



Cornell University  
Cooperative Extension  
Otsego County

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Otsego County Holds Annual Meeting**

Board of Director Election results were announced by Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Otsego County on January 15, 2009 at the continuation of their annual meeting. Three positions on the Board of Directors were filled. William Gibson, Cooperstown, was elected for a three year term ending in 2011 and Dan West, Cherry Valley, for a one year term ending in 2009. The third term will be filled by Association Chairman Doug Geertgens through appointment of the write in candidate receiving the most votes. Of the five individuals receiving votes, David Merzig, Oneonta, received the most and will be appointed to a one year term.

In addition, the Association members voted on amendments to the Association's Constitution. The amendments approved by an 80 to 9 vote provide for increased transparency in decision making and an enhanced members role in conducting Association business.

Interim Executive director Daniel Palm provided an overview of Association program highlights from 2008. Included were recognition of the 452 County youths who participated in youth development programs through 38 4-H and *Reality Check* clubs and independent programs. New initiatives recognized were participation in a new National 4-H environmental education program held in the Cherry Valley-Springfield Central School and participation in the 4-H National Youth Science Day.

Agricultural and environmental programming focused on participation in the Central New York Dairy and Field Crops Team, programming for flower, fruit, vegetable and livestock growers and consumer oriented programs delivered through the Master Gardner program. The latter answered over 400 questions asked by local residents; pH tested 50 soil samples and provided numerous workshops.

Health and nutrition programs focused on 4-H and delivering nutrition education programs to County food stamp recipients. Four hundred people in 133 families were served this past year. Additional programs delivered energy savings information, diabetes prevention and control information, and responded to general nutrition, cooking, preservation, and health question from County residents.

Support for these programs was received from Otsego County, New York State, Federal government and local contributions. The total support from the County was a \$195,000 appropriation and a \$106,706 *Eat Smart New York!* Grant through the Department of Social Services.

Association Chairman Doug Geertgens concluded the meeting by thanking the funders for their commitments that allow the Association to provide programs to the Otsego County residents. He also indicated that the Association will be investigating ways to deliver these programs in a more cost effective manner. The Association goal for 2009 is to identify and implement ways to accomplish this.