

FEBRUARY 2026 AG REPORT

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Sullivan County

PAST WORKSHOPS

All About Lavender – February 4th. Hands on lavender workshop taught by Winterton Farms. Participants attended the workshop and learned different varieties of lavender, how to grow successfully in our climate and to care for the plant and become established. Attendees also created and sampled lavender tea and lavender infusions to take home.

Farmer Mixer at Forage and Gather - February 11th.

Livestock Weather Stress - February 12th. Attendees learned how livestock respond to extreme temperatures, and what they can do to protect the livestock's health and productivity. Attendees also learned how animals regulate body temperature through behavior, metabolism, and physiology, how heat stress impacts fertility and milk production, how cold stress impacts feed requirements and energy loss species-specific differences in tolerance, and climate-related challenges facing modern livestock systems.

Understanding Cover Crops for Farms- February 26th. Attendees learned how cover crops improve soil health, nutrient cycling and on-farm resilience through ecological and biological processes.

Know the Law: On Farm Risk Management & NYS Legal Requirements - February 18th. Attendees learned about the NYS Safety in Agricultural Tourism Act and what it means for their farm, from the NYS Department of Agriculture. Winterton Farms presented on how the law affects a farm operation from a farmer's perspective. Topics covered were liability, signage, visitor safety, animal contact zones, food service, emergency planning, risk management, insurance, waivers, staff training and incident documentation.

Biosecurity for Farm Experiences - February 24th. Attendees learned about safety protocols for visitors in farm environments, managing animal contact zones and minimizing risk, designing and placing effective biosecurity signage and Communication safety expectations to guests.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

Technical Assistance/Inquiries: 87 Soil/Hay Tests: 0 Farm Visits: 0

Technical Assistance was provided on land access, ag districts, farmland preservation, Catskills Kitchen (insurance, business structures, permitting & licensing), beginning farmer, soil tests, soil health, Cover crops: species selection, nutrient management planning, funding opportunities, tree pathogens, native gardens, soil samples, plant hardiness, planting zones invasive species.
16 total Hours of Technical Assistance.

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS:

- **Farmer Mixer at The Herbal Scoop** - Monday March 9th from 5:30 - 7:30pm
- **Lawn Alternatives: How to Replace Some or All of your Grass** - Thursday March 19th from 5:30 - 6:30pm
- **Silvopasture Development of Farms Webinar** - Wednesday March 25 from 6:00 - 7:30pm
- **Agri-Tourism Webinar Series**
 - 3/4: Creating Accessible Farm Experiences
 - 3/18: Designing the Farm Experience: Tours, Storytelling & Visitor Engagement
 - 3/25: Marketing Your Farm Experience

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Trainings:

Ag and Food Systems staff attended the New York State Farm to School Conference in Saratoga Springs in February. Staff participated in sessions on local food procurement, partnerships, and nutrition education, gaining useful strategies and resources to support Farm to School efforts in Sullivan County.

Research Projects:

In partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension livestock educators throughout NYS, the final report for the SARE-funded project “Optimizing the Economic Return of Pasture-Raised Slow-Growth and Conventional Broilers” has been completed and submitted. The report provides a comprehensive summary of project activities and outcomes, including a detailed economic analysis comparing slow-growth and conventional broiler systems, insights gathered from participating producers, and recommendations aimed at improving profitability and sustainability for pasture-based poultry operations. The findings offer valuable guidance for farmers considering alternative broiler genetics, highlight key cost drivers affecting enterprise viability, and outline practical strategies that can support informed decision-making across diverse production settings. To read the full report visit: <https://projects.sare.org/project-reports/1ne22-435/>



Beginner Farmer Program:

The CCE Sullivan Beginner Farmer Mentorship Program is nearing the close of its second cohort, with a celebration planned for the 11 mentees on March 9th. Since the program began in 2024, a total of 25 beginning farmers have participated across both cohorts, benefiting from a broad range of educational and technical assistance activities. To date, the program has delivered:

- 22 agricultural production workshops (exceeding the target of 20)
- 7 marketing workshops
- 5 business-planning workshops
- 5 farm food safety workshops
- 4 USDA/NYS/local assistance workshops
- 4 financial management workshops.

Staff have also completed 33 new farm site visits, supported the review of 5 marketing plans and 5 business plans, and facilitated knowledge gains for 108 farms in business planning and 60 farms in marketing.