

CONSTITUTION OF THE CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION ASSOCIATION OF NASSAU COUNTY STATE OF NEW YORK

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Nassau County, hereafter called the Association.

ARTICLE II - OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Association are:

- Section 1.* To provide for a subordinate governmental agency consisting of an unincorporated organization of residents of Nassau County in cooperation with Cornell University and the United States Department of Agriculture; and in accordance with subdivision 8(b) of section 224 of the County Law as amended.
- Section 2.* To extend the educational resources of Cornell University and the New York State Colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Human Ecology and Veterinary Medicine, the Land Grant university system and other educational institutions, to the people of Nassau County to foster economic, social and environmental improvement of its individuals, families and communities.
- Section 3.* To further objectives of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Nassau County and the State Extension system in the fields of environmental horticulture, home economics, family/consumer education, 4-H, environmental stewardship and community betterment.

ARTICLE III - AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

All actions of this Association will be in compliance with the affirmative action plan of the Association and appropriate equal program opportunity, equal employment opportunity and Americans with Disabilities Act legislation.

ARTICLE IV - ENROLLMENT & VOTING RIGHTS

- Section 1.* **Enrollment:** Enrollment is open to all persons interested in the work of the Association. Persons become enrollees by: (a) participation in programs or activities of the Association, evidenced by registration or lists generated with respect to such programs or activities, (b) requesting the Association to place their names on an Association list that will be maintained for one calendar year or (c) serving the Association as a volunteer.
- Section 2.* **Voting Rights:** All persons, who, as of the date of a voting event, are Nassau County residents, 18 years of age or older, and who qualify as an enrollee in accordance with Article IV, Section 1 are eligible to vote at such event.
- Section 3.* **Participation Fees:** No fees shall be established as a requirement to become a voting participant. Fees may be established for participating in specific programs or activities of the Association consistent with regulations established by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE V - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Section 1.* **Governing Body:** The governing body of the Association shall be the Board of Directors. Each director shall have voting privileges except the ex-officio representative designated by the director of Cooperative Extension at Cornell.
- Section 2.* **Policies:** The Board of Directors of the Association shall, with Cornell Cooperative Extension at Cornell University outline the policies and procedures of the Association consistent with this constitution and the memorandum of agreement between the Association and Cornell Cooperative Extension at Cornell University and Nassau County.
- Section 3.* **Composition:**
- A. The Board of Directors of the Association shall consist of 15 persons elected as directors, plus the appointed members listed in Article V, Section 3B below.
 - B. Appointed members: 1. The Nassau County Legislature shall be requested annually to appoint two (2) legislators or their representatives to serve as directors on the Association Board of Directors. 2. The County Executive's office shall be requested annually to designate a staff member to serve as a member of the Association's Board of Directors. 3. The Director of Extension shall designate a representative from Cooperative Extension administration to serve on the Association Board of Directors as ex-officio without voting privileges.
 - C. A quorum of the Board of Directors shall consist of a majority of the elected membership of the Board.
 - D. All directors shall serve until their successors are named or a vacancy declared as provided in Article V, Section 6.

ARTICLE V - BOARD OF DIRECTORS - continued

- E. Directors shall be selected through an election open to all persons who are eligible voting enrollees of the Association.
- F. A person is not eligible to serve on the Board of Directors if: 1. The following relationships exist with a Board member or any Association staff: mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, husband, wife, or any person residing in the same household. 2. He/She is currently employed by the Association, or has been employed by the Association in the previous 18 months. 3. He/She is not a county resident with the exception of the representative appointed by the Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension. 4. He/She served one or more previous terms on the Board of Directors and the lapse since that service is less than three (3) years.
- G. Members of the Board of Directors shall abstain from voting on any issue in which he/she has a conflict of interest or an appearance of a conflict of interest.
- H. The Executive Director shall serve as executive officer of the Board of Directors without voting privileges.

Section 4. **Duties:** The Board of Directors shall:

- A. Establish the organizational structure, consistent with this constitution, to conduct the work of the Association.
- B. Support and maintain the Cooperative Extension Association in cooperation with Cornell Cooperative Extension at Cornell University. 1. Execute the memorandum of agreement and other legal instruments. 2. Establish policies and procedures for maintaining an effective Cooperative Extension Association including program scope and priorities.
- C. Secure resources necessary to conduct, manage and administer the Association's programs.
- D. Hire the Executive Director for the Association.
- E. Adopt Association annual budget.

