

CONSTITUTION OF THE
CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION ASSOCIATION
OF ULSTER COUNTY
STATE OF NEW YORK

Effective January 1, ~~2007~~2010

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Ulster County, hereinafter called the Association.

ARTICLE II - OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Association are:

- Section 1. To provide for a subordinate governmental agency consisting of an unincorporated organization of residents of Ulster County in cooperation with Cornell University and the United States Department of Agriculture and in accordance with subdivision 8(b) of section 224 of the County Law as last amended.
- Section 2. To extend the educational resources of Cornell University and the New York State Colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Human Ecology and Veterinary Medicine, the Land Grant university system and other educational institutions to the people of Ulster County to foster economic, social and environmental improvement of its individuals, families and communities.
- Section 3. To further the objectives of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County and the State Extension system in the fields of agriculture, family and consumer sciences, 4-H youth development, and community and economic vitality.

ARTICLE III - AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

All actions of this Association will be in compliance with the affirmative action plan of the Association and appropriate equal program opportunity, equal employment opportunity and Americans with Disabilities Act legislation.

ARTICLE IV - PARTICIPATION

- Section 1. Enrollment: Enrollment is open to all persons interested in the work of the Association. Persons become enrollees by: (a) participation in programs or activities on the Association, evidenced by registration or lists generated with respect to such program or activities, (b) having their names placed on an Association mailing list that will be maintained for one calendar year, or (c) serving the Association as a volunteer.
- Section 2. Voting Rights: All persons, who, as of the date of a voting event are Ulster County residents, 18 years of age or older and who qualify as an enrollee in accordance with Article IV, Section 1 are eligible to vote at such event.
- Section 3. Participation Fees: No fees shall be established as a requirement to become a voting participant. Fees may be established for participating in specific programs or activities of the Association. These shall be consistent with policies established by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE V - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Section 1. Governing Body: The governing body of the Association shall be the Board of Directors. Each Director shall have voting privileges except the ex-officio representative designated by the Director of Cooperative Extension at Cornell.
- Section 2. Policies: The Board of Directors of the Association shall with Cornell Cooperative Extension at Cornell University outline the policies and procedures of the Association consistent with the Constitution and Memoranda of Agreement between the Association and Cornell Cooperative Extension at Cornell University and Ulster County.
- Section 3. Composition:
- A. The Board of Directors of the Association shall consist of 15 persons elected as Directors-at-Large plus the appointed members listed in Article V, Section 3 B, below.
- B. Appointed members:
- i. ~~i.~~ The county governing body shall be requested annually to appoint one legislator to serve as a Director on the Association Board of Directors.
- ii. ~~ii.~~ The county executive's office shall be requested annually to designate a staff member to serve as a Director on the Association Board of Directors.

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Comment [R1]: To add a representative from the
Ulster County Executive's office to the Board of
Directors

iii. ii. The Director of ~~Extension~~ Cornell Cooperative Extension at Cornell University shall designate representation from Cooperative Extension administration to serve on the Association Board of Directors as ex-officio without voting privileges.

Comment [deh2]: Replace with:
Cornell Cooperative Extension at Cornell University

- C. A quorum of the Board of Directors shall consist of a majority of the total voting membership of the Board.
- D. All Directors shall serve until their successors are named or a vacancy is declared as provided in Article V, Section 6.
- E. Directors-at-Large shall be selected through an election open to all persons who are eligible voting enrollees of the Association.
- F. A Director-at-Large shall not serve concurrently in another elected position within the Association.
- G. A person is not eligible to serve on the Board of Directors if:
 - i. The following relationships hold with a Board member or any association staff: mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, husband, wife, or any person residing in the same household.
 - ii. They currently are employed by the Association, or have been employed by the Association in the previous 18 months.
 - iii. *They are not a county resident with the exception of the Cornell Extension Representative assigned by the Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension.
 - iv. They served on one or more previous terms as an at-large Director lapse since that service is less than three (3) years with exception of appointed Directors as per Article V, Section 3 B. (See Article V, Section 5).
- H. Members of the Board of Directors shall abstain from voting on any issue in which he/she has a conflict of interest or an appearance of a conflict of interest.

