

CCE

APRIL 6, 2026

Cornell Cooperative Extension | Saratoga County

NEWSLETTER

Tee Up for a Great Cause: Join Us for the Saratoga County 4-H Scholarship Golf Classic - Celebrating 25 Years!

Get ready to hit the greens for a day of fun, connection, and community impact at our 25th Annual 4-H Scholarship Golf Classic on May 30, 2026, at the beautiful Fairways of Halfmoon!

Last year's event was a tremendous success, bringing together more than 100 golfers and raising an incredible \$15,000 to support Saratoga County 4-H programs. This year, as we celebrate our 25th anniversary tournament, we're aiming even higher - and we'd love for you to be part of it.

All proceeds from the tournament directly benefit Saratoga County 4-H, helping to provide scholarships, educational programming, and hands-on learning opportunities for 4-H volunteer leaders. Your participation truly makes a difference in shaping future generations.

The day will kick off with registration at 8:00 am, followed by a 9:15 am shotgun start. After a great round of golf, players will enjoy a buffet lunch and awards ceremony, celebrating both fun on the course and the impact made off of it.

There are many ways to get involved:

- **Golfers** - Gather your team and join us on the course
- **Sponsors** - Showcase your business while supporting a great cause
- **Donors** - Contribute to the success of the event
- **Raffle Item Contributions** - Help us create an exciting raffle experience
- **Good Bag Donations** - Provide items to enhance the golfer experience

Whether you're an avid golfer or simply passionate about supporting youth development, your involvement helps ensure the continued success of Saratoga County 4-H programs.

Join us as we celebrate 25 years of impact - mark your calendar and be part of this special milestone event!

For more information, become a sponsor or to register to play, visit:

www.sc4h.org/golf

25th Annual
4-H
Scholarship
Golf Classic



May 30, 2026



Seed Library

Got a green thumb—or hoping to grow one? We’re excited to share that our Seed Library is officially open! Stop by and take a look, and a big thank-you to Liz Kormos for bringing this wonderful resource to life.

The Seed Library is open Tuesday from 10:00 AM—7:00 PM, Wednesday from 10:00 AM—5:00 PM, Thursday from 10:00 AM—8:00 PM, and Saturday from 10:00 AM—3:00 PM. Swing in during open hours to pick up FREE seed packets along with helpful educational handouts.



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, MAY 7 | 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.

Sustainable Cut Flower Farming 101

When: April 22, 2026 | 6:00 pm—8:00 pm

Where: Cornell Cooperative Extension of Albany County
24 Martin Road, Voorheesville

Cost: \$6 per person

Are you interested in cut flower farming but not sure where to start? Are you just starting to grow cut flowers but not sure if you are on the right track? Join us on April 22nd at 6:00 pm at CCE Albany County for a two hour workshop designed for beginners. This workshop will discuss cut flower farming basics, focusing on sustainable production techniques.

Topics include:

- Crop planning
- Soil health
- Season extension
- Weed control
- Integrated pest management
- Marketing strategies



Presenter:

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

Registration:

https://pub.cce.cornell.edu/event_registration/main/events_landing.cfm?event=SustainableCutFlowerFarming101_201

For program questions or special accommodations, contact:
Jingjing Yin jy578@cornell.edu | 518-429-8608

Farm Product Pricing and Marketing Workshop



The Cornell Agriculture Marketing Research Program (CAMRP) and Cornell Cooperative Extension announce a two-part series of farm marketing workshops. The series focuses on how farmers selling directly to consumers can benefit from new tools, resources, and teaching on the topics of marketing and pricing for the upcoming 2026 market season.

Each workshop will cover two topics. Both topics apply to livestock producers selling meat directly to consumers, while the second part of the evening will also appeal to dairy, egg, fruit and vegetable producers and those selling any farm product at a farmers market. Participants are welcome to join for one or both parts. Registration details for each location are below.

