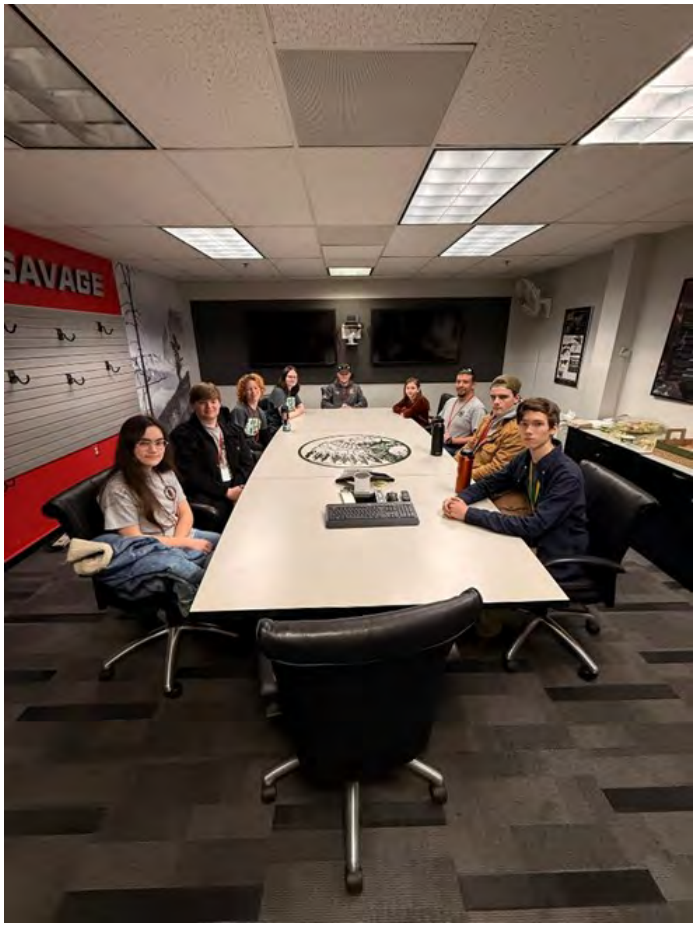
CCE
Cornell Cooperative Extension | Saratoga County
NEWSLETTER
March 9, 2026

Saratoga County 4-H Shooting Sports Ambassadors Visit Savage Arms

On March 4th, the Saratoga County 4-H Shooting Sports Ambassadors had the exciting opportunity to visit Savage Arms for an immersive and educational experience. Savage Arms graciously welcomed the group into their facility, guiding the youth through a behind the scenes factory tour that showcased the craftsmanship, precision, and innovation behind their firearms manufacturing process. Ambassadors were able to see firsthand how raw materials evolve into the finished products used by sportsmen/women across the country.

In addition to the tour, Savage Arms provided an engaging discussion about their company's history, values, and the wide array of career paths within the firearms industry. From engineering and product design to machining, quality control, marketing, and customer service, youth gained valuable insight into the many opportunities available in a modern manufacturing environment. The visit offered an inspiring look at potential future careers and strengthened the connection between industry professionals and the next generation of responsible shooting sports leaders.



Saratoga County 4-H Shooting Sports Ambassadors visit Savage Arms in Massachusetts

What is Shooting Sports in 4-H?

The 4-H Shooting Sport Program is a comprehensive, non-formal education program that combines recreation and competition while emphasizing Positive Youth Development. Through the safe and responsible use of firearms, the program helps address youth development goals related to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) learning, healthy living, and civic engagement.

Participants gain valuable life skills, develop leadership abilities, and build meaningful relationships with supportive adult mentors. These experiences help young people develop a strong sense of belonging, independence, and personal achievement.

By recognizing youth as capable individuals with the potential to grow and lead, the 4-H Shooting Sports program helps cultivate young people who are competent, confident, connected, caring, and committed to contributing positively to their communities.

Shooting Sports

SARATOGA SPRINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Seed Library

It's time to get growing with Saratoga Springs Public Library (SSPL)! Our Seed Library is out and ready foy you to start sowing (indoors, for now). This year, we're thrilled to be partnering with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County's Master Gardener Program, and are grateful to them and their supporters for these beautiful seeds! Stop in and take what you need, and nothing you don't. If you have seeds to share, feel free to bring in as well!

CAR SEAT CHECK

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County is partnering with New Country Toyota of Clifton Park for a FREE car seat check to insure your car seat is properly installed. Nationally Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians and Instructors will be on site.

