

May 9, 2022

Volume 3 Issue 10

Saratoga County 4-H Robotics Thrive at World Championships

Recently, the Saratoga County 4-H's Robotics team went to Houston, Texas for the FIRST Worlds Championship. It took place from April 20-23, 2022 at the George R. Brown Convention Center, for the FIRST Tech Challenge.

RoBovines is made of six team members, with Henry LaBarge and Owen Fleury, Ballston Spa; Ethan Stone and Corin Gordon, Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake; and Norah Hoke and Ethan Thomas, Saratoga Springs. Four of the team members are new additions to the team this year, and they range from 6th to 10th grade. RoBovines met and talked to teams from 44 different states and 15 different countries. They finished in the top 50% of teams overall at 75th out of 160 teams.

To get to Houston, the RoBovines put on their fundraising hats and managed to fundraise over \$25,000 in just 6 weeks. They did this through reaching out to businesses and using social media to reach their goal. They also had support from the County and NYS 4-H Office.

Although their competition season is over, the RoBovines are far from relaxing! The team has many upcoming fundraising and outreach events on their calendar as part of their plan to grow the 4-H STEM program. The team is working to add leaders and members to the robotics program, as well as assisting to



raise funds for the new STEM building at the Saratoga 4-H Training Center.

How can you help the team? Great question! There are two great ways you can help the RoBovines reach their goals. First, the team is looking to recruit leaders to run 4-H Clubs. You don't need to have a doctorate in engineering to run one of these clubs, all the team asks for is your dedication to lead and your willingness to learn; they will help you with the rest. STEM, not your cup of tea? 4-H is always looking for leaders in their other departments as well; whether your interests are shooting sports, horticulture or cooking and sewing there is something for everyone. The second way is to spread the word about the Saratoga County 4-H Robotics Program. We are looking to grow the program to serve more youth in the county.

FIRST Tech Challenge teams design, build, program, and operate robots to compete in a head-to-head challenge in an alliance format. They work with each other and their mentors to CAD (Computer Aided Design), build, and program their 18" by 18" robots. They also create a 5-minute speech to present to judges at each of their competitions. They were judged on their robot, outreach, presentation ability, and engineering portfolio.

Please take a look at Robovines' webpage: robovines.org or visit our [Facebook page](#). We will be holding an interest meeting on May 18, 2022 at 6:30 at the Saratoga County 4-H Training Center to share the many opportunities available through Saratoga County 4-H.

For more details, contact Greg Stevens at (518)885-8995 or email grs9@cornell.edu

FREE ADMISSION

2022 Saratoga Horse Symposium



CCE Equine is excited to announce that due to our generous sponsors, the Saratoga Horse Symposium will be FREE to the public this year! The Saratoga Horse Symposium is a celebration of the horse for new, aspiring, and experienced horse people. Everyone is welcome to join us on **Saturday May 14th, 2022** at the **4-H Training Center, 556 Middleline Road, Ballston Spa, NY.**

Attendees can expect a full day of horse related clinics and seminars. The first 50 people will receive a free gift, and door prizes will be raffled throughout the day. In between seminars and demonstrations participants can enjoy food concessions, bid in a silent auction, browse our vendor area, and enjoy a large tack-sale fundraiser for the Saratoga County 4-H Horse Program.

For more information and updates, please contact Brianna Hughes at bh548@cornell.edu 518-885-8995.

2022 SARATOGA COUNTY HORSE SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

8:30 AM	REGISTRATION & TACK SALE OPENS	
	SESSION 1	SESSION 2
9:00 AM - 9:50 AM	Bridless Riding <i>(Molly Alger)</i>	Equine Legislation: What Horse Owners Need to Know <i>(Kim Trombly, New York Farm Bureau)</i>
10:10 AM - 11:00 AM	Enhancing Communication: Using Ground Work to Advance Ridden Maneuvers <i>(Liz Deluca)</i>	What They Didn't Tell You About Horse Ownership <i>(Sarah E.J. Collier, JD, John G. Ullman & Associates, Inc.)</i>
11:20 AM - 12:10 PM	Intro to First Aid <i>(Dr. Julia Gloviczki, Rood and Riddle Equine Hospital)</i>	Equine Pasture, Hay & Weed Management <i>(Erik Smith, Cornell Cooperative Extension)</i>
12:20 PM - 1:10 PM	The 3 Ls of Riding for Better Control <i>(Michael Canfield, Lucky Star Horsemanship)</i>	Preparing for Goodbye <i>(Dr. Karin Bump, Saddle Up NY)</i>
1:20 PM - 2:10 PM	If Only Horses Came with Owner Manuals <i>Dawn Samuelson, N.E.I.G.H.)</i>	Equine Emergency Rescue—Part 1 <i>(Dr. Steve Sedrish & Dr. Tracy Bartick-Sedrish, Upstate Equine Medical Center)</i>
2:30 PM - 3:20 PM	Equine Emergency Rescue—Part 2 <i>(Dr. Steve Sedrish & Dr. Tracy Bartick-Sedrish, Upstate Equine Medical Center)</i>	
3:30 PM	TACK SALE & SILENT AUCTION CLOSES	

MASTER FOOD PRESERVER PROGRAM A SUCCESS!