CAMRP manages [MeatSuite.com](https://meatsuite.com) and the Farmers Market Research Project (farmersmarketresearch.cornell.edu). Funding for this project was provided by the Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, using Federal Capacity Funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

PART 1: Creating and Pricing Consumer-friendly Meat with MeatSuite. This session will introduce you to MeatSuite, a free tool that helps farmers sell more meat to NY consumers in bulk. We'll also share how to make bulk meat sales more approachable for first-time buyers including a demonstration of MeatSuite's newest tool, Bundle Builder. Bundle Builder allows you to easily assemble "bulk bundles" to utilize all of your cuts, and set profitable prices.

PART 2: Farmers Market Sales Data: Using the Customer Experience and Pricing to Improve Market Sales Performance. In this session we will discuss CAMRP's price reports and how sales data from NY farmers markets teach us how to improve the customer experience using the results of the Cornell Farmers Market Research Project. Learn practical ways to increase customer spending and daily sales. This session is appropriate for farms selling fruit, vegetables, meat, dairy, and eggs as well as other farm products.

DATES & LOCATIONS:

Tuesday, April 21 | 6:00 pm—8:30 pm

St. Lawrence County 2043B State Highway 68, Canton, NY
Contact: Carmen Hostetter

crh248@cornell.edu | 315-379-9192 ext. 224

Registration: <https://bit.ly/46RjcYW>

Wednesday, April 22 | 3:00 pm—5:30 pm

Essex County Youth & Agriculture Building, Essex Co. Fairgrounds
6 Fairground Way, Westport, NY

Contact: Cole Trager

ct693@cornell.edu | 518-962-4810 ext. 409 (office)

Registration:

https://pub.cce.cornell.edu/.../main/events_landing.cfm...

Thursday, April 23 | 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Washington County, 101 Main St., Argyle, NY

Contact: Brian Gilchrist

btg5@cornell.edu | 518-290-2302

Registration: https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/Marketing_and_Pricing_253

Leading the Farm Team



Supervisory Skills for New Managers

This 3-session online training is designed for farm owners and new managers supervising employees for the first time.

What You'll Learn:

- ✓ Understand responsibilities as a supervisor
- ✓ Transition into a supervisory role
- ✓ Set clear expectations & give feedback
- ✓ Communicate effectively with employees
- ✓ Manage workplace challenges & conflict

Program Details:

- 📅 April 14, 21 and 28th
- 🕒 4:00-5:30 PM
- 📍 \$30 Webinar Series

[Click Here to Register](#)



**Cornell
Cooperative
Extension**

This program is offered by Eastern NY Commercial Hort Team, Central NY Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops Team, CCE Schoharie/Otsego County, and CCE Dutchess County.

Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and educator recognized for providing equal program and employment opportunities in accordance with applicable laws.

SUSTAINABLE LAWNS

We will help with how to properly take care of your lawn with low maintenance techniques along with lawn alternatives to provide pollinator habitats.

\$10
Pre-registration
deadline 4/24

ZOOM
4/29 @ Noon

Pre-payment & registration required
Registration can be made by emailing
Jessica Luse at jmh452@cornell.edu
Pre-payments can be made by
using the QR code or mailing your check to
CCE-Saratoga County
50 West High St, Ballston Spa NY 12020

<https://www.paypal.com/ncp/payment/KHWFDUF8Q4MY>

Should you not be able to make the zoom, a recording will be available!



All proceeds benefit the Unlimited Garden Fundraiser! 

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Saratoga County



Save the Dates: Spring & Fall Horticultural Tours & Horsemen's Social Celebration!

Mark your calendars for two exciting opportunities to connect, learn, and celebrate with the Saratoga County community!

We're thrilled to introduce the Saratoga County Horticultural Tours, a new offering this year, taking place on May 9 and October 3, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Locations will be announced soon. These tours will feature both guided and self-guided options, giving participants the flexibility to explore at their own pace or learn alongside knowledgeable guides. Attendees can enjoy beautiful local landscapes, gain practical horticultural insights, and take advantage of plenty of photo opportunities. Stay tuned for more details.

Looking ahead to summer, we are excited to host the Saratoga County Horsemen's Social on June 12 from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm, at the 4-H Training Center (556 Middleline Road, Ballston Spa).

This year's event is especially meaningful as CCE Equine celebrates 20 years of serving the equine community. The annual Horsemen's Social brings together equine professionals and enthusiasts for an evening of networking connection, and fun - and this year, we're making it even more memorable!

