


2025–2030

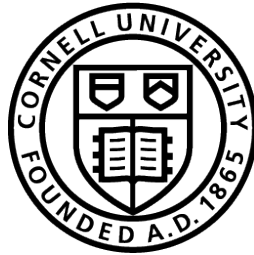
WYOMING
COUNTY
2025
2030



Cornell Cooperative Extension

Wyoming County



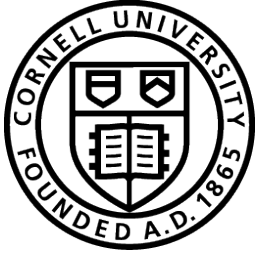


Cornell Cooperative Extension Wyoming County

2025–2030
Strategic
Vision

Cornell Cooperative Extension

Wyoming County



2025–2030 STRATEGIC VISION

Empowering Youth and Adult Development

OUR MISSION:

CCE Wyoming County applies innovation to strengthen local communities.

OUR VISION:

CCE Wyoming County envisions a resilient rural community where strong agricultural and food systems support the success and well-being of producers, youth, and all residents through innovation, heritage, and trusted partnerships.

Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Wyoming County has developed a five-year strategic plan to strengthen its adult informal education and 4-H youth development programs. Guided by its Board of Directors, this initiative aims to align Wyoming County Cooperative Extension programs, infrastructure, and volunteer service to the current community needs.

This alignment will reinforce the commitment that the local CCE Wyoming County Association must serve the county's residents in connecting heritage and innovation so that the agricultural community can continue to thrive and grow with the county.

The board of directors, program committees, staff, volunteers, and public program participants are all committed to enhancing the value that the organization brings to the county, in partnership with the county.

Wyoming County is home to 638 farms, covering more than 298,000 acres, with over 97% family-owned operations. Agriculture here is more than an industry—it's the heart of our economy, culture, and way of life. Of those acres, nearly 204,000 are actively in production, a testament to our farmers' resilience and commitment.

Wyoming County is the top producer of maple syrup in New York State and ranks 10th nationwide for maple production. Although it is the leading milk producer in New York, it ranks second in milk sales, offering consumers excellent value. The county also leads the state in haylage and calf production, and ranks fourth in honey production.

For generations, local farmers, volunteers, and civic leaders have guided the mission of Cooperative Extension in Wyoming County. Their input has ensured that the organization remains rooted in real-world needs—supporting strong farm businesses, forward-thinking innovation, and youth who grow into prepared, resilient adults.

Following thoughtful input from the board, committees and staff, we shifted our focus outward—inviting the broader community to share their vision for our future. Through brown bag lunches and a community-wide survey, we listened deeply to what matters most.

Building on over 100 years of service, Wyoming county Cooperative Extension's community is united in advancing this vision through seven strategic goals:

GOALS:

- 1. Reinforce the Culture of Agriculture**
- 2. Improve Agricultural Market Access and Community Food Systems**
- 3. Foster Engagement and Experiential Learning**
- 4. Build Hands-On Skills for Practical Innovation**
- 5. Leverage Strategic Partnerships**
- 6. Enhance Communication and Volunteer Recognition**
- 7. Strengthen Organizational Practices and Infrastructure**

Youth Development through Cooperative Extension's 4-H programs, we've raised a 'herd of awesome kids'—nurturing young minds with skills, confidence, and curiosity so they can grow into strong, capable, and compassionate leaders of tomorrow.

Adult Programming through Cooperative Extension keeps minds active and communities connected by offering hands-on, research-based learning. Through workshops, clubs, and group programs, adults gain practical skills, share knowledge, and grow together—personally and professionally.

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THEMES

Cooperative Extension recently undertook a strategic planning process to assess where we are—and where we need to go. A comprehensive SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis was conducted, drawing input from a wide range of voices: from 4-H volunteers and committee members to the Board of Directors and longtime contributors to county agriculture. Community surveys, interviews, and a roundtable co-hosted by the Wyoming County Farm Bureau helped bring ideas into sharper focus.



