

Article from Sustainable Campus, January 1st, 2013:

<http://www.sustainablecampus.cornell.edu/blogs/news/posts/cornell-awarded-59-signs-of-sustainability>

Cornell Awarded 59 "Signs of Sustainability"

Sustainable Tompkins recognizes community sustainability efforts...

On December 2, 2012 [Sustainable Tompkins](#) celebrated achievements and innovations in sustainability spotted in our community throughout the year. Awardees are celebrated for their contributions and receive a "Sign of Sustainability" certificate for their initiative. Cornell received 59 "Signs of sustainability" certificates for 2012!

Sustainable Tompkins invites the community to keep watch through the year to spot individuals and organizations emerging on the local scene, all doing their part to help advance community sustainability.

Do you have a "Sign of Sustainability" you would like to report? If so, please contact [Sustainable Tompkins!](#)

2012 Signs of Sustainability – Cornell University and affiliates:

- Four **Cornell University graduate students - Frank Nicklaus, Benjamin Koffel, Andrew Curthoys, and Neyvin De Leon** - presented their findings to the Tompkins County Planning Department on the viability of various renewable options in Tompkins County.
- **Cornell University ecologist Robert Howarth and engineer Anthony Ingraffea** were cited in Time magazine's 2011 list of 'People Who Mattered'. Howarth was recognized for his study which argued that natural gas produced by hydraulic fracturing may create a bigger greenhouse gas footprint than coal. Ingraffea was cited for his awareness-raising work about the threats that shale gas drilling could pose to water supplies.
- **Recent Cornell graduate James Muna** has launched "Bora Wear": a store which creates men's clothes using traditional Kenyan cloths called khanga and kitenge. The fabric is purchased from Kenyan producers and a portion of Bora Wear's profits will be returned to an orphanage in Kenya that supports HIV-positive children.
- "Cornell Big Red Cheddar" was developed by **Cornell University dairy extension specialist Rob Ralyea**. Ralyea developed this specialty cheese with the help of Brian Bailey, master cheese maker at Yancey's Fancy cheese company in Corfu NY and Howard Van Buren of Chr. Hansen, an international company that develops natural ingredients for the food, pharmaceutical, nutritional and agricultural industries. Big Red Cheese will be available online and at campus outlets, like Cornell Orchards and the Cornell Campus Store.
- Science Cabaret presented a program by **Cornell faculty member Chuck Greene** called "Fossil Fuel Junkies, Climate Change, and National Security."

- **Cornell University** hosted a free event that allowed government officials and the public access to learn about and connect with more than twenty University programs. In this first-time, resource-sharing event, representatives from departments and outreach offices provided information about their respective areas, among them Cornell Cooperative Extension and the Sustainability Office.
- **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schuyler County** hosted the first Corning Locally Grown Foods Festival in February, giving participants the opportunity to sample local foods, meet farmers, and learn about how and where they can buy healthy, local food.
- Hosted by the **Cornell Cooperative Extension in Tompkins County**, the Tompkins County Agriculture Summit gave local farmers the opportunity to share their success story and to showcase the diversity and productivity of local farms. The summit was the first that the county has had in years.
- The Mobile Home Weatherization program taught residents now, for free, to save energy in their home while still staying warm. The event was sponsored by the **Cornell Cooperative Extension in Tompkins County** and the Tompkins Community Action Weatherization Assistance Program.
- **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County** renovated their kitchen-space into a well-equipped, large commercial-grade kitchen. The organization celebrated its opening by hosting a public open house for the Cargill Teaching Kitchen, which featured free food and information about their food-related classes.
- During the first annual Leaf Swap, instead of paying for leaf pickup, attendees brought bags of their clean leaves to the **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County** to give to any gardeners or composters who could use them.
- **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County** started the new Community Chef volunteer leadership development program to teach participants to how to become agents of change for healthier food in their communities.
- To help consumers understand their options, **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County** featured a presentation on Landowners' Rights Regarding Oil & Gas Leases as part of their Consumer Issues Program.
- **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County** started a free monthly newsletter called "The Community Toolbox" that shares news about classes and learning events.
- **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County** and the Tompkins County Council of Governments (TCOG) co-sponsored a public meeting to educate participants about the regulations, risk and land use issues associated with the development of gas pipelines.
- The greater Ithaca Community, Chef Roy Despaigne, GreenStar Community Projects, the Community Chef Project, and **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County** came together to organize weekly Fresh Friday events for roughly two months. The events offered healthy and fresh local, sustainable food, sustainability information and resources, and music.
- The Way2Go program of **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County** hosted a CarFit event. CarFit, a program developed by the American Society on Aging, AARP, and the American Occupational Therapy Association, is designed to help older drivers decide if their current vehicle fits their present needs.
- Sponsored by **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County** and the Ithaca Green Building Alliance, the Local Building Materials Initiative was created to better

connect those involved with and interested in using local building materials. Their website includes a directory and interactive map.