The first of five 3-day Master Food Preserver Programs took place in Cornell Cooperative Extension of Warren County's new kitchen and classroom in Warrensburg. Marybeth Mitcham of CCE Warren County served as host educator for the event, with instructors Karen Mort and Diane Whitten, from CCE Albany County and CCE Saratoga County, respectively. Class size was limited to 15; class filled with a waiting list of six. Participants besides those from our region came from New York City, Syracuse, and Boston, MA.

Participants learned about the science behind food preservation methods, boiling water canning high acid foods, pressure canning low acid foods, pickling, fermenting, freezing, and dehydrating. All topics included hands-on activities or demonstrations.

The four remaining Master Food Preserver programs will be taught by Karen and Diane in the offered in the following counties: Livingston, St. Lawrence, Niagara, and Chautauqua.



Participants boiling a no-added pectin cranberry-apple jelly.



Participants of the first of five Master Food Preservation Programs offered throughout the state by Karen Mort and Diana Whitten from Cornell Cooperative Extension.



4-H SCHOLARSHIP GOLF CLASSIC

Saratoga County's 4-H Leaders' Association will be holding their 21st Annual 4-H Scholarship Golf Classic on **June 4 at the Fairway of Halfmoon.**

Registration information for players and sponsors is available at:

[Cornell Cooperative Extension | Saratoga County 4-H Scholarship Golf Classic](#)



DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP ONLINE

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County will host an informal support group via Zoom for people with diabetes or prediabetes. The program meets the first Friday of each month. The next online event is **Friday, June 3 at NOON.**

Register for this meeting by clicking on this: [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

Questions? Contact Diane Whitten at dwhitten@cornell.edu or (518) 885-8995.

There is no fee for the support group. Topics will vary and may be based on the interest of the group.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The May Board of Directors Meeting will be held at 7:00 PM at the CCE Office and via Zoom (if needed) on **Thursday, May 26, 2022.**

For Zoom link or to inquire about in-person attendance, please email wlm8@cornell.edu.



Capital Region PRISM IS HIRING

Watercraft Steward(s) and Lead Steward

Watercraft Stewards work independently at various boat launch locations throughout the Capital Region PRISM region. Watercraft Stewards collect survey data through interactions with the public. The Lead Watercraft Steward will assist in providing oversight to Watercraft Stewards. The Lead Steward will work independently and travel frequently between various boat launch locations throughout the Capital Region PRISM region. **Lead steward will be promoted based on program needs.* Compensation: Watercraft Stewards: \$15.00/hr and Lead Watercraft Steward: \$16.00/hr **To Apply Click Here**

Locations:

As part of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County's Capital Region Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM) program, Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Watercraft Stewards provide public education and outreach at boat launches regarding statewide Clean, Drain, Dry practices in order to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. Watercraft stewards work independently at various boat launch locations. Counties of employment include Albany, Saratoga, Schenectady, Greene, Washington and Columbia. A list of boat launch location can be found [here](#).



Duration:

Watercraft Stewards and Lead Watercraft Steward: work on a full-time, seasonal basis from May through September. Work schedules are typically Thursday - Monday, 7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. though schedules may also vary depending on program needs. Holidays and weekends are required. The Watercraft Steward Program runs from the Friday before Memorial Day through Labor Day, with three days of required programmatic training from May 23rd to May 25th.

KEEP TICKS OUT OF YOUR YARD CHECK YOUR CLOTHING & BODY AFTER BEING OUTDOORS

HOW TO PREVENT TICKS IN YOUR YARD

- 1) Clear tall grasses and brush around homes and at the edge of lawns.
- 2) Place a 3-foot wide barrier of wood chips or gravel between lawns and wooded areas, and around patios and play equipment. This will restrict tick migration into recreational areas.
- 3) Stack wood neatly and in a dry area . (This discourages rodents that ticks feed on).
- 4) Remove any old furniture, mattresses, or trash from the yard that may give ticks a place to hide.
- 5) Keep playground equipment, decks, and patios away from yard edges and trees and place them in a sunny location, if possible.

CHECK YOUR CLOTHING FOR TICKS

Ticks may be carried into the house on clothing. Any ticks that are found should be removed. Tumble dry clothes in a dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing after you come indoors. If the clothes are damp, additional time may be needed. If the clothes require washing first, hot water is recommended. Cold and medium temperature water will not kill ticks.

CHECK YOUR BODY FOR TICKS AFTER BEING OUTDOORS

Conduct a full body check upon return from potentially tick-infested areas, including your own backyard. Use a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body. Check these parts of your body and your child's body for ticks:

- Under the arms
- In and around the ears
- Inside belly button
- Back of the knees
- In and around the hair
- Between the legs
- Around the waist



MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH!