1. Renewing Our Commitment to Public Service



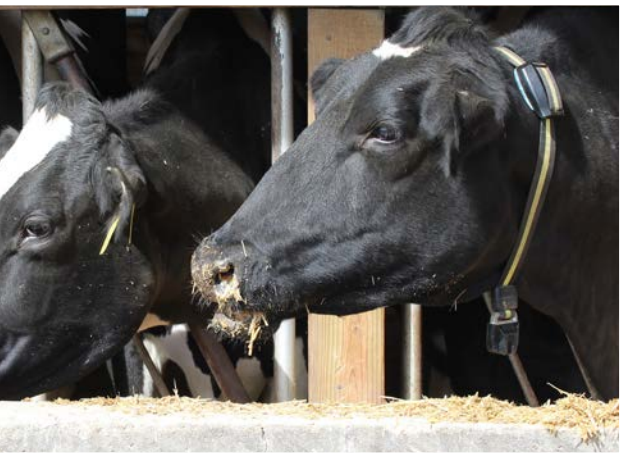
Cooperative Extension was founded to serve farmers, youth, and lifelong learners—and that mission continues to grow with the changing needs of our communities. We are developing and implementing service opportunities through deeper community engagement, strong volunteer training and support, and targeted efforts to address food security. Across all program areas, we remain committed to responsive, people-centered public service.

2. Expanding What Leadership Means



Leadership is rooted in responsibility, adaptability, and a shared vision of service. By supporting youth and adults through engagement, development, health and safety, and skill-building programs, Wyoming County will foster leaders across groups, rather than one at the helm of a group.

3. Reinforce a Dynamic Agriculture Sector



CCE Wyoming County supports a skilled and diverse dairy community by offering timely, research-based guidance. As part of a broader network of agricultural expertise, we help producers, industry partners, and youth navigate challenges, build capacity, and make informed decisions that support resilience and long-term success.

4. Support Emerging Ag. Enterprises, Agri-Tourism, and Home Management



Cooperative Extension recognizes the value of emerging agricultural enterprises, including pre-commercial production, agritourism, and homesteading. These areas offer opportunities for economic diversification, and Extension is expanding its programs to meet the needs of a broader base of rural learners and entrepreneurs.

5. Enhance the Volunteer Experience and Update Facilities



CCE's ability to serve relies on dedicated volunteers and accessible, well-equipped learning environments. By enhancing volunteer training and modernizing teaching spaces, we aim to strengthen participation, learning outcomes, and long-term community impact.

Wyoming County CCE Staff



Caron Gala
Lead Executive Director

- Administration
- Grants
- Budgets & Contracts
- Insurance
- Soil Science/Agronomy
- Leadership
- STEAM
- Development
- Strategic Planning
- Gardening and Apples
- Agriculture Economics
- Raised Beds
- Farm and Forest Safety
- Bees



Don Gasiewicz
Agriculture Program
Manager

- Natural Resources
- Horticulture
- Plant and insect identification and soil testing
- Master Gardener Volunteer and events
- Vegetable Production
- High Tunnel Production
- Pesticide Certification
- Trees, Fruits, and Berry Production
- Vegetable Variety Trial (coordination with Cornell)



Kathie Ricketson
Finance Assistant

- Financial Reporting Processes
- Financial Records Management
- Bookkeeping



Holly Harwood
4-H Program
Manager

- Meat Animal Program
- Beef, Sheep, and Swine
- Poultry, Pheasants and Rabbits
- Tractor Safety Program
- Livestock Sale
- Club Management
- Club and Youth Scholarships
- Shooting Sports



Alesia Ackerman
Senior Administrative
Assistant

- General Program Support
- Mailing Address & Contact Info updates
- Correspondence
- Event Registration
- Club enrollment/ completion
- 4-H News



Sarah Clark
4-H Educator

- Dog Obedience, Horse Program
- Plant Science, Gladiolus, Giant Veggies
- Award Trips
- Family & Consumer Science, Food & Nutrition
- Clothing, Home Environment, Arts & Crafts



Laura Berkemeier
Communications
Coordinator

- Program Advertising
- Communications
- Program Promotion
- Video Interviews & Production
- Graphic Design
- Farm and Homestead Production



Stephanie Czerniak
4-H Educator,
AITC/DITC Educator

- Dairy, Goat, Poultry, Rabbit Programs
- Natural Resources
- Woodworking Projects
- Hiking
- Ag in the Classroom (AITC)
- Dairy in the Classroom (DITC)

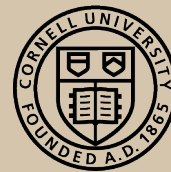


Lisa Byers
Farm To School,
DITC Educator

- Farm to School
- Dairy in the Classroom

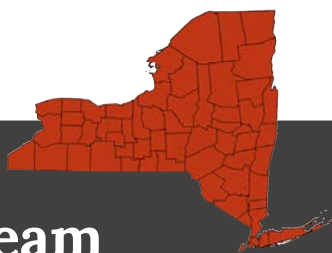
The **Shared Business Network** team is a part of Wyoming County Cooperative Extension staff. They serve the entire region in three functional areas: finance, human resources, and IT. For more information about that team, contact Caron Gala at ceg256@cornell.edu.

