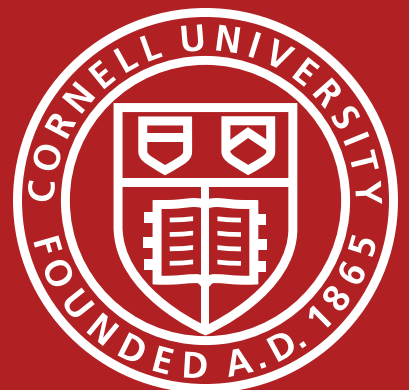




Cornell Cooperative Extension | **Columbia and Greene Counties**

Annual Report 2022



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From the Executive Director

On my sixth day, in early June, I attended my first public event as Executive Director of CCE of Columbia and Greene Counties (CCE) at our 4-H picnic in Hudson. It was clear the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic still lingered on everyone's mind especially how difficult it was not being together in person. However, the joy and importance that events like these provide was evident. Through a meal, a game of tag and planning for the fairs our youth and their parents were finding connection again.

Since June, I have connected with internal and external stakeholders. We continue our commitment to existing programs including being the premier source of local Agroforestry and Climate Resilience education, supported dozens of 4-H clubs and programs, and maintained our evidence based in-home parenting education.

New opportunities grew from these meetings. This fall we hosted the Columbia and Greene Counties Chamber of Commerce Leadership Program at the Agroforestry Resource Center in Acra. At the Extension Education Center in Hudson, we hosted a volunteer workday with the support of Farm Credit East staff, Master Gardener Volunteers, and community volunteers. We also offered four Open Campus tours to garner community input, feedback we will use to reimagine and increase community engagement on the Hudson Campus.

Feedback has also led to another exciting announcement. CCE and the local agriculture community have had a long wonderful relationship. Since starting, I have visited over 25 farms who opened their barns, fields, and farm stands for me. With their feedback, we are hiring a full-time Agriculture Educator. Combined with promotion of farm products at the Capital Region Welcome Center Taste NY Market we hope to reaffirm our commitments to Agriculture in Columbia and Greene Counties.

Along with a new Agriculture educator, you will see new faces at our offices. We are excited to have hired six new staff, each with new strengths and enthusiasm. It has been exceptional to see how each new person has found a mentor with our more seasoned staff. I'm confident with the team we have assembled we will continue to bring some of the best and accessible education to our counties.

2022 has been a year of transition for many of us. It has brought us back out into the community with face-to-face programming as COVID-19 risks were lowered and we have received tremendous response from our constituents. For many, coming back together has been a reunion and a renewing of commitments to service. As you read this report you will find some examples of the magnificent work we do and the success stories of those we serve.

With the help of our staff, volunteers, and community partners, I hope to see more of the delight I found at the 4-H picnic I attended my first week here. Thank you for your ongoing support!



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Gallina". The script is fluid and cursive.

