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# Annual Report

## Thoughts from the President...

2021 has proven to be a year of achievement, as well as a transition away from the prior year of pandemic. While the transition aspect remains a work in progress as the COVID requirements continue in varying degrees, let's focus on our 2021 achievements despite the pandemic.



*James Corriveau,  
President*

These include:

- Completed a full summer 4-H Camp Wabasso season for 300+ youth, giving campers a safe and exciting camp experience fully consistent with required COVID-19 protocols.
- Facilitated capital improvements at camp to include three cabin renovations and constructing a beach pavilion, memorialized in honor of Carolyn and Jim Fitzpatrick.
- Provided education as well as coordinated on-farm vaccinations to sustain the health of our agricultural workforce.
- Offered summer youth programs to boost the academic achievement levels of our students adversely impacted by the pandemic.
- Welcomed back the Jefferson County Fair with 4-H domestic and non-domestic exhibits.
- Increased support to local food initiatives to benefit producers, consumers and value added processors, especially given the vulnerabilities exposed in our national food system during the pandemic.
- Significantly expanded Master Gardener volunteerism throughout the community with 10 new Master Gardeners achieving full certification this year.
- Organized several workshops and internships for transitioning Soldiers and veterans interested in agriculture.
- Trained Soldiers and family members in a variety of life skills to enhance their well-being.

All these accomplishments are a direct result of our wonderful team of volunteers, staff and leadership who continue to develop and apply their creativity, resourcefulness, and frankly the willingness to roll up their sleeves and get right after the tasks at hand. Our programmatic transitioning continues, returning some activities to more in-person sessions as others remain virtual. While some of these transition dynamics will undoubtedly continue through the ongoing pandemic, let's look forward to a year of greater stability and improved health such that our mission of service may continue to improve the lives of every Association member.

## 2021 Board of Directors

### Officers:

- James Corriveau, *President*
- Bruce Armstrong, *Vice President*
- Hartley Bonisteel-Schweitzer, *Secretary*
- Todd Hyman, *Treasurer*

### Directors:

- Darrel Aubertine
- Corey Campbell
- Mark Gebo
- Steve Jennings
- Julia Ledoux
- Tracy Leonard
- Mike Lumbis
- John Peck
- Nathan Pistner

## Mission Statement

Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Jefferson County educates youth, families, farmers, and communities using research-based knowledge for practical application and lifelong learning.



*Executive Director  
Kevin J. Jordan*

**On behalf of the  
Board of Directors  
and staff, I  
am pleased to  
present our 2021  
Annual Report.**

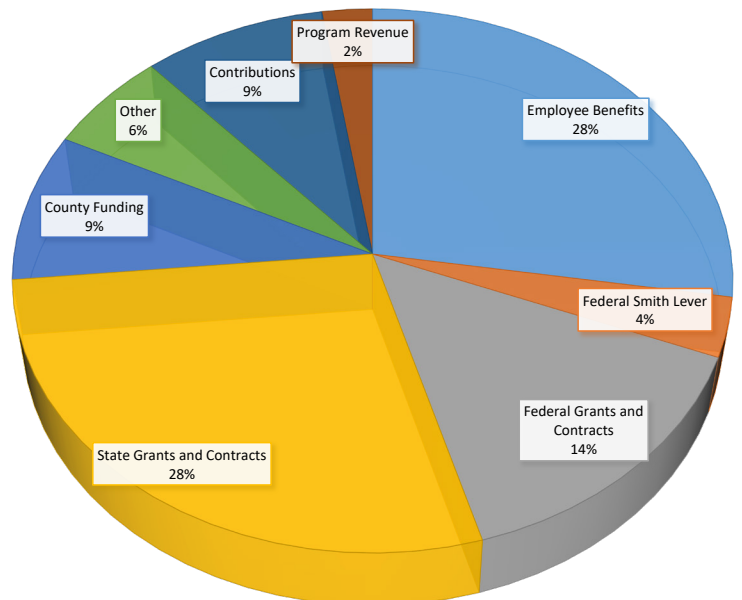
As our community pushes forward addressing the challenges of COVID-19 recovery, and adapts to a world that has forever changed, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County isn't just standing ready to assist. We are back on farms, working directly with youth, and engaging participants in ways you have told us are meaningful and impactful to your families, daily lives, and businesses. We are doing this while continuing to use best practices to keep everyone safe and healthy.

Backyard Gardens  
Cover Crops  
Leveraging Resources  
Food System Resilience  
Virtual Programming  
Community Partnerships  
Dairy Workforce  
In-person Workshops  
Sustainability  
Hybrid Summer Camps  
Youth Academics

## 2021 Funding Sources

Our funders are some of the most important community partners. Strong community partnerships build strong community programs.