Partners with Cornell Cooperative Extension Teams



Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE)'s 70+ regional agricultural specialists serve multi-county regions throughout New York State, providing research-based information, programs and technical assistance to dairy, livestock, field crops, vegetable, grape, and fruit producers.

Harvest New York Team



Harvest New York is an innovative Cornell Cooperative Extension team that focuses on growing New York's farm and food economy. Harvest New York seeks to link consumers and producers.

Local Food and Supply Chain Management

Harvest NY analyzes supply chain logistics and inefficiencies to develop solutions that create resiliency and self-reliance in the New York farm food value chain. Educators work in Farm-to-School, New York Grown and Certified, food safety, and farm-based beverages. Our work promotes economic growth and consumer access to New York products.

Community Gardens

Fostering innovative farming methods that improve ecological resilience and meet urgent food access needs through community education, engagement and empowerment.

NWNY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Team



The CCE Wyoming County office supports the Northwest York Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Team, which serves a 10-county region in western New York. It is one of the outstanding regional programs serving Cornell Cooperative Extension. The six specialists work together with Cornell faculty and county educators to provide assistance, best practices education, and applied research results to dairy, livestock, and field crops farmers on all size farms, and encouraging the vitality of family farms.

Highlights Include:

- Developing management and leadership skills of next generation managers of farm businesses
- Working with growers using emerging technology or practices to evaluate the impact on farm profitability
- Leading dairy skills training and human resource management assistance in Spanish and English
- Facilitating crop, nutrient and pest management best practices with grain and forage growers
- Supporting livestock farms with production, marketing, and business planning
- Delivering precision agriculture education with focus on big data analytics

GOAL 1

Reinforce the Culture of Agriculture

Cooperative Extension will strengthen Wyoming County’s agricultural legacy by engaging youth and adults in hands-on learning, career exploration, and workforce development, while building partnerships that ensure agriculture continues to be a thriving, multi-generational strength of the community.

Youth

Youth Ag Pathways: From Exposure to Enterprise

Objective 1

Wyoming County 4-H brings agriculture to life through hands on learning and experiences, classroom activities, and guest speakers.

Objective 2

Take fun and educational trips to farms, equipment dealerships, seed and amendment suppliers, and processing plants so youth in dairy and livestock projects can see how agriculture works beyond the show ring.

Objective 3

With help from volunteers and staff, youth can care for animals through leasing programs and take part in fun, hands-on learning - even if they don’t live on a farm. Educational clinics, camps, and workshops help them build skills and confidence.

Objective 4

Increase youth involvement in plant and soil sciences by growing plants in greenhouses or gardens, testing soil, using amendments, and helping with Master Gardener or garden club projects around the county.

Objective 5

Collaborate with volunteers to teach youth tractor and small engine machinery safety through hands-on activities that help youth feel confident and stay safe.

Objective 6

Let youth explore the business side of farming by working on real-life projects like budgeting, animal care, and using ag technology.



Objective 7

Build confidence and leadership by helping youth practice public speaking, manage money, and take part in community projects.

Objective 8

Host an **Innovation Challenge** each year. Youth of all ages will explore careers, visit farms and ag businesses, and work with mentors, then team up to solve real ag problems and share their ideas in a fun, family-friendly showcase.



Adult

Agricultural Education and Training

Objective 1

Host seasonal, hands-on workshops and multi-session trainings on production, equipment use, pest management, farm and forest safety, specialty crops, high tunnel production, and farm diversification strategies.

Objective 2

Translate applied research on pest control, maple production, honeybee health, soil fertility/health, and livestock care into articles, op-eds, and research updates that emphasize research-tested practices.

Objective 3

Provide training in ag technologies. Collaborate with engineers and Cornell experts for demonstrations in enterprise design and applied innovations.

Farm Business Development and Innovation

Objective 4

Educate producers on cooperative strategies including shared land use, equipment models, and collaborative marketing approaches.

Objective 5

Facilitate peer-to-peer learning through brown-bag sessions and coffee gatherings with guest speakers on vegetable, livestock, and farmstand topics.

Objective 6

Support farm business development with training in direct marketing, pricing, funding access, and strengthen networks via online platforms.

Objective 7

Organize agritourism training events with agency partners on visitor safety, liability, marketing, and customer experience.



