Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Ulster County

County Observer

October 2008

2008 4-H Achievement Night
Friday, November 7
7:00 pm
SUNY Ulster—Stone Ridge Campus
Student Lounge

Save the Date!
Friday, December 5
Make-It Take-It Workshop
For Youth and Adults

Saturday
4-H New Leader Training

This fall a Saturday training will be made available in addition to our Thursday evening training. The training will be held at the Cornell Cooperative Extension office in Kingston from 9am - 4pm on Saturday, October 25, 2008. Spread the word to all those friends who want to join you in 4-H leadership! To register and obtain an application contact Jenny at 340-3990.

Calling All Clubs!

We would like to add club information to our web site! Our goal is to have a list of current clubs and a brief summary for each club so that anyone can see what is going on in 4-H in our county. At your next business meeting, please work as a club to brainstorm a few sentences that describe your club. Make sure your descriptions cover the following areas:

General interests of the club
Project Areas in which the club regularly works
Age ranges

And anything else you would like the world to know about your club. Then, ask your secretary to send the description to the 4-H Office.

We have received descriptions from

U.C. 4-H Teen Council
Homesteaders

Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Ulster County

10 Westbrook Lane
Kingston, NY 12401

For more information please contact the
4-H Staff
845-340-3990

4-H CLUB ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERS

Ellen & Russell Hausmann and Jenny Burkins ....4-H Animals and Company
Lisa Marx .....4-H Cool Kids
Anne Gomola ..... 4-H Rocks
Jenny Burkins & Joy Weis Teen Leader, Courtney Weis .....ABC 4-H
Rochelle Jourdan, Donna Grimm & Debbie Smith ....A Little This, A Little That
Pam Pardee & Angie Skretta..... .....Animals Around the World
Virginia Legg .....Association of 4-H Friends
Anne Magielnicki & Melissa Frumenti..... ..... Brookside Nature Kids
Joe Watson & Mary Pottinger .....Budding Gardeners
MaryLou Giuliano & Lynn Fleming..... Capricious Kids
MaryLou Giuliano.....Coleman Cares 4-H Club
Claudia & Barbara Davenport..... ..... Curiously Creative Cousins 4-H Club
Gary & Susan Clark .....Equestrians Unlimited
Annie Mardiney .....Feathered Friends
Laura Every & Allison Reidy ..... Feathers & Fur
Cynthia Worrad & Bernadette Bergin ....Highland 4-H Forest Finders
Jen & George Holz.....Homesteaders
MaryJane & John Coughlin..... ..... The Hudson Valley Harvesters
Kristen Wilson .... Kingston High School Outdoors 4-H Club
Elizabeth & Andrew Higgins .... Kingston Wild Birds & Animals 4-H Club
Susan & Timothy Bruck Sr..... The Musketeers
Cindy Scherry, & Sylvia Tinti ....Out of Hand 4-Hers
Denise & Ron Van Aken and John & Carol Fitzpatrick..... .....Rondout Valley Country Kids
Allyson Nichols, Denise Barringer & Lori Zelinsky..... .....Samsonville Barnyard
Donna & Wayne Grimm..... Saugerties Hareraisers
Greg Walters, Ray & Barbara Smith..... .....Sharp Shooters
Debra MrcCullough, Joanne Ewald & Heidi White ....Shawangunk Ridge Equestrians
Patti Zellmer & Kay Peischel .... Super Sassy Thimblinas
Jenny Burkins & Ben Campbell .....Teen Council
Jenny Burkins, Carol Carboni, and Lori Halwick .... Ulster County 4-H MuttMasters
Roberta Jackson & Carla Picayo ....Ulster Equistars and Pony People
June Teloar & Stacy Eccleston.....Zena 4-H Black Bears

The County Observer is the monthly publication for the 4-H Youth Development Program of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County. Cornell Cooperative Extension is the unique educational network linking Ulster County with resources from Cornell University and the USDA.

The mission of the 4-H Youth Development Program is to "help young people become self-directed, productive and contributing members of society." Participation in the 4-H Program is open to all interested youth, regardless of race, color, sex, creed, national origin, or handicap. Youth ages 5-19 are invited to be 4-H members.