Section 4. Duties: The Board of Directors shall:

- A. Establish the organizational structure, consistent with the Constitution, to conduct the work of the Association.
- B. Support and maintain the Cooperative Extension Association in cooperation with Cornell Cooperative Extension at Cornell University.
 - i. Execute the Memoranda of Agreement and authorize the execution of other legal instruments.
 - ii. Establish policies and procedures for maintaining an effective Cooperative Extension Association including program scope and priorities.

- C. Secure resources necessary to conduct, manage and administer the Association's program.
- D. Provide for the employment of staff to conduct the work of the Association.

Section 5. Term of Office: The term of office for Directors-at-Large is three years or until a successor is named, and shall not exceed a period of two consecutive elected terms plus the portion of an unexpired term to which they may have been appointed. After a lapse of three (3) years, they are eligible for re-election or appointment to the Board of Directors. Exception: the six-year limit does not apply to members appointed as per Article V, Section 3 B.

Section 6. Declaring a Vacancy: A position on the Board of Directors may be declared vacant by the President of the Association when the elected member has resigned or has an unexcused absence at three (3) regular meetings.

Section 7. Filling Vacancies on the Board of Directors:

- A. The President shall, after consultation with the Board of Directors make an appointment to fill the vacancy in a Director-at-Large position on the Board of Directors; such appointee to serve only until a replacement is chosen by the next regular election to fill the remaining portion of the unexpired term.

Section 8. Meetings of the Board of Directors: The Board of Directors shall meet at least five (5) times a year and more often as called by the President.

ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Section 1. Election: After the annual Association election and at least prior to February 1, the Board of Directors shall meet to elect officers and organize for the next year. A Nominating Committee of the Board of Directors shall prepare a slate of officers.

- A. The President and Vice-President of the Association shall be elected annually from among the members of the Board by a majority vote of the continuing and new members of the Board of Directors at the organizational meeting of the Board to be held between the annual meeting and February 1. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all program and standing committees, excluding the Nominating Committee. (An ex-officio member is a member by virtue of his/her office and has all the privileges of membership).
- B. The Secretary of the Association shall be a member of the Board of Directors and shall be appointed by the President at the organizational meeting of the Board to be

held between the annual meeting and February 1. A staff member may be appointed as recording Secretary and shall not serve as an officer nor be eligible to vote.

- C. The Treasurer of the Association appointed by the President at the organizational meeting of the Board to be held between the annual meeting and February 1. The Assistant to the Treasurer shall be appointed annually from the staff by the President with the approval of the Board of Directors prior to February 1. An Assistant to the Treasurer shall not serve as an officer nor be eligible to vote.
- D. The terms of office of the President, Vice-President, Secretary and the Treasurer of the Association Board of Directors shall be for the calendar year or thereafter until their respective replacements are named. An officer shall not serve in the same office for more than (3) consecutive years.

Section 2. Duties:

- A. The President of the Association in addition to the powers and duties conferred on the position by law shall perform such duties as usually pertain to the office of President. The President may call meetings of the Association, the Board of Directors, any of the committees or special meetings of the Association (see Article X, Section 2).
- B. The Vice-President of the Association shall perform the duties of the President in case of the President's absence or disability.
- C. The Secretary of the Association shall be responsible for keeping in permanent form complete and accurate records of all meetings of the Association, receive and present to the Board of Directors all communications relating specifically to the Association, and prepare correspondence on behalf of the Board of Directors.
- D. The Treasurer of the Association in addition to the powers and duties conferred upon the position by law shall act as custodian of all funds and property real and personal of the Association. ~~The Treasurer shall be responsible for disbursements of all Association funds for expenses of the Association only upon written order of the Executive Director or designee.~~ The Treasurer shall verify the financial situation of the Association and shall testify that the balance is current by signature on all financial reports as designated by the Board of Directors.
- E. The assistant to the Treasurer of the Association may be responsible for disbursements of Association funds for the expenses of the Association only upon written order of the Executive Director or designee.

Section 3. Filling Vacancies - Officers of the Association

- A. In the event a vacancy occurs in the position of the President; the Vice-President

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will complete the unexpired term.

- B. In the event of a vacancy in the position of Vice-President or other elected office, the Board of Directors shall select a Director to fill the unexpired term. Selection will be made by a majority vote of all members of the Board of Directors present at the meeting.
- C. In the event of a vacancy in the position of an appointed office; the President shall appoint with the approval of the Board of Directors a qualified replacement to fill the unexpired appointment.