Workforce Development & Agriculture Mentorship

Objective 8

Develop seasonal internships linked to agricultural initiatives (e.g., high tunnels, gardening, agritech) with learning goals that highlight the value of all operations.

Objective 9

Establish mentorship programs that connect people with experienced farmers and ag professionals for personalized guidance and support.

GOAL 2

CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WYOMING COUNTY

Improve Agricultural Market Access and Community Food Systems

Support producers and communities by improving marketing strategies, agritourism, and providing access to local food systems.

Youth

Objective 1

Spark curiosity about food systems and entrepreneurship through hands-on experiences like culinary contests, nutrition workshops, and farm-to-table adventures. Youth dive into programs like Produced in NY, Delicious Destinations, and smoothie or cupcake challenges.

Objective 2

Build civic pride and volunteer spirit through youth-led service projects that tackle food safety, access and nutrition. From planning and cooking to serving meals at community dinners, youth partner with food pantries and churches with commercial kitchens to create warm, welcoming experiences—and learn the power of hospitality in action.

Objective 3

Youth reflect on their hospitality events through group presentations that highlight how they created welcoming spaces with nutritious, fun food while enhancing community food access and

connections. Presentations may include advertising pitches, event budgeting, and ideas for improving food access.

Objective 4

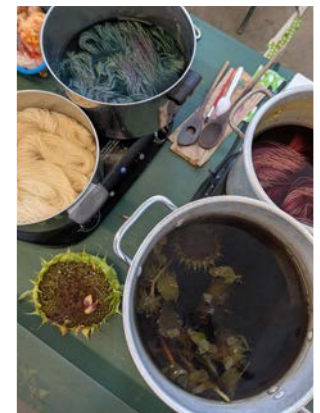
Prepare youth for fair participation by focusing on product quality, product presentation, and meeting market expectations.

Objective 5

Teach essential skills like food preservation, kitchen safety, and proper food handling to ensure consistency, safety, and value in youth-created products.

Objective 6

Engage youth in food access volunteer efforts by providing opportunities through their projects or in alignment with adult volunteer or farm to table programs.





Adult



Market Development and Business Planning

Objective 1

Create a planning, agritourism, and management discussion group. Co-sponsor workshops on branding, economic decision-making, farmers' markets, roadside stands, winter marketing, and financial strategies to enhance profitability and improve pricing and consumer insight.

Objective 2

Prepare producers with tools and knowledge to engage in local, regional, or state processing initiatives.

Objective 3

Research and create communications on the health benefits of tree syrups, honey, mushrooms, and specialty crops to support value-added markets.

Objective 4

Organize in-state, out-of-state, and international tours to explore value-added products and emerging technologies.

Partnerships and Institutional Support

Objective 5

Build partnerships with institutions to bring agricultural and conservation innovation experts to Wyoming County for demonstrations and applied learning.

Objective 6

Support local schools with procurement, purchasing, and food safety in farm-to-school programs alongside Cornell Cooperative Extension-led efforts through Harvest NY.

Outreach, Promotion and Food Access

Objective 7

Co-sponsor and promote Wyoming County producers through a coordinated communications effort with other county agencies or organizations, media outreach, and community events.

Objective 8

Strengthen volunteer networks to receive and distribute surplus food to vulnerable populations, enhancing food access and community connection.

GOAL 3

CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WYOMING COUNTY

Foster Engagement and Experiential Learning

Mobilize volunteers and community members to support educational projects and agricultural heritage, enhancing local connections.

Youth

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Wyoming County 4-H engages more than 700 youth in 4-H programs that build life skills, leadership, and community involvement through hands-on learning in agriculture, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM), and family and consumer sciences.

Objective 1

Support youth-led beautification and garden projects that promote community stewardship and involvement.

Objective 2

Showcase youth project work at the Wyoming County Fair to encourage celebration of the beauty of agriculture.

Objective 3

Foster community engagement by having members participate in community service projects, such as food drives and park cleanups, which teach them the value of giving back and develop leadership skills.

Objective 4

Request regular input on programs from community members through a network of committees.



Wyoming County 4-H

4-H Youth development utilizes a wide variety of engagement models including community clubs, project area clubs, special interest clubs, and independent family members.

Community Based Clubs

Local clubs have a broad focus, based on member interests.

Countywide Clubs

Offer project-based learning year-round. Ex. rabbit, poultry, goat, textile and sewing, hiking, shooting sports, and STEAM clubs.

Animal Science Clubs

Experiential learning with animal species such as dairy, horses, livestock, and companion animals.