4-H Youth Development Staff Team

Patricia Zellmer, Issue Leader
Kristen Wilson, Resource Educator
MaryLou Giuliano, After School Program Educator
Dona Crawford, Event & Volunteer Coordinator
Jennifer Burkins, Administrative Assistant

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Cornell Cooperative Extension
of Ulster County 4-H Program

2008-2009 4-H Dates and Events

October (2008)

3	4-H Window Displays in place
4	State Public Presentations, Cornell University, Ithaca
5-11	National 4-H Week
7	Ulster County's National 4-H Week Proclamation
7	4-H Information Night, 6:30pm, CCE Education Center, Kingston
9	4-H Information Night 6:30 pm, Fairgrounds, New Paltz
15	**4-H Records & Awards Due**
15	Capital Day Nominations Due
21-23	4-H Record & Award Evaluation
25	New 4-H Leader Training

November (2008)

5	4-H Small Animal PDC, 7:00pm, Kingston
6	New 4-H Leader Training, 6:00-9:00pm, CCE Education Center
7	4-H Achievement Night, SUNY Ulster
11	OFFICE CLOSED—Veteran's Day
13	New 4-H Leader Training, 6:00-9:00 pm, CCE Education Center
14	Annual Dinner, 6:30pm, Hillside Manor
15	Officer Training, SUNY Ulster
17	Auction Committee, 6:30pm, Kingston
27-28	OFFICE CLOSED—Thanksgiving

December (2008)

5	Make-It, Take-It, 6:30-8:30pm, Announce Capital Days
6	Christmas Carol
25-31	OFFICE CLOSED

January (2009)

1	OFFICE CLOSED—Happy New Year!
5	Strategy Committee, 5:00pm
13	New 4-H Leader Training, 6:00-9:00pm, CCE Education Center
15	4-H Leader Share Fair, 6:30pm
19	OFFICE CLOSED—Martin Luther King Day
20	New 4-H Leader Training, 6:00-9:00pm, CCE Education Center
22	Snow Date—Share Fair

4-H Leader's Network Sign ups Welcome

The 4-H Office has a Leader's Network! What is the Leader's Network? In the Ulster County 4-H Program there are many adults with skills and talents. We have created a listing of these skilled and talented people who are willing to share their expertise. This tool will especially be helpful for new leaders and is available for all 4-H Leaders. For example: You are a new 4-H Leader and your 4-Hers are going to do a Public Presentation. It sure would be nice to talk to another 4-H Leader that could help you get ready. Pull out our 4-H Leader's Network and call or email: Debby McCullough, Donna Grimm or Dawn Takacs.

Currently we have Leaders ready to help other Leaders in these areas: Home Economics (cooking, sewing), Goats, Rabbits, Cattle, Shooting Sports, Woodworking, Horse, Computers, Gardening, Cats, Small Animals, Poultry, Homesteading.

Leaders that would like to be a part of the Leader's Network are welcome to sign up. Just call or email the 4-H office and tell us what area(s) you would like to share with others.

Opportunity for Teen Leadership

Are you a teen interested in helping to spread the word about 4-H? On October 7 & 9, 2008, the 4-H team will be holding 4-H Information Nights for the public. Adults attend the event with their children to find out how they can join 4-H. We need 4-H teens to assist with teaching a youth activity. Sound fun? Contact Kristen Wilson or Patti Zellmer at 340-3990.

2008 Woodstock Film Festival Career Day for Young People October 3

The Career Roundtable offers students a unique opportunity to meet with A-list film industry professionals in small groups, ask questions, and learn about careers in film and new media.

Participants in this youth event have included the late legendary composer of more than 200 film scores, Elmer Bernstein, and award-winning cinematographer and director, Haskell Wexler. Additional past participants include Academy Award nominated screenwriter Ron Nyswaner; actors Melissa Leo, Giancarlo Esposito, and many others.

Woodstock Elementary School
10/3/2008 at 5:00 pm
FREE

For more information visit:
http://www.woodstockfilmfestival.com/festival2008/panels.php?

Evaluation Team Ulster County 4-H Awards

Ulster County 4-H Leaders and Parents are invited to be a part of the Evaluation Team for the Annual 4-H Awards. Time periods for evaluating at the Extension Education Center in Kingston:

Tuesday, October 21	**10am-12pm or 5pm-7pm**
Wednesday, October 22	**10am-12pm, 2pm-4pm or 5pm-7pm**
Thursday, October 18	**10am-12pm or 4pm-6 PM**

All Teens who worked at the U.C. Fair 4-H Milkshake Booth or the Highland Rib Festival this summer are invited to:

The 4-H Teen Council
Fall Thank-You Party
Sunday, November 2, 2008
4:00pm - 7:00pm
Wallkill/Shawangunk Corrections Clubhouse

Join us for food, fun and music

Come in costume

4-H Teens may bring one guest. The cost is $4.00/person. Call Jenny at 340-3990 to register. Limited to First 100 people.