NY FarmNet Offers Trainings to Support Mental Health Awareness + Literacy

Recognizing that May is Mental Health Month, and as part of the USDA Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network funding, NY FarmNet is offering two programs to groups of farmers and agricultural business professionals, or those who provide direct services to farmers and farm employees. NY FarmNet believes in building a common language around mental health and suicide prevention, and these trainings support that work in building literacy. Building mental health and wellness literacy helps remove barriers like stigma, embarrassment, and shame.



Talk Saves Lives: An Introduction to Suicide Prevention

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

This program provides participants with a clear understanding of this leading cause of death, including the most up-to-date research on suicide prevention, and what people can do in their communities to save lives. Participants will learn common risk factors and warning signs associated with suicide, and how to keep themselves and others safe.

- Length of training: 45 minutes—1 hour
- Format of training: Zoom or in-person
- Max/min # of participants: No max/10
- *FarmNet can help advertise to bring in outside attendees if appropriate

Mental Health First Aid

National Council for Mental Well-being Standard Program

Just as CPR helps you assist an individual having a heart attack, Mental Health First Aid helps you assist someone experiencing a mental health or substance use-related crisis. In the Mental Health First Aid course, you learn risk factors and warning signs for mental health and addiction concerns, strategies for how to help someone in both crisis and non-crisis situations, and where to turn for help.

- Length of training: 6 hours in class + 2 hours of pre-work
- Format of training: Zoom or in-person (preferred)
- Max/min # of participants: 30 max/5 min for virtual
- *FarmNet can help advertise to bring in outside attendees if appropriate

If you are interested in hosting a Talk Saves Lives or Mental Health First Aid, contact Kate Downes, kdownes@cornell.edu to schedule a program. Trainings will be offered through May of 2023, free of charge.

This work is supported by 7 U.S.C. 5936, Section 7522 of FCEA of 2008, Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN), Grant No. 2021-70035-35550, from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Berry Farms Needed for Cornell Labor Study

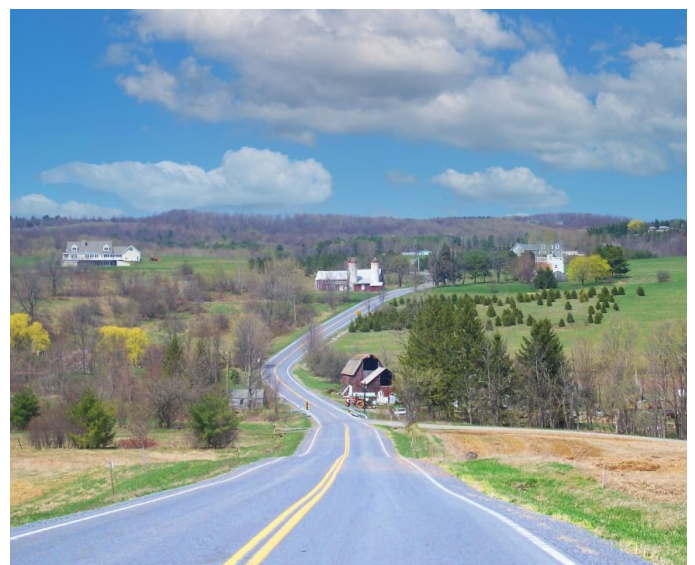
Labor is critical to your success. Cornell, with funding from the New York Berry Growers Association and New York State Agriculture and Markets, is testing the scope and scale of labor regulatory changes on your farm, and we need berry growers to join our study.

The study will describe the present labor force and wages paid for farm labor and the potential changes to labor when minimum wage rates increase. In addition, the research will explore changes in

labor, production practices and market channels driven by proposed changes in overtime regulations.

Our survey will consist of an in-person, farm interview conducted by a Cornell project team member and a short 5-10 minute follow-up survey. The interview should take approximately one hour to complete.

To participate, contact: Kristen Park, ksp3@cornell.edu or 607-255-7215.



RELISHING MY TIME AS SARATOGA COUNTY DAIRY PRINCESS

By Caitlyn VanDeusen, 2021-2022 Saratoga County Dairy Princess.

Published in The Saratogian, Friday May 6, 2022



Caitlyn VanDeusen

For most of my life I dreamed of one day becoming the Saratoga County Dairy Princess.

Growing up, I have been surrounded by former dairy princesses, such as my mom, other family members, and friends. These were women I always looked up to. Over the last four years in the dairy promotion program, I have worked hard to connect with consumers and promote the dairy industry. Little did I know that all of this hard work would lead

me to achieving one of my biggest dreams, being named the Saratoga County Dairy Princess.

It seems like just yesterday I was up in front of the guests at our pageant giving my speech and then being crowned the 2021-2022 Saratoga County Dairy Princess.

