



Cornell University

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**CCE-Monroe Welcomes Urban Garden Educator  
Alison Espinosa has joined our team serving Rochester and the Western Region.**

Cornell Cooperative Extension provides the educational outreach functions for Cornell University's role as New York State's Land Grant University. Harvest New York is an innovative Cornell Cooperative Extension team that focuses on the food and beverage value chains, workforce development and business expansion projects to increase profitability and investment in key sectors of New York's agriculture industry. The project areas covered by Harvest New York are Local Food Distribution and Marketing (including Farm to School), Urban Agriculture and Gardens, Farm-Based Beverages, Emerging Crops, and Agricultural Economic Development/Local Supply Chain Management.

Food-based gardening is a beneficial activity that leads to the economical production and consumption of healthy and fresh food. Community gardens in particular have the potential to contribute to community resiliency, social and environmental justice and food sovereignty. This program seeks to contribute to the successful production, harvesting, safe food handling, sustainability, nutrition and food access for community gardens across New York State.

Recently, Harvest NY added Alison Espinosa to our team. Alison is a Central Florida native and after graduating high school relocated to Cayuga County, New York where she gained a true reverence for bucolic living and WNY agriculture while working on a horse farm in Union Springs. Alison is a Certified Veterinary Technician of 11 years with a strong background in veterinary medical terminology, companion animal as well as livestock health in clinical, emergent, farm and research settings. As an Herbalist, Alison is also expanding her education and currently pursues a diploma in Advanced Master Herbalism with the emphasis of plants as medicine/nutrition for humans and animals/livestock, alike. Case Management and Care Coordination for underserved communities are also passions Alison possesses after years of working with high-risk populations in Denver, Colorado before relocating back to the Finger Lakes Region.

All of the skills and education acquired over time are what place Alison in the position of Urban Gardens Specialist here in Rochester, NY; focusing on community gardens and those they serve to access to nutritionally enriching foods, as well as facilitation of educational tools to address food sovereignty and poverty throughout disparate communities. Alison currently

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owns and runs her farm on over an acre of land in Ontario County and specializes in herb gardens, greenhouse growing, seed starting, seed saving, pollinator gardening, poultry and livestock care. The surplus of produce from her farm is provided to local members of the Rochester community facing food apartheid. Companions on Alison's farm include flocks of laying hens, ducks, silver fox rabbits for compost and breeding, as well as the newest addition of honeybees!

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County is pleased to partner with Harvest NY and welcome Alison to our team. Those who would like to learn more about the Urban Garden outreach of CCE-Monroe and Harvest NY are encouraged to contact Alison at [ame94@cornell.edu](mailto:ame94@cornell.edu).

*CCE-Monroe is a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational organization and is part of the Cooperative Extension land grant system, a partnership between County, State, and Federal governments that is administered in New York State through Cornell University. Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County provides research-based information and educational programming to ensure the vitality of agriculture, strengthen families, promote health and well-being, responsibly improve home and community landscapes, and enhance our natural environment.*



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