Cloverbud Program

Age-appropriate learning for youth ages 5–8.

Special Interest Clubs (SPIN)

Short-term learning focused on emergent interests.

Community and Leadership

Youth-led service learning and 4-H leadership/civic opportunities.

Adult



Objective 1

Coordinate family and community-friendly garden tours and educational events at Wyoming County gardens.

Objective 2

Have an Annual plant sale celebrating gardening community with vendors, educational booths, and demonstrations. Host an annual end-of-season farm-to-table with production tips and cooking demo. The events support Jr. and Master Gardener training and events.

Objective 3

Provide a resource library, computer space, and aid in research, article writing, project planning with towns, and workshop preparation.

Objective 4

Support and celebrate gardening exhibits and volunteer engagement at Wyoming County Fair and other locations across the county.

Objective 5

Connect residents to Master Gardeners, Master Food Preserver, Master Forest Owners, Master Beekeeper, and Master Naturalist Science programs at Cornell Cooperative Extension.

Objective 6

Engage and empower Master Volunteer Groups to develop and deliver effective presentations through templates, materials support, hands-on-learning, and public speaking practices. Support an annual volunteer-led series.

Agriculture Program Engagement

Support interest group development in food security and safety, food preservation, beekeeping, maple production, gardening, forestry, livestock, community gardens and naturalist sciences.

Food Systems

Dairy and Livestock

Business Management

Beekeeping and Honey

Maple

Vegetable



GOAL 4

CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WYOMING COUNTY

Build Hands-On Skills for Practical Innovation

Invest in youth and adults with hands-on, interdisciplinary learning that bridges science, technology, trades, and home management. Leverage the expertise at Cornell University and other regional institutions to foster creativity, technical fluency, and practical problem-solving in home environments, private and community infrastructure, and planning.

Youth



Objective 1

Engage youth in projects that integrate Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) through hands-on activities such as sewing, materials evaluation and use, culinary chemistry, crafting, and financial simulations.

Objective 2

Increase participation in fiber, sewing, and other materials-related activities. These programs are informed by programs in apparel and construction design at Cornell and other regional institutions.

Objective 3

Host 4-H-led culinary, hospitality, and constructive (food prep) design focused events and workshops. These events draw on Cornell and other regional institution's programs and expertise.

Objective 4

Deliver workshops on product development, and buildings for agricultural facilities, restaurant and home design, and construction. A planned approach will engage the phases of design while familiarizing youth with social science, computer and engineering tools. Workshops will be done in partnership with Cornell and other local institutions with expertise in computer aided design, manufacturing, and optimization approaches.

Objective 5

Expand robotics and digital design programming with a focus on agricultural, natural resources, water and land-use design challenges.

Adult



Objective 1

In collaboration with partners, provide development opportunities, safety training, and foundational technical education in STEAM fields—such as home repair, 3D printing, and culinary/nutritional programs—in partnership with Cornell, land-grant or forestry institutions, and, where appropriate, in coordination with BOCES.

Objective 2

Establish community “makerspaces” that allow for recreational or entrepreneurship related clubs associated with interests in areas like sewing, fiberworking, woodworking, printing, and design/fabrication.

Objective 3

In collaboration with partners, host safety and wellness workshops for professionals, addressing physical health, injury prevention, nutrition, and stress management.

Objective 4

Use participant feedback and community input to evaluate and refine adult STEAM offerings. Programs will be designed to be accessible, relevant, and responsive to local needs. CCE Wyoming will use evaluation methods from Cornell Cooperative Extension to determine impact.



GOAL 5

CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WYOMING COUNTY

Leverage Strategic Partnerships

Build collaborations with regional and state partners to extend program reach, share resources, and amplify impact. Partner with schools, farms, colleges, and local organizations to expand access, build skills, and prepare youth for careers in agriculture and animal science.

Key Strategic Partnership Goals

Innovation and Research Partnerships

CCE Wyoming County collaborates with academic institutions, Extension research teams, and agricultural innovators to deliver education in livestock, specialty crops, forest management, soil health, pest control, farm planning, and agricultural technologies.

Business and Community Development Partnerships

Working with cooperative development experts, regional planners, the business center, and the county chamber, CCE Wyoming County supports entrepreneurship, market diversification, agritourism, and alternative business models that strengthen rural economies.

Together, these partnerships foster an ecosystem where youth gain critical skills in agriculture, STEAM and leadership, preparing them to become the innovators and leaders of tomorrow.