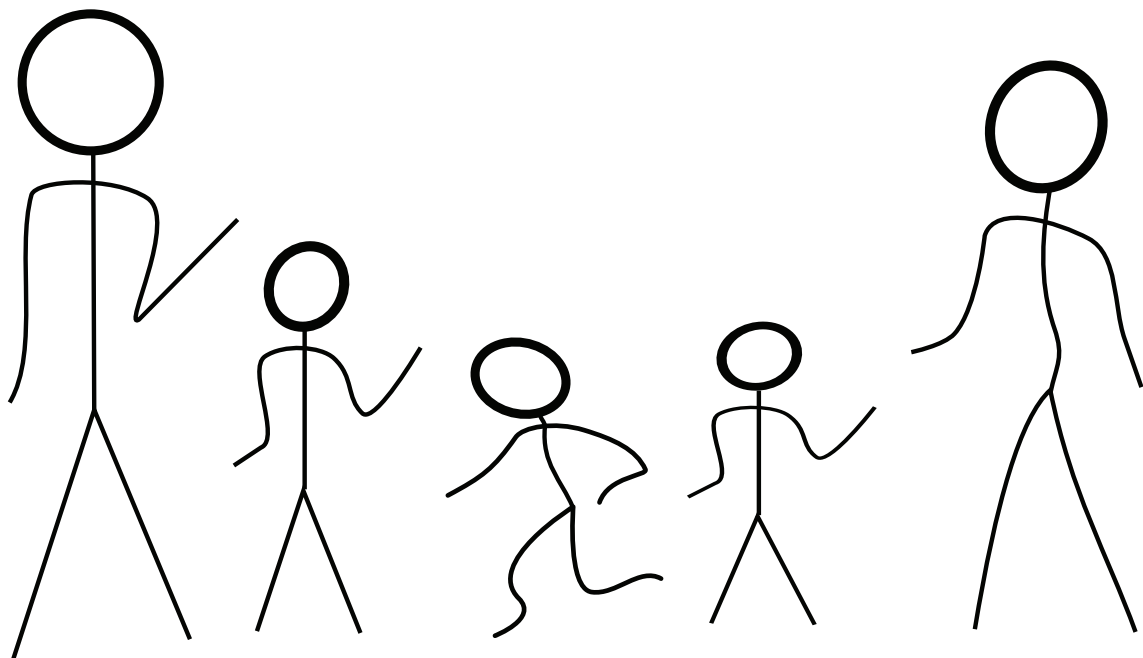
Lisa Gallina



Family and Consumer Sciences

The Family and Consumer Sciences Program provides resources that advance community resiliency and family well-being. The objectives of this work are to contribute to advancing the socio-economic potential of communities, and the empowerment of people to achieve optimal well-being.

We develop our programming through a plan-of-work based on locally identified needs. The goal of our programs is improved quality of life for families and individuals in the areas of personal & family development; nutrition; health & safety; healthy homes and communities; family economics & resource management; and community resiliency.





Parenting Education

Over 100 families received parenting education and support through our two programs. The In-home Parenting Education Program is supported through a contract with the Greene County Department of Social Services (DSS), who exclusively refers into the program. The Parenting with Confidence Program is supported through a grant from the Dyson Foundation and is open to all caregivers in Columbia and Greene Counties. Over 90% of families that participate report improvements in their parenting skills after participation. Dedicated parenting educators provide support to families through education, skill demonstration, referrals to other services, and as empathetic listeners for caregivers dealing with the difficult job of parenting in an ever changing landscape. Their services are so vital to the success of some families

that they are requested to maintain a presence in their lives long after their cases are closed with DSS. We have been engaging with some families for several years who still call on their parenting educators any time they are facing a difficult situation, such as parental loss, job loss, or difficulties at school. These maintenance visits have helped families avoid further contact with Child Protective Services as they can get the help they need before the situation becomes a crisis.

Food Preservation

In addition to answering food preservation questions by phone, our Master Food Preserver offered a 5 week non-credit course at Columbia-Greene Community College (CGCC). The course had 10 participants and covered canning, freezing, dehydrating, and fermentation. This represented a new type of partnership with CGCC where we offer our educational opportunities through their non-credit courses.

Hudson Fish Advisory Program

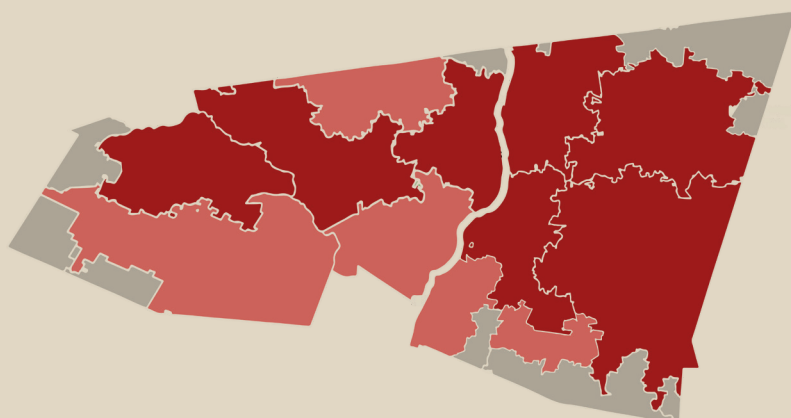
The Hudson Fish Advisory Program educates community members about what fish are safe to eat from the bodies of water in Columbia and Greene Counties and is funded through a subcontract with CCE Dutchess County. Educational events took place at community partner agencies, as well as during our Environmental Awareness Days for local schools. This year the program provided education for over 200 people.

Anger Management




The Anger Management Program is a 12 week series taught by a Certified Anger Management Specialist-1. Class series are offered multiple times per year. They reach about 20 participants who receive a certificate of completion at the end.

Snap-ED

SNAP-Ed is a regional program that provides free nutrition education classes to schools and community groups in Columbia and Greene Counties. This past year they worked with the Mental Health Association of Columbia and Greene Counties, Hudson City School District, and Taconic Hills Central School District. They also offered teacher trainings that all teachers in the two counties were eligible to attend.