THURSDAY, APRIL 2| 4 pm—8 pm
New Country Toyota of Clifton Park
202 Route 146, Mechanicville

To schedule an appointment call 518-885-8995.

What to bring to your car seat check:

- Your child (if possible)
- Your car seat manual
- Your vehicle owner's manual
- A cleaned-out vehicle (remove other items for easier access)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for **May 20, 2026 | 7 pm** at the Extension Office.

CCE Saratoga's Board of Directors
John Mancini - *President*
Liz Newsom - *Vice President*
Mark Preissler - *Secretary*
Jim Pettis, Jr.—*Treasurer*
Tom Venditti
Alex Guilmette
Ian Murray—*Board of Supervisors Representative*
Danielle Hautaniemi - *Cornell Representative*

If you would like to attend, please reach out to Wendy at wlm8@cornell.edu.

Save the Date

SARATOGA COUNTY HORTICULTURAL TOURS

MAY 9TH &
OCTOBER 3RD, 2026
10AM-2PM
TOUR LOCATIONS TO
BE ANNOUNCED

GUIDED & SELF
GUIDED TOURS,
EDUCATIONAL &
PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES

Questions?
Contact Jessica Luse
at jmh452@cornell.edu or
518-885-8995

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Saratoga County

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS
4-H SCHOLARSHIP GOLF CLASSIC

Join us for a great day of golf in support of
Saratoga County 4-H!
MAY 30, 2026
Fairways of Halfmoon
⛳ 7:30 AM – Registration
⛳ 9:00 AM – Shotgun Start
🍽️ Followed by a buffet lunch & awards ceremony

Last year, over 100 golfers helped us reach our goal. In 2026, we're aiming even higher—125+ golfers and $15,000 raised—and with your support, we know we can do it!
All proceeds benefit Saratoga County 4-H, providing scholarships, educational programs, and hands-on learning opportunities for 4-H volunteer leaders.
Get involved!
We welcome golfers, sponsors, donors, raffle items, and goodies for participant bags—or simply come out and enjoy a fun day on the course for a great cause.
📞 Questions? Call Greg at the 4-H Office:
518-885-8995 or grs9@cornell.edu

CONTACT US

518-885-8995
www.sc4H.org
CCE Saratoga
50 West High Street
Ballston Spa, NY 12020

The Saratoga County Horsemen's Social

Celebrating

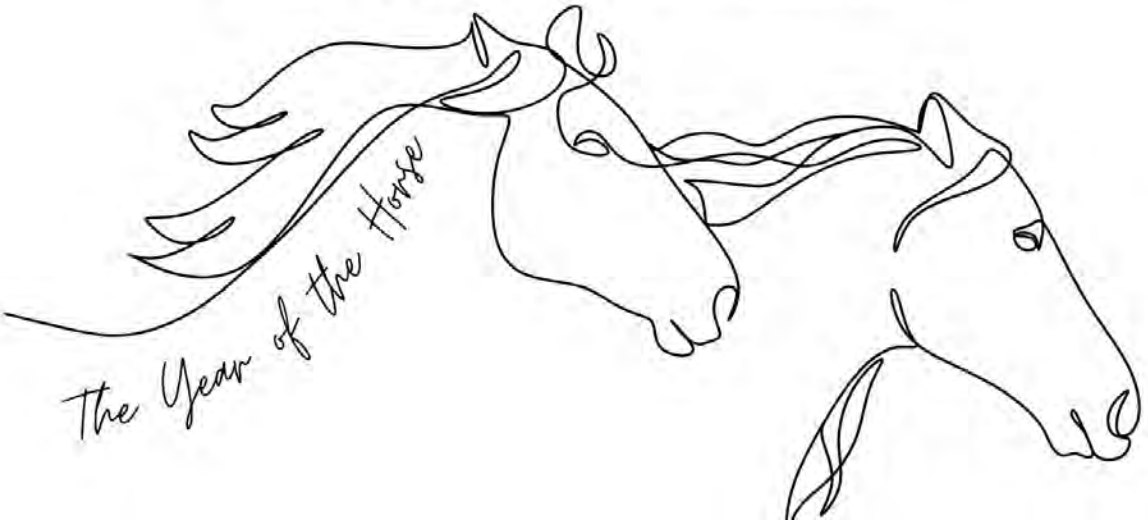
CCE EQUINE

20th Anniversary

June 12, 2026
6:30-9:30 pm

4-H Training Center
556 Middline rd Ballston Spa NY

Ticket price and sales to be anounced...