The total budget for Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Jefferson County for 2021 was \$7,689,207.



# Connecting the Community to Local Foods

During the COVID-19 pandemic, local food was on everyone's mind. Consumers wanted guaranteed access to food products and producers wanted to capitalize on that demand. Wanting to support the needs of our local community, all of our program areas have played a part in connecting the community to local foods this year.



*Trying new foods during Fort Drum Cooking Classes.*

- The Healthy Families New York parenting program connected with a local CSA to provide weekly produce shares to families. This provided local producers with new customers and increased access to fresh local produce for families. HFNY educators provided recipes, tips, and helpful tools to ensure families used the produce. Kids and adults alike expanded their healthy choices.
- Partnering with the Family Advocacy Program on Fort Drum, nutritionists taught cooking classes with a focus on communication, family meals and snacks, and local food! The classes highlighted various ways to access local food in our community - farmers markets, Taste NY, farm stands, CSAs - and how to make it so your family and kids will want to eat it!

- The [online Local Food Guide](#) with interactive maps to farm stands and farmers markets is the perfect way for consumers to easily find local producers, their products, and what forms of payment are accepted.
- Farmer profiles, complete with farm photos and producer information, were developed to help consumers know their farmers and to assist farmers with marketing and outreach. These profiles were posted on the [website](#) and shared on social media.
- The Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program, funded by Fidelis Care, provided free access to fruits and vegetables in underserved communities through partnerships with healthcare providers and fresh produce farmers.
- 480 reduced-price local CSA shares were provided to low-income seniors at four housing sites. Senior citizens received weekly nutrition lessons, food demonstrations, and recipe samples.



*Improving health outcomes through the Fruit & Vegetable Prescription Program.*

**"The weekly produce bag we can purchase is a great budget stretcher!! I'm enjoying trying new things & old things cooked differently! Having this program offered makes a difference for me."**

*- Housing Site Nutrition Programming Participant*

- In partnership with the 4-H summer program, SNAP-Ed Nutrition Educators taught 82 youth at Copenhagen Central School about healthy eating and physical activity.
- Over the past year, the North Star Food Hub became a fully independent business, working with up to 40 local growers throughout the year. The food hub delivers weekly retail products to 17 sites in Jefferson and Lewis Counties, one of the sites being the Taste NY store.
- Educators helped four producers become EBT certified to accept SNAP benefits and several producers become approved to accept Farmers Market Nutrition Coupons - expanding their client base.
- Ag staff provided workshops to growers on how to grow asparagus, mushrooms, honeyberries, and more.
- Technical support to growers in the field helped resolve issues ranging from low magnesium levels in high tunnel tomatoes to packaging methods for leaf lettuce to new marketing techniques.



*Taste NY Gift Baskets - keeping the community connected to local foods.*

## Helping Soldiers & their Families

**We pride ourselves in having something for everyone in our community and this includes the Soldiers, veterans, and families on and around Fort Drum. We have staff directly on Fort Drum connecting Soldiers and families to Army, community, and CCE services, as well as education and support.**



*Briefing soldiers on soldier and family health and welfare.*

- Fort Drum's Financial Readiness team worked with 1,965 in-processing Soldiers, creating individualized budgets. The in-processing brief provided information on budgeting, investing, and retirement to 924 Soldiers. Sound finances help Soldiers and families reduce stress and stay focused on other important matters.
- Fort Drum's Family Advocacy Program teaches classes, provides hands-on workshops, and gives briefings with a focus and goal of preventing child abuse and domestic violence. They supported 12,281 Soldiers and families this past year.
- The Army Emergency Relief program's motto is "Soldiers helping Soldiers." From an annual fundraising campaign to the grant and loans provided to Soldiers, families, and retirees, that's just what they do.

**"Army Emergency Relief is the best program, most professional, and most helpful of all ACS programs I have experienced!"**

*- Army Emergency Relief Program Participant*

# 4-H Returns to In-Person Programming

In a year with many challenges, 4-H was excited to provide in-person programs through afterschool, the Jefferson County Fair, and 4-H Camp Wabasso. This helped provide a bit of normalcy in anything but a normal time.