In honor of both the Year of the Horse and our 20th anniversary, we're adding a few extra activities to enhance the celebration. Guest can enjoy food, drinks, raffle prizes, a silent auction, and - new this year - BINGO!

Ticket pricing and sales information will be announced soon, along with sneak peeks of the exciting items and activities we have planned.

Be sure to save the dates and join us for these special events - we look forward to seeing you there!



**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**

The Saratoga County
Horsemen's Social

Celebrating



20th Anniversary

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

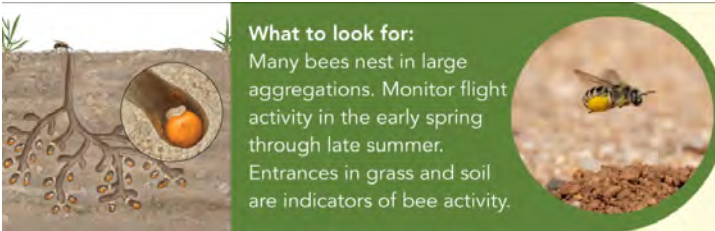
4-H Training Center
556 Middleline Road, Ballston Spa

Ticket price and sales to be announced...



Project Ground-Nesting Bee (GNBee)

The Ground Nesting Bees Community Science Project needs your help to collect data on native bee populations and nesting sites. Your contributions will help us to better understand the importance of native bees and how to protect them in our local environments. You can help by reporting nesting aggregations by uploading a photo of a bee entering or exiting its nest to iNaturalist (GNbee). Learn more: <https://www.gnbee.org/>



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

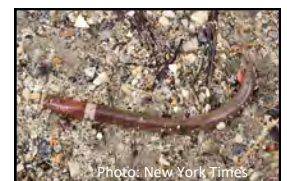
What's Bugging You?

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.**

MAY 1: Jumping worm management | Feeding Friendly Insects: look for seedlings

Learn how to know if you have jumping worms in your yard and what you can do about it. And if you're growing perennial plants to feed friendly insects, start looking for seedlings. [Register here.](#)



Hanging Baskets: Jewelry for the Garden

By Ellen Zachos

I've always thought of hanging baskets as the costume jewelry of the gardening world. They add the finishing touch to your garden after the irrigation has been installed and the mulch has been laid. And like any good accessory, they should always be kept looking shiny and new.

Hanging baskets require special care. A big part of their appeal is their lush, overflowing appearance, which means hanging baskets must be planted tightly to achieve this look. They have reduced room for soil and retain less water than in-ground gardens. Hanging baskets are usually planted with soilless potting mix because it's lightweight. But these peat-based mixes contain very little nutrition, so hanging baskets also require more frequent fertilization than gardens planted in the ground.

Meticulous maintenance is the key to flourishing hanging baskets. Consistent deadheading keeps flowering annuals from going to seed and encourages continuous bloom, so you should do it at least once a week. Plants with large flowers or flower heads, like geraniums and petunias, should be deadheaded more frequently, as soon as their flowers begin to wilt. You'll also want to keep trailing plants from becoming leggy. To keep stems compact, cut back every other stem by a third when they start looking stretched and disproportionately long. [Blue fan flower \(*Scaevola*\)](#), [Summer Wave trailing torenia](#) varieties, and [million bells \(*Calibrachoa*\)](#) are good examples of annuals that benefit from this kind of trimming. Remove dead or yellow leaves whenever you walk past your basket. Impatiens may need this kind of de-leaving every few days.

Fertilize your hanging basket once every two weeks, using a balanced fertilizer. A soluble fertilizer delivers nutrients more quickly than granular fertilizers and is a better choice for hanging baskets.

Hanging baskets dry out fast; their volume of soil is relatively small and they're exposed to the elements from all sides. In hot weather, you may need to water your basket as often as every day. If you forget to water and the soil in your basket dries out so much that it pulls away from the edges, soak the entire basket in a tub of water for 30 minutes to hydrate the potting mix. If you can't soak the basket, water it thoroughly every two hours until the soil has fully expanded.

