

**Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Is Making a Difference  
In Onondaga County  
*January 2008***

## **Agriculture and Food Systems**



CCE staff was awarded a funding through the Natural Resource Conservation Service Conservation Innovation Grant. The funding paid for rye, vetch and Austrian peas to be planted as a cover crop on a total of 60 acres on 6 farms located in the Skaneateles Lake Watershed. In spring 2008 soybeans, corn and pumpkins will be planted after the cover crops flower. This demonstration project will provide information about the feasibility of planting cover crops to reduce erosion and act as a mulch to reduce weed infestation in fields and allow for on-farm profitability comparisons between traditional row crop farming practices and cover crop practices.

CCE staff also assisted with the Skaneateles Lake Watershed Agricultural Program Annual Meeting. Over 70 people attended to learn more about the potential for renewable energy opportunities within the Watershed.

CCE staff member serves on the Onondaga Co. Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board and provides some of the staffing responsibilities for the board. Eagle Point Farms, LLC, Jordan, NY was awarded \$2.1 million for the purchase of development rights. In 2008 Agricultural District No. 4 will undergo its 8-year review for recertification. Currently there are 64,000 acres enrolled in the District. A presentation was made before 100 municipal leaders in Seneca, Yates and Ontario County about farmland protection efforts in Onondaga County. Municipal leaders received continuing education credits for attending.