Celebrate 20 years of CCE Equine serving the equine community! This year's annual Horsemen's Social will once again bring together equine professionals and enthusiasts for an evening of networking and socializing. In honor of both the Year of the Horse and our 20th anniversary, we're adding a few extra fun activities to make this celebration even more special.

Join us for food, drinks, raffle prizes, a silent auction, and—NEW this year—BINGO!

Stay tuned for more information and sneak peeks at the exciting items and activities we'll have in store. Ticket prices and sales will be announced soon.

SARATOGA COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Annual Tree and Shrub Program

Each spring, the Saratoga County Soil and Water Conservation District offers a tree and shrub seedling sale in April to interested landowners throughout Saratoga County. They coordinate this program so landowners can take advantage of their bulk buying to reduce erosion, support wildlife and improve the landscape around their property.

Buying young bare root seedlings is a small investment that can:

- Provide beneficial habitat for wildlife
- Encourage pollinators such as hummingbirds, butterflies, bees and more!
- Help stabilize and reduce soil erosion
- Improve water quality in Saratoga County
- Beautify areas in the community and much more!

Saratoga County Soil and Water are now accepting orders for their Annual Spring Tree & Shrub Program. **Pre-orders will be taken until Tuesday, March 31, 2026** and **pick-up (located at the 4-H Training Center) date for all orders will be Friday, April 17, 2026 from 8 am—Noon.**

ALL orders will be taken through the SWCD Online Shop, *paper orders are no longer accepted.*

Please note that ALL items are sold in bundles. Be sure to read each item description carefully before selecting the quantity you wish to purchase. After completing your purchase, you will receive both a receipt and a confirmation email.

Beyond the tree and shrub seedlings; bluebird and bat boxes, wildflower seed mixes and conservation grass seed mixes are also made available for purchase.

NYS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Spring Burn Ban in Effect—March 16 to May 14

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation is reminding New Yorkers of the upcoming burn ban that will take effect March 16 and remain in place until May 14.

For more information on the burn ban: Open Burning - NYSDEC

CORNELL IPM Program

What's Bugging You?

Not all things that buzz, crawl or slither are pests. Figuring out WHAT is bugging you is the first step.

Each month at New York State Integrated Pest Management's "What's Bugging You? First Friday" events, experts share practical information and answer questions on using integrated pest management (IPM) to avoid pest problems and promote a health environment where you live, work, learn and play. We end with an IPM Minute, and cover a specific action you can take in the next few days to help you avoid pest problems. **Events take place online from 12:00 pm to 12:30 pm.**

APRIL 3: Mole Control | Feeding Friendly Insects: Delay Garden Cleanup

Learn how the professionals manage moles, and stay tuned to hear about creating habitat for beneficial insects in the garde. Register here.

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND MARKETS

Maple Month

It is officially Maple Month! Maple is the first agricultural crop of the year here in New York, and our producers are at the forefront of creating to make some of the highest quality, innovative, delicious maple products in the country.

While maple production has become more streamlined and efficient over time, the process remains deeply rooting in tradition as a beloved community endeavor. As sap begins to flow in the late winter, sugarmakers across the state tap into maple trees with meticulous care to collect the clear, watery sap that is boiled into the delicious liquid gold we know and love. We encourage you to check out the process first hand by visiting a local maple producer during Maple Weekends, held this year during March 21—22 and March 28 –29.

Learn more here:
https://www.mapleweekend.com/

MAPLE
-MONTH-
MARCH

UPPER HUDSON MAPLE PRODUCERS

Maple Open House Weekend
March 28-29

Maple Open House Weekends are a chance for the public to come to the farm to learn about New York's maple sugarmaking processes and traditions and to taste pure maple syrup in its many forms - right from the source. **Come on out on March 21-22 and 28-29 when the sap will be running!**

NEW YORK STATE
Maple
Weekend

Producers in Saratoga County that you can visit on Maple Open House Weekends include:

NYS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Skunk Cabbage Flowers

As Mother Nature wakes up, watch for one of the classic signs of spring—dragon claws emerging from the earth...just kidding! Those "dragon claws" are actually young skunk cabbage flowers—one of the first native wildflowers to bloom in spring. Named for their memorable odor, skunk cabbage flowers are pollinated by flies and beetles, who are drawn to the flower's pungent, carrion-like scent. Skunk cabbage leaves grow after the flower has bloomed, smell skunky when damaged, are toxic, and have tiny, glass-like calcium oxalate crystals that provide excellent defense against hungry wildlife.