ARTICLE VII - COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Committees: The Board of Directors shall establish each year at its organizational meeting those committees it deems necessary to carry out the work of the Association. Standing committees shall be identified in the operational guidelines of the Association. The President shall appoint all members to committees annually and designate a chairperson for each. Committees shall act as set forth in the Association's operating guidelines. (See Article XII)

Section 2. Executive Committee: An executive Committee of the Board of Directors composed of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary will conduct the business of the Association in the interim between regularly scheduled Board meetings.

ARTICLE VIII – PROGRAM AREAS AND PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Section 1. Establishment of (Program/Issue) Areas:

The Board of Directors shall establish annually the major program areas of the Association and establish the advisory structure for each area. Details of the procedures for creating and staffing the advisory structure(s) shall be contained in the operating guidelines of the Association (See Article XII).

ARTICLE IX - ASSOCIATION NOMINATION AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. Nominating Committee: The Nominating Committee is a committee of the Association and its enrollees and is not a standing committee of the Board of Directors. It is responsible to and acts in the interest of the Association, its enrollees and constituencies.

- A. Composition: The President of the Association shall annually appoint a Nominating Committee of at least five people, who represent the broad interests of the residents of the county and the work of the Association; a majority of whom are not current Board members. The President shall designate the chairperson of the Nominating Committee.
- B. Duties:
- i. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a list of nominees for all vacant elected or eligible elected positions. Current members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible as nominees.
 - ii. In addition to nominations by the Committee, nominations may be made by:
 1. A petition delivered to the Association in person or by certified mail no later than 45 days prior to the election. Thirty eligible voting enrollees of the Association must sign the petition.
 2. Nominations from the floor where the nominating and election process occurs at the annual meeting of the Association.
 3. By write in on the election ballot where balloting is done by mail.

Section 2. Elections and Voting: Elections shall be held annually by a method determined by the Board of Directors prior to July 1. The election shall be conducted in one of the following ways:

1. By ballot of all eligible voters present at the annual meeting, or
2. A mail ballot sent to all eligible voters, as defined in Article IV Section 2 at least twenty-one days prior to the due date of return.

In all cases, the candidate receiving a plurality of vote for each seat shall be declared elected. In the event of a tie vote, the winner shall be decided by a majority vote of the Board of Directors at its next meeting.

ARTICLE X - ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

Section 1. Annual Meeting: One meeting of the Association during the last quarter of the calendar year shall be designated as the annual meeting. Public notice shall be given of the time and location of the meeting at least 21 days in advance of the meeting. The agenda shall include the following items, plus other business as appropriate:

- i. Annual financial and program report,
- ii. Either the announcement of the results of the election conducted by mail or the conduct of the election by the voting of eligible voters present at the annual meeting.

Section 2. **Special Meetings:** A special meeting of the Association may be called by the Board of Directors and shall be called by the President upon written petition by twenty-five (25) eligible voters provided the objects of such meetings are set forth in the petition. Only such business may be conducted as is set forth in the call of the meeting. Public notice of special meetings shall be made at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the meeting date.

Quorum: A quorum for any annual or special meetings of the Association shall consist of twenty-five (25) eligible voters of the Association.

ARTICLE XI - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Section 1. **Robert's Rules of Order:** The rules contained in the most current *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern the Association in all cases to which they are applicable and where they are consistent with the Constitution or the regulations (including operating guidelines) of the Association as adopted by the Board of Directors. In the event that Roberts Rules of Order, the Constitution, and/or the regulations of the Association are not consistent then the Constitution shall take priority followed by the regulations of the Association.

Article XII – OPERATING GUIDELINES

Section 1. Operating guidelines of the Association that identify operating details of the Board and committees not contained in this Constitution shall be established and reviewed annually by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XIII - AMENDMENTS

Section 1. The Constitution of the Association shall be reviewed every three years by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. The Constitution of this Association may be amended with prior approval by the Board of Directors of this Association and the Director of Extension by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the eligible voters present at any annual or special Association meeting or by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the eligible voters responding in a mail ballot.

ARTICLE XIII - REPEAL OF PREVIOUS DOCUMENTS

This Constitution shall take effect when approved by the eligible voters and all previous documents of the Association entitled "Constitution" and "By-laws" are hereby repealed.

Approved by:

Adopted by:

Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension

President of the Association

Comment [deh4]: At Cornell University

Date

Date