

Ontario County Farm Bureau

February 2026



President's Message

I am looking forward to the year ahead for Ontario County agriculture. We have the first legislation of the year getting past the president's desk with the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids act. This was made possible by Farm Bureau's efforts and your grassroots efforts in telling those in D.C. what we needed. On a more local level I am excited to report that our FFA chapters are strong and growing, Ontario County 4-H is robust and more kids than ever are enrolling.

Our Ag in the Classroom educators Emma Moore, Adam Bacher, and Amy Pyra are educating kids in all our public schools. In March they will be reading "Seasons on the Farm" and delivering lessons rooted in agriculture to hundreds of elementary school children. Last year, with the help of volunteers, they were able to read to 870 students in 55 classrooms! If you would like to be a reading volunteer, please reach out to Emma Moore at ejw226@cornell.edu.

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An advertisement for the Young Farmers & Ranchers Conference. It features the Farm Bureau New York logo, the YFR logo, and the text "BREAK THE MOLD BUILD THE LEGACY YOUNG FARMERS & RANCHERS CONFERENCE March 21-22, 2026". It also includes a QR code, a "REGISTER NOW! Deadline: March 9" call to action, and logos for "withum" and "Nationwide".

Welcome New Board Members



Jonathan Eagley - With roots in agriculture, Jonathan was raised on a cash crop farm in Ontario County, where he spent years operating the family farm alongside his grandfather. He now serves as the transport director of a construction

company while continuing to work part-time on an Ontario County dairy farm.



Chris Smart - Chris is the Director of the Cornell CALS AgriTech campus in Geneva, NY. She researches diseases of vegetable crops and has worked with vegetable growers to manage diseases that injure crops and reduce yield.



Corrine Brown - Corrine Brown of Palmyra, New York grew up on a small hobby farm with beef cattle and pigs in Clifton Springs, raising and showing them in 4-H. Corrine received her Bachelor's in Agriculture Science from Cornell

University where she also

worked as a Dairy Sustainability Research Assistant for the university's Nutrient Management Spear Program and was a member of the collegiate Farm Bureau. She also holds an Associates in Agriculture Science from SUNY Morrisville. Currently, Corrine works as an Analyst for Sustainability Research and Initiatives for Newtrient, LLC whose mission is to reduce the environmental footprint of dairy farms while making it economically viable to do so.

Updates from Ontario Soil & Water Conservation District

Highlighting Sustainable Agriculture: College Tours

This October the Ontario County SWCD had the pleasure of co-hosting two college-level farm technology & sustainability tours with American Dairy Association Northeast and El-Vi Farms. Local colleges that participated included Rochester Institute of Technology, SUNY Geneseo, and Finger Lakes Community College. As part of these tours, we followed the farm's manure collection and treatment process from when manure is first produced in the barns and then directed to the on-farm methane digester, where fresh manure is processed for energy production for the local community. We then toured the manure solids separation facility where manure



Farm sustainability tours with American Dairy Association Northeast and El-Vi Farms.

solids are collected, treated and recycled back into a quality bedding product for on-farm use. We finished up at the farm's covered and flared manure storage facility where the remaining post-digested liquid manure product is stored under cover until the time is right to transport to the fields for application as a valuable nutrient source for cropland. The student groups were engaged participants and we received a lot of positive feedback after the event.



Save the Date: February 24, 2026

Ontario and Yates County Soil & Water Conservation Districts are holding their annual Soil Health & Nutrient Management Workshop on Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at Tomion's Event Center in Penn Yan from 8:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Certified Crop Advisor credits and Pesticide Applicator credits are pending. The day is packed with new and exciting topics related to Finger Lakes agriculture, including topics on soil health, late season cover crops, pest management, and more. Registration is through Yates County SWCD at (315) 536-5188 and costs \$20 (\$25 for walk-ins). The official flyer will be out soon on our website at www.ontariocountyswcd.gov.

President's Message, continued

We also have had a big turnover in our local supervisors. Ten new supervisors joined the board this year, and if you haven't met your supervisor, I recommend you go and introduce yourself. Make sure they keep agriculture in mind when they make decisions and know the importance of our agricultural heritage in Ontario County.

This year I would like to get to know more of our members and include them in the decision-making process going forward. We always have opportunities to get involved in board activities, committees and social events. We plan on having another meet the candidates picnic this summer, golf tournament this fall, policy setting meeting and some fun in between. If you would like to be more involved or have ideas that we can implement, I am all ears and you can always call or email me anytime. One way to start getting connected would be to follow our Facebook page, which we hope to get more active this year.