Skunk cabbage is more than just a stinker! Flowers can generate their own heat to melt snow and ice around them and provide a warm respite to early spring insects during cold dips in temperature. For more information click here.

NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION, CALDWELL COUNTY CENTER—Written by Sarah Christas

Skunks: A Brief Overview for Homeowners

Have you been smelling skunks more often than usual lately? As spring approaches, homeowners may notice increased skunk activity as they enter their mating season, which starts in February and can last until March.

Skunks, often recognized by their distinct black and white fur and notorious scent, are a common sight in many neighborhoods.

Characterized by their nocturnal habits, skunks are omnivores know for their foraging behavior, often leading them to residential areas in search of food, especially in yards. Their holes are typically cone-shaped and 3 to 4 inches wide, but the area disturbed may be as wide as 10 inches.

Skunks' diet consists of 80% insects, worms, small rodents, bird eggs, and reptiles, supplemented by berries, acorns, and other vegetable matter. They leave evidence of their feeding by creating cone-shaped holes in the soil when they dig for food, such as grubs.

They will also create burrows in various types of soil, including loose dirt, gravel, and even under structures like porches or sheds. Their burrows, ranging from shallow depressions to more elaborate tunnel systems, serve as dens for shelter and rearing offsprings.

Skunks play a vital role in ecosystems by controlling insect populations, and scavenging on small rodents and reptiles, making them beneficial neighbors despite their pungent defense mechanism. However, encounters with skunks can be problematic for homeowners due to their defensive spray, which they release when feeling threatened.

Photo from www.nyc.gov

To mitigate skunk activity around homes, secure potential entry points such as gaps under decks or sheds, ensure that garbage cans are tightly sealed, and remove any potential food sources like pet food left outside

While skunks may provoke mixed feelings among homeowners, understanding their behavior and implementing preventive measures can help foster coexistence and reduce conflicts between humans and wildlife in residential areas.

For information on managing skunks in New York click here.

THE NATIONAL GARDENING ASSOCIATION

Renovating a Flowering Shrub

Old shrubs, such as spiraea, forsythia, lilac, and honeysuckle, often become overgrown and full of crowded stems and dead wood.

New growth is weak, and flower production decreases. To reduce the shrubs' size and width and rejuvenate them, follow these pruning techniques.

Tools and Materials

- Hand pruners
- Small pruning saw
- Loppers
- Safety glasses
- Leather gloves

Determine flowering time. The best time to prune depends on when the shrubs bloom. Prune spring bloomers in early summer, right after they finish blooming. Because summer-blooming shrubs produce flowers on shoots grown in the current year, wait until early next spring to prune.

Remove dead, damaged, and diseased wood. You can do this at any time of year. Prune into healthy wood or cut the shoots back to the ground. Also remove limbs that rub against one another.

Remove the oldest shoots. On shrubs with many crowded shoots, use loppers or hand pruners to cut about a third of the oldest shoots back to the ground at the right time of year for pruning a particular shrub. You can repeat this process each year, removing a fourth to a third of the shoots each time.

Prune severely. Some shrubs can tolerate having all of their shoots cut back at once to within 3 to 6 inches of the ground. To allow the shrub to recover in the following growing season, do this in late autumn to early spring. Suitable shrubs for this treatment include redtwig dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*), smokebush (*Cotinus coggygria*), peegee hydrangea (*H. paniculata* 'Grandilora'), ninebark (*Physocarpus*), basket willow (*Salix purpurea*), and *Spiraea bumalda*. Allow two to three years between severe prunings.

Improve shrub appearance and health. As the shrub regrows, choose the strongest shoots and remove crowded, spindly, and week ones. Prune off spent flowers, and cut the shoot tips back to a desirable branch or bud to encourage bushiness, but take care not to remove developing flower buds.

Tips

Safety glasses prevent sharp branches and sawdust from accidently scratching or poking your eyes. Wear leather gloves to protect from pinches, splinters, and cuts.

With slow-growing shrubs and those with few shoots, prune lightly instead of renovating them. Remove the oldest and weakest growth at the appropriate time of year, but never take more than a fourth of the plant at one time.