This past year as the Saratoga County Dairy Princess is one that I will never forget. I was able to do so many amazing things, such as welcoming people to Sundae on the Farm at Mill Creek Farm, visiting ice cream shops throughout Saratoga County for National Ice Cream Month, going to the New York State Fair for Dairy Day, attending the Tugboat Roundup in Waterford, handing out milk to students at Schuylerville Elementary School to celebrate World School Milk Day, and attending the 4-H Open House Halloween Extravaganza.

These are just a few of the things that I did over the past year. With this, I was able to talk to the public and be a voice for dairy farmers in Saratoga County.

My favorite thing that I did as the Saratoga County Dairy Princess was visiting elementary students. Throughout the last year, I have had the opportunity to visit over 500 elementary students at Schuylerville Elementary School. While visiting with them I read books such as *Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type* by Doreen Cronin, and *Tales of the Dairy Godmother: Chuck's Ice Cream Wish* by Viola Butler, talked to them about how dairy cows are raised, and how to make butter.

Talking with the elementary students has been my favorite part of being the dairy princess because they are so interested to learn and it is so much fun teaching them about something that I am passionate about. I also find it very cool that it wasn't that long ago that I was in their shoes, an elementary student at Schuylerville learning about the dairy industry. I remember being their age wishing that I could be the dairy princess and now I am a junior in high school living that dream.

Serving as the Saratoga County Dairy Princess has been one of the most demanding and rewarding things I have ever done. I've educated people about the dairy industry, which has given me so many opportunities. I was able to share the stories of the hardworking dairy farmers in Saratoga County who I am honored to call friends and family. I would not have been able to do this if it wasn't for my amazing family, friends, and other community members who have supported me through everything.

PUBLIC TREES AND PUBLIC HEALTH

WEDNESDAY, MAY 11 (NOON—1:15 PM)

A growing body of scientific research suggests that abundant trees and green space in communities provide important benefits for human health and well-being. The Green Heart Project of Louisville, Kentucky is one of largest, long-term initiatives in the U.S. to plant many trees and conduct controlled research on physical and mental health in Louisville.



Join us for an overview of the Green Heart Project with a presentation from members of the project team at the University of Kentucky.

Registration is FREE, but required in advance at: <https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/onstage/g.php?MTID=e9279ca6af6040513004639aa145a2982>

TELLING YOUR STORY: THE POWER OF STORYTELLING IN GRANT

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18 (NOON—1:15 PM)

Tell the story of the projects you want to bring to life is a critical component of grant applications that many struggle with. Join us to hear about the Arbor Day Foundations T.R.E.E. proposals which use community stories to find donors for projects, and about tow successful local case studies in the communities of Mamaroneck and Newburgh.



Registration is FREE, but is required in advance at: <https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/onstage/g.php?MTID=e7baeff8e66df2e4efce36baf2f0f4f8b>

Capital Region SNAP-Ed VIRTUAL Pubic Classes



Capital Region SNAP Nutrition Education program provides free evidence based nutrition education and obesity prevention programming, including environmental supports to limited resource communities by working with community partners to promote healthy behaviors across all stages of life.

The capital region SNAP Nutrition Education program strives to help people become their healthiest self in a healthy community. We believe it is important for all to have access to healthy food choices and the opportunity to be physically active. We believe with increased knowledge, skills and resources people will be able to make healthy changes for themselves and the community.

Fruits & Vegetables for the Whole Family, Easy Solutions

May 13 (12 PM - 1 PM)

This lesson is all about the little tips and tricks to making sure everyone in the family is eating the fruits and vegetables they need. Hear other families' success stories on how they are able to get their family to where they need to be.

Contact Kim Maercklein with questions & Zoom meeting information at: kam487@cornell.edu

Link to register: https://cornell.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcrd--qpj8uE9NzRGhfqx_9F_yh04oHedkL

Meeting ID: 936 0628 4497
Passcode: 828233

Family Meals

May 20 (12 PM - 1PM)

Take the stress out of the week and discover easy, affordable ways to bring family meals to the table.

Contact Kim Maercklein with questions & Zoom meeting information at: kam487@cornell.edu

Link to register:
<https://cornell.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcqcGhrDorEtljfrupM5EJDhImp6DAervq>

Meeting ID: 937 5892 1186
Passcode: 781696

Easy Food That Tastes Great!

May 23 (9 AM - 10 AM)

This interactive workshop allows you to learn the basics of what it means to eat a healthy diet while customizing it to your preferences. Small changes make a big difference! You can enjoy the foods you already eat with a few simple, healthy twists!

Contact Brenna Kavakos with questions & Zoom meeting information at bk375@cornell.edu.