- NYSEG, Cargill, Cayuga Bird Club, and the **Cornell Lab of Ornithology** teamed to build a safe nesting site for a family of ospreys.
- The **Cornell Law School** hosted the conference, "Women, Sustainable Development and Food Sovereignty/Security in a Changing World" to bring together an international group of women who have been involved in projects that encouraged sustainable development in their region.
- The **Cornell student vineyard at Cornell Orchards** has been certified organic by the Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA) of New York.
- This year, **Cornell Small Farms Program's** biennial New York Small Farms Summit grew considerably since their last summit. Approximately 150 farmers with small operations and farm educators met physically and virtually at the event to prioritize the organization's efforts on behalf of regional small farms.
- **Cornell University** will build a two-million-square-foot applied science and engineering campus on Roosevelt Island in New York City. The campus will be designed to be one of the most sustainable campuses in the world.
- **Cornell University** began offering a climate change minor to its undergraduate students.
- **Cornell University** opened the Kevin M. McGovern Family Center for Venture Development in the Life Sciences to support the incubation of biologically-focused enterprises.
- **Cornell University** earned the Gold rating in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS) by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability Education.
- **Cornell University's "Greeks Go Green"** held a Reuse-a-Shoe Drive, collecting old pairs of athletic shoes to be sent to Nike, where they were reused to create new products. New or significant expansion of sustainable activity by an existing enterprise or organization.
- **Cornell University Alumni Affairs** decided to donate books left over from the New Student Reading Program to schools, reading groups, and organizations.
- **Cornell University** has taken many steps to make their alumni reunions more sustainable. They donate compost to Cornell's Farm Services, choose caterers that use sustainable supplies, use water coolers instead of providing bottled water, and they offset carbon emissions for their bus travel to Ithaca.
- The **Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management at Cornell University** hosted the Agribusiness Economic Outlook Conference. One conference panel discussed how hydraulic fracturing in Pennsylvania has impacted rural economies and farmers. About 150 economists, academicians and others attended the conference.
- **Cornell University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS)** hosted a contest within their six buildings to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. A total of 2 million pounds of carbon dioxide were saved (saving \$230,000!). The first place winner, the students in Barton Lab, saved 801,988 pounds of carbon dioxide.
- Glean NY is a new statewide project created by **Cornell University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences**, the Food Bank Association of New York, and the New York Farm Bureau. The project is designed to prevent food waste by encouraging farmers to donate surplus or unmarketable crops to organizations in need.