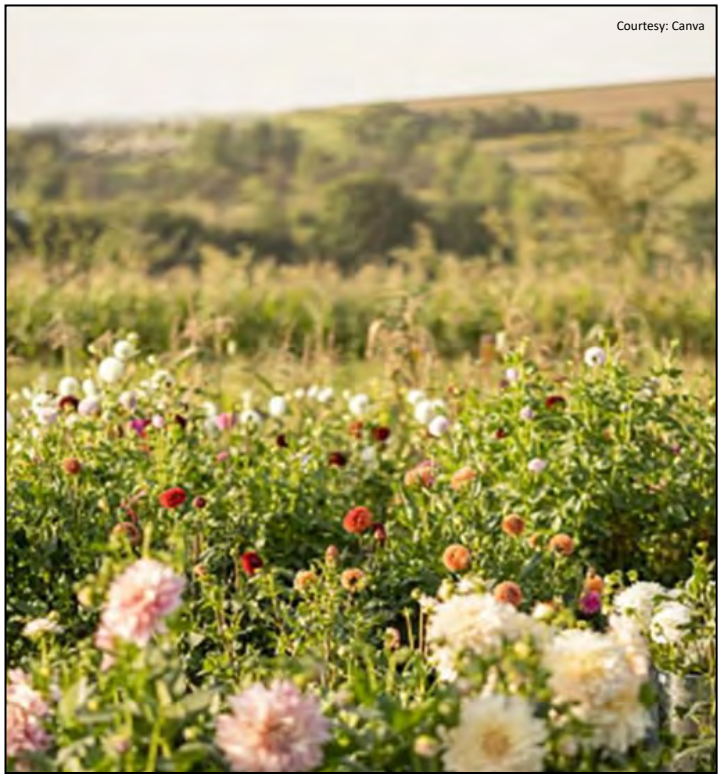
CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION - CAPITAL AREA AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE PROGRAM

Sustainable Cut Flower Farming 101

When: Wednesday, April 22 | 6 pm - 8 pm
Where: Cornell Cooperative Extension of Albany County
24 Martin Road, Voorheesville, NY 12186

Cost: $6 per person

Registration: Please register by April 21
https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/SustainableCutFlowerFarming101_201


Courtesy: Canva

Are you interested in cut flowers farming but unsure where to begin? Or have you started growing cut flowers and want to make sure you're on the right track? Join us for a two-hour workshop designed specifically for beginners.

This workshop will cover the fundamentals of cut flower farming with a focus on sustainable production techniques. Topics will include crop planning, soil health, season extension, weed management, integrated pest management, and marketing strategies to help you grow and sell beautiful blooms successfully.

Presenter: Jingjing Yin, Regional Commercial Horticulture Educator, Cornell Cooperative Extension Capital Area Agriculture and Horticulture Program

Contact: Jingjing Yin, jy578@cornell.edu

THE NATIONAL GARDENING ASSOCIATION, By Susan Littlefield

Create a Rain Garden

It is not uncommon for areas of the country to experience hot, dry days followed by sudden thunderstorms that drop lots of water in a short amount of time, rather than with long, soaking rains. When a thunderstorm unleashes a torrent of rain, all that water landing on impervious surfaces like roofs, driveways, and walkways often runs off into the nearest storm drain and from there eventually to local waterways, or it goes directly into nearby streams, rivers, and lakes. Even when the rain lands on lawns, or other vegetated surfaces, so much comes down so quickly in a thunderstorm that much of the needed water runs off rather than soaking into the ground.

What is a Rain Garden?

Rain Gardens are gardens shaped like shallow bowls that are designed to capture storm water and hold it until the ground can absorb it. By capturing a sudden deluge of water before it becomes runoff and letting it soak into the ground, a properly designed rain garden helps protect the environment and recharges the groundwater. It can also be an attractive addition to your landscape and, an added bonus, many of the plants that are suited to a rain garden are natives that attract beneficial and pollinating insects, butterflies, and birds. It's win win all around!

Where to Build a Rain Garden

Locate your rain garden where downsprouts or swales can direct water from roofs, driveways, and other imperious surfaces, but place it at least 10 feet away from the foundation of your house, at least 30-50 feet away from septic tanks, leach fields, and drinking water wells, and away from any other underground utilities. When siting your garden, it's also important to remember what a rain garden is not. It's not a bog or a swamp; it's a temporary water holding basin. So it doesn't belong in a spot that is naturally wet or where water stands for long periods after a rain. A low spot that is fairly flat with soil that allows any standing water to drain within a day or two after a storm is best. To check if the soil drains fast enough, dig a test hole about 10 inches deep and fill it with water. If the water drains away within 48 hours, you're good to go.

A common concern is that a rain garden will become a "mosquito garden" as well. But because it's filled with water for only brief periods of time, you don't need to worry about a rain garden adding to the local skeeter population.