Link to join:
<https://cornell.zoom.us/j/91977704577?pwd=Zyszl2JsTkpmQ2J4UjBjUG9qSkxyUT09>

Meeting ID: 919 7770 4577
Passcode: 660823

Making Family Time Active & Fun

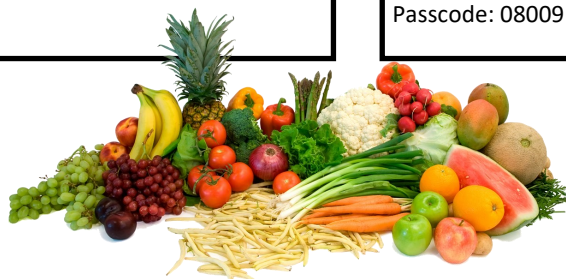
May 27 (9 AM - 10 AM)

This session will aim to help busy parents, caregivers, and their families be more physically active. Participants will discuss why being physically active is important and the challenges to being active every day.

Contact Kim Maercklein with questions & Zoom meeting information at: kam487@cornell.edu

Link to register:
<https://cornell.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcqcGhrDorEtljfrupM5EJDhImp6DAervq>

Meeting ID: 969 8027 0680
Passcode: 08009





Ten Tips for Packing Waste-Free Lunches

By Laura M. Stanton
Ohio State University Extension



 **THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**
COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

- 1 **Start with a reusable lunch box or bag.** Avoid single-use items like disposable plastic or paper bags. Personalize, monogram, or label your reusable lunch container and items so they do not get lost.
- 2 **Pack reusable utensils.** Avoid disposable plastic forks, spoons, and knives. Pack utensils made of durable plastic, bamboo, or stainless steel. Consider buying used utensils from a thrift store or using what you already may have at home.
- 3 **Scan your refrigerator and cupboards for appropriate lunch items** so you can stretch your food budget and reduce wasted food in your home.
- 4 **Use food storage containers made of cloth, durable plastic, glass, or stainless steel** that can be re-used. Avoid plastic baggies, plastic wrap, and aluminum foil. Use glass or ceramic containers to heat food items.*
- 5 **Drink from a re-fillable beverage container.** Avoid single-serving drink boxes, pouches, cans, and bottles. Filtered water in a reusable bottle is the healthiest and least expensive option. Skip the straw or purchase one that is reusable and can be cleaned after each use.
- 6 **Bring your own dips and condiments.** Single-use items are expensive and cost more money in the long run. Use small, reusable containers for salad dressings, ketchup, and other condiments and side dishes.
- 7 **Consider your napkin.** If you prefer paper napkins, purchase napkins that are made from 100% recycled paper. The most sustainable option is a cloth napkin. Remember to use environmentally safe detergent to wash them and line-dry to save energy.
- 8 **Compost fruit or vegetable scraps.** If composting is not currently offered, investigate what it would take to implement a composting program at home, school, or the office. Every item you compost makes a difference.
- 9 **Recycle what you can.** Check with your local waste hauler to understand what items are recyclable in your area.
- 10 **Host a waste-free challenge** at school, at your workplace, or in your home to see how small changes can lead to big reductions in waste.

Making these small changes can make a big difference and help protect our environment. However, these changes can take time and money. If it seems too expensive, start small and recognize you will save money over time, especially if you ditch the more expensive, single-serve products and buy in larger quantities. For example, buying one large bag of pretzels and putting them in your own reusable containers is much cheaper than buying individual, single-serving bags of pretzels.

Remember you may have many of these reusable items or containers already so reuse what you have. If you need to purchase new items, consider buying from a local thrift store or zero waste store.

**Due to health concerns related to the chemicals used to make plastic, medical professionals and researchers suggest avoiding plastic to store, re-heat, or cook food.*

“Microsoft Monday” Webinars

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rensselaer County (CCE) is pleased to announce that it will offer “Microsoft Monday” webinars beginning on May 16th. Each webinar will be led by Delia Hubbard, Digital Literacy Educator for CCE and certified Microsoft Office Expert.

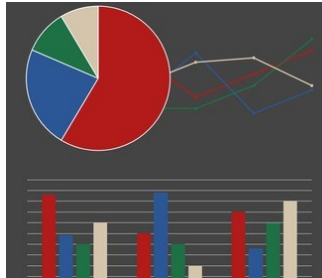


These intensive-study events offer an affordable option for learners to explore intermediate- and advanced-level skills with the support of a trainer. Microsoft Monday events focus on specific topics within with Word, Excel, PowerPoint and other Microsoft Office software programs. They are perfect for small business owners, those seeking to bolster their skills in order to pursue Microsoft certifications, or employees who want to increase their productivity in the workplace or expand their options for advancement in employment.

Charting Data with Excel

May 16 (2PM - 4PM)
Cost: \$25 per person

Would you like to create visually pleasing charts to display your data? Excel has a wide variety of powerful charting tools available to meet your needs.



In this virtual training session on Zoom, Delia Hubbard—Digital Literacy Educator and Microsoft Office Master, will demonstrate charting techniques with Excel. (These techniques are applicable for nearly any newer version of Excel, 2007-2019 or 365.)