Directions:

From New Paltz: Take Rte 299 to Rte 208 South. At the light, go straight through Ireland Corners where it intersects with Rte 44/55.(There will be a Mobile Station on the right). *Look for the signs for Wallkill/ Shawangunk Correctional Facility on the right side of the road. Turn right on to Quick Rd.(From Ireland Cors. to Quick Rd. is approx. 4-5 miles.) Go about 1/4 of a mile to the blinking light and turn left. You will go about 1/2 mile and will come upon a 90 degree bend to the right, in the road. The "Clubhouse" will be the first building on the right after you go around the bend.

From Kerhonkson area: Take Rte 44/55 to the Ireland Corners intersection. The Mobile station will be on the right. Turn right onto Rte 208 South. Follow direction above from *

From Kingston area: Take Rte 32 to New Paltz and at the intersection with Rte 299, go straight thru the light on to Rte 208. Take Rte 208 and at the light, go straight through Ireland Corners where it intersects with Rte 44/55. (There will be a Mobile Station on the right). Follow directions above from *

Club Chatter

The MuttMasters met on September 9, 2008 to begin our new training year. Jenny met with new members to go over the expectations for the beginner training program. The returning youth talked about this year's fairs and what they would like to accomplish in the 2008-09 4-H year. Officers will be elected at the October meeting.

U.C. 4-H MuttMasters

4-H National Youth Science Day!

On October 8, 2008 the 4-H Youth Development Program is launching the first annual 4-H National Youth Science Day to help build America's future science, engineering, and technology workforce. The National Science Experiment, the designated science activity of 4-H National Youth Science Day, will focus on the environment and will use science principles to teach youth about the importance of water conservation. You can find the short experiment in this newsletter. Find the long experiment on line at: http://www.4-H.org/4-HNysd.html.

A key element of this National Science Experiment is offering youth the opportunity to communicate their findings with others across the nation. With that, you will see many references throughout the experiment encouraging youth to visit www.4-H.org to share their thoughts. This will be part of the launch of the new www.4-H.org site which will also be available during National 4-H Week. If any Youth or clubs get a head start on the experiment, encourage them to record their findings after October 6.

4-H Volunteer to be Honored at Annual Dinner

Every Year Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County hosts an annual dinner where we honor "Friends of Extension," volunteers and colleagues who have helped with our programs.

The annual dinner will be held at Hillside Manor Restaurant in Kingston on November 14. For more information and to purchase tickets ($35.00/person), please call Dona at 340-3990.

National 4-H Conference

Are you a teen who takes on a leadership role in Ulster County? Are you focused and committed to 4-H in New York State? Then maybe you'd like to attend the 2009 4-H National Conference in Maryland and Washington, D.C.! Applications to attend are due to the NYS 4-H office on November 6, and the conference will take place on March 28 – April 2, 2009. For more details about the conference visit http://nys4h.cce.cornell.edu/program/events/TeenEventLinks.php or http://4hconf.4-h.org/about.aspx.

If interested in applying, please contact Kristen, kew67@cornell.edu, or Patti, psz2@cornell.edu, or call us at 340-3990.

2008 New York State Fair

Ulster County static exhibits (non breathing!) were on display in the Youth Building August 26-30. Teen Leaders welcomed the public to the Ulster County Booth with Operation Military Kids activities. Along with approximately 86 static exhibits, youth and teens participated in many other 4-H areas. Three Teens were in the State Clothing Revue. Youth entered rabbits, cavies, horses, poultry, and dogs. Ulster County was well represented and did very well. Here are the current State Fair Results for Ulster County!