Section 5. **Term of Office:** The term of office for elected directors is three (3) years. Directors shall serve no more than two consecutive elected terms, plus the portion of an unexpired term to which they may have been appointed. However, a director may continue to serve past the end of his/her elected or appointed term, until a successor is elected or appointed. Any previous director, after a lapse of three (3) years following service on the board, will be eligible for re-election or appointment to the Board of Directors.

Section 6. **Declaring a Vacancy:** The President of the Association may declare a position vacant when the elected member has resigned or has an unexcused absence from three (3) regular meetings of the Board of Directors.

Section 7. **Filling Vacancies on the Board of Directors:** The president shall, after consultation with the Board of Directors make an appointment to fill the vacancy of a director position on the Board of Directors. That person so appointed will serve only until a replacement is chosen by the next regular election to fill the remaining portion of the unexpired term.

Section 8. **Meetings of the Board of Directors:** The Board of Directors shall meet at least five (5) times a year and more often as called by the president.

ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Section 1. **Election:** After the annual Association election, but prior to February 1, the Board of Directors shall meet to elect officers. A nominating committee appointed by the president shall prepare a slate of officers.

- A. The following shall be elected annually from among the members of the board by a majority vote of the continuing and new members of the Board of Directors present at the organizational meeting of the board to be held between the annual Association meeting and February 1: President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.
- B. The president shall be an ex-officio member of all program and standing committees, excluding the nominating committee.
- C. A recording secretary may be appointed annually from the Association staff by the president with approval of the Board of Directors. The recording secretary shall not serve as an officer nor be eligible to vote.
- D. An assistant to the treasurer may be appointed annually from the Association staff by the president with the approval of the Board of Directors. An assistant to the treasurer shall not serve as an officer nor be eligible to vote.
- E. The terms of office of the president, vice-president, secretary and the treasurer of the Association Board of Directors shall be for the calendar year or thereafter until their respective replacements are named. An officer shall not serve in the same office for more than 3 consecutive full years.

Section 2. **Duties:**

- A. The president of the Association, in addition to the powers and duties conferred on the position by law, shall perform such duties as usually pertain to the office of president. The president may call meetings of the Association or of any of the committees or may call special meetings of the Association (see Article X, Section 2).

ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION - continued

- B. The vice-president of the Association shall perform the duties of the president in case of the president's absence or disability.
- C. The secretary of the Association shall be responsible for keeping in permanent form complete and accurate records of all meetings of the Association, receive and present to the Board of Directors all communications relating specifically to the Association, and prepare correspondence on behalf of the Board of Directors.
- D. The treasurer of the Association, in addition to the powers and duties conferred upon the position by law, shall act as custodian of all funds and property, real and personal, of the Association. The treasurer shall be responsible for disbursements of all Association funds for expenses of the Association only upon written approval of the Executive Director or designee. The treasurer shall verify the financial situation of the Association, and shall testify that the balance is current by signature on financial reports as designated by the Board of Directors.
- E. The assistant to the treasurer of the Association may be responsible for disbursements of Association funds for the expenses of the Association only upon written order of the Executive Director or designee.

Section 3. **Filling Vacancies - Officers of the Association**

- A. In the event a vacancy occurs in the position of the president, the vice-president will complete the unexpired term.
- B. In the event of a vacancy in the position of vice-president or other elected office, the Board of Directors shall select a director to fill the unexpired term. Selection will be made by a majority vote of all members of the Board of Directors present at the meeting.
- C. In the event of a vacancy in the position of an appointed office, the president shall appoint with the approval of the Board of Directors, a qualified replacement to fill the unexpired appointment.

ARTICLE VII - COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. **Standing and Special Committees:** The Board of Directors shall establish each year at its organizational meeting those committees it deems necessary to carry out the work of the Association. The president shall appoint all members to the standing committees annually and designate a chairperson for each. The standing committees shall act as set forth in the Association's operating guidelines (see Article XII).