Keep your eyes open for pests and diseases. Because the plants in a hanging basket are placed so close together it's easy for pathogens to travel from plant to plant. Check your basket at least every other day and remove any leaves that show signs of disease (mold,



Petunias (*Petunia*)

Uploaded by [Hamwild](#)

mildew, or leaf spots). Nip any pest infestation in the bud by handpicking pests, removing the affected plant parts, or treating the plant with a lower-toxicity labelled pesticide such as insecticidal soap, neem oil, or pyrethrin. But keep in mind that even organically approved pesticides such as these can be harmful to bees; if you must apply them to flowering plants, do so in late evening when bees are not actively foraging.

Another way to keep your hanging baskets fresh is to replace annual plants selectively as they pass their prime. If you started the season with pansies surrounded by ivy, replace the pansies with verbena in June, then chrysanthemums in September.

Be attentive to your hanging baskets. They may not last as long as a favorite piece of jewelry, but a few well cared for, creative containers can perfectly accessorize your home and garden, adding the sparkle that will take your landscape from "nice" to "wow!"



Peanuts: The legume with nutritional punch



Although they're called peanuts, they're not actually nuts—they're legumes, similar to soybeans and lentils. These nutrient-rich seeds grow in pods and can be enjoyed in a variety of forms, including peanut butter, oil, flour, and flakes. Packed with impressive nutritional value, peanuts may be small,

but they offer big benefits. Take a moment to explore all that this versatile legume has to offer!

Peanuts are a familiar food found at many family events including ball games and the circus. This favorite food also known as “goobers” sustained soldiers during the civil war. The name peanut can be deceiving. The peanut is not a nut but a legume. They are related to peas, lentils and beans. The peanut plant grows as a ground flower with its pods maturing underground.

There are many ways to enjoy peanuts, including peanut butter, oil, flour, flakes. These legumes pack a powerful punch of nutrition. They contain folate, niacin, magnesium, vitamin E, copper, and phosphorus. They also offer monounsaturated fats, fiber and the same polyphenol antioxidant found in red wine. These nutrients are needed to help convert food to energy, cell division and protection. One handful or

ounce of peanuts contains 13% daily value for protein which makes them an excellent plant-based protein. The [2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) specifically point out the need for a shift in food intake to a more plant-based diet; one that emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains and nuts.

Research has long shown that peanuts help to reduce the risk of heart disease in small amounts. It has also linked peanuts to the prevention of other chronic diseases such as diabetes and certain cancers. Studies show that moderate consumption of peanuts does not lead to weight gain, but in fact, can help with weight loss by increasing fullness. Peanuts and peanut butter provide more than 30 essential vitamins and minerals and can be part of a varied balanced diet that promotes good health.

Peanuts are available year-round and come in a variety of ways. Enjoy them shelled, unshelled, raw, bulk, roasted or sweetened. Shelled peanuts store best sealed and refrigerated. Unshelled peanuts require cool, dark storage. They can be a handy snack or a nutritious addition to many recipes. For more information on healthy eating, visit www.nutrition.gov.

Peanut Butter Yogurt Dip

- 8 oz non-fat vanilla yogurt
- 4 oz unsalted peanut butter

Combine yogurt and peanut butter until well blended. Serve with sliced fruit or vegetable.

Makes 6 servings.

Nutrition information per ¼ cup: calories 150, total fat 9g, saturated fat 2g, sodium 30mg, 10g carbohydrate, 1g fiber, 7g protein.

Flourless Peanut Butter Oatmeal Cookies

- 1 cup creamy peanut butter
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp vanilla
- 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 cup quick oats

Preheat oven to 350°F. Add everything except oats and chocolate chips. Cream together all until batter is smooth. Add chips and oats. Line baking sheet with parchment paper and scoop ball of cookie dough onto sheet and cook 10-12 min. Let cookies set before moving them.



Peanut Ginger Chicken

- 2½ cups thinly sliced red cabbage
- ½ cup shredded carrots
- 1/3 cup thinly sliced scallions (sliced on the diagonal)
- 1 tsp plus 3 Tbsp low-salt soy sauce
- 3½ tsp sugar
- Salt
- 1 clove garlic (add more if you love garlic)
- 1-inch piece of ginger, peeled and sliced (food processor works great)
- ½ cup packed cilantro leaves, plus 1 Tbsp chopped
- 3 Tbsp creamy peanut butter
- 1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp peanut oil (can use olive oil)
- 1 lb. thinly sliced chicken breast
- 1/3 cup toasted sliced almonds or peanuts (optional)

In a bowl, combine the cabbage, carrots and scallions, 1 tsp. sugar, and a big pinch of salt. Set aside for 20 minutes, tossing occasionally.