Our board meetings are always on the 3rd Monday of the month, usually at 7 p.m. in the Cooperative

Extension office, and are open to any member of Farm Bureau. Some months the meetings travel, so please reach out if you are interested in attending to make sure you have the location.

Regards,

Jacob Maslyn

Ontario County Farm Bureau President

Save the Dates!

- Aug..... *Meet the Candidates Picnic*. Final date TBD.
- Sept. *Fun on the Farm*. Details coming soon!
- Sept. 21 *Policy setting party* - 6 p.m. (before our regular board meeting)
- Oct..... *Golf Tournament*. Stay tuned for further details!
- Oct. 20..... *Ontario Annual Meeting*



Marcus Whitman FFA Chapter Updates

We are beyond proud to share that our chapter was named Chapter of the Year by the New York State Agricultural Society. This honor belongs to our incredible students whose hard work, leadership, and passion for agriculture shine through in everything they do. From classroom learning to hands-on experiences, community involvement, and leadership development, our members continue to step up, support one another, and represent agricultural education with pride. Their commitment, dedication, and willingness to grow make achievements like this possible.



Marcus Whitman FFA Chapter of the Year students pictured with NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets Commissioner Richard Ball

Before the holiday break, our Floral Design Class welcomed the Marcus Whitman Transportation Department into the classroom to make centerpieces.

We are so happy that this worked out for us to have them in our classroom. Everyone left with a beautiful centerpiece! Students were also busy in Food Science spreading holiday cheer in the best way possible, through hands-on learning and delicious treats. Students prepared simmer pots filled with oranges, cranberries, and a variety of warm holiday spices. They also put their baking skills to work making rolo cookies and Christmas bark, learning food preparation techniques while embracing the joy of the season. Our middle school classes have had a very busy fall raising poultry, learning about hydroponic systems, and the ins and outs of FFA, and each had the opportunity to make bread for the holiday season.

In December, our FFA chapter recognized 21 area farms with our annual Thank a Farmer Program. We filled boxes with all the items they need to make a Christmas breakfast and delivered them to each family on December 7th. Members are busy preparing for their District Contests that was held at Penn Yan Academy on Saturday, February 7th. We had 42 Whitman FFA members that represented our chapter in various Leadership Development Events including Agricultural Issues, Conduct of a Chapter Meeting, Prepared Speaking, Employment Skills and People in Agriculture. The Sub State Contests are being held March 14th at Alfred State. Please reach out to Mary Coolbaugh if you would like to serve as a judge. No experience required.

Mary Coolbaugh, Marcus Whitman FFA

Ag Appreciation Banquet

You are cordially invited to join in the celebration of National Agriculture Week, applaud Ontario County agriculture, and honor its leaders. The **2026 Ontario County Agriculture Appreciation Banquet** will be held on **Friday, March 20, 2026** at Club 86, 86 Avenue E, Geneva, NY 14456. 6 p.m. Social hour and 7 p.m. dinner. This event will be celebrating the accomplishments of agriculture leaders in Ontario County with the presentation of the Rodney Lightfoote Agriculture Viability and Innovation Award; Jackie Kunes Outstanding Woman in Agriculture; Paul and Peg Zimmerman Young Farmer Award; Jerome Family Scholarship; and the Agricultural Citizenship Scholarships.

There are two options to register to attend this event.

Option 1: Register online with payment by credit card or check made payable to CCE Ontario, and mailed to CCE, Ag Appreciation, 480 North Main Street, Canandaigua, NY 14424.

Option 2: Request a flyer to be mailed to you by calling 585-394-3977 x 427 or email nea8@cornell.edu with your name and address.

Cost: \$45/person with payment by check made payable to CCE Ontario and mailed to CCE Ontario, Ag Appreciation, 480 North Main Street, Canandaigua, NY 14424. Or \$50/person with payment by credit card with Paypal on the registration link.

Use the QR code provided below or click thru to the registration link: reg.cce.cornell.edu/AgAppreciation26_232

All registrations and payment must be received by March 5, 2026. We will NOT be able to accept walk-ins or payments on the night of the banquet. This event is sponsored by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ontario County, Ontario County Farm Bureau, and Ontario County.



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Ontario County Farm Bureau
New York Farm Bureau
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Ontario County Farm Bureau board meets the third Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Cooperative Extension Office in Canandaigua.