School Districts We Worked With In 2022

-  School districts staff have visited
-  School districts volunteers have visited
-  School districts CCE was not involved with or are based outside the two counties.



PARENTING EDUCATION WORKS



**90% of participants
reported improved
parenting skills.**



**Over 100 families
received parenting
education and support.**

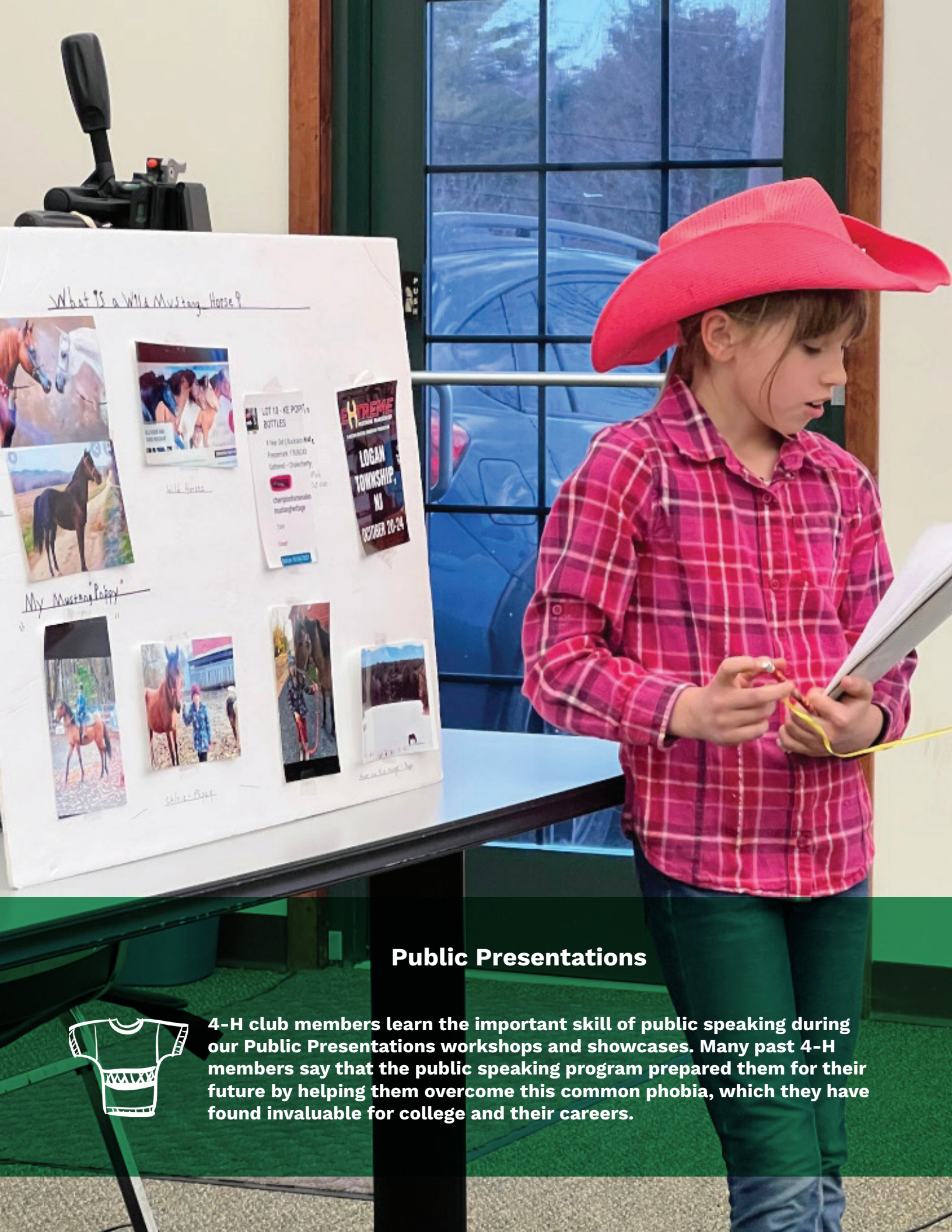
4-H and Youth Development

All of the youth activities offered by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia and Greene Counties fall under the 4-H umbrella, whether they happen after school, in the summer or as a workshop, club, camp or special event. Our programs are offered in a wide variety of formats and places because they are designed to fit the interests and needs of the diverse young people who live in the rural and more urban communities of Columbia and Greene Counties. Over 5,300 young people aged 5-to-19 take part in 4-H activities in the two counties each year.