Which Plants to Use for a Rain Garden

Similarly, the plants that are appropriate for a rain garden are not wetland plants that need constantly wet soil. Instead, choose plants that can tolerate both temporarily saturated and drier soil. Both herbaceous and woody plants can be appropriate choices. Specific plant choices will depend on your climate, the size of your garden, and your sit'e exposure. Fortunately, there are many online resources with information on designing, planting, and maintaining rain gardens in various regions of the country. Or contact your local Extension Service or Master Gardeners program for advice.

How to Build a Rain Garden

How big should you make your rain garden? Ideally it should be about 20-30 percent of the size of the area draining into it; for example, a 300 sq. ft. garden to hold the runoff form a 1000 sq. ft. roof. The deeper the garden and the more freely draining soil, the greater the volume of water a given area will be able to accommodate.

I recently installed a rain garden to intercept storm water as it comes off the roof of my house before it sheets across the paved driveway and down the street to the storm sewer. Drainage in my sandy soil is good, so I excavated the area about 6 inches deep: then leveled out the interior and add compost to the soil. I selected both woody and herbaceous plants to provide a changing display of seasonal interest. Most of the plants are natives (or cultivars of natives) of areas of the eastern U.S. and all will weather periods of saturated soil as well as drier conditions. Goatsbeard (Aruncus dioicus Kneiffii') begins the floral show in June with arching sprays of ivory-white flowers. Later, spires of fragrant white flowers adorn dwarf summersweet (Clethra alnifolia 'Hummingbird') from midsummer on, attracting butterflies and bees, while purple coneflower (Echinacea purpurea) and turtle-head (Cheone lyonii) add bright notes of color in mid to late summer. Variegated dogwood (Cornus alba 'Elegantissima') provides year-round interest with its green and white variegated leaves in summer, red stems in winter, and white berries that attract birds. Inkberry (Ilex glabra 'Shamrock') with its narrow, glossy evergreen leaves provides a nice textural contrast to the lady ferns (Athyrium felix-femina) that fill in the shadier side of the garden. This new garden is now a lovely spot that will help the environment, wildlife, and the water table—and add beauty and color to my front yard.

Create your own rain garden and capture the excess water to create benefits all around.

CCE WARREN COUNTY

Fermenting & Dehydrating Workshop

When: March 28, 2026 | 9:30 am—11:00 am
Where: Cornell Cooperative Extension of Warren Co., 377 Schroon River Road, Warrensburg

Alyssa Hayes, Food Systems Educator, will teach participants how to make sauerkraut and "Edgy Veggies". Alyssa expounds, "this is a great class not only to learn how to ferment but to learn the health benefits of fermented foods and how easy it is to stock your own pantry with homemade healthy foods."

Prepayment of $15.00 and registration are required; contact Alyssa Hayes at 518-623-3291.

NDSU EXTENSION

2026 Field to Fork Webinar Series

The 2026 webinars began February 11 and continue weekly On Wednesdays from 2 pm - 3 pm CT) until April 15.

Experts from across the region provide information about growing, preserving and preparing specialty-crop fruits and vegetables safely in the eleventh annual Field to Fork webinar series.

Each week, the webinar recording, slides, handouts and completion certificate will be archived for viewing.

Upcoming Webinars:

March 25: Roots, Fruits, and Shoots: Edible Plant Parts
Susie Thompson - NDSU Department of Plant Sciences associate professor and potato breeder

April 1: Safe Home Canning: Start with the Recipe, Finish with Confidence
Karen Blakeslee - Kansas State University Extension associate

April 8 - Safer Solutions: Natural Insecticides to Manage Garden Insects
Janet Knodel - NDSU professor and entomologist

April 15 - Does Soil Health Make a Difference in Producing Healthy Food?
Carlos Pires - NDSU Extension soil health specialist and assistant professor

Past webinars include:

February 11: **Planting Techniques Make All the Difference: From Tomatoes to Apple Trees**

February 18: **New and Promising Vegetable Varieties for 2026**

February 25: **The Prepared Consumer: From Grocery Aisle to Emergency Plan**

March 4: **Food Preservation All Year - Fruit Leathers, Apple Chips, Jerky and More!**

March 11: **Debunking Common Vegetable Gardening Myths**

March 18: **To sous vide or not sous vide: Safety of Long-term, Low-temperature Cooking for Vegetables**

Watch The 2026 Field to Fork Webinar Recordings here.