In a small food processor, chop the garlic and ginger. Scrape the bowl with a spatula, add the ¼ cup cilantro and chop thoroughly. Scrape the bowl, add the peanut butter, 1 Tbsp hot water, the lemon juice, 1 Tbs. oil, 3 Tbs. Soy sauce, and 2½ tsp sugar. Pulse until well combined, scraping the bowl as needed.

Heat 1 Tbs. oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Season the chicken pieces with salt and put them in the hot pan. Cook on one side until the edges are white (1-2 minutes). Transfer to a cutting board and stack them in one or two piles; let rest for 3 to 4 minutes. Slice the chicken into generous ¼ inch strips and put them in a large bowl. Squeeze the cabbage mixture well and add it to the chicken, pour in the dressing, and toss well to combine. Divide amount four plates and garnish with nuts and cilantro.

Seven Tips For A BearWise Spring

Chances are you may have started noticing signs of bear activity sometime in March when some bears emerge from their dens. And many bears have been up and about and looking for food and water before the Easter Bunny arrived. So, it's a great time to think about what worked and what could have worked better last year and make sure you've done everything you can to discourage hungry bears from paying you a springtime visit.

#1—Going for a Walk?

There's nothing like heading out for an early morning or evening stroll and bumping into a bear searching for breakfast. If you're walking around the neighborhood, in a park or out in the woods, pay attention to your surroundings, keep your dog on a leash, and if you do surprise a bear, don't let your dog chase or harass it. Just back away and leave the area. Whether you're walking with a dog, someone else or by yourself, it's always a good idea to carry a safety whistle or other noisemaker and a can of bear spray just in case. And check the expiration date on your bear spray to see if it's time to replace it.

#2—Check Garages, Porches, Decks and Outbuilding



Do you have an unlocked garage, shed or outbuilding where you're storing anything that might look or smell good to a bear? This includes all manner of pet food, bird seed, deer corn and livestock feed, along with human food, unwashed BBQ grills and even things like antifreeze that are definitely not good to eat (antifreeze smells and tastes sweet but is actually highly poisonous in very small quantities to both people and bears.) Double bag and store open antifreeze responsibly; never put in the garbage. Check with your local authorities on how to recycle.

Your screened-in porch is not "inside" and under your deck is not "out of sight and smell" to a bear. Don't leave food, pet food, or anything else with an odor on or under your porch or deck overnight.

#3—What's In Your Vehicle?



Bears can open doors of unlocked vehicles and let themselves in. Unfortunately, when the door shuts behind them, they can't get out. The resulting damage is a steep price to pay for leaving stuff inside your vehicle that could attract bears.

If you park vehicles outside, don't leave anything inside that could attract a bear—this can range from that bag of dog food you forgot to bring in to the pack of gum in your cup holder. In some areas bears have been attracted to vehicles by the enticing (to a bear) smells of empty cans, bottles, wrappers and trash. So, get in the habit of cleaning out your vehicles, rolling up windows and locking the doors.



#4—Secure Garbage

Have you been putting out your trash and recycling the night before pickup? Stacking pizza boxes out by the back door? Chilling beverages on the back porch? Bears can literally smell that empty pizza box from a mile away. If you gave yourself a bear vacation over the worst of winter it's time to get back in the habit of keeping trash and recycling in a sturdy building or [bear-resistant container](#) until the morning of pickup.

#5—Take Down Bird Feeders

If you're still feeding birds, you could soon find something big, furry and hungry ripping down your feeder. So many calories, so easy to get at. Bears are super smart and fast learners, so please don't tempt them with a feeder full of food. When you take down your feeders, remember to lock up or bring inside any bird seed or other treats you've been storing outside. . [Download the BearWise Bulletin #1: Attract Birds, Not Bears](#)

#6—Don't Forget The Pet Food

Pet food is another super-concentrated, easily digestible source of thousands of calories—exactly what a bear is looking for after a long winter's fast. Leaving pet food outside where bears can see or smell it is an invitation that can be hard for a hungry bear to resist. Feed pets indoors if at all possible. If you must feed them outside, feed in single portions only, remove bowls and food after feeding and store pet food inside in a secure location.