In 2022, 4-H continued to provide enrichment activities for hundreds of children throughout Columbia and Greene Counties with community-based programming in schools and at other community-based organizations, as well as our traditional 4-H club program.



It was a chilly Achievement Night in the Siuslaw Model Forest as 4-H club members gathered to celebrate their successes.



Public Presentations



4-H club members learn the important skill of public speaking during our Public Presentations workshops and showcases. Many past 4-H members say that the public speaking program prepared them for their future by helping them overcome this common phobia, which they have found invaluable for college and their careers.



Record Setting Livestock Sale

The Livestock Sale is part of the 4-H Market Livestock Project, designed to teach youth about raising animals for meat production. They attend educational meetings about proper handling, market specifications and business aspects. Throughout the year the youth use this knowledge to care for their animals – feeding, grooming, exercising and working with them so they are ready for the show and sale.

The 4-H Livestock Sale during the 2022 Columbia County Fair set a new sales record. Thank you again to all our sponsors and to the 4-H club members who do the hard work of raising the animals!

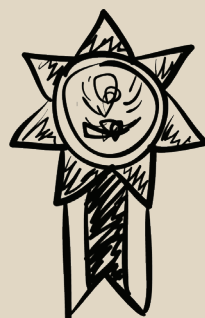


4-H Returns to the NY State Fair

4-H made its return to the New York State Fair after a two year hiatus. 4-Hers from Columbia and Greene were selected to enter their projects (the Columbia and Greene Display is the back left). 4-H clubs also took turns working the Capital Area 4-H booth. Above, a member of the Mountain Waterfalls 4-H Club displays the Spotted Lantern Fly mask craft they were leading for fairgoers.

40+

4-H clubs were active in our two counties



Two 4-H members won purple ribbons at the NY State Fair and at the Northeast Regional Public Presentations.

Connecting Youth to Higher Education

4-Hers Avery, Kendal, Anna, Kasey, and Jackson got a chance to visit Cornell University through the 4-H Career Explorations program. This program aims to expand possibilities for youth by connecting them to Cornell University, sparking interest in careers and career pathways, developing academic, leadership, and life skills, and providing an opportunity to experience college life.

Club Highlights

Members of our clubs remained busy throughout the year. Some highlights include:

- Udderly Impossibles 4-H Club showing off their fashion design and sewing skills during the 4-H Fashion Revue held in August. The outfits they are wearing were all made by them.
- The Four Leaves 4-H Club helped plant a pollinator garden



Top: 4-Hers visit Cornell University. Middle Bottom: Members of the Udderly Impossibles show off their designs during the 4-H Fashion Revue.



Community Horticulture

Our team has worked with regional agriculture technical service providers and colleagues to offer programs and resources to the public. We also provide support to community organizations and groups in their effort to build sustainable communities through growing and gardening.



Master Gardener Volunteers

The Master Gardener Volunteers reached over 1,000 community members in 2022 through presentations, outreach and events. We received over 800 calls, emails and samples from both Columbia & Greene counties. We also welcomed six new volunteers to our team who received their training in partnership with CCE Ulster.

Top: The MGV exhibit at this years two fairs demonstrated fresh herb cultivation. Left: Welcome our new Master Gardener Volunteers! This was the first class to graduate since the pandemic.

A New Gardening Podcast

Master Gardener Volunteers launched a new podcast called Nature Calls: Conversations in the Hudson Valley. This amazing program invites regional experts to discuss all aspects of gardening, ecology, and nature. This weekly podcast is designed to entertain, inspire, educate and inform listeners who want to begin or enhance their gardening journey and/or explore other aspect of the Hudson Valley's natural resources. Using science-based resources, learn how to best enjoy and steward our natural ecosystem while adapting to the current climate realities.

Listen on our website or on your favorite podcast platform.



1,000

community members
in 2022 through
presentations, outreach
and events.

Spring Gardening Days

Staff and Master Gardener Volunteers offered multiple workshops in both Acra and Hudson including, but not limited to:

- Birding
- Introduction to Unusual Fruits
- Landscaping
- The Importance of Soil Health

800+

calls, emails and soil
samples from both
counties.

Top 10 Topics You Asked Us



- Lawn & garden care
- Vegetables, herbs and fruit
- Species selection and landscape planning
- Mushroom and edible plant identification
- Native species and biodiversity
- Invasive species and plant pressures
- Tree health & arboriculture
- Ponds & water resources
- Community gardens and public spaces
- Soil health and composting



Agriculture & Natural Resources

Climate Change & the Environment



Agroforestry

Agroforestry is the intentional combination of trees, shrubs and forests with farming practices such as crops and grazing. When implemented well, systems can support environmental sustainability and economic resilience.