Participants will learn to:

- Choose the appropriate type of chart to best display the data set
- Apply styles to charts for consistent formatting
- Add and delete chart elements
- Edit the data range included in the chart
- Customize chart formatting
- Change chart type without restarting the charting process
- Copy and paste the chart to other Office programs (Word, PowerPoint)

Participants should have basic foundational knowledge of using Excel, including how to select a range of cells on a spreadsheet and how to navigate the Ribbon toolbar.

Pre-registration is required:

https://cornell.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAkc-uqpijrHNaVS1o7IPO_pWHZt6tF2oYc

Data Analysis Shortcuts

June 13 (2PM - 4PM)
Cost: \$25 per person

Are you looking for a quick answer to a statistical question? If your data is stored on an Excel spreadsheet, there are several techniques you can use to find your answer quickly and without creating complex formulas.



In this virtual training session on zoom, Delia Hubbard—Digital Literacy Educator and Microsoft Office Master, will demonstrate how to take advantage of these data analysis shortcuts.

Participants will learn to:

- Analyze a range of data to determine its sum, average, minimum value, maximum value, or count of values without creating a formula
- Adjust table properties to quickly calculate values without creating a formula
- Use standard and custom sorting rules to help organize data
- Use multi-level data filtering techniques to find specific data

Participants should have basic foundational knowledge of using Excel, including how to select a range of cells on a spreadsheet, move between spreadsheets in a workbook, and how to navigate the Ribbon toolbar.

Pre-registration is required:

<https://cornell.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUrdOmsrjgtEtUBLzhiKoUPX8v2d-57u87v>



HOMESTEADING & SELF-SUFFICIENCY



CCE Saratoga educators have created an [educational webpage](#) where people can learn all aspects of becoming self-sufficient and what it means to have a homestead. The informational platform brings together agriculture (Livestock & Animal Husbandry, Food Preservation & Preparation, Hunting & Gathering, and Planting & Growing recourses.

If you missed the 8-week video series for Homesteading and Self-sufficiency [you can find it here.](#)



FROST DATES EXPLAINED

By John Martin, Albany Master Gardener

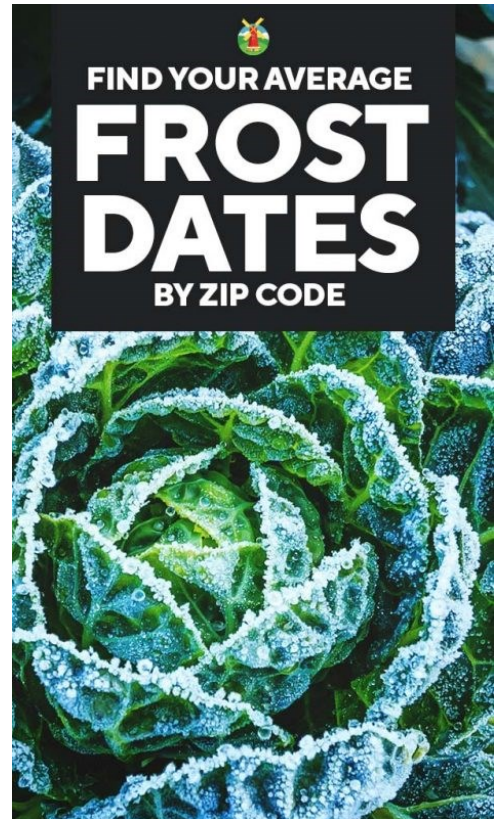
As we approach planting season, you may hear the term “last frost date” and subsequently in the fall “first frost date.” What do those dates really mean and how hard and fast are they? These dates are a function of your planting zone and meteorological history. The first and last frost dates are dates of the last light freeze in the spring and first light freeze in the fall. Note that frost dates are only an estimate based on historical climate data and are not set in stone. The probability of a frost occurring after the spring frost date or before the fall frost date is 30%, which means that there is still a chance of frost occurring before or after the given dates! It

should be noted that these dates have been moving slightly over the last ten years due to climate change. The last frost dates have been coming earlier and the first frost dates have been happening later, thereby extending the growing season by four or five days over the last twenty years, per national weather data. The last frost date comes in the spring and dictates your planting dates. Planting dates can be found on seed packets or from seed catalogues. These items will tell you to wait until the danger of frost has passed, or to plant x number of weeks after the last frost. Another key date is when the soil temperature rises above a certain temperature. Individual vegetable data can also be found on Cornell University’s website under the link <http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/homegardening/scene0391.html>

Freeze temperatures are based on their impact on plants:

Light freeze: 29° to 32°F (-1.7° to 0°C)—tender plants, for example basil, are killed
Moderate freeze: 25° to 28°F (-3.9° to -2.2°C)—widely destructive to most vegetation
Severe freeze: 24°F (-4.4°C) and colder—heavy damage to most garden plants.