*Students at the Belleville Henderson 4-H Afterschool Program making a Pax Puzzle. A Pax Puzzle works to create peace, starting in the classroom.*

- 4-H Afterschool fully operated in-person during the 2020-2021 school year reaching 792 youth with 6,227 hours of targeted academic enrichments, 1,328 hours of career development programming, and 3,409 hours of wellness education.
- 4-H Afterschool offered programming on over 50 different topics, such as ornithology, farm-to-table, 3D printing, robotics, healthful cooking, geospatial science, survival skills, sewing, and much more!
- The 2021 Jefferson County Fair had a total of 408 entries. In total, there were 194 animal entries and 212 domestic entries. After a 14 year hiatus, the 4-H Livestock Auction returned. Approximately 65 community members attended and 2 market goats were auctioned.
- Learning about money early matters! Mad City Money, a financial education program targeting middle and high school students, had 187 participants.
- The Walmart Healthy Habits program served 426 youth who learned about staying active and healthful cooking and eating.
- The Highway Traffic Safety program worked with 476 youth on Bicycle Safety. Youth learned how to safely navigate the roads they are riding on.
- Memories to last a lifetime! 4-H Camp Wabasso reopened in 2021, operating for 7 full weeks with 378 campers.
- Through strong partnerships with the Jefferson County Youth Board, Jefferson County Department of Social Services, and numerous organizations and members of our community, 85 scholarships were provided for youth to attend camp.
- 4-H Camp Wabasso offered 3 grant-funded military camps, providing 58 military youth with low-cost/no-cost camp experiences.



*Making life-long friends and memories at 4-H Camp Wabasso!*

“My child was hesitant to attend 4-H at the beginning of the year due to feeling overwhelmed by school and struggle with peer relationships. Through consistent encouragement from myself and the 4-H team he went from never wanting to attend to requesting to attend daily and participating in extra activities.”

*- Parent of a 4-H Afterschool Participant*

# Supporting the Agriculture Community

Our local agricultural community is diverse and multi-faceted. Likewise, our ag department has a wide knowledge base and staff with varied expertise. This year we pivoted from COVID vaccinations, to horticulture support, to training new and up and coming farmers.

- The Ag team helped 123 local dairy workers obtain COVID vaccinations on-site; helping to keep the workforce safe and productive.
- Through a combination of workshops and on-farm mentorships, the Farm Ops program helped Soldiers and veterans interested in agriculture identify and explore opportunities. One transitioning Soldier now works at a local dairy.
- Education on agricultural topics helped beginning and established farmers find new markets and improve their operations. One participant began selling mushrooms at farmers markets while another is selling poultry. An Amish produce farmer began operating a high tunnel and will offer a CSA in 2022.
- Ten new master gardeners helped the group continue its work growing produce at the Urban Mission Garden, maintain native plant and pollinator gardens at Zoo New York, and serve as gardening mentors for the county.



*Farm Ops Participant interning at a local dairy farm learning the ins and outs of life on a farm.*



*New Master Gardeners beautifying the community at the Urban Mission Garden!*

- Workshops were offered on topics ranging from Cattle Genetics to Value-Added Dairy Processing to a Hay and Pasture School. We also provided direct support to local small dairies through on-site visits, and sponsorship of mastitis-prevention and dairy-profit monitoring peer groups. The Ag team also participated in the triumphant return of both the Dairy Parade and the Jefferson County Fair.
- Workshops on raising pigs, getting started with chickens, and raising lambs provided information to backyard livestock enthusiasts and farmers alike. We also continued providing consultation services with individuals working towards establishing slaughter facilities in the county.
- Natural resources management and wildlife were an emerging focus this year. Topics ranged from controlling invasive species such as the Asian Longhorn Tick to helping save native ones such as the endangered little brown bat. We provided consultations for homeowners on everything from landscaping to minimize shorelines erosion to controlling household pests. Dozens of homeowners, as well as several municipalities, consulted us on emerging urban and suburban forestry issues to include gypsy moth outbreaks, maple anthracnose, Dutch elm disease, and Emerald Ash borer.

*“We were worried that COVID would impact day-to-day operations at our dairy. CCE helped us get our workers tested and vaccinated. As a result, we were able to continue operations without interruption. If they had not come to the farms the likelihood of the workers getting the vaccine would have been very slim. They helped tremendously during a very difficult year.”*

*- Local Dairy Farmer*

## 4-H Camp Wabasso Beach Pavilion Dedication to Carolyn & Jim Fitzpatrick

The Board of Directors of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County held a dedication ceremony at 4-H Camp Wabasso honoring Carolyn and Jim Fitzpatrick. The event recognized Carolyn's 20 years of service on the Cooperative Extension Board as the representative from the Jefferson County Board of Legislators. It also honored Jim Fitzpatrick's many years of support for 4-H Camp Wabasso. Friends, family members and community leaders honored the Fitzpatricks with the dedication of the recently constructed beach pavilion. A stone and plaque were placed adjacent to the pavilion to commemorate the couple's contributions and support for the organization.



Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County  
203 N. Hamilton St.

Watertown, New York 13601

Phone: 315-788-8450 Fax: 315-788-8461

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