

Annual Report

2007-08



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Fulton and Montgomery Counties

A Message from the President...

Everyone is talking about the tough economic times. The prices are up; the stock market is down...how will we heat our homes? How will I buy groceries? How will I make ends meet? How can I make that dollar stretch farther?

I began to realize that now, more than ever, how valuable CCE is to Fulton and Montgomery Counties.

For instance, our Eat Smart New York initiative has trained Nutrition Program Assistants who work with individuals and groups. The participants learn to plan thrifty menus, stretch food dollars, budget household finances, store and prepare food safely, grow a vegetable garden, and preserve food by canning or freezing. All of these skills can help families to survive tough economic times.

Our Horticulture and Agricultural Educator can help you plan your vegetable garden and to help you save on your food bill. Or perhaps you would like to sell your home-grown produce at our local farmer's market for additional income.

The current economic trends demand that we be educated about finances. Cornell Cooperative Extension, through their consumer and financial literacy area offers a variety of educational programs including basic budgeting classes, credit and debt management workshops, and seminars about ways to reduce home energy bills. How timely and critical this information is.

The farm families in our two counties also rely on CCEFM. Each year Fulton and Montgomery County farmers produce agricultural commodities valued at more than 57 million dollars on 400+ farms. The CCEFM Dairy Team consisting of a dairy management specialist and a field crop specialist, provides educational programs to commercial farms in Fulton and Montgomery counties. We are there to help farmers make informed decisions.

And what could be more important than our youth? They are our leaders of tomorrow. Our youth need to develop their leadership, and critical thinking skills. 4-H Clubs provide our young people with an opportunity to learn and practice these skills. These young people will be the ones making the future economic decisions.

CCEFM can and does make a difference in people's lives in these two counties. I am honored to be a part of this organization.

-Rosemary Smith, President

Executive Director's Notes...

In thinking about this program year, several significant thoughts come to mind. First, I must acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the staff team. I think the group of people currently working at CCEFM is collectively one of the best teams I have ever worked with. Somehow, even when resources are stretched, demands are high, and there never seems to be enough time, we manage to be productive and accomplish great work.

Second, I am pleased with positive relationships that continue to develop with the two County Boards of Supervisors. We enjoyed several opportunities to get to know each other better, as well as acquaint the supervisors with Cooperative Extension programming in the counties. Because the counties and Cooperative Extension have had a statutory partnership in New York state since 1914, it is important to continually nurture that relationship.

Third, it has been exciting to see the reestablishment and growth of horticulture and agriculture programming during the past year. Having had a void in the educator position for over seven years, it is wonderful to have a qualified individual who has Extension experience to rebuild this critical program area.

Fourth, it has been rewarding to be involved in several regional efforts. I have had the added responsibility of serving in the role of Regional Chair this year. We continue to partner with Saratoga and Washington Counties for a regional IT coordinator. We participate in the Capital District Marketing committee, as well as a number of other regional programming efforts. As resources continue to tighten, I am even more convinced that regional partnerships provide the opportunity to stretch our dollars as well as gain us access to programs and expertise that we cannot get when we are just on our own.

Although the year ahead promises to be very financially challenging, I am looking forward to continued work with the staff and board, as well as our community partners and colleagues in the region.

-Marilyn J. Smith, Executive Director

Agriculture

Agriculture Economic Development

In December of 2007, the Montgomery County Agriculture Economic Development Project sponsored the 2nd Annual Mohawk Valley Winter Market. The winter market was held at the Glen Town Hall in Fultonville and featured 16 producers from Fulton and Montgomery Counties. New producers at the market included Blue Moon Farm, Peaceful Valley Maple Farm and the Conbeer Family Farm. New products included fresh wreaths, kissing balls, apple crisp homemade ice cream, elk moccasins and gloves, natural pork cuts, canned goods, homemade peanut butter, preserves, pickled vegetables, dried soup mixes, salsas, maple gift baskets, and new artisan breads. In April of 2008, the 3rd Annual Mohawk Valley Spring Market took place and was another success for the 15 participating businesses. New additions to the market included Natural Bridge Farms & Greenhouse and Beechnut/HERO. Vendors indicated again that repeat business was generated from previous markets and that customers are coming directly to the farm to purchase items throughout the year. Customers were treated to the sounds of the Montgomery county folk band, Sundial Express. Based on producer reports, the Winter & Spring Markets helped to generate over \$10,000 for local farmers and producers. Both markets continue to expand and attract new vendors.

During the summer of 2008, the AED project focused on community outreach for farmers' markets. Fonda Fair was a great opportunity to let area residents know about the new market in downtown Canajoharie. All Fulton & Montgomery County markets were represented. Fairgoers were able to take home schedules and maps of all local markets.

In the fall of 2007, the AED project was awarded a Small Farms grant from Cornell University to implement a series of direct marketing roundtable discussions. The roundtables were scheduled throughout 2008.

Protecting Your Farm: Negotiating Insurance for Maximum Protection and Profit: Presentations by Judy King Insurance and Saratoga Springs Farmer's Market. **Food Safety and Food Processing for Farmers' Markets:** A presentation from NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets Food Safety Division. **Marketing Strategies:** Video presentation: "Shared Wisdom- Selling Your Best at Farmers' Markets," and Gwen Hyde of Windy Willow Farm discussed CSA's (community supported agriculture), blogging and websites. **Pricing and Presentation:** Sandy Buxton, Farm Business Management Resource Educator from Cornell Cooperative Extension in Washington County discussed product pricing and publicity for small farms. Robyn & Michael Lapi owners of Church & Main Restaurant in Canajoharie, NY shared stories of working with local farms to create unique menus. **More Marketing Strategies for Farmers' Markets and Roadside Stands:** Nicholas Bartosik, Montgomery County Weights & Measures discussed unit pricing. Richard Ball, owner of The Carrot Barn, Schoharie County presented the history of the Carrot Barn and talked about displaying products to attract customers. All meetings were free and any local producer was encouraged to attend. The goal of the meetings was to help farmers and producers become more successful and more sustainable by taking advantage of every marketing opportunity available.

Central New York Dairy & Field Crops Team

Aimed at changes in commodity prices and input prices and the effect on the whole farm, the “New Realities of Dairy & Field Crops Production” a series of meetings was planned and implemented by the CNY Dairy & Field Crops Team.

In addition, the team planned and conducted the 2008 Central New York Dairy Day Program in Cooperstown. This inaugural event was a huge success with approximately 120 in attendance.

112 people attended a series of field crop pest management meetings held at each of the five Extension association offices. Growers learned about alfalfa pest management, soybean pest management, weed identification and herbicide resistance management.

94 people participated in the 2008 Corn Day, a program that addressed grain marketing to an ethanol plant, corn diseases and weed control and nitrogen testing.

The team conducted its fourth annual forage quality-monitoring program this spring. Samples of grass and alfalfa were taken and analyzed for quality. Results were posted on our web site providing people with data to help them determine optimal harvest dates.

Corn growers participated in a demonstration of two new soil nitrogen tests on their farms that determine whether or not additional nitrogen is needed. Nitrogen test plots were put out in fields where the test indicated no additional nitrogen was needed. Field meetings were held later in summer. Also, one Montgomery County farm will participate in statewide research on whole farm soil nitrogen test.

Producers attended a summer field day at SUNY Cobleskill that demonstrated new concepts in corn rootworm control, potato leafhopper control, corn planting depth and no-till corn production.

The team worked with Department of Environmental Conservation to hold a meeting on pest management for Amish farmers in the Palatine Bridge area.

Fulton and Montgomery farms have sought the farm business management expertise of the team to help with farm transfers and structure their businesses to bring the next generation on to the farm. Farms have also participated in the Dairy Farm Business Summary to compare their profitability to other dairy farms in New York.

Commercial Horticulture

Working with the surrounding counties, CCEFM held workshops for beginning farmers to help them navigate farm laws and taxes, avoid common pit-falls, and make connections in their communities. Within Fulton and

Montgomery Counties, an extension educator followed up with many farmers providing one-on-one support. Within the group of “new farmers” are included recent transplants to the counties, farmers diversifying into new areas, and Amish farmers who are entering the county from other areas.

Consumer Horticulture

During 2008, six new volunteer Master Gardeners were recruited and two former Master Gardeners who had become inactive returned to active volunteerism in the program. This translated to a 67% increase in active Master Gardeners in our counties. The six new Master Gardeners will contribute 600 volunteer hours over the next two years.

During 2008 the veteran Master Gardeners volunteered over 1200 hours presenting educational programming for the general public, answering home-owner horticulture questions, and arranging community events. Their display at the Fonda Fair was combined with a showcase of Fulton and Montgomery County greenhouse displays this year, providing ideas and information about growing at home. The display was staffed for the majority of the fair, providing consumers with an opportunity to ask questions and pick up information on growing vegetables.

Consumer & Financial Literacy

Over the last three years, CCEFM has built a strong adult consumer and financial literacy program. From October 2007 to Sept. 30, 2008, over 300 local residents attended CCEFM’s small-group financial management and energy saving workshops.

During the 2007-08 program year, CCEFM’s consumer and financial literacy program began developing and implementing more financial lessons for youth. With adult programming continuing to attract large audiences, CCE staff implemented summer lessons for youth regarding the importance of saving money. CCEFM’s lesson, “When Pigs Save,” reached over 20 summer recreation programs and approximately 300 youth. Planning for in-school youth financial lessons continued this year and implementation of those lessons is expected during the 2008-09 program year.

CCEFM’s Energy Bike, constructed last year, continues to be a favorite among local teachers. The Energy Bike helped CCE staff deliver home energy conservation lessons to all the 7th grade science classes in the Greater Amsterdam School District in 2008. Staff delivered after-school and in-class energy conservation lessons in other districts as well.

The Energy Bike isn’t the only unique tool that has been designed to enliven program content. With moving audiences in mind, such as those at resource fairs, the consumer and financial literacy program this year also unveiled a new interactive tool designed to get people thinking about out-of-pocket spending. CCEFM staff,

with assistance from a local sign maker, designed a display-sized “spending wheel” to provide a hands-on illustration of how small amounts of money saved over time add up to large amounts.

Many of the program’s efforts this year followed the suggestions from CCEFM’s consumer and financial literacy issue committee. The committee ranked financial programming for youth as a priority and CCEFM is preparing to implement other programming discussed by the committee. For instance, efforts are underway to provide first-time home buyer education.

The consumer and financial literacy educator also reached more public via local radio appearing several times with Dave Dybas on WCSS, Bob Cudmore on WVTL and Lisa Queeney on WENT.

4-H Youth Development

Youth in Action Projects

CCE of Fulton and Montgomery Counties received two 2008 *Youth in Action* grants from National 4-H Council in partnership with Cumberland Farms.

126 4-H members and volunteers and citizens planned and implemented a Fulton County project to improve the City of Johnstown section of the FJ&G Rail Trail on which individuals walk, jog, bike, and cross-country ski. A trail clean-up and 4-H geo-caching activity were implemented and a six-foot recycled plastic bench personalized with engraving was mounted and dedicated.

107 4-H members and volunteers and citizens also planned and implemented a Montgomery County project to further improve the Thomas H. Burbine, Sr. Memorial Forest Nature and Hiking Trail in Charleston. A trail clean-up and interpretive trail hike was implemented as well as work to update the trail map and guide using GPS/GIS technology. An eight-foot recycled plastic bench personalized with engraving was installed along the trail overlooking the pond.

These *Youth in Action* projects provided opportunities for local youth to work with adults to improve recreational/educational resources in the community, contribute to the public good and develop life-long commitments to active citizenship. Local 4-H club members are planning to adopt trail segments and implement periodic clean-ups including the Gloversville section of the FJ&G Rail Trail. It is a project goal for more people, students and youth group members to make use of the Burbine Forest trail for hiking, environmental education and geo-caching activities upon the distribution of the updated trail map and hiding of a 4-H geo-coin.

Children and Chaos

CCEFM was one of twelve sites in NYS to facilitate the live videoconference *Children and Chaos* on June 17, 2008. The program featured Bronfenbrenner Life Course Center Faculty from the Cornell College of Human Ecology.

48 local professionals involved in education and human service delivery programs with parents, caregivers and others concerned with child well-being participated in the session at the Johnstown site. Participants learned about:

- social and psychological environment effects
- how a chaotic environment influences children's development from infancy through adolescence
- physical environment effects
- individual difference effects
- how macro forces such as culture or socioeconomic status relate to chaos

2008 Cornell Reading Project

Cornell University selected [Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words that Remade America](#) as its choice for the 2008 Reading Project. This was the 3rd year CCEFM participated in this project, linking local high schools to Cornell University. The Reading Project extends to high schools throughout New York State.

700 high school students in nine schools throughout Fulton and Montgomery Counties participated. The Johnstown Public Library also participated this year and hosted a book talk. This project provides a great opportunity for schools to receive free books, connect with Cornell and form a community of readers in their classroom and beyond.

Ag Awareness Days & Environmental Field Days

4-H Agriculture Awareness Days bring 4th grade students to outdoor settings to learn about 13 different agricultural topics, careers and commodities. Annually, for nearly 20 years, 4th grade students and their teachers in Fulton and Montgomery Counties have attended 4-H Ag Awareness Days.

Students participating in 4-H Ag Awareness Days increase their understanding of the sources of food and fiber, increase their knowledge of career opportunities in agriculture, and are able to elaborate about the origins of at least six products represented at the event. Agricultural literacy promoted by Cooperative Extension educators and supporting resource volunteers empowers youth to make sound decisions about agriculture in their communities and support local agri-business.

Fifth grade students attend 4-H Environmental Field Days in outdoor settings to learn about 5-9 different environmental topics. Annually, for nearly 45 years, 5th grade students and their teachers in Fulton and Montgomery Counties have participated in 4-H Environmental Field Days.

Students participating in 4-H Environmental Field Days increase their understanding of the responsible use of natural resources, gain an understanding of options for protecting and conserving natural resources, increase their knowledge of the impact of human activities on the quantity and quality of natural resources. They increase their consciousness of local and global environmental issues and are able to elaborate about at least three of the environmental issues presented at the event. Environmental issue education implemented by Cooperative Extension educators and supporting resource volunteers aims to get youth to think globally, but act locally.

Agriculture Literacy Day

Agriculture Literacy Day involved volunteers reading the book Sugarbush Spring by Marsha Wilson Chall to over 1,000 second graders in every elementary school in Fulton and Montgomery Counties. Supporting activities presented by volunteer readers included a maple syrup taste test using donated syrup. Books were sponsored by interested individuals and organizations. A copy of the book was placed in every elementary school library and some public libraries as well.

Youth Horticulture

4-H youth in Fulton and Montgomery Counties participated this year in the regional 4-H Vegetable Marketing Program, which is sponsored by the Golub Corporation. Participating youth were provided seeds for selected varieties of vegetables. They grew then sold their produce directly to local Price Chopper stores. Within the two counties 32 4-H youth enrolled in the program, and 28 participated. In addition to the 4-H youth participation, students from the Tryon State School for Boys also enrolled in the program.

Data collection from this project was incomplete at reporting time, but initial results have been very positive. Youth enjoyed growing vegetables, and reported interest in participating in the program again next year if eligible.

4-H Horse Project Activities

38 4-H horse project members developed the knowledge and skills necessary to ride safely and were evaluated at 4-H Horse Camp, a five day experience held at the Fonda Fairgrounds. Instructors included local 4-H volunteers in addition to experts from outside of the two-county area. Participants explored horse activities they had not previously experienced such as driving, drill-team, gymkhana, and dressage.

This year was the first year Gymkhana has been offered to 4-H horse project youth in over 20 years. Using a monetary donation, CCE purchased an electric timer and poles for bending. Two Gymkhana shows were held during the 2007-2008 4-H Year with over 40 participants taking part.

2007-2008 4-H Statistics

- 282 youth participated in 4-H community clubs
- 88 youth participated in 4-H individual study
- 166 youth participated in 4-H special interest/short-term programs
- 6414 youth participated in 4-H school enrichment programs
- 2044 youth participated in 4-H after-school programs
- 218 adults participated as 4-H volunteers
- Place of Residence of 4-H Participants : Farm -5%, Towns under 10,000 & rural -41%, Towns & cities 10,000 to 50,000 – 54%

Nutrition & Health

Eat Smart New York!

Eat Smart New York! is a program that reaches limited resource individuals and households with children who are recipients of or applicants for Federal Food Stamps. Participants learn how to maintain a healthy lifestyle, stretch resources, and handle food safely.

In Fulton and Montgomery Counties from October 1, 2007 to September 30, 2008, 386 participants enrolled in the Eat Smart New York! Program. Of these, roughly 88% completed a minimum of six classes, adding to a long list of ESNY program graduates. With 30 participants continuing into the 2009 program year, the overall retention rate is 95%. In lessons that emphasized a healthy lifestyle, participants learned a variety of skills that improve nutrition, reduce the risk of food-borne illness and help stretch food dollars. Staff worked diligently to enroll eligible families receiving food stamps. In Fulton County, a goal of maintaining a caseload that comprises 75% families was successfully attained. In Montgomery County, the family caseload grew from 58% in FY 2007 to 69% in FY 2008. The remaining caseload consisted of seniors and individuals.

“Learning to Do More with Less” - What participants say:

“Sandra” entered the Eat Smart New York program having difficulties providing enough food for her family of four to last the entire month. She was dedicated to providing quantity not quality. Sandra also was having difficulty

copied with only having a single burner and a hot plate to provide food for four. She has two teenage children, one of whom will not eat meat.

After the first contact, Sandra's response to information about MyPyramid was "I will not change. I do not eat fruits and vegetables. I only have \$100 a week to feed a family of 6. I don't spend money on things like this. I choose what I can get the most of."

As the lessons progressed Sandra began to feel more in control of her situation. She realized that she must budget her dollars for the entire month and not overspend early in the month. With careful planning and wiser choices she could buy healthier food. There were frustrations along the way. The first time Sandra bought fruit for the family, her teenagers weren't eating it. Learning to turn the fruit into fruit salad worked. Ideas about how to cook healthy meals with her limited facility, resulted in her including more vegetables into her menus.

Sandra stated, "I have become more aware of what I am eating and how to eat better. I have been trying to get a more balanced diet" [since attending Eat Smart New York classes]. When thanking the instructor, Sandra admitted that she was surprised by how much she had learned from the lessons.

"Reading Labels to Lower Cholesterol"

"Bill" had high cholesterol and a family history of hemochromatosis, a condition that causes the body to absorb and store too much iron. He was initially concerned about knowing the iron content of foods and what to eat to lower his cholesterol. During the course of the lessons further problems occurred and he was diagnosed with pre-diabetes and had elevated potassium levels.

Using lessons based on Michigan State's research-based curriculum, "Eating Right is Basic" Nutrition Program Educator, Jean Budlong focused on providing Bill in-depth consistent reading of nutrition labels and how to analyze the nutritional value of the foods he normally ate. Adding to that base of knowledge Bill learned ways to lower the amount of fat and saturated fat in his diet.

After a series of six lessons Bill was confident in his ability to know how many carbohydrates he was actually eating and use the Diabetic Plate Method for planning his meals. Using lists of the amount of potassium in common foods, he also managed to consume less potassium. As a result of his ESNY lessons Bill began carefully planning out menus for his meals. Bill reported back a couple of months after his lessons were completed that his potassium levels and blood sugar levels were both back in the normal range.

Motivation to Move

CCEFM took the lead in an inter-agency collaboration designed to promote physical activity, raise awareness and prevent or delay the incidence of diabetes. On Thursday, May 8, 2008, the program began with a full day of events featuring nationally known motivational speaker Robert Sweetgall, who shared research on the health benefits of physical activity and talked about his experiences of walking across America. Over 250 people participated in interactive workshops presented by Sweetgall who, through his use of humor and personal story, helped drive home the message that physical activity is key to maintaining a healthy lifestyle encouraging participants to "move to improve".

And move they did. Partnerships with several area human service organizations including the two county public health departments, Offices for the Aging, Chambers of Commerce and three local hospitals enhanced outreach to nearly 200 people who participated in a 12 week “Activity Challenge” that included 13 worksites. The activity challenge offered grand prizes drawings for full participation and elicited responses from over 150 participants. The challenge suggested taking three, 10 minute activity breaks (ex. walking) throughout the day if necessary, to reach a daily minimum goal of 30 minutes. Instructions and activity logs were provided to participants and made available through CCEFM’s website. A special packet for worksite coordinators outlined general guidelines and tips for conducting a successful challenge. Worksites that reported the highest rates of participation were awarded plaques and bragging rights.

Feed back from participants reflected a range of health improvements including weight loss, improvements in diabetes, blood pressure and cholesterol levels and a commitment to continued physical activity. Out of 97 comments, 33 report losing at least 5 pounds, six lost at least 20 pounds and one reported losing 60 pounds! Blood pressure improvements were reported by 15 participants and the vast majority reported either having more energy and/or feeling better at the end of 12 weeks of regular physical activity. Comments included, “This was a great activity that we did as a family and had fun”, “The challenge motivated me to get back on track...I rejoined curves and took an 8 session Aqua Aerobics class. Thanks for the opportunity to focus on me”, “I have never continued consistent exercise through the summer months, this challenge has spurred me on. If feel so much better!!...I feel like I’ve formed a new habit. Thank you!”, “Summer wedding. Joined Weight Watchers-total loss- 40lbs.”, “...as part of the challenge I made sure to walk to the bank or just take a break and walk every work day.”