Frost is predicted when air temperatures reach 32°F (0°C), but because it is colder closer to the ground, a frost may occur even when air temperatures are just above freezing. Always keep an eye on your local weather forecast and plan to protect tender plants accordingly. Weather, topography, and microclimates may cause considerable variations in the occurrence of frost in your garden. The location of surrounding buildings, trees and foliage conditions may also influence your microclimate. This is why it is recommended that you keep a garden journal to track any weather condition/occurrences and dates that may be specific to your location.



[Find the First and Last Frost Dates in Your Area by ZIP Code \(morningchores.com\)](#)



FIDDLEHEADS

Fiddleheads, an early spring delicacy throughout the Northeast and Canadian Maritime Provinces, are the young coiled fronds of the ostrich fern (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*). Nearly all ferns have fiddleheads, but not all fiddleheads are edible. The

Ostrich fern fiddleheads are edible, and can be identified by the brown, papery scale-like covering on the uncoiled fern. Fiddleheads are approximately 1 inch in diameter, have a smooth fern stem (not fuzzy), and also a deep “U”-shaped groove on the inside of the fern stem. Look for ostrich ferns emerging in clusters of about three to twelve fiddleheads per plant on the banks of rivers, streams, brooks, and in the woods in late April, May, and early June depending on your location. Make sure that you obtain landowner permission before harvesting fiddleheads. [Continue reading article from The University of Maine Cooperative Extension.](#)



TAKING A SOIL SAMPLE....The Correct Way

For most situations (lawn, vegetable garden, ornamentals.), the soil should be sampled every 2 to 3 years. For situations involving high-value cash crops or soils under intensive use, it is recommended that the soil be tested prior to planting the crop.

Soil samples may be taken at any time during the year; however, avoid extremely wet soil conditions unless absolutely necessary. It is recommended that successive samples from a given situation be taken at about the same time of the year.

- (1) Using a garden spade or shovel (if available, a soil probe or auger works best) slice into the soil to a depth of **four to six** inches.
- (2) Take a one-inch –thick slice of soil from the side of a hole. Repeat this process to obtain 5-10 samples, randomly taken, depending on the size of your lawn or garden.
- (3) Combine all samples into a clean container and mix thoroughly, removing any plant debris or stones. **ONE CUP IF SOIL IS ALL THAT IS NEEDED FOR pH TESTING (IF YOU PLAN TO SEND FOR COMPLETE ANALYSIS APPROXIMATELY 2 CUPS NECESSARY).** Avoid as much hand contact as possible as it may alter the true pH of the soil.
- (4) If your soil is wet, you will need to let it dry. Let it dry naturally. **DO NOT** dry in a conventional or microwave oven.
- (5) Label samples for proper identification (ie: back lawn, vegetable garden). Include your name, address, daytime phone number, and email address.



Samples can be brought to the Cornell Cooperative extension Office, 50 West High Street, Ballston Spa for testing. There is a fee of \$1.00 per sample for pH testing. We can usually turn the sample around within 48 hours, but if there is a tremendous volume in the lab it may take a little longer.

If a more complex testing of soil nutrients is desired, a soil sample can be sent to the Agro-One Soil Laboratory in Ithaca, NY. The fee for this testing is \$13.00 or more per sample depending on information desired. We can provide you with the necessary bags and forms necessary for sending, simply contact our office at 518-885-8995.



TIRE RECYCLING

It's springtime which means yard cleanup time.

The Saratoga County Soil and Water Conservation District's Spring Tire Recycling Program will be held on **Thursday, May 26 from 4:00 PM—5:30 PM** (You **MUST** be a Saratoga County resident & Pre-register to participate.)

Drop off location: Behind Town of Ballston Town Hall
(336 Charlton Rd, Ballston Spa)

Registration Form: [Tire Recycling Registration Form](#)

Registration Deadline: Tuesday, May 24th

Fee: \$5.00 per tire (with or without rims)

Payment must be made at drop off in EXACT cash, we will not be able to make change on site.

[Tire Recycling – Spring 2022](#)



Herb B.'s Monthly Advice for May



COOKING WITH LOVE FOR THE PLANET

It is a guessing game as to when we have the last frost. 40 Years ago, I was told June 6th. To be honest, there may have been a frost that late, but with recent years. That has become moot as we now have a high tunnel that changes the equation. Today, the concern is the growing area being too hot on a sunny day. Right now, I am trying to find the time to buy the parts for a friend to hook up the thermostat, louver and fan in the tunnel.

When I told a long-time farmer friend we have a high tunnel, she said "welcome to the 21st century." Truth is, back in the day greenhouses produced much of the fresh veggies for the country. I can remember seeing lots (acres) of greenhouses with chimneys on Long Island sitting empty waiting to be knocked down for houses.

I recently heard on the news that Florida now produces 10% of the fresh veggies for the northeast. It used to be 80% in the 70s. Today, most veggies for the northeast are produced in Mexico (80%).