#7—Help out the Newbies and Neighbors

Have you got new residents who moved in over the winter and may have met all their wild neighbors? Do them a big favor and help them get off on the right paw. [Visit the BearWise store](#) to download free information fact sheets (including the [checklist: How BearWise Are You?](#)) or to order handy door hangers and magnets that make house calls for you.

Welcome Back to the Garden!



With their many tones of browns against the dark leaves cover, perennials remind me that there is still a garden, where birds and insects seek food and shelter during the harsh winter.

We all yearn to see spring signs. In some places, the ground is saturated with water. The snow is fast melting. Crocuses are blooming in some gardens. Already the sap started to move up the trees. A wild bee flies here and there. Our longings are bursting with hope.

Kept in my basement until March, pots of geraniums will soon migrate to a table in the living room; watered at first, then about a week later they'll receive a touch of organic fertilizer. This past fall, after trimming their stems, I decided to leave two geraniums in the living room, facing a window, expecting some blooms. The plants grew beautiful leaves, but didn't bloom. I think that they lacked enough sun. It is a small disappointment, yet it still added greenery this long winter.

The only garden plant that I nurture throughout the winter is a red Mandevilla, perched on a box away from the reach of my two indoor cats, in a south-facing window. In the fall, I cut the plant down, and keep it trimmed during the winter. It returns outside when the temperatures are steadily warm, and by mid-August it starts to bloom profusely.

In January, I started receiving my favorite seed catalogs and I became excited about the prospect of starting seeds and trying a few new plants. Last year, I started the petunia seeds in the living room mid-March, then once the weather significantly warmed and the seedlings looked viable, I transfer them to the greenhouse, under domes and on heating mats. I am still learning this technique. I made an error last year and "fried" the foxgloves. Luckily, it was early in the season and I was able to start new seeds, but there will not be a bumper crop of foxgloves this year. My daughter recently gave me LED grow lights and I will start some of the petunias in the basement this year. A new experiment!

Let's take a moment to talk about lawns in today's global warming climate. (*Climate-Wise Landscaping*, Reed and Stibolt, 2018). Below

are points presented by the authors.

Reducing the size of lawns will save water, reduce pollution and support wildlife. Lawns can be replaced with a wildflower meadow, a rain garden, herb garden, a flower bed of native and pollinator friendly plants.

Lawns that go dormant (turn brown) during dry spells spring back as soon as moisture returns with rains. Lawns that are artificially irrigated (sprinklers) mostly develop surface roots instead of dryness, long deep roots can. So the more a lawn is watered, the more it develops surface roots and the more the grass turns brown in periods of dry spells.

Evidence-based science points to the long-term pollution caused by synthetic fertilizers, pesticides and so-called "weed-killers". The manufacturing of such products also leaves a large carbon footprint. Organic fertilizers have nutrients which added to the soil qualities, synthetic nutrients don't. Most pesticides kill a vast majority of organisms that are beneficial to soil and plants, and which actually eat what we see as "undesirable" insects.

As these products enter the food chain they push away predators such as birds, bats and frogs that would otherwise eat those insects, caterpillars and such. Most of the insects in our typical landscape are beneficial.

The carbon footprint of a lawn mower is impressive: for 11 gallons of gas used each year, 194 pounds of carbon are emitted. Electric mowers reduce pollution, but still generate some pollution in the manufacturing of lithium batteries.

The best options for zero carbon footprints are manual mowers. I used to have a push mover when I lived in the Adirondacks, it was fun to watch the rotation of the blade and it was a good physical exercise. I also mowed only twice in the season.

Today, I use an electric mower, it is quiet, it doesn't emit fumes, and it's more maneuverable for my older joints. In the summer, I mow every ten days to two weeks, sometimes less often, and usually at a 5" height. I find a taller lawn more artistic, more natural looking and more pleasing to the foot.