Workforce and Technical Training Partnerships

CCE Wyoming County partners with equipment suppliers, engineers, and trades professionals to offer hands-on training in farm safety, Commercial Driver licenses, ergonomic health, and tool use—expanding workforce readiness and technical skills in rural communities.

Peer Learning and Education Partnerships

CCE Wyoming County fosters adult education through producer cohorts, clubs, and informal gatherings such as brown bag sessions. These peer-driven experiences are enriched by guest speakers and content experts from local and statewide networks.

Specialized Program Development Partnerships

CCE Wyoming County works with Extension associates and regional collaborators to deliver specialized educational programs. These initiatives bring targeted expertise to local learners, addressing emerging local needs.

By nurturing these strategic partnerships, CCE Wyoming County ensures that adult learners have access to high-quality, research-based, and community-relevant education that supports their roles as farmers, entrepreneurs, and civic leaders.

Key Partners

Youth Organizations

- 4-H Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Program Work Team
- Cornell Cooperative Extension New York State 4-H Programs
- FFA Chapters
- New York State Agriculture in the Classroom
- New York State Dairy in the Classroom
- New York State Farm to School Program
- Wyoming County 4-H Alumni
- Wyoming County School Districts

Cornell University, Extension, and Other Higher Education Partners

Cornell University and its applied research and Extension teams provide education in dairy production, forest production, soil fertility/health, pest management, maple production, farm business planning, and agricultural technologies such as agritech (sensors), high tunnels, and robotics.

- Cornell University / Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Cornell Agricultural Workforce Development
- College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
- Department of Animal Science (PRO-DAIRY, PRO-LIVESTOCK)
- College of Architecture, Art, and Planning
- College of Engineering
- College of Veterinary Medicine
- Department of Entomology (Dyce Laboratory for Honeybee Studies, Cornell Integrated Pest Management)
- Department of Natural Resources and the Environment
- Extension Disaster Education Network
- Harvest New York
- Northwest New York Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Team
- New York FarmNet
- Regional and Local Food Systems Program Work Team
- SC Johnson College of Business, Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management

Community Partners

- Wyoming County Arts Council
- Wyoming County Building and Grounds
- Wyoming County Business Education Council
- Wyoming County Business Center
- Wyoming County Chamber and Tourism Office
- Wyoming County Fair Association
- Wyoming County Farm Bureau
- Wyoming County Fire & Building Codes, Planning and Development Office
- Wyoming County Industrial Development Agency
- Wyoming County Maple Producers
- Wyoming County Office of Emergency Services
- Wyoming County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Wyoming County Veterans Service Office
- FarmMedic
- Northeast Center for Occupational Health and Safety
- New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health
- New York State Department of Transportation
- USDA Farm Service Agency
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Potential Future Partners

- Alfred State College
- Buffalo State University
- Genesee Community College
- Paul Smith's College
- Rochester Institute of Technology
- State University of New York Cobleskill
- State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry
- State University of New York at Morrisville
- University at Buffalo

GOAL 6

CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WYOMING COUNTY

Enhance Volunteer Recognition and Public Communication



To build a vibrant, connected agricultural community, it is essential to strengthen volunteer outreach, provide meaningful support, and celebrate contributions across 4-H and agricultural programs.

Objective 1

Provide streamlined how-to guides and orientation materials to support volunteer success and retention.

Objective 2

Maintain a dedicated volunteer leader email contact lists for ongoing communication. Ensure volunteers across 4-H and agricultural programs are well-informed, supported, and retained through consistent staff collaboration.

Objective 3

Develop and implement coordinated pre- and post-program communications using digital and print formats to broaden participation. Deliver timely post-program follow-ups to gather feedback and encourage ongoing engagement.

Objective 4

Create a press release calendar and weekly community announcements. Use branded templates to ensure timely, consistent messaging across digital and print media.

Objective 5

Leverage social media platforms for graphical posts, videos, and other formats along with newsletters, magazines,

community calendars, and other networks to promote events, increase educational impact, amplify visibility, and drive community engagement.

Objective 6

Work with media outlets and partner organizations to align messaging, co-promote initiatives, and share stories that highlight the collective impact of Cooperative Extension programs.

Objective 7

Utilize a contact record management system to manage communication and analyze engagement trends to improve program reach and effectiveness.

Objective 8

Ensure regular, clear communication between staff and volunteers defining roles and providing ongoing support across 4-H and agricultural programs.

Objective 9

Publish articles in Farm and Homestead, newspapers, and magazines, by local Masters on topics like seed starting, bulb management, landscape planning, late blight resistance, soil testing, deer-resistant plants, and backyard veggies.