As a homesteader these food and energy security issues are not worrisome details. If you are an urban or even suburban person, it may be cause for thought. Does Mexico have the same pesticide laws as the US? Is the irrigation water checked like the United States? What about handwashing? ...You get the idea.

It did give me pause to learn our state government may try and outlaw wood heat. (*known as the Climate Act*) Most of all, what will you do if Mexico decides there is a problem and closes the border? The money for the high tunnel is looking smarter all the time. A case in point, we have had a 6.13 KW solar system for over 8 years.

Again, as a homesteader these are not pressing issues. As an American, it may be worth a ponder or two.

So, we now have our tunnel. I just took soil samples and will adjust to meet the needs of our crops. Early veggies are always welcome, but I am waiting for a vine ripened tomato in November. More on that in a few months. - Herb



High Tunnels come in various sizes and prices.

This month, we will discuss other ways to take our food scraps out of the waste stream so it does not end up in a landfill, generating powerful greenhouse gases, such as composting. We can do this as we prepare our gardens for the growing season. We will also cook again and find surprising ways to utilize our scraps to create healthy dishes instead of throwing them away.

Zoom class is offered free of charge via Zoom. Registration is required at the following link: Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://cornell.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEvc-iurzspGtV2OpL2Wgn8BcsX5yhFDtBa> . After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Contact Karen Roberts Mort at CCE Albany via e-mail, kem18@cornell.edu or leave a message at 518-765-3552.



CHOOSING A CHICKEN BREED: Eggs, Meat, Exhibition



There are many reasons for raising chickens. People raise chickens for eggs, meat, exhibition, and rare breed preservation, as well as for the enjoyment of raising, caring for, and watching their interesting behavior. Some people raise them to hear a rooster crow to symbolize past days on the farm.

There is a wide array of chicken breeds. Choosing the right type of chicken can be difficult. The purpose of this publication is to help beginners determine which types of chickens are most suited to their needs .

[Continue reading publication from Purdue University.](#)

CAREER EXPLORATIONS is live and in-person this year! OPEN TO ALL TEENS entering 8th grade & above

Career Explorations is live and in-person this year. This year's event will take place at Cornell University from June 28 - 30, 2022. This exciting annual event is something that Saratoga County 4-H always looks forward to participating in.

4-H Career Exploration aims to expand possibilities to youth by:

- Connecting to Cornell University
- Sparking interest in careers and career pathways
- Developing academic, leadership, and life skills
- Providing an opportunity to experience college life

The conference is consists of two program tracks:

1. **University U** *(for those entering 8th Grade & Up)*
Youth are introduced to Cornell through campus tours and explore a variety of topics in six different departmental workshops. Youth are randomly assigned to these UU programs.
2. **Focus for Teens** *(for those entering 10th Grade & Up)*
Youth spend 3 days with a specific department. Youth select their Focus for Teens programs which are filled on a first-come first-served basis.

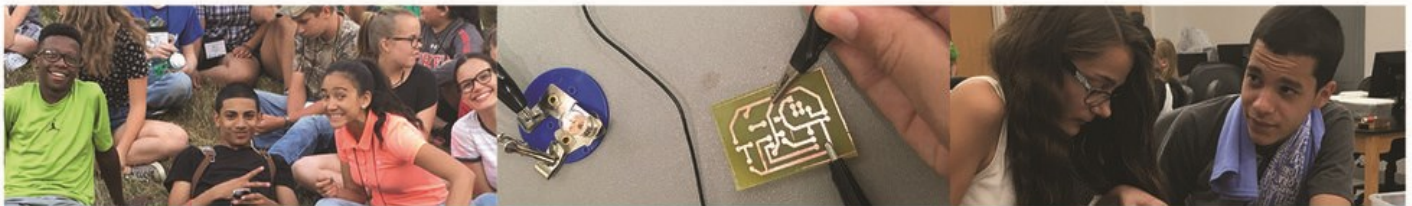
Saratoga 4-H members are graciously supported in this program by the Saratoga County 4-H Leaders Association, and 4-H Teen Council. A **\$20 non-refundable deposit** is due with registration. Late registration will be accepted, but program preference gets less likely due to programs filling up.

DO NOT register yourself using the links on the website. All registrations need to be completed and emailed to Greg Stevens at grs9@cornell.edu.

USE THIS FORM: Complete and email to Greg Stevens

4-H Career Exploration Event Page

DO NOT USE THE REGISTRATION ON THIS WEBSITE



ABOUT 4-H

4-H is a worldwide youth development program available in every state and over eighty countries. It is open to all youth aged 5-to-19, who want to have fun, learn new skills, and explore the world. In return, youth who participate in 4-H find a supportive environment and opportunities for hands-on or "experiential" learning about things that interest them. They also get what all young people need to succeed in life--the confidence, compassion and connections with caring adults to make contributions to their communities. The mission of Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development is to unleash the power of youth and adults through diverse opportunities that meet community needs.



WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

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



CCE Saratoga



4-H



CCE Equine



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