Section 2. **Executive Committee:** An executive committee of the Board of Directors, composed of the president, vice-president, treasurer and secretary will conduct the business of the Association in the interim between regularly scheduled board meetings. The Executive Director will be an ex-officio non-voting member.

ARTICLE VIII - PROGRAM AREAS AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Section 1. **Establishment of Program Areas:** The Board of Directors shall establish annually the major program areas of the Association and establish the advisory structure for each area. Details of the procedures for creating and staffing the committees shall be contained in the operating guidelines of the Association (see Article XII).

ARTICLE IX - ASSOCIATION NOMINATION AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. **Nominating Committee:** The nominating committee is a committee of the Association and its enrollees and not a standing committee of the Board of Directors. It is responsible to and acts in the interest of the Association, its enrollees and constituencies.

A. **Composition:** The president of the Association shall annually appoint a nominating committee of at least five (5) people, who represent the broad interests of the residents of the county and the work of the Association, a majority of whom are not current board members. The president shall designate the chairperson of the nominating committee.

B. **Duties:**

1. The nominating committee shall prepare a list of nominees for all vacant or eligible elected Board of Director positions. Current members of the nominating committee are not eligible as nominees.
2. In addition to nominations by the committee, nominations may be made by:
 - a. A petition, delivered to the Association in person or by certified mail no later than 45 days prior to the election. Thirty eligible voting enrollees of the Association must sign the petition.
 - b. Nominations from the floor where the nominating and election process occurs at the annual meeting of the Association.
3. The nominating committee will supervise the conduct of the election.

Section 2. **Elections and Voting:** Elections for directors shall be held annually. Such elections, and/or voting for any other matter as determined by the Board of Directors shall be conducted by ballot of all eligible voters present at the annual meeting. The candidate receiving a plurality of votes for each seat shall be declared elected. In the event of a tie vote, the winner shall be decided by a majority of the Board of Directors at its next meeting.

ARTICLE X - ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

- Section 1. **Annual Meeting:** An annual meeting of the Association for which public notice is given 30 days in advance, shall be held during the last quarter of the calendar year. The agenda shall include the following items, plus other business as appropriate:
 - A. Annual financial and program report.
 - B. Election of directors by eligible voters.
- Section 2. **Special Meetings:** A special meeting of the Association may be called by the Board of Directors, and shall be called by the president upon written petition by 25 eligible voters, provided the objectives of such meetings are set forth in the petition. Only such business may be conducted as is set forth in the call of the special meeting. Public notice of special meetings shall be made at least 21 days prior to the meeting date.
- Section 3. **Quorum:** A quorum for any annual or special meetings of the Association shall consist of 25 eligible voters of the Association.

ARTICLE XI - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

- Section 1. **Roberts Rules of Order:** The rules contained in the most current "Roberts Rules of Order" shall govern the Association in all cases to which they are applicable and where they are consistent with the Constitution or the regulations (including operating guidelines) of the Association as adopted by the Board of Directors. In the event that Roberts Rules of Order, the Constitution, and/or the regulations of the Association are not consistent, then the Constitution shall take priority, followed by the regulations of the Association.

ARTICLE XII - OPERATING GUIDELINES

- Section 1. Operating guidelines of the Association that identify operating details of the board and advisory committees not contained in this Constitution shall be established and reviewed annually by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XIII - AMENDMENTS

- Section 1. The Constitution of this Association shall be reviewed every three (3) years by the Board of Directors.
- Section 2. The Constitution of this Association may be amended, with prior approval by the Board of Directors of this Association and the Director of Extension, by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the eligible voters present at an annual meeting or special Association meeting.

ARTICLE XIV - REPEAL OF PREVIOUS DOCUMENTS

This Constitution shall take effect when approved by the eligible voters and all previous documents of the Association entitled "Constitution" and "By-laws" are hereby repealed.

APPROVED BY:	ADOPTED BY:
<div style="border-top: 1px solid black; text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> DIRECTOR OF CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION </div> <div style="border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 10px;"> DATE _____ </div>	<div style="border-top: 1px solid black; text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION </div> <div style="border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 10px;"> DATE NOVEMBER 15, 2006 AT THE ANNUAL MEETING </div>