Saving water really matters. We need to accept that lawns may turn brown.

Horticultural literature points to the best practices to lower our carbon footprints: reducing the size of lawns, replacing them with wildflower meadows or flowerbeds, trees and shrubs, avoiding all synthetic products, avoiding surface watering, limiting the use of fuel mowers and power tools. Mow less often and mow at a 5" height.

A new project: Saratoga Cooperative Extension has started a "Seed Library" at the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Library. Free seed packets are available in the library. Master Gardeners such as myself will be making presentations as the season progresses. I will be giving a class on Tuesday, April 28, 2 pm—3 pm called Seed Starting.

Article by Rosine, Saratoga County Master Gardener

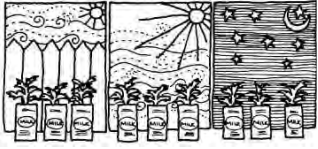


Homesteading



THE NATIONAL GARDENING ASSOCIATION

Hardening Off Tomato Transplants



One of the most important steps in planting comes before seedlings get near the garden. This is the process of hardening off, or gradually acclimating your tomato seedlings to outdoor conditions.

These plants have spent their short lives in a warm, sunny, protected place and won't fare well if you don't expose them slowly to the elements.

A few days before you're ready to begin hardening plants off, reduce amount of water you give them, and cease fertilizing until they are planted in the garden.

About 10 days before you intend to plant, put your transplants outdoors in an area where they'll be protected from the direct sunlight and wind. Leave them out for a few hours and bring them back inside. Repeat this each day, gradually increasing the amount of time they're outside and the degree of exposure to sun and wind. After a week or so, leave the transplants out overnight. If frost threatens, bring them indoors.

If you harden off your plants properly, they'll be strong and able to withstand full sun, strong breezes, and all the challenges they'll meet in the garden.



NYS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

2025 Hunting Season the Safest on Record



New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Amanda Lefton announced another year of safe hunting. Hunting remains one of the most popular forms of wild-life recreation in the state with nearly 600,000 New Yorkers participating annually, helping achieve State wildlife management objectives and safely enjoying time out doors.

"The historic low number of incidents observed in 2025 demonstrated that hunting is safe and is getting safer thanks to the efforts of the DEC's Hunter Education Program, volunteer instructors, and the vigilance of New York's hunters," said Commissioner Lefton. "In addition to being safe, hunting is ecologically important, helping manage wildlife populations conservation-related behaviors, and providing a local, affordable food source. I am proud of our team's efforts to grow New York's hunting community."

The 2025 hunting season was the safest in New York's recorded history. The total number of hunting-related shooting incidents (HRSI) in 2025 was seven, five of which were self-inflicted and two involved more than one person. One incident involved an unlicensed individual who was hunting illegally. Fortunately, there were no HRSI fatalities.

Many, if not all, HRSIs can be prevented if people follow the primary rules of hunter safety:

- Treat every firearm as if it were loaded.
- Control the muzzle, always keep it pointed in a safe

direction.

- Identify your target and what lies beyond it.
- Keep your finger off the trigger until ready to fire.
- Wear hunter orange or pink.

DEC also documented nine falls from tree stands or elevated platforms, including one fatality. Like HRSIs, elevated hunting incidents (EHIs) can be avoided by following simple safety measures. Hunters can prevent severe injuries or death due to falls from tree stands or elevated platforms by wearing and properly using a fall-arrest system (FAS). A FAS keeps a hunter attached to the tree from the time they leave the ground until they get back down. A harness only works if it is attached to the tree the entire time the hunter is off the ground.

A FAS includes:

- A full-body harness with shoulder, chest, and leg straps;
- A strap that attaches to the tree when in the stand;
- A tether strap that attaches the harness to the tree strap;
- A "lifeline" to keep a hunter safe while climbing and descending; and
- A suspension relief strap to be used in the event of a fall.

DEC encourages all New York hunters to [Strap Up before you Go Up](#).

For more information on hunter education courses and hunting safety statistics, visit [Hunter Education Program webpage](#).

