest eggs for purchasing land of their own or speciality equipment. An added benefit for those who need to borrow when they transition to their own land is gaining the managerial experience and production history that lenders require of their applicants.

There is nothing better than experience for teaching people how much time, money and energy it takes to farm. This experience is especially important for those who didn't grow up on a farm. They may not realize how much time they'll spend bent over a calculator or computer adding up sales, recording yields, mapping out planting plans, documenting processes for state and federal certification programs. A love of paperwork is seldom what attracts people to farming, but knowing how to do it is an essential skill for anyone who wants to run their own farm. Farm internships seldom give beginners a chance to develop administrative skills, but time at an incubator farm will. Time spent at an incubator also gives beginning farmers a chance to develop the systems, efficiencies, and markets essential to a successful business. And they aren't paying a mortgage while they figure it out. They can leave the incubator on solid financial ground, with confidence in their production numbers, an established market and documented value in their business.

Beginning farmers will also benefit from the connections and camaraderie they find on an incubator farm. The collective nature of an incubator gives beginning farmers a chance to interact with other farmers, new and experienced, reducing feelings of isolation and enhancing chances of success. It can be a lifesaver to have someone to ask about fussy seeders and the intricacies of accounting. It's a comfort to have someone to commiserate with on rough days. The chance to build professional knowledge and personal support networks is especially important for those who may not have access to them through friends, family or formal education.

## Farm Incubators in New York State

Farm incubators are specialized business incubators. The first ever business incubator was established by Joe Mancuso in Batavia in the 1950s. The Mancuso family bought the Ferguson Harris (now Massey Ferguson) plant after it closed leaving thousands jobless. When Mancuso couldn't find a corporate buyer for the entire plant, he decided to divide the space and rent it out to individual small businesses. He enticed businesses in by offering short-term leases, shared office equipment, secretarial support, and help finding funding. Mancuso renamed the plant the Batavia Industrial Center, but locals started calling it the "incubator" because one of original tenants was a chicken hatchery. The name stuck and what started as an effort to create jobs in a flagging local economy, became an innovative way of nurturing new businesses. The idea went global. Today, business incubators number in the thousands.

New York State has three incubators nurturing beginning farmers. Glynwood was established in the Hudson Valley more than 20 years ago. In 2012, Groundswell established its farm incubator near Ithaca. The newest incubator is the Providence Farm Collective (PFC) in East Aurora. Established in 2019, PFC is a farm incubator with a twist. It is trying to bring more equity to the food system by giving those that serve communities with limited access to land and fresh food a place to farm.

PFC evolved from a collaborative effort to find a place where Buffalo's Somali Bantu refugees could share cultural farming traditions and grow food for their West Side community. The Somali Bantu Community Garden was established in 2017 on an eighth-acre of donated land in East Aurora. The sweat equity of the Somali Bantu community and other volunteers plus grants from the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County, General Mills Foundation, and Newman's Own Foundation turned the garden into a farm with tools, a tractor, trailers, vehicles and irrigation equipment. The farm grows garlic and flowers to generate income. In 2018, 1,500 pounds of vegetables were given away to people in need.

PFC accepted eight new incubator farmers and three new organizations into its programs for 2020. The new incubator farmers all started as volunteers at the Somali Bantu's Community Farm. Each will now have a sixth-acre of plowed, fertilized and fenced land as well as access to hand tools, select plant materials, workshops and technical assistance, all at no cost. Each farmer will manage production and markets as they see fit. One of their options will be to sell to PFC. PFC, in partnership with Buffalo Go Green and the Community Action Organization, will aggregate produce for resale to mobile markets serving areas with limited access to fresh food. After three years as incubator farmers, they will have the opportunity to have long term tenancy on the farm.

Four organizations will be farming at PFC in 2020. They are: the Somali Bantu Community Farm; Our Lady of Hope (mainly Burmese participating) Congolese Babondo Buffalo (Congolese); Buffalo Go Green (urban Farm focused on food access and nutrition for underserved communities). The organizations will have one acre of land and all the support services that individual farmers have. All will be sharing what they grow, or selling it affordably, to an underserved community.

## Is a Farm Incubator the Right Place to Launch Your Farm?

All three farm incubators in New York State give beginning farmers with limited capital a place to hone skills, work out the kinks in their operations, and develop markets. A 2017 national survey of incubator participants shows that 42% went on to run farms of their own, but incubators are not the best option for everyone. An incubator may be right for you if you:

- \$ have limited capital
- \$ need to develop additional technical and business skills
- \$ lack management experience
- \$ want to test the financial viability of your business plan before applying for financing
- \$ enjoy learning from others and sharing your knowledge
- \$ thrive in cooperative environments ■

## Links

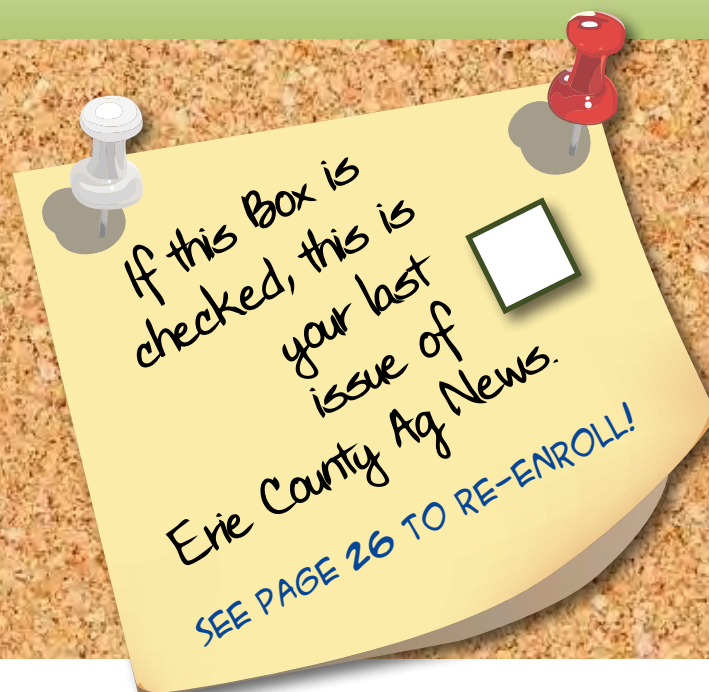
- <https://www.glynwood.org/what-we-do/farm-training/farm-business-incubator.html>
- <https://groundswellcenter.org/the-incubator-farm/>
- <http://providencefarmcollective.org/programs/>
- <https://smallfarms.cornell.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Incubation-Oct-2010-Cornell-BFLN-mtg-2k44kjc-vn6uz5.pdf>

**Cornell Cooperative Extension**  
**Erie County**

21 South Grove Street  
East Aurora, NY 14052  
—Return Service Requested—

# Erie County Ag News

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Erie County



***Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities***

Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and educator recognized for valuing AA/EEO Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities.