June 3, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

A decision has been reached regarding the participation of the Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development program in the 2020 New York State Fair. We have been consulting with Extension Administration, P.W. Wood, our partners in Animal Sciences, and many of you, and we also had a direct conversation with State Fair leadership on Friday, May 29. There is no decision at this time on the State Fair overall, nor a clear indication of when that decision will be made. However, we have made the very difficult decision to suspend 4-H’s participation in the New York State Fair for 2020.

The cancellation of our participation includes the 4-H Youth Building Exhibits, Animal Science Competitions, and 4-H participation in any youth shows. We based our decision on the following challenges and concerns:

- Overwhelming concern for the health and safety of our staff, youth, volunteers and families
- Uncertainty of when group gatherings can safely resume while following Health Department guidelines
- Overall uncertainty of the status of the NYS Fair
- Current recommendations provided by the CDC
- The need to provide clarity at the County level as you make plans for the summer

As the reopening of NYS progresses we will continue to listen and work with all of you to explore how to keep programming going during this time for the benefit and growth of our youth, families, volunteers and staff. We recognize and appreciate the efforts you are all making to explore virtual strategies to support the youth, families and volunteers of the NYS 4-H program. We are proud to support a program and system that works so hard to support the youth of our state and nation grow and thrive during this challenging time.

Sincerely,

Andy Turner and Autumn Lavine
New York State 4-H State Office
nys4-h.org