Staff Support of Volunteers

Cooperative Extension staff serve as coordinators, mentors, and coaches for volunteers—offering steady guidance, resources, and encouragement. Support includes regular check-ins, sharing of materials, and hands-on help.

Signature Event Management

Cooperative Extension staff bring thoughtful coordination and dependable follow-through to every event, ensuring high-quality experiences. Support includes managing registration, negotiating contracts, building clear agendas, and overseeing event setup.

How-To Volunteer Packet

Each volunteer receives a clear, concise packet that outlines their role, expectations, and practical tips. This easy-to-use resource takes the guesswork out of getting started and helps reduce barriers to participation.

Orientation Meeting

Volunteers are welcomed through a brief orientation meeting with a staff member—typically a Program Manager or Executive Director. This session clarifies responsibilities, answers questions, and fosters connections right from the start.

Volunteer Resources and Development Opportunities

- **User-Friendly Materials:** Volunteers have access to clear, accessible materials and checklists (e.g., event prep guides, trip planning examples) that support success.
- **Development Opportunities:** Align volunteer opportunities with individual interests and strengths, integrating opportunities for development to foster responsibility, collaboration, critical thinking, and adaptability.
- **Recognition and Celebration:** Contributions are celebrated year-round with public acknowledgment and spotlights in local media, as appropriate.

GOAL 7

Strengthen Organizational Practices and Infrastructure

Establish systems, governance, and infrastructure that support sustainable growth, operational excellence, and a positive workplace culture.

Organizational Procedures

Objective 1

Share an annual summary of the Board's organizational meeting with staff, including priorities, policies, and budget updates.

Objective 2

Conduct regular performance reviews using office standards and a goal document to guide year-round discussions.

Objective 3

Update the Wyoming County Human Resources (HR) Manual to reflect current practices and compliance.

Objective 4

Ensure the Western Shared Business Network (WSBN) maintains a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual and submits an annual report to CCE Administration, and the Association Management Group (AMG), for their board of directors.

Objective 5

Maintain succession plans and SOP's to ensure continuity during staff absence or transitions.

Governance

Objective 6

Implement an annual development plan for the board of directors on selected topics, which may include: governance, fundraising, fiduciary duties, management, team building, and community engagement.

Objective 7

Program committees approve annual workplans.

Objective 8

Committees, Subcommittees and clubs provide input into the annual budget process, which includes program priorities. The process is maintained with board oversight.

Objective 9

Uphold transparent policies on elections, meetings, committees, and compliance with Robert's Rules and Cornell Cooperative Extension standards.

Objective 10

Develop WSBN Association Management Group SOP's with cover meeting notes, rules, and clear roles/responsibilities for the Association Management

Group, Lead Executive Director, Senior Extension Staff, and regional functional leads.

Staff Development

Objective 11

Support staff development in leadership, curriculum, and communication.

Objective 12

Train staff on volunteer management, including recruitment, delegation, and retention.

Objective 13

Provide time and support for innovation and collaboration in programming.

Objective 14

Hold regular monthly staff meetings and one-on-ones to support communication and goal achievement.



Facilities and Technology

Objective 15

Upgrade physical spaces to support hybrid learning, hands-on education, and collaboration across all programs. Build or design classrooms, kitchens, outdoor labs, and multi-use spaces to foster development in agriculture, STEAM, and life skills.

Objective 16

Improve and expand facilities for experiential learning in agriculture, livestock, food safety, and rural skills. Develop spaces for demonstrations, training, events, and community engagement.

Financial Sustainability

Objective 17

Diversify funding through grants, sponsorships, donations, fee-based services, and other sources.

Objective 18

Develop a financial strategy with board-guided investment planning, a supporting addendum, and an annual grant plan with key focus areas.

Objective 19

Create fundraising and enrollment plans for Agriculture and 4-H programs.

Governance and Leadership Structure

CCE Wyoming County is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of elected at-large directors, program committee-elected directors, and ex-officio members from Cornell Cooperative Extension and the Wyoming County Board of Supervisors. Elections are open to all Wyoming County residents aged 18+ and take place during the annual meeting of the organization. Directors serve staggered 2 year terms. The Board sets policy, oversees management of the budget, and guides program strategy. It meets at least five times per year. Elected officers are president, vice president, secretary and treasurer.

Agriculture and 4-H Program Committees advise the Board annually and include 5–15 members each, electing 2 representatives to the Board.

BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE HIGHLIGHTS

January: Organizational meeting, annual workplans, program calendars, personnel report, financial review, communications plan

March: Budget approval, prior year financials review, staffing and fundraising plan, current year financial review

June: Annual report data, nominations, financial review

July: Develop annual report, next year budget prep, pre-fair communications

September: Executive Committee, Post-fair review, nominations, financial review

October: Annual membership meeting (no financial review)

November: Financial review, Strategic Plan review

December: Executive committee reviews accomplishments and financials

A CROSS-CUTTING INITIATIVE

Partnership with Schools

Agriculture in the Classroom (AIRC)

Educators deliver standards-aligned lessons and field trips that explore food production, supply chains, processing, nutrition, and the vital role of farmers in ensuring food security.



Dairy in the Classroom (DITC)

Students discover the journey of milk from cow to carton through interactive lessons, dairy tastings, and farm tours. These experiences foster appreciation for Wyoming County's dairy heritage and promote healthy food choices.



Farm to School (F2S)

CCE supports the NYS Farm-to-School Program to bring fresh, local food into cafeterias and classrooms. Schools sourcing at least 30% of lunch ingredients from New York farms qualify for additional state funding. CCE supports this effort through food sourcing, menu planning, and educational activities such as school gardens, taste tests, and nutrition lessons—helping students and cafeteria personnel connect food, health, and local agriculture.



Internships

The new Agriculture Program Internship offers youth hands-on experience in crop and livestock production at CCE Wyoming County. Interns will work in high tunnels and other facilities, gaining skills in irrigation, soil fertility, pest management, season extension, and crop rotation. They may also support community gardens, food security initiatives, and explore dairy and livestock operations.

FFA and Ag Teacher Coordination

CCE Wyoming County is committed to working with agricultural educators and FFA chapters. For example, CCE Wyoming County works closely with district agriculture teachers and FFA chapters on annual Ag Days. During these events, students engage in hands-on stations, meet local producers, and explore agriculture.



Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Wyoming County is partnering with Central School Districts to cultivate the next generation of agricultural leaders through immersive, hands-on learning that brings agriculture to life—connecting classrooms with farms, food systems, and the heart of rural community life.

Workshop Series*

Growing Gourmet: Niche Crop Production from Farm to Fork

Explore niche crop cultivation, production, nutritional uses, marketability, value added products, and culinary uses.

High Tunnel Farming: Extending Seasons and Expanding Yields

Discover how high tunnels support fruit, vegetable, and flower production. Includes tips on sensor use and tunnel management for improved harvests.

Forest Knowledge Series: Land, Leaf, and Sap

Learn tree identification, maple tapping, and forest farming. Includes webinars on Christmas trees and sap sensor tools.

Grower's Game Plan: Soil, Pest & Input Management

Understand soil health, pest control strategies (IPM), and safe pesticide application. Ideal for home growers and certification course participants.

Twilight Tour of High Tunnels

Evening exploration of high tunnel systems and their seasonal benefits.

Farm Structures and Operations Planning

Guidance on designing and managing efficient farm infrastructure.

Farm Tours

Facilitating on farm, producer led discussions introducing emerging crop growing systems and newly implemented industry innovation, for new and existing farmers.

Tree Fruit and Berry Production Workshops

From Soil to Fruit. Hands-on training on soil health, varietal considerations, nutrient management, combating disease and insect pressure, pruning and maintenance for hobby and commercial fruit growers.

Advanced Dairy Standard Operating Procedures

Best practices and strategies for producing dairy products effectively.

Data Management for Whole Farm Dairy and Vegetable Growers

Tools and techniques for managing farm data across dairy and vegetable operations.

Wyoming County Value Added Marketing

Regional insights into enhancing product value through marketing innovations.

Dairy Workshop Winter Series

Seasonal workshops focused on dairy production, feed quality, economics, health, and business planning.

Manure Management and Funding Support

Learn sustainable manure handling practices and explore funding opportunities.

Value Added Production for Diversified Enterprises

Strategies for expanding product lines and increasing farm profitability. Includes references to local beef and on-farm processing.

Cooperative Development and Rightsizing Partnerships

Explore cooperative models and how to scale partnerships effectively.

Responder Safety Series: Farm & Forest- Mapping and Risk Amelioration Practices

Tools and techniques for identifying and mitigating on-farm and in-forest risks. Includes emergency responder teamwork in rollover incidents, grain bin submersion, and bunker safety.

CDL and New York Department of Transportation Regulations for Farm Machinery

Understand commercial driver's license requirements and New York State Department of Transportation regulations for operating farm equipment on public roads.





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