Static Exhibits

CONGRATULATIONS
The following 4-H member received special recognition from the NYS Fair for their project

Julia Robinson - Spiced Zucchini Bread

Communications & Expressive Arts

Meghan Gibbons
Scrapbook ..... Blue

Cody Cragnolin
Lifetime Portfolio ..... Red

Courtney Weis
Lifetime Portfolio ..... Blue

Ulster Equistars
Booth Display ..... Red

Consumer & Family Science

Samantha Bruck
Brown Plate ..... Blue
Blueberry Cake ..... Red

Timothy Bruck
Wave Bowl ..... Blue
Hufflepuff Cloak ..... Blue
Vanilla Wafers ..... Red

Katherine Marie Byrne
Apron ..... Blue

Rebecca Carroll
Tote Bag ..... Blue
Apple-Blueberry Muffins ..... Blue

Bethany Crescini
Apron ..... Blue

Ashley Curtis
Etched Copper Picture ..... Blue
Ring Toss Game ..... Blue

Juliana DeArce
Chocolate Chip Cookies ..... Blue

Stephanie Flynn
Child's Pull Toy ..... Red
Pina Colada Quick Bread ..... Red

Madeline Friedman
Papercut Art ..... Blue
Scarf ..... Red
Pillow ..... Red

Kacie Giuliano
Wine Rack ..... Red

Nina Igoe
Strawberry Bread ..... Red
Coconut Muffins ..... Red
Dinner Rolls ..... Red

Charlotte Knapp
Modern Still Life ..... Blue
Zucchini Carrot ..... Red

Elise Macur
Triple Choc. Chip Cookies ..... Red

Elissa Mardiney
Easy Layer Bars ..... Blue
Banana Bread ..... Red

Kristen Nerone
Oatmeal Cookies ..... Red
Mint Chocolate Chip Cookies .. Red
Brownies ..... Red

Consumer & Family Science Con't.

Courtney Rider
Wooden Star Wall Hanging ..... Blue
Zucchini Bread .....Red

Courtney Weis
Curtains .....Red

Erik Whispell
Vest ..... Blue

Visual Arts

Timothy Bruck
Sleepy Bebo .....Red

Samantha Bruck
Single Color Photo ..... Blue

Rebecca Carol
Picture Story/Wet Leaves ..... Blue
Tiger Lily ..... Blue

Joshua Holz
Digital Image ..... Blue
Digital Image ..... Blue
Digital Image Heavily Edited..... Blue
Website ..... Blue

Elissa Mardiney
Unedited Digital Image .....Red

Katlyn McCullough
Single Slightly Edited Digital ..... Blue

Kristen Nerone
Heavily Edited Digital Image.....Red

Michelle Robinson
Single Unedited Digital Image ..... Blue
Single Unedited Digital Image ..... Blue
Single Unedited Digital Image ..... Red

Alexandra Strauss
Tiger Photo ..... Blue

Cody Whispell
Digital Image ..... Blue

Horticulture

Samantha Bruck
Cucumbers ..... White
Bell Peppers ..... Red

Timothy Bruck
Cucumbers ..... White

Rebecca Carroll
Tomato ..... Red

David Fletcher
Open Class..... Blue

Christiana Holbrook
Cabonelle ..... Red

Meghan Gibbons
Black Eyed Susan ..... White

Joshua Holz
Garlic ..... Blue

Courtney Weis
Marigolds ..... White
Cut Flowers ..... White
Floribunda ..... Red

Cody Whispell
Straight Eight ..... Red

Erik Whispell
Cucumbers ..... Blue

Science, Technology & Engineering

Samantha Bruck
Decorative Shelf ..... White

Charlotte Knapp
Birdhouse ..... Blue
Flower Box ..... Blue

Courtney Rider
Birdhouse ..... Blue

T-Shirt Challenge

Michelle Campbell
..... Cloverbud Participation
Ashley Curtis ..... White
Meghan Gibbons ..... Blue
Caroline Snyder..... Blue
Courtney Weis..... White
Courtney Weis.....Red

For Display Only

Erica Bell ..... Costume Horse
Erica Bell .....Barn
Courtney Weis.....Neck Coolers

Rabbit & Cavy

Trisha Bell
Standard Chinchilla ..... Best of Breed
Standard Chinchilla .....Best Opposite

Rabbit Decathlon, Novice
Erica Bell, Trisha Bell .....1st Place Team

Rabbit Decathlon, Junior
Garrett Igoe ..... 3rd Place Team

Rabbit Decathlon, Senior
Leanna Igoe, Nina Igoe .. 4th Place Team

Livestock Skillathon

Ulster Senior Team Places 8th

Michelle Robinson
Katlyn McCullough

New York State
Reserve Champion
4-H Dog Drill Team

Harry Birch, Jessica Birch, Michelle Campbell (Cloverbud Mascot), Rebecca Halwick, Amber Huckeba, Bryan Huckeba, Elissa Mardiney, Evan Mardiney, Kristen Nerone, Lori Potter, Joyce Sylvester and Courtney Weis. Team Leader: Jenny Burkins

