

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

Technical Assistance/Inquiries: 161 Soil/Hay Tests: 24 Farm Visits: 2

Technical Assistance was provided on invasive species management, soil testing, ag assessment, ag districts, ag zoning, farmland preservation, fertilizer and lime recommendations, farm funding, farm food safety, starting a farm, livestock production, vegetable production, spreading calculations, access to wholesale markets, connections to farmers markets, business planning, poultry, recordkeeping, field crops, farm to school, land access, starting a food business, value added products and marketing. 37 total Hours of Technical Assistance.

PAST WORKSHOPS

Bobolink Farm Tour and Mixer (April 22nd) 20 participants. Attendees received a tour of Bobolink Farm by owner Brenda Miller. Including tips and tricks for planting, do's and don't's, and site selection.

Starting Seeds & a Successful Garden Webinar (April 22nd)) with the Non-Profit Doris Does. 7 attendees, taught by Katie Gasior, focused on soil health, plant selection, seed starting timelines, and native plants.

Small Scale and Backyard Layer Chicken Workshop (4/24 & 4/29) 48 participants. The recent prices of eggs has many of us thinking about adding layer hens to our operations or starting our small flock. This workshop helped attendees understand the commitment and risks to help set them up for success. Participants learned basics of small scale layer production, incorporating biosecurity into their operation, egg sales, cleaning, and regulations.

Gardening 101 – Part 1 in a Three-part series (April 29th) Webinar taught by Katie Gasior, 9 participants. Topics covered were soil health, seed starting, planting zones, integrated pest management, and native plants.

Apple Pruning Workshop and Demonstration (April 30th) 24 registrants. Educational workshop and demonstration on apple orchard pruning at the Town of Thompson Park. This hands-on session covered essential pruning techniques to improve tree health, maximize fruit production, and extend the life of your orchard. Taught by Brett Budde from Majestic Orchard and Ryan Watson from Wild Russet Farm.

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS for May

- **High Tunnel Production at Sprouting Dreams – May 8th 5:30-7:30pm:** See how high tunnels can protect crops from unpredictable weather, pests, and disease while also helping to extend the growing season and improve yields.
- **Writing a Farm Food Safety Plan Webinar – May 22nd 1-2pm:** This webinar will focus on writing a produce safety plan for your farm. This plan will help you to create standard operating procedures (SOP's) and record keeping strategies that will help you to fulfill the reporting requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule.
- **Farmworker Health and Hygiene Training Webinar – May 27th 6-7pm.** Presenting on the principles of food hygiene and food safety, importance of health and personal hygiene, including recognizing symptoms of a health condition that could result in direct or indirect contamination of produce and other standards in the FSMA that are relevant to the farm worker's job.

CATSKILLS KITCHEN FOOD BUSINESS INCUBATOR PROGRAM:

Technical Assistance was provided to 7 potential users/inquiries on product labeling, licensing and regulations, the permitting process for using the kitchen, branding and insurance. We currently have 3 Users, 3 Users in the process of being onboarded and 2 seasonal users. The Catskills Kitchen program has also been busy updating the kitchen with new equipment and supplies to make the cooking experience for efficient and user friendly.

RESEARCH PROJECTS:

Sustainable Agriculture and Research Education (SARE) Poultry Grant: With our partners, we are in the process of reviewing the production and financial data gathered from this poultry grant we have been assisting with, and are putting together the cohort's statewide benchmarks, as well as the personal benchmarks to see how any changes made following the first year on the project have made participants more profitable in year two. The White paper should be available for dissemination in the next few months.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION:

Number of Municipal 239 Review's: 7 (and more in the process of being reviewed)

Ag Assessment Technical Assistance: 17

Ag District Technical Assistance: 31

2025 Ag District 30 Day Window: The 30 day window to apply to be included in Ag District #1 or #4 is from April 1st - April 30th. Applications were accepted during the month of April from interested landowners. The County Ag Board will review the applications and do site visits in May and make recommendations to the County Legislature in June, with a public hearing tentatively scheduled for July.

County-Wide Farmland Preservation Project:

- CCESC & Orange County Land Trust are working to coordinate our first municipal and the farmer focused workshops in Sullivan County. The Municipal event will focus on zoning and how it can be made more "farm friendly". The draft of the farmer focused event is in revisions. This event will feature OCLT on a general overview of the easement process followed by Shanna Ables the OCLT farmland preservation project manager on the FPIG process and tentatively NYS DAM to add to that conversation.
- Continued dialog with potential farmers who are strongly interested in preserving their farms.

