



Photo by Jim O'Connell, Senior Resource Educator at Cornell Cooperative Extension Ulster County, from the chainsaw and tractor workshop class.

Farm Health and Safety Best Practice Training

Agriculture is one of the most dangerous industries in the country and can present hazards and risks not only to farmers but to their employees and families. Farmers and farmworkers work long, physically demanding days and the absence of an employee creates greater risk for everyone involved in the business. For the workers, it means lost wages and for the farmer, many of whom are smaller operations, it means reduced productivity, fewer harvests, and less revenue from crop sales. Many of the injuries on the farm are preventable and result from lack of best practices education on farm equipment, large animal handling and diseases, and repetitive motion injuries. A 2018 survey of Hudson Valley growers found that 55% of those polled wanted equipment safety training, 30% wanted to learn exercises to reduce injury resulting from repetitive motion, and 15% indicated they wanted training on livestock maintenance and handling.

Cornell Cooperative Extension Ulster County (CCEUC) is a leader in providing technical assistance and training to farmers offering programs that are developed in response to direct input from Cornell staff, other land

grant universities, and local people in the community. In previous workshops for new livestock farmers, 67% of attendees strongly agreed that after the workshop they had an increased knowledge of all topics presented. More recently, two workshops entitled *Chainsaw Game of Logging* and *Tractor Safety for Spanish Speaking Farmworkers* were filled to capacity within only several days of advertising.

A total of 9 workshops and 17 videos, led by Senior Resource Educator **Jim O'Connell**, were delivered to a targeted audience that consisted of livestock and fruit farmers from the **Hudson Valley**. Equipment and safe animal handling workshops were delivered in a hands-on classroom setting while the zoonotic diseases and repetitive motion workshops were delivered via Zoom. The funding that was saved from switching in-person programming to on an online platform due to Covid, was used to produce three short chainsaw safety videos for Spanish speakers. Overall, farmers came to the workshops with some knowledge but developed an improved understanding of on farm risks and best practices after attending while 86 producers achieved the outlined results.

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"After the workshop, I had increased my knowledge of chainsaw safety and maintenance...my previous knowledge was next to nill."

– Farm Manager

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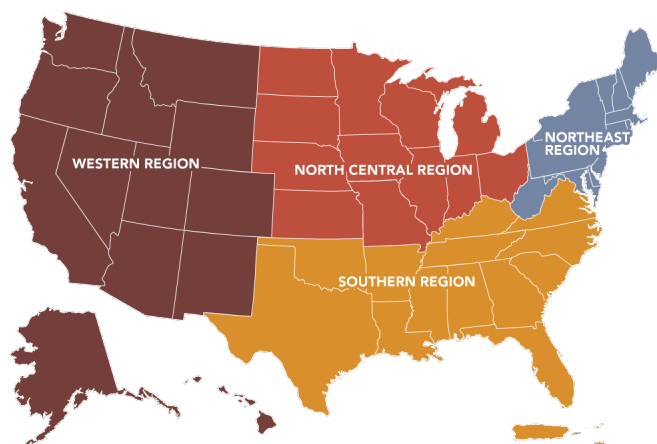
Extension Risk Management Education is supported by
the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

“Educating America’s farmers and ranchers to manage the unique risks of producing food for the world’s table.”

Extension Risk Management Education (ERME) is delivered through four regional centers that provide grant funding and leadership within their regions.

Projects are producer-focused, results-based and encourage public-private partnerships. Funded projects must identify targeted results that will help producers manage risk and then describe how the project will measure those results.

Extension Risk Management Education has funded innovative education projects that have generated tangible results for agricultural producers in 56 US states and territories. Beginning in 2020, the Centers initiated a new funding opportunity for the delivery of risk management education to agricultural producers underserved by the Federal crop insurance program. Priorities for both of these programs include commitments to funding results, providing transparent accountability, and encouraging collaboration. The accomplishments of all funded projects are available for public viewing on the ERME website:
<http://ExtensionRME.org>



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