

For Immediate Release

Cooperstown, NY

The *Grow with CCE* Campaign Nears Funding Goal

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schoharie and Otsego Counties reached an important milestone in contributions received for the ***Grow with Cornell Cooperative Extension*** campaign, according to Don Smyers, Executive Director of the Association. The capital campaign was launched in November to redevelop the grounds of the organization's Education and Outreach Center at 123 Lake Street in Cooperstown into teaching and education gardens.

"Presently, we have exceeded 70% of our goal, which is especially rewarding in light of the December holidays and the COVID pandemic," said Mr. Smyers. "Our success demonstrates the investment in planning conducted by Master Gardener Volunteers and staff, and the value the gardens will bring for residents living throughout the county."

"We are excited to announce that Price Chopper-Golub Foundation has awarded the organization a grant to develop and demonstrate the value of rain gardens. The rain garden will be installed in a buffer zone between the parking pavement and a pedestrian entryway into the gardens."

Rain gardens demonstrate an important environmental benefit. Rain gardens capture the surface water runoff from impervious surfaces, such as pavement, and slows it for ground absorption before the suspended soils are carried off into creeks and waterways."

"Good land practices benefit everyone, including supermarkets which seek locally-produced foods for their markets. The gardens are in close proximity to Otsego Lake and the headwaters of the Susquehanna River which flow into the polluted Chesapeake Bay. The potential for soil loss, albeit on a small scale for this demonstration site, is minimized, but the benefit tells the story of proper land and water management. The principles are the same, be it large parcels or gardens," Mr. Smyers emphasized.

"We're encouraged that others see the value of the project and have supported the garden capital campaign. I am excited that the end goal is in sight through the generosity of many, and we hope others will help us over the goal line," he added.

Individuals and businesses are asked to visit CCE's website, www.cceschoharie-otsego.org, and follow the front page link to *Grow with CCE* and learn how they may contribute to the campaign, or they may email Don Smyers at drs269@cornell.edu for more information.

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