

March 15, 2005

Community and Commercial Horticulture, Ag Issues

Commercial Ag Production and Marketing

Goal: To bolster Ulster County Agriculture by improving production and expanding market opportunities for growers.

- *Completed* –**Hudson Valley Bedding Plant School** January 26, 2005. Organized a full day seminar on horticultural topics including: herb and perennial production, pest control, marketing, and labor issues. Over 50 greenhouse and nursery growers from the Hudson Valley region attended. Attendees' program evaluations indicated a **high level of adoption** of practices presented at last year's program.
- *Completed* – **Pesticide Training** February 25, 2005. Trained 10 candidates for pesticide applicator certification.
- *Completed*- **Vegetable School** March 3, 2005. Organized a full day seminar on vegetable production and Agricultural Issues including: conventional and organic pest management, maximizing pumpkin yields, retail market opportunities, new varieties, and farmland Protection Issues. Participants engaged in discussion on **Extension's Role in Helping Growers**. The results of this discussion will aid in developing my plan of work.

Ag Issues:

- *In Progress:* **30 Day Ag District Inclusion**-Processing applications and consulting landowners
- *In Progress:* **Ag District 2 Review**- working with Planning Dept. to assess data base and guide outreach to landowners to which this program applies.
- *In Progress:* **Wallkill River Watershed Management Planning** Grant Steering Committee member.
- *In Progress*- Developed a five year communication strategy for Ulster County **Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM)** Program. AEM is a mechanism to address agricultural land as a possible source of non-point pollution. This is a collaborative ongoing effort with CCE, Soil and Water Conservation District and Natural Resource Conservation Service. The AEM Act was passed by the NY state legislature for the purpose of establishing a voluntary program to encourage the development and implementation of environmental farm plans.

Community Horticulture

Goal: To provide communities with sound horticultural advice and dynamic educational programs.

- *Completed*- Master Gardener Training, **14 New Master Gardeners** are on board! This brings us to a total of 45 volunteers.
- *In Progress*- **Learning Community School IPM Project** for Ulster County, working with regional team and pilot school in New Paltz on sound pest management strategies. Conducted preliminary assessment at New Paltz High School and Elementary School on Oct.13. Currently working with District Building and Grounds Director in developing implementation strategy.
- *In Progress*- **Master Gardener Programs** Adams Spring Show (March 4,5,6) Seedling Sale (April 20-23) and Garden Day (April 30). Hotline re-opened on March 2.