In response to increasing interest in agroforestry, CCE Columbia & Greene has worked with local and regional partners to offer agroforestry resources and workshops. We also teamed up with Cornell colleagues to create an extension program work team to further agroforestry knowledge in NYS and help growers and producers farm their forests.

2022 Programs and Projects:

1. Over 300 people engaged in programs and tours in 2022
2. Over 100 people supported through calls, emails and volunteer outreach

3. Developed Statewide Agroforestry Survey for farmers and producers
4. Supported statewide webinar series and conferences
5. Expanded agroforestry demonstrations in Siuslaw Model Forest
6. Supported partner research projects and field trials

CCE Columbia & Greene Agroforestry Focus Areas in 2022:

1. Shiitake & Woodland Mushrooms
2. American Ginseng & Understory Crops (ramps, goldenseal, cohosh)
3. Maple and Tree Syrups
4. Foraging & Wild Edible/Medicinal
5. Multifunctional Riparian (Forest) Buffers

Logger Training

In partnership with the Watershed Agricultural Council Forestry Program, we offered 8 Trained Logger Certification workshops to over 40 loggers and forest professionals. These courses improve logger safety and productivity in the woods while implementing Best Management Practices to protect water quality and support forest health.

2022 Core Courses (each held twice)

1. Game of Logging Level One
2. First Aid and CPR
3. Forest Ecology and Silviculture

2022 Continuing Education Courses (each held once)

1. Stream Crossing (Field course on regulations and permitting)
2. Invasive Forest Pests

Master Forest Owner Program

The Master Forest Owner (MFO) program provides private woodland owners of New York State with the information and encouragement necessary to manage their forest holdings wisely. Experienced and highly motivated volunteer MFOs are available statewide, ready to assist neighbor woodland owners with the information needed to start managing their woodlands, through free site visits to landowners properties.

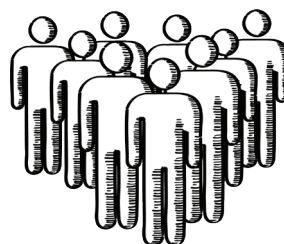
All MFOs are graduates of a training program, where they learn about sawtimber and wildlife management, woodland economics, and ecology. The MFOs continue to receive information updates, attend refresher classes and maintain contact with natural resource

managers from private, public, and academic organizations.

In 2022, over 75 landowner requests for a MFO Volunteer visit have been received in our region. We received 91 in 2021, 57 in 2020 and 55 in 2019. Over 60 volunteers generously supported this program in 2022 by sharing their time and woodland stewardship experience. We also welcomed new volunteers to our region who participated in the statewide hybrid training.

Women Owning Woods

Catskill | Hudson Valley (WOW) is a group of women landowners and natural resource professionals from the Catskills and the Hudson Valley regions of New York. The Watershed Agricultural Council, CCE of Columbia and Greene Counties, and the Columbia Land Conservancy organized this group of professionals and landowners as a way to foster learning experiences and discussions about forest property. The group tailors events and programs to women who own and/or manage forest land, but you need to be neither a woman nor a landowner to join!



**Over 300 people
engaged in
programs and
tours in 2022**



Siuslaw Model Forest

Siuslaw (Sy-use-luh) Model Forest (SMF) is our 142-acre living classroom. It sits right across the street from the Agroforestry Resource Center in Acra. "Siuslaw" is a Native American word meaning "land of the far away river". The property was named by Eric Rasmussen, in tribute to the Siuslaw National Forest in Oregon, where he worked as a forester in the 1950's. Eric managed Siuslaw for fifty years, and in 2006, his family donated the property to Cornell Cooperative Extension.

In 2007, Siuslaw was designated a NYC Department of Environmental Protection Model Forest. Siuslaw is managed in partnership with the Watershed Agricultural Council and SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. Siuslaw is one of four NYC Model Forests that demonstrate the importance of wise land stewardship in the protection of drinking water.

Siuslaw Today:

Education: CCE provides a wide variety of hands-on educational programs, often supported by partners like the Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC) Forestry Program. Topics include forestry and silviculture, invasive species, agroforestry, best management practices, stream stewardship, and more.

Demonstration: CCE and partners have established many demonstrations that exhibit sustainable forest management, woodland enhancements, agroforestry and best management practices that address water quality protection in all stewardship conditions.

Research: SMF offers researchers, students and partners a wide variety of research and monitoring opportunities that serve the natural resource community and advance forestry and woodland stewardship concepts throughout the region.

Recreation: The SMF is open to visitors during business hours and during events. The property offers miles of hiking trails and passive educational opportunities.

Watersheds & Culverts: In partnership with Trout Unlimited, staff supported two Road Stream Crossing Management Plans for neighboring communities in the Hudson River Estuary. These comprehensive management plans include culvert assessment information to help municipalities identify storm water vulnerabilities, priority replacements and aquatic organism passages.

Citizen Science

Our citizen science projects are a fun way to engage the public with important research. Here are a few of the opportunities we offered to learn and join the citizen science effort:

Eel Monitoring at the Hannacroix

Creek: It was another successful year working with NYS DEC and the dedicated volunteers counting eels during their annual migration up river. The data collected supports the state's ongoing research project and provide opportunities for youth and adults to learn more about this species and river ecology.

AVID- Assessing Vegetation Impacts

from Deer: With Cornell University and the NYS DEC, this project trains landowners and land managers on how to establish deer exclosures and monitor deer browse over time. This year we partnered with the New York City DEP Model Forest Program to install deer fence and monitor plots on partner model forest properties.

Monitoring and Managing Ash

(MaMa): We host and monitor MaMa plots in our Siuslaw Model Forest to determine resistant genetics. We use this opportunity to educate on the Emerald Ash Borer, Ash trees and invasive species pressure on our forests.

Siuslaw Model Forest BioBlitz:

A bioblitz is a citizen science event where participants work together to identify and record as many species as possible within a set time and location. We hosted two events in

the Siuslaw Model Forest this year. We welcomed partners, volunteers and experts to collect data using iNaturalist.

Columbia-Greene Community

College: We worked with Dr. Rebecca Pinder of CGCC to host classes and research projects in Siuslaw Model Forest. This ongoing partnership has been an amazing opportunity to work closely with students and experts in our community. A highlight was the Sleuthing for Salamanders event held in Siuslaw Model Forest. We welcomed over 30 participants to help with Dr. Pinder's ongoing salamander monitoring project. People of all ages were guided through the forest to identify species and contribute to the project directly. We look forward to hosting this again in 2023!

Invasive Species Reporting: We track certain invasive species through our community hot lines and report to iMapInvasives. We also share this tool widely so everyone can contribute to the reporting and eradication of invasives.

Right: Educator Tracey Testo works with young participants at the salamander monitoring project.

Climate Resilience

With continued support from the NYS DEC Hudson River Estuary Program and the Cornell Water Resources Institute, our staff supported 6 communities with their climate resilience and adaptation goals. Some of our work together included planning tools, assessments, road stream crossing management plans and formal submittal for Climate Smart Community certification.

Our 2022 community partners include:

1. Ancram
2. Germantown
3. Hillsdale
4. New Lebanon
5. Village of Coxsackie
6. Taghkanic

PARTNERS FOR CLIMATE ACTION: Local Champions Program

We continued our partnership with the Partners for Climate Action HV in support of their Local Champions Program. Along with the Capital District Regional Planning Commission's Sustainability Team, we facilitate Climate Smart Community Assessments as part of the program's wider curriculum and community planning efforts.

2022 Columbia-Greene County Community Partners include:

1. Town of Chatham
2. Village of Kinderhook
3. Town of Kinderhook
4. Village of Philmont
5. Village of Valatie
6. Village of Catskill



NATURAL RESOURCE EDUCATION

We offered over 20 educational programs and trainings related to natural resources, forests and outdoor recreation! We provide in-person and virtual programs and distribute evidence-based resources to all communities.

Taste NY



The Taste NY Market at the Capital Region Welcome Center is entering its fifth year in business having opened in November of 2018. This marked the first year with new Market Manager Sarah Roberts.

Throughout the year, we maintained 8 full-time staff and 2 part-time staff, hiring one seasonal part-time worker over the summer to provide additional coverage on Saturdays and Sundays. Dozens of new products were brought in to the store as well as 13 new vendors,

including Common Hands Farm (Hillsdale), Jourdin's Maple Syrup (West Coxsackie), Hudson Valley Apple Project (Ancram), Stacks Coffee Roasters (Albany) as our new provider for our fresh hot coffee, and locally made dog treats from Kodee's Krunchies (Schuylerville).

Throughout the year, we saw a post-pandemic return to outreach and sampling events. We held several successful tabling and sampling events with Kinderhook-based vendor Dutch Desserts that allowed

the vendor to promote their business and boost product sales. The store and Market Manager Sarah Roberts were featured in a holiday commercial with NYS Ag & Markets Commissioner Richard Ball to promote holiday baskets and buying local for the holiday season. In March of 2022 in partnership with Association Communications Manager Deven Connelly, we created an agri-tourism video highlighting one of our maple vendors, Maplewood Farm (Chatham). The video provided an educational look at how maple was made and also gave the vendor an opportunity to talk about their success selling at the Taste NY store and working with staff. In May of 2022, store staff also attended a local ribbon cutting event for the grand-opening of the Coxsackie Boat Launch, and sampled Columbia and Greene County products to those in attendance.

This year also saw success in sales and foot traffic, as we have seen an increase total monthly sales in almost every month in 2022 compared to 2021. According to data from the NYS Thruway Authority, there were over 480,000 visitors at the Welcome Center between October 2021 and September 2022, and over 67,500 individual transactions at the Taste NY store. Summer months and holidays like Thanksgiving, Christmas, Memorial Day, and Labor Day continue to be the busiest times at the store.



480,000 visitors at the Welcome Center between October 2021 and September 2022



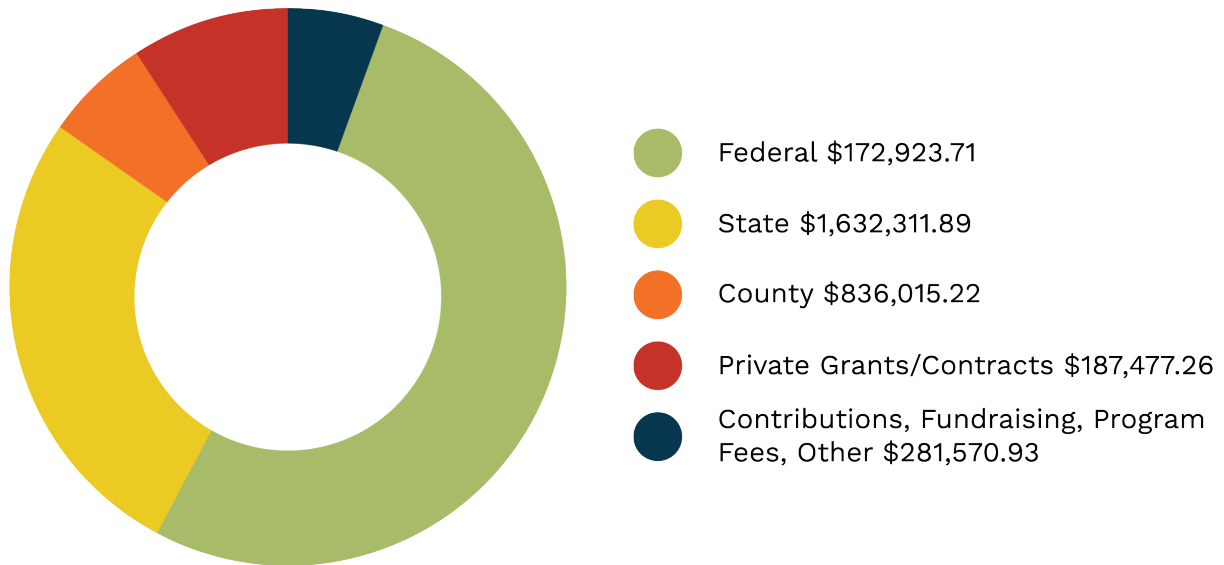
67,500+
sales in the last year



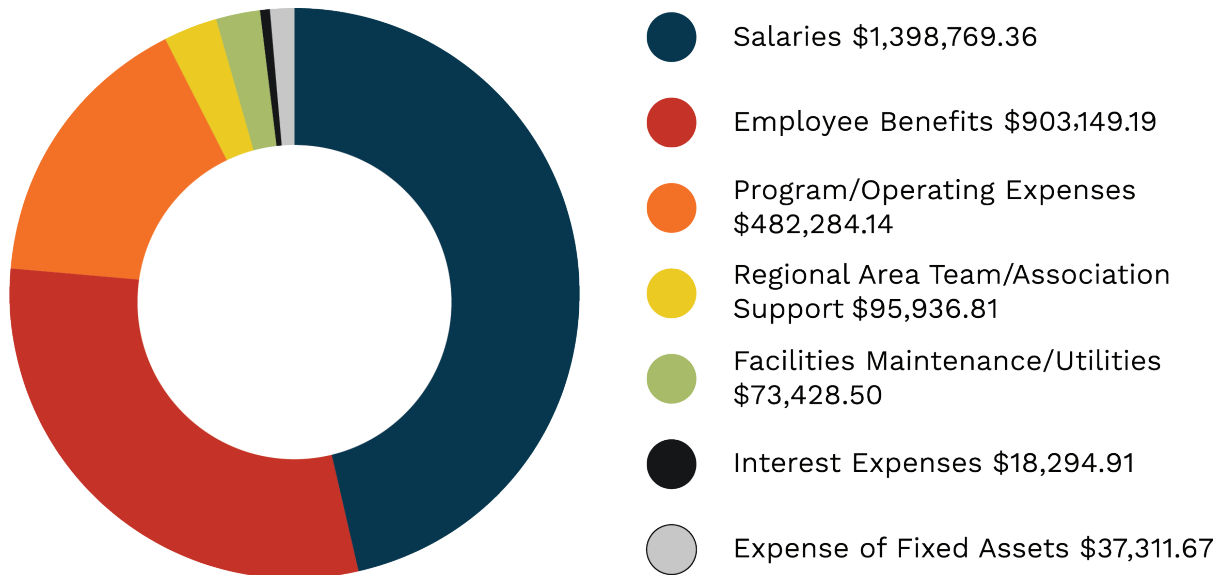
Opposite: Operations Manager Chris Lawton promoting local products at the Coxsackie Boat Launch. Top: Staff met Ag and Market Commissioner, Richard Ball. Bottom: Pies from Dutch Desserts of Kinderhook.

Finances

2022 YTD Revenues



2022 YTD Expenses



Our Staff

Administration

Lisa Gallina, Executive Director
Evon Antonio, Administrative Support
Angela Tallarico, Administrative Support
Bipul Saha, Finance Manager
Donna Garafalo, Accounts Representative
Eileen Simpson, Administrative Assistant
Joshua Williams, Facilities Coordinator
Deven Connelly, Communications Manager
Megan Henry, Administrative Assistant

Family & Consumer Sciences

Rebecca Polmateer, Program Director
Megan Gardner, Subject Educator
Peggy Henne, Program Educator
Sintya Rodriguez-Mendez, Program Educator

4-H & Youth Development

Sara Poggi-Decker, Program Manager
Athena Conzone, 4-H Agriculture Educator

Agriculture And Natural Resources Climate Change And The Environment

Connor Young, Team Leader
Tracey Testo, Subject Educator
Audrey Kropp, Program Coordinator
Lindsey Strehlau-Howay, Program Assistant
Katie Campbell-Nelson, Northeast SARE Program Coordinator
Sandra Linnell, Program Coordinator

Taste NY

Sarah Roberts, Manager
Chris Lawton, Operations Manager
Kaitlin Camarda, Market Associate
Lydia Casey, Market Associate
Nicole Cruz, Market Associate
Kayleigh Miller, Market Associate
Joshua Hynes, Market Associate
Lydia Johnson, Market Associate
Vanessa Kowalczyk, Market Associate
Mi-Lyn Dolan, Market Associate
Samantha Puorro, Market Associate
Sara Ashby, Market Associate

Our Board

Billy Greer - President
Virginia Benedict - Vice President
Joshua Lipsman - Treasurer
Linda Levitt - Secretary
Michael Brown
Jonathan Farber
Sandra Gardner
Roberta Keller
Matthew Maraglio
Alicia McCagg
Sandra Miller
Rebecca Pinder

Virgilia Tegiacchi
Paula Van Meter
Timothy Ooms, Columbia County Board of Supervisors Representative
Sherry True, Greene County Legislature Representative
Danielle Hautaniami, Cornell Cooperative Extension State Specialist



CCE at a Glance

CCE connects communities with Cornell research and expertise to enrich and empower New York State neighbors, local businesses, towns, and cities.

In neighborhoods, homes, workplaces, and schools, CCE educators work to empower individuals and families with raising children, saving energy and money, growing and preparing food, starting, sustaining businesses, and protecting the environment.

Each CCE office relies on county, state, and federal funds to solve local problems and strengthen communities.

CCE Columbia and Greene Counties is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

Connect

Agroforestry Resource Center
6055 Route 23, Acra, NY 12405
(518) 622-9820

Extension Education Center
479 Route 66, Hudson, NY 12534
(518) 828-3346

Website: ccecolumbiagreene.org
Email: columbiagreene@cornell.edu

Facebook: @CCEColumbiaGreene
Instagram: @CCECGC

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