Horse

Cecilla Campalla
Hunter Under Saddle, Jr..... 5th
Working Hunter, Jr. 3rd
Equitation Over Fences, Jr. 6th

Eliana Corell
Hunter Hack, Jr. 6th
Working Hunter, Jr 10th

Abby Hastings
Equitation on the Flat, Sr..... 1st
Hunt Pleasure, Pony 1st
Working Hunter, Pony 1st
Hunter Hack, Pony 1st

Lauren Mullady
Hunter Hack, Jr. 8th

Emily Orchant
Hunt Pleasure, Jr..... 8th
Hunter Hack, Jr. 3rd
Working Hunter, Jr. 2nd
Equitation Over Fences, Jr. 4th

Michelle Robinson
Working Hunter, Sr..... 2nd
Equitation Over Fences Sr. 4th

Deanna Zajic
Hunter Under Saddle, Jr..... 1st
Working Hunter, Jr. 1st
Equitation Over Fences..... 1st

Senior Hippology
Michelle Robinson, McKinley Matteson, Katlyn McCullough

Junior Hippology
Kevin Seche, Julia Robinson, Joel Moskowitz

Dog

New York State Grand Champion Rally Advanced

Rebecca Halwick & Border Collie Cali

Jessica Birch
Grooming & Handling A.....Blue

Cheyenne Faerber
Beginner A..... Red
Grooming & Handling A.....Blue

Rebecca Halwick
Advanced Novice.....Blue
Grooming & Handling B.....Blue

Amber Huckeba
Beginner A.....White
Grooming & Handling A..... Red

Elissa Mardiey
Rally Advanced.....White

Lorren Potter
Beginner B.....White

Joyce Sylvester
Grooming & Handling B.....Blue

Courtney Weis
Beginner B.....Blue
Graduate Beg. B..... Red
Grooming & Handling B..... Red

Leader's Rally

THANK YOU Leaders for a great 4-H Leaders Rally!
We had delicious soup & bread
Really yummy desserts!

At this required annual 4-H Leaders event, Leader Handbooks were updated, new club packets handed out, ideas shared, and new curriculums presented.

Steve & Julie Noble sharing about Project Feederwatch at Leaders Rally

4-H Records and Awards Applications DUE!!! October 15, 2008 Office Hours: 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

Records can be sent or delivered, NOT FAXED to the 4-H Office on or before Wenesday, October 15.

ALL Information is available ONLINE! Or call with your questions, 340-3990. Click on http://counties.cce.cornell.edu/ulster/4h/Awards&Records.htm

Under 4-H Awards and Records you will find:

Member Recognition Guide

Awards Directory

4-H Award Application

Lifetime Portfolio

Project Summary Sheet

4-H Veterinary Science Returns…

4-H teens interested in 4-H Vet Science, watch for the November Observer. The 2009 4-H Vet Science series will be offered. This series is very popular and is offered on a first come first served basis. 4-H members will have first choice. The series is on Thursdays in February and March.

4-H Shopping!!!

Good news to share - 10% of all National 4-H Supply Service orders placed through the link: http://www.4-hmall.org/New York/ will go to the NYS 4-H Foundation. Orders must be placed on line, and specifically through this link. As you know, the **National 4-H Supply Service** has clothing, pins, pens, jewelry, curriculum, club supplies and more. Please share this link and information with your volunteers. Perfect timing for the new club year!
You can also get to this link through the "shop" page on the new NYS 4-H Web Site: http://nys4h.cce.cornell.edu/shop/shop.php

Ulster County Fair
2008
Tuesday, July 29 - Sunday August 3
Monday, July 28 - Static Exhibits

To keep you informed about the Ulster County Fair

2009 Ulster County Fair Entry Deadline

Entries will be accepted only by USPS or in person. NO FAXES

DUE: July 15, 2009

2008 Ulster County Fair Summary

136 youth showcased 1668 exhibits

2008 New York State Fair Highlights

The Important Things Are Not Ribbons

There once was a boy, won ribbons, mostly blue
Came home from the fair, with a big trophy too.
With a voice glad and proud, he said to his dad,
"'Tis the very best year that I've ever had."
Said his very wise Dad, "son, I'd like to hear,
Why you think this was such a fine year."