Event Registration Link:
https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/qmzptfk

CCE SENECA COUNTY

Sourdough Breads

Sourdough bread can safely be made at home, following best practices to cultivate a healthy and viable sourdough starter. Maintaining a sourdough starter involves managing an ecosystem of microscopic yeast and bacteria. The key to ensuring a healthy sourdough starter is controlling the factors that influence microbial survival and growth.

In a healthy sourdough starter, yeast and lactobacilli thrive in a harmonious symbiotic relationship. Each has a preferred carbohydrate fuel from grain. The yeast uses these carbohydrates to produce ethanol and carbon dioxide. Ethanol is further converted by the bacteria, which produces lactic acid. Bubbles of carbon dioxide become trapped in the stretchy dough, making it rise. The acidity created by the lactobacilli is good for the yeast but inhospitable to other organisms, acting as a natural preservative. A sourdough starter is able to be kept at room temperature (if fed properly) and the acidity of the bread acts as a preservative even after baking as well.

A benefit from maintaining a sourdough ecosystem is a ready leavening that will yield bread and baked goods with better flavor, texture, and nutrient profiles. The fermentation process transforms the initial grain, developing more readily digestible protein content, decreasing starch content, improving some mineral and vitamin availability, and often increasing overall palatability. During the fermentations process, many of the simple sugars in the grain are eaten up as fuel, making it easier on blood sugar levels. The longer resting/rising time necessary to raise sourdough breads allows for the breakdown of the proteins, like gluten, into amino acids, making it easier to digest. This gluten breakdown is why **SOME** people who have a gluten sensitivity can tolerate sourdough breads. Also, the bacteria present in the sourdough help to activate phytase, an enzyme that breaks down phytic acid, an anti-nutrient found in all grains and seeds, making sourdough bread higher in nutrients by allowing vitamins and minerals to be more readily available to the body .

Best practices:

- Use safe food-handling procedures. Start with clean hands equipment and surfaces, and use quality ingredients. Always keep the starter loosely covered.
- Flour is a raw agricultural product, it is not a ready-to-eat food and should always be cooked before consuming. Do not taste raw sourdough starter before baking. Instead, a bubbly appearance, tangy smell, batter-like consistency, expansion and records of preparation steps should be used to determine when your starter is ready. The fermentation process will acidify the starter, which helps prevent pathogen growth and the baking step will kill any bacteria present.
- Wild yeast is naturally on the flour and in the air. Wild yeasts are inactive, but under suitable conditions will become activated in the presence of water. Yeast does not need to be added when making a sourdough starter. Wild yeast is found on the surface of grains, fruits, vegetables, and in the air and soil.

Photo: dreamstime

- Take care of your living starter. The fermenting microorganisms in sourdough starter need to be fed fresh flour and water regularly to survive and grow. Regular removal of some starter is an important step when feeding, to stabilize the volume of microorganisms and ensure nourishment for metabolic processes. Refrigeration can be used to prolong time between feedings in an active starter, but is not needed if feeding regularly. Sourdough starter can also be dried for long-term storage.

Monitor Factors:

Time: Creating a starter or rehydrating a dried starter will take several days of regular feeding. It will bubble and rise, and develop a pleasantly sour smell when ready to use.

Temperature: The fermenting microorganisms are more viable at temperatures that feel comfortable for you, a warm room temperature (around 70°F). Fermentation will slow at colder temperatures, and occur too rapidly or even stop when too hot for your own comfort.

Moisture: Water combined with the flour will provide the environment needed to cultivate the wild yeast and bacteria. Keep starter loosely covered to discourage mold development.

Acidity: Beneficial lactic acid bacteria (LAB) will produce lactic acid, which will increase the acidity, dropping the pH safely below 4.6. This rapid acidification of the sourdough starter will help limit growth of harmful microorganism, including mold.

Nutrients: Regularly spaced feeding intervals are necessary. Removal of some starter with each new addition of flour and water helps with nutrients access for optimal growth.

Oxygen: Fermenting sourdough starter will produce carbon dioxide. The starter should be loosely covered in order to safely release the gas, but the culture does not require oxygen.

