

Impact...

From the Director's Desk...

As I write this article, spring seems to be struggling to make its much anticipated return. We get a few days of warmth and sunshine followed by cold weather and the predictable April showers. Yes this is all according to the plan but aren't we all just a bit impatient to be rid of the snow and cold and don't forget the mud! I did take the risk of putting my snow shovel and ice scraper away over the weekend and I also saw and otherwise "detected" a dead skunk on my way to work today. All good signs that we are almost there. Here at the Cooperative Extension office we are preparing for some "rites of spring" of our own. Local agricultural operations all over Madison County are well into their spring planning activities. It is not uncommon to see some tillage operations already being worked on some of the better drained fields. Our Agricultural

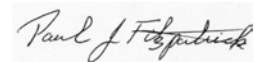
staff is ready to assist these area farmers in whatever way we can. One additional burden this year on our agricultural operators is again the high cost of fuel. When we feel the pain of filling our car's tank I hope we all think of the challenge this presents for our neighbors who are putting food on our tables. Assistance for the non farm homeowners is also available by calling our office in Morrisville.

Our 4-H article this time points out some of the more subtle learning experiences which young people can benefit from by being a part of this time-honored youth program. We often see the 4-H youth with their animals and other projects at the youth fair and the state fair. These more tangible results are good experiences themselves but often there are much deeper lessons to be learned. The tragic loss of their young leader Laura Jansen

caused this group of young people to take a much deeper look at their activities. They should be congratulated for how they responded to their loss and what they are doing in memory of their lost mentor. It may seem like a little thing to the outsider but it is HUGE when it comes to life experience for these kids!

So as the weather continues to improve, a wish from all of us at Cooperative Extension: "May the Road rise to meet you, and may the wind be always at your back....."

Sincerely,



Paul J Fitzpatrick
Executive Director

Fifty + Inquiries to "Come Farm With Us"

By, Karen Baase, Extension Issue Leader

"Come Farm With Us" is a regional marketing effort that promotes, educates, and encourages farmers from outside Central and Northern New York to discover the advantages of farming and conducting agricultural business in eight New York counties.

In 2002, Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida and St. Lawrence counties formed the original "Come Farm With Us" partnership. Essex, Franklin, Madison and St. Lawrence counties joined in January 2007. For Madison County, this program helps fulfill one of the goals of the Madison



Come Farm With Us

County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan and was made possible

by an appropriation from the Madison County Board of Supervisors.

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The Regional "Come Farm With Us" program receives inquiries from farmers, agricultural businesses, and other interested parties in response to ads in magazines and newspapers, the group's attendance at trade shows, and through its web site at www.comefarmwithus.org. Each participating county responds with its own specific information about agriculture, business, and the advantages of living there.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Madison County has responded to

over 50 inquiries since January. This project will eventually come under the guidance of the county's new Agricultural Economic Development specialist.

Since 2002, "Come Farm With Us" has advertised and participated in 16 farm trade shows, which yielded over 2,000 contacts. The magazine and newspaper ads resulted in over 700 inquiries. As a result, 75 farms have either sold or contracted for rent-to-own farm within the founding counties.

Skills Learned in 4-H Last a Lifetime

By, April Winslow, Community Educator

When members of the Spurs-N-Spokes 4-H Horse Club lost one of their leaders, Laura Janson, in a tragic car accident, they could have decided to give up the club and move on to other things. But they didn't give up. Inspired by their young leader's positive attitude and the lessons she had taught them, they decided to tackle a big project. They decided to honor Laura's memory by raising money to breed Laura's horse, Lady, a project that Laura had started to plan prior to her death. The foal could then be used to continue lessons about caring for, showing and riding horses. The 4-H'ers took on this project and started to learn more about breeding horses, as well as how to develop a "business plan", how to manage money and how to work together as a team. They decided to create beaded horse shoes and jewelry and worked many hours creating and selling their product. So far, the 4-H'ers have raised over \$2,200 which will be used to cover breeding expenses and care of the horse and foal. When the owners of the stallion were approached, they were so touched by



the story of the kids working together and by the account of Laura's life that they decided to donate a \$1,500 breeding to the family. The money the club members raise will now be used towards the veterinary bills associated with breeding Lady and the remainder will go into a scholarship in Laura's name.

This project has taught the kids more than what is involved in the breeding of horses. They have turned to each other in a time of grief and come up with a plan that helps, not just them, but all involved to heal. They have also learned many other life skills in the process. The foal that will be born, as a result of their efforts, will remain with Laura's family and the 4-H'ers will help with its care and training, carrying on Laura's plan to use this experience as a learning opportunity. The skills these 4-H'ers learned from their young leader and through their involvement in 4-H, go well beyond riding horses and will last a lifetime.

Did You Know...

The inventory value of New York States equine was \$1.83 billion on December 31, 2006. This represents an 8% since 2000. These results are from the first comprehensive state equine survey in 5 years. The survey was made possible through the collaboration of New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and the equine industry.

F A Q...

Who manages the "Come Farm With Us" program in Madison County? Temporarily, Cornell Cooperative Extension is managing that responsibility until a new Agricultural Economic Development Specialist is hired. CCE is trying to develop a network of realtors who can assist potential clients inquiring about farming and doing business in Madison County.



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Madison County

P.O. Box 1209, 100 Eaton St.
Morrisville, NY 13408

315-684-3001

315-655-2075

fax: 315-684-9290

email: madison@cornell.edu

www.cce.cornell.edu/madison/