Worksite coordinators responded to a brief survey to determine such things as how they motivated their co-workers, what is being done at their worksite to continue promoting physical activity and what changes they observed. Some of the comments included, “The main thing it did was get us organized and motivated to do something”, “It was a good way to focus on our health”, “Gave out kudo awards to those who followed through on their goals”, “I gave them time off to participate”, “We even found that we ate more healthy snacks and meals as part of our days”, “Weekly educational hand-outs were distributed; special daily notes of encouragement like “Secret Santa” were shared on the sly so you didn’t know who was cheering you on.”, “WE lost a lot of weight, got more comfortable moving and felt better overall.”

Dining with Diabetes

The New York State Department of Health reported in its 2003 Diabetes Surveillance Report that the rate of diabetes among adults is 9.1%, a rate that is well above the state average of 7.7%. Nationwide diabetes is considered to have reached epidemic proportions with 23.8 million Americans who are living with diabetes and 54 million estimated to be “pre-diabetic”, a condition where blood glucose is higher than normal but not

high enough to be considered diabetes. If lifestyle changes are made, progression to full blown diabetes can be prevented or significantly delayed.

CCEFM recently launched *Dining with Diabetes*, a two-session educational series designed to help people with diabetes and their families or caretakers learn to sort through the confusion about how to make the lifestyle changes that can help prevent serious health complications. 41 individuals attended classes that were offered at the CCEFM Teaching Center in August and September. The program included a basic overview of diabetes, how food and activity affects diabetes, label reading, meal-planning methods, portion sizes and dining away from home. Participants responded positively to a satisfaction survey sharing comments such as, “The class has been very informative”, “Instructors were very knowledgeable and good”, “I learned not only from my own questions, but by listening to other’s questions”, “Today’s session was very informative for me. I’ve been to some other classes before, but this one was great. It helped me a lot. I learned more about diabetes” and from a visiting registered nurse/certified diabetes educator, “This is an excellent resource for newly diagnosed diabetics as they attempt to come to grips with their condition. There is so much information available that it can be overwhelming at times”.

The program was considered a success and will continue to be offered through CCEFM supported in part with funds from the New York State Department of Health.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

Partnering with local government and other agencies, Cornell Cooperative Extension in Fulton & Montgomery Counties helps to bring money back to the localities through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA).

For the 2007 Income Tax filing season, the CCEFM VITA site prepared 301 tax returns with Federal refunds of \$201,763, Earned Income Tax Credit of \$103,654 and New York State refunds of \$53,968. Four volunteers also assisted 125 taxpayers in preparing returns that qualified them for the Economic Stimulus Payment. With a CCEFM staff member as site coordinator, ad hoc sites at two senior housing venues and the Fulton County Drug Addiction Services were set up to file taxes for residents and clients who did not have transportation to reach the site office. Coordinated efforts for clients of the Fulton County Adult & Child Protective Services allowed those clients to file returns also. The site coordinator helped several taxpayers file returns for past years, complete amended returns and acted as a resource for other sites, clarifying issues and answering questions.

Regional & Statewide Associations & Partnerships

Some significant regional partnerships were undertaken in the 2007-2008 program year that provide Fulton and Montgomery Counties with greater exposure in Capital District Extensions and position CCEFM as a major partner in the district.

Executive Director Marilyn J. Smith served as Regional Communications Chair of the Capital District Executive Directors, leading the group through a variety of challenging discussions on a monthly basis, as well as serving as the liaison to Extension Administration on campus.

Regional IT Coordinator Erik Yager was named Key IT Coordinator for the greater region which includes Hamilton, Herkimer, and Warren Counties. He provides oversight and troubleshooting to the participating counties as well as acting in the capacity of liaison to the Cornell campus IT Department.

Public Affairs Coordinator Karen Kosinski chaired the Capital District Regional Marketing Committee this year. The committee accomplished two significant projects: the airing of *From Farm to Table*, a 13-episode television cooking show co-produced by Cornell Cooperative Extension and WMHT Public Television and the placement of a full page advertisement in the June 2008 edition of the NYS Legislative Gazette. The television show was the culmination of two and a half years of planning and implementation and was celebrated with a grand debut event that included attendance and remarks by Helene Dillard, Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension. The Legislative Gazette project brought attention to Cooperative Extension associations throughout the district and was focused on local foods initiatives.

Crystal Stewart, Extension educator in agriculture and horticulture, began an association with the *Agricultural News*, which serves Eastern New York. Her column, dedicated to topics for commercial horticulture is now a regular feature in the newsletter that reaches subscribers in six counties.