Sourdough Starter

- 1/3 cup (50g) all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup (50g) whole wheat flour
- A little less than ½ cup (100g) water, room temp

Equipment: glass jar/dish, loose lid, plastic spatula, rubber band, kitchen scale (optional)

1. Mix flours and water well to combine with no clumps. Let rest in warm spot 24 hours.
2. When starting a feeding schedule, make sure to feed your starter with the same type of flour you intend to bake with.
3. Day 2: Mix ¼ cup starter + ½ cup flour mix + ¼ cup room temp water. Stir to combine completely. Cover and let rest 24 hours. Discard rest of previous starter.
4. Day 3: Mix the same feeding ratios. Stir to combine completely. Let rest 24 hours. Discard the rest of previous starter.
5. Day 4-6: Feed twice a day (every 12 hours). Mix the same feeding ratios. Stir. Cover. Let rest 12 hours. Discard the rest of previous starter.
6. Day 7+ until ready: Feed every 12 hours. Mix same feeding ratios. Stir. Cover. Let rest 12 hours. Discard the rest of previous starter. Keep watch for signs of peak activity.
7. If the starter begins to have any off-doors or mold growing on top, you will have to throw it out and start over.
8. If you think it is ready to leaven your bread, perform a "float test". If a small chuck floats when placed in water, it is ready to use.
9. If you use the part of the culture, feed the leftover culture. Let it sit 1 hour at room temperature, then refrigerate. If you do not use the culture, you should still feed it. If the culture is unrefrigerated, you must feed it once a week. If you neglect it for several weeks, the culture might die.
10. To reactivate your starter, feed it 12 hours before you plan to bake, making sure to reserve at least ¼ cup of your starter in your refrigerator for future baking.

Photo: dreamstime

Sourdough English Muffins

- ½ cup (100 g) sourdough starter (active)
- 1 Tbsp (20g) honey
- 1 cup (240g) milk
- 3 cups (360g) all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp (5g) fine sea salt
- ¼ cup (40g) cornmeal (for sprinkling)

1. 12 hours prior to mixing the dough, feed your sourdough starter by mixing ¼ cup starter + ½ cup ap flour + a little less than ½ cup water.
2. The night before cooking, add all ingredients (except corn meal) to a large bowl and use your hands to mix until well combined. Turn the dough out onto a floured surface and knead the dough for 5 minutes. Place the dough back into the bowl, cover and let ferment on the counter at room temperature 10-14 hours. (Room temperature is 65-70°)
3. The next morning, turn the dough out onto a floured surface, flour the top of the dough and press it out with your fingertips until it is 1" thick.
4. Use a 3" biscuit cutter, or a regular mouth jar, to cut rounds and place them on a parchment line baking sheet that's been sprinkled with cornmeal.
5. Sprinkle the tops with cornmeal, cover, and let rise 1 hour at room temperature.
6. Preheat a non-stick skillet over low heat. Place 4 muffins into the skillet 2" apart, cover, and cook the first side 4 minutes. Turn muffins over, cover, and cook 4 minutes.

https://littlespoonfarm.com

Sourdough Baguette

Photo: dreamstime

- 2 cups flour
- ½ cup water
- ½ tsp sea salt
- ½ cup sourdough starter (active)

1. Activate starter by feeding several hours before mixing the dough.
2. Combine all ingredients and mix well.
3. Sprinkle a couple tablespoons of flour on a work surface. Knead the dough slightly, taking time to knead gently. Avoid adding too much flour.
4. Form the dough into a ball and cut in half. Form each half into a long baguette. Place on a greased or parchment lined sheet pan.
5. Cover lightly with a damp towel and let rise 3-6 hours until doubled.
6. Preheat oven to 425°F and bake 15 minutes , or until golden brown.
7. Cool on a rack for at least 20 minutes.

Recipes - Cultures For Health

SIGN UP FOR A FREE CLASS TO LEARN ABOUT PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES

With severe weather events becoming more frequent and more extreme, it is more important than ever that New Yorkers are prepared for disasters. **The NY Citizen Preparedness Training Program** teaches residents to have the tools and resources to prepare for any type of disaster, respond accordingly and recover as quickly as possible to normal conditions. This training course will provide an introduction to responding to a natural or man-made disaster. Participants will be advised on how to properly prepare for any disaster, including developing a family emergency plan and stocking up on emergency supplies. Each family that attends will receive one preparedness kit.

WHERE: Paul Lent Public Safety Building
Large Training Room
6012 County Farm Rd
Ballston Spa, NY 12020

WHEN: Friday, April 17, 2026
5:00 PM

REGISTER:

Registration is required to attend the event.
To register visit www.prepare.ny.gov or scan the QR code

THIS EVENT IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY GOVERNOR HOCHUL IN CONJUNCTION WITH: NEW YORK NATIONAL GUARD and Paul Lent Public Safety Building

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American Red Cross

Blood Drive

Saratoga County Cornell Cooperative Extension

50 W. High St., Ballston Spa, NY 12020
training room

Wednesday, April 1, 2026
12:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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