"Why, Dad you know, all the prizes I've won;
How I've come out on top, in most things I've done.
Just look at the ribbons that hang on my wall
And think of the money, I've made since last fall.
From premium checks, and a big auction price
You can't help but think cash and ribbons are nice."

But the man said, "My son, you're not thinking right
Blue ribbons, 'tis true are better than white'
But ribbons will fade and trophies grow old,
Money's soon spent, and fame soon grows cold.
The important things, son, are not ribbons or pins,
And sometimes it's really the loser who wins;
Now here are the things, most important, it's true
Your 4-H experience has accomplished for you."

"You've seen how a business meeting is run
This knowledge will help you in years to come.
You've conquered the fear of addressing a crowd,
You've learned how to stand up and talk nice and loud."

"Patience you've learned, in your projects, too,
As well as your skills, that will always help you.
You've learned to cooperate with majority rule,
To give in with grace and not be a fool,
Who must always have his very own way.
Be it in club work, in school or at play.
You've learned how to lose, without making a 'beef''
You know the judge judges to her best belief.
You've learned how to win, without boasting too loud,
A kid can lose friends, if he's overly proud."

These are the things, most important to you.
You'll remember and use them all your life through.
They'll help you become a mighty fine man,
They'll do more for you, than any prize can."

Anonymous

Officer Training Saturday, November 15, 2008

The 4-H Office has scheduled Officer Training for Saturday, November 15, 2008, 9:00 am - 12:00 noon.

Where?
SUNY Ulster (Student Lounge)

What is Officer Training?
Officer Training is a workshop designed to provide 4-H members with the skills they will need to perform the functions relative to the office they hold.

Who should attend?
All 4-H members who hold an officer position or hope to be an officer should attend.

What will you learn?
You will gain valuable skills related to the office that you hold. You will learn what your roles, responsibilities and duties are and receive instruction on how to plan and run your own meeting.

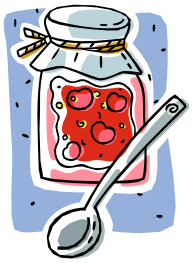
How do you register?
Please complete the registration form on the last page of the newsletter and send it to the 4-H office at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County.

Do you need more information?
Contact Patti at the 4-H office. Phone: 340-3990, Email: psz2@cornell.edu

Community Service Opportunity

Attention all Ulster County 4-H Families

Ulster County 4-H Teen Council and Ulster County 4-H MuttMasters are joining forces again this year to help feed the hungry over the holidays. We will be putting together "Gift Jars" with the dry ingredients to make soup, cookies, etc. and supplementing the baskets with other donated items. Each basket will contain a ham or turkey to make the meal complete.



How can you help? We are looking for Quart size Mason Jars, flour, brown sugar, sugar and other baking items. Your club can help by donating any of these items, asking a local store if they would like to donate, or donating any other non-perishable items to supplement the baskets. Donations of frozen turkey or ham would be very helpful.

If you have any questions, please call Jenny at 340-3990 or email jlb64@cornell.edu.

THANK YOU in advance for your help!!

4-H New Leader Training/ Refresher
Thursdays, November 6 & 13
6:00-9:00pm
CCE Office, Kingston

Non-animal PDC's Accepting applications for new members

The new **4-H Nutrition and Gardening PDC** and the seasoned **4-H Family and Consumer Science PDC** are now accepting new members. Do you have an interest in nutrition, gardening, sewing, fiber science, or consumer science? Then one of these committees might be for you. Come join us to help plan and develop county-wide events and programs in these subject areas! To find out about meetings and current projects contact Kristen Wilson at kew67@cornell.edu.

Q&A's about...Program Development Committees (PDC)

Q. What is a Program Development Committee? (Commonly called PDC)?
A. A committee of people interested in developing outstanding programs for Ulster County 4-H Youth.

Q. What PDC's do we have in Ulster County?
A. There are PDC's for Cattle, Family & Consumer Science, Horses, Auction, Sheep & Goats, Small Animals.

Q. What do you do on these committees?
A. Plan workshops & educational events.

Q. Who can be on these committees?
A. Adults & Youth committed to positive youth development.

Q. How do I join a committee?
A. Request and fill out an application!

Have more questions? Contact Patti at 340-3990 or email psz2@cornell.edu

2008 NATIONAL YOUTH SCIENCE DAY

4-H National Science Experiment

Helpful HYDROGELS

Can hydrogels help the environment?

