

May 17, 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.

- In Progress: **Winning Fields on a Limited Budget** – This is a day long workshop for school and park groundskeepers and other turf professionals. Seminars focus on athletic field construction, renovation and maintenance practices that yield winning results on and off the athletic field. I am in the process of developing this program along with Orange County Hort Educator, Rose Baglia, and Cornell turf specialist, Joanne Gruttadaurio. This program will run in July 2005.
- In Progress: **Farm field visits.** I am spending at least one day a week assisting farmers with production issues. Most calls have been to Christmas tree and organic vegetable farms.

*Ag Issues:*

- *In Progress:* **30 Day Ag District Inclusion**-All applications have been processed, conducted farm visits as needed and made recommendation to Ag Farmland Protection Board. Currently working on status letters to landowners. Process should be complete in August of 2005.
- *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*- Implementing first phase of 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. Two articles on AEM have been published in the Current and Ag Focus. Presentations were made at Fruit School and Vegetable School. Farmer participation in the program is increasing.

***Community Horticulture***

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

- **Master Gardener Programs** Seedling Sale (April 20-23) was a big success, lots of orders and seedlings came in nice. Garden Day at UCCC (April 30) attendance was excellent, 100+.
- ***In Progress***-Hotline re-opened on March 2. and has been very busy. New MGs doing very well with hotline and projects. Plant a Row (PAR) for the hungry program is under way. Vegetables will be going in at the fairground PAR plots during the month of May. **Coming up in June**, The Plant Swap at Kingston Zoo June 4, Brooklyn Botanic Bus Trip June 7, and the Mohonk Mountain Garden Walk June 30.