The Latest from Our 4-H Youth

Saratoga County 4-H Shooting Sports Ambassadors Took Part in the Annual Sportsman's Day at the Capitol



Nine members of the Saratoga County 4-H Shooting Sports Ambassadors, along with a 4-H member from Dutchess County, took part in the annual Sportsman's Day at the Capitol, hosted by the New York Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus. This event brought together

legislators, outdoor enthusiasts, and organizations committed to hunting, fishing, conservation, and responsible outdoor recreation. The youth ambassadors had the unique opportunity to meet with elected officials and share firsthand how 4-H programs have shaped their skills, interests, and future goals.

Throughout the day, the ambassadors demonstrated safe and responsible archery practices using 4-H's inflatable archery range. Their instruction showcased not only their technical expertise, but also the leadership and communication skills gained through years of 4-H involvement. In conversations with legislators and partner organizations, the youth shared their personal 4-H stories and highlighted the positive impact that shooting sports has had on their confidence, discipline, and connection to the outdoors.

By serving as educators and advocates, these young people helped elevate the visibility of 4-H's commitment to youth development



and outdoor education. Their presence at the Capitol underscored the program's role in fostering lifelong skills and cultivating the next generation of safe, informed, and engaged sportsmen and sportswomen.

Opportunities for Saratoga County Youth

CANINE TRAINING CLASSES

Saratoga County 4-H is offering a variety of canine training classes once again this year! Classes begin May 4. Pre-registration with payment is due by April 24.

Classes open to YOUTH ONLY:

- Agility
- Advanced Agility
- Grooming and Handling

Classes open to Youth and Adults (*Youth will be given priority*):

- Beginner Obedience



For questions or to sign up, please contact our office by calling (518) 885-895 or mail in [registration](#) to 50 W. High St., Ballston Spa, NY

4-H TURKEY HUNTING WORKSHOP

SATURDAY, April 11 | 8:00 am—12:00 pm
4-H Training Center, Ballston Spa

Join us for a hands-on workshop where participants will learn the fundamentals of turkey hunting, from techniques and safety to calling strategies. Attendees will also have the opportunity to build their own turkey call to take home.

This program is open to youth of legal hunting age, along with accompanying adults.

Cost: \$20 per person (includes turkey call kit and lunch)

Call the Extension office to register: 518-885-8995



Open House/Information Day

The Ballston Spa Lions Club will be highlighting a variety of committees, organizations, and projects they have supported over the past 76 years of serving the community. Saratoga County 4-H is proud to be among those featured.

Be sure to stop by our 4-H booth at the Ballston Spa Lions Club Open House/Information Day on Saturday, April 11, from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. at 50 West High Street, Ballston Spa. We hope to see you there!

The Ballston Spa Lions Club Cordially Invites You To Our OPEN HOUSE INFORMATION DAY SATURDAY APRIL 11TH 11-3PM 50 West High St (Solar Bldg) Ballston Spa

We will be showcasing the Committees/Organizations and some of the projects the club has sponsored over the last 76 years of helping people throughout the community.

Please stop by and check out these great services.

Sight & Hearing Conservation/World Service/Childhood Cancer

Glens Falls Association for the Blind/Guiding Eyes/Puppy Raising

Northeastern Association of the Blind at Albany/ 4H/Diabetes Info

Lions Eye Institute/ Camp Abilities/Ballston Spa Lions Music Park

Sight Society of Northeast NY, Lions Eye Bank at Albany

We will also be collecting old eyeglasses.....

We hope you will be able to join us on April 11th 2026.

“WE SERVE”

For more information

Ed Hersh/Past President

518-496-6162

lionedhersh@gmail.com



WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

Click the photos to be navigated to each of our Facebook accounts:



CCE Saratoga



4-H



CCE Equine



Agriculture
Economic
Development



Capital Region
PRISM



TASTE NY

WHO WE ARE

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Reyna Racaza	Isabella Hanson

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Erik Smith	Raevyn Saunders

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Alexa Howansky	Shannon Onstot, <i>Taste NY</i>
	James Hume, <i>Taste NY</i>

EASTERN NY COMMERCIAL HORTICULTURE

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Jeremy Schuster	Mike Basedow
Elizabeth Higgins	Elizabeth Hodgdon
Heather Kase	

GC-SBN Leads

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