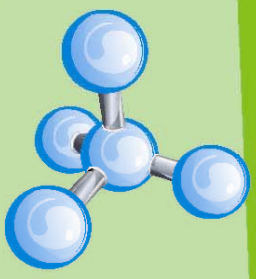
Water is everywhere – in the sky, in the ground, and in our homes. However, caring for this vital resource is often a challenge for each of us. Conservation means using water wisely. Protecting our groundwater is important because it is a source for drinking and irrigation. Consequently, scientists and engineers have developed amazing, superabsorbent polymers, called **hydrogels**, that can help.

In this investigation, you will look at a particular hydrogel that is secretly at work in millions of households across the country…

Materials:

- Disposable diaper
- Water
- Newspaper
- Scissors
- Measuring cup and measuring spoons
- Zipper-lock bag; 1 gallon size
- 9 oz. plastic cup

*A **polymer** is a long chain of molecules. Polymers are all around us, and they make up materials like bicycle helmets, CDs, tires, plastic water bottles, rubber bands, and glue. This experiment focuses on special kinds of polymers that are superabsorbent: hydrogel polymers. Hydrogel polymers are long molecule chains that grab onto water molecules. Some can soak up as much as 500 times their weight in water! This superabsorbent characteristic makes hydrogel polymers useful in water conservation and in solving other environmental issues.*

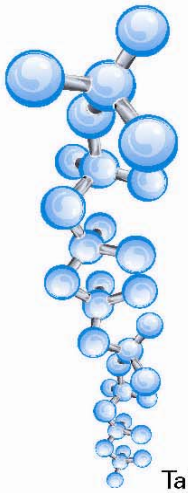


Check out the expanded National Science Experiment at www.4-H.org

A hydrogel is a class of polymer with some unique characteristics.
Find the hydrogel polymer in a diaper and examine its use.

Collect a sample of hydrogel from the cotton and plastic lining of a disposable diaper.

1. Place a new diaper on the piece of newspaper. Carefully cut through the inside lining and remove all the cotton-like material. Put all the stuffing material and plastic lining into a clean, 1 gallon zipper-lock bag.



2. Scoop up any of the powdery material that may have spilled onto the paper and pour it into the bag with the stuffing. Blow a little air into the bag to make it puff up like a pillow, then seal the bag.
3. Shake the bag for a few minutes to remove the powdery hydrogel polymer from the stuffing. Notice how much powder falls to the bottom of the bag.
4. Carefully remove the stuffing and the plastic lining from the bag, and check out the powdery polymer left in the bag. Repeat steps 1-4 with another diaper, if needed, to get 1 tablespoon of the hydrogel powder.
5. Now it's time to mix the powder with water to see what happens. Pour 1 tablespoon of hydrogel powder into a 9 oz. plastic cup. Measure ½ cup of water, and pour it into the cup along with the powder.
6. After about 30 seconds, observe that the water has changed — it's no longer a liquid… it's a gooey solid!

Take a closer look at the gel by scooping up some of the gel with your fingers. You can poke holes in it and even tear it into smaller pieces. This hydrogel is safe and non-toxic, so you can touch it, but remember: even safe chemicals never go into your mouth, ears, or nose!

Things to think about…

- How does this water-slurping powder work? Does it only absorb water?
- How much water will the average diaper absorb?
- What would happen if you let the gel dry out? Is this powder reusable?
- Besides diapers, how else could this powder be used?
- How does the absorbency of the hydrogel compare with other materials that are absorbent: cotton balls, paper towels, sponges?
- How could adding other ingredients (like salt) affect a hydrogel's water-absorbing properties?

So what's next?

Hydrogel technology, of which there are many different types, lends itself well to an unlimited number of agricultural and domestic applications. For example, certain growers have learned that by adding hydrogels to the soil in the right proportions, crops easily survive on sixty to eighty percent less water. Today, hydrogels are widely used in such applications as forestry, gardening, and landscaping as a means of conserving water.

Go to ***www.4-H.org*** to share your thoughts, find more information, try the expanded student version of the National Science Experiment, and join a discussion on the potential impact of hydrogels as well as environmental issues relating to water conservation and groundwater contamination. 4-H, part of the Cooperative Extension System of the United States Department of Agriculture and the 106 Land Grant Universities across the country, has been educating youth on agriculture and the sciences for over 100 years—and we have lots of ways for youth to explore, engage, and get inspired by science!

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