- **Cornell University College of Architecture, Art and Planning's Milstein Hall** received LEED Gold certification for its achievements in sustainability, design, and efficient operational standards.
- **The Cornell University College of Architecture, Art, and Planning** hosted representatives from The City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative, presenting to the public and hosting a smaller workshop in Ithaca on building skills for how city government can end structural disadvantage in public administration.
- **Cornell University's Human Ecology Building** was awarded a LEED Platinum rating for sustainable structures, making it the first building on the Cornell campus to achieve this rank.
- 30 Cornell undergraduate students redesigned the Head Start facilities at Tompkins Cortland Community College. The facilities were custom-built to combine design theory and behavioral science to better support the developmental needs of children. The project is part of a long-running partnership between two design and environmental analysis classes in the **Cornell University College of Human Ecology**: professor Gary Evans' The Environment and Social Behavior and a design studio taught by professor Paul Eshelman. Since 1995, Eshelman and Evans have combined their courses, directing their students as they improved the design of local facilities serving populations with unique needs.
- The Sciencenter hosted 'Moo to You', a program offered by the **Cornell University Dairy Science club** to teach children about dairy animals, how to make butter, identify cheeses, and more.
- The **Cornell University Department of Architecture** held a symposium titled "Sustaining Sustainability: Alternative Approaches in Urban Ecology and Architecture" to examine approaches to sustainability and the built environment that go beyond the typical anthropological perspectives.
- **Cornell University's Department of Design and Environmental Analysis** hosted "People, Planet, and Performance: A Conversation with Rick Fedrizzi" as part of their Beyer Sustainable Design Lecture. Fedrizzi is the President, CEO and founding chair of the U.S. Green Building Council.
- Through a generous grant from the Northeast Sun Grant Institute, the **Cornell University shrub willow bioenergy program** grew tremendously. The grant led to breeding willow (a renewable energy option) and installation of a boiler which will burn willow biomass to heat two buildings in Cornell's agricultural station in Geneva.
- A team of international researchers, led by **Cornell University Plant Science Professor Stewart Gray**, studying the spread of viral plant diseases by insects, received a grant of close to \$1 million from the National Science Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
- **Cornell University** has become the first Ivy League university to be certified by the Marine Stewardship Council for serving only seafood certified as sustainably harvested in its on-campus dining facilities.
- Two teams from the **Cornell University Energy Institute** and the **Cornell University Sustainable Design** organization were among the eight finalists in the U.S. Department of Energy's Geothermal Student Competition.
- A collection of Food Science researchers and volunteers from **Cornell** and the University of Hawaii's HI-SEAS (Hawaii Space Exploration Analog and Simulation) project teamed

to research foods that are healthy, sustainable, and delicious, while also being suitable for space travel.

- To recognize President Lincoln's 150th anniversary of signing the Land-Grant College Act, **Mann Library** at Cornell University's annual Local Fair was themed around Local Ideas That Work!. The fair showcased local innovation, local foods, energy efficiency measures, and campus-community partnerships.
- **Cornell University's Mann Library** hosted "Working Across Differences to Make a Difference: Collaborative Engagement as a Pathway to Sustainability, Justice, and Equity." The event was meant to inspire a conversation between campus and community partners about how to come together to create sustainable change.
- In the "Catch the Breeze" wind turbine design competition, children were given the opportunity to learn how to harness wind energy using inexpensive materials, and then discover how wind energy can be converted into electrical energy. Participants met with wind turbine designers and received free materials and their final designs competed for prizes. (**Cornell XRaise**)
- A passionate animal rights activist and the head of the Gabby Wild Foundation Inc., **Cornell student Gabby Wild** is undertaking the "12 in 12 for 12" awareness-raising campaign. During each of the twelve months throughout the year, Gaby dressed in 12 different animal-inspired and originally designed outfits each representing an endangered species.
- In an event co-sponsored by the **Mann Library at Cornell University, the Food, Agriculture, and Nutrition Group, New World Agriculture and Ecology Group, and GPSA-FC**, Chris Koliba and Erica Campbell visited Ithaca to discuss healthy food systems in Vermont. In their lecture, titled "Collaborative Engagement and Empowered Food Systems: Lessons from Vermont," these renowned professionals discussed their vast experience.
- Holly Heitzman from **Cornell University's Alumni Affairs and Development** started an office book exchange within her department.
- "Cosmos," electronically-powered artwork by Leo Villareal, is powered by 12,000 energy-efficient computer-driven LEDs (light-emitting diodes). These lights combine to create a piece of art that is constantly changing. (**art exhibit at Johnson Museum**)
- **Cornell Professor Mary Jo Dudley** was honored by the White House as a "Chavez Champions of Change" leader. As one of ten individuals who received this award, President Obama granted Dudley this honor for her work as the director of the Cornell Farmworker Program and her efforts to improve the lives and working conditions for farmworkers and their families.
- The Finger Lakes Social Entrepreneur Institute was a weekend-long training session for social entrepreneurs with the theme "creating local, sustainable, and just economies, with equity as the driver for growth." (**Center for Transformative Action at Cornell**)
- Presented by **Cornell University President's Sustainable Campus Committee**, the Town of Caroline won the 2012 Cornell University Partners in Sustainability Award for their progressive environmental accomplishments in Tompkins County.
- Way2Go organized a dance party to benefit Get Your Greenback Tompkins, Swidjit, and the Sustainable Enterprise and Entrepreneurs Network. The party also served local wine and beer. (**Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County**)

- Moving Box Studios and Way 2 Go collaborated to film a series of videos about alternative modes of transportation, such as bus use and carsharing. (**Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County**)