Cooperative Extension’s role in 
Disaster Communication and 
Reporting: NY EDEN and Hurricane Sandy

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Keith G. Tidball, Cornell University NY EDEN
Situational Awareness
and
Common Operating Picture
in Agricultural Disasters

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Situational Awareness & Assessment

• Why is it necessary?
• Provide appropriate support to the agriculture community during disasters
• Effectively prioritize resource requests
• Provide vital information to decision makers
• Disseminate crisis communications and press releases to the appropriate populations
Situational Assessment

• Emergency Operation Center Agriculture Desk
• Limited access to current and UTD information
• Need for “boots on the ground” real-time information (ground truth)
• Limited access to Federal databases such as FSA and NASS
Situational Assessment

• An Example – Radiologic Exercises/Drills
  – 10 mile plume radius
  – 50 mile ingestion pathway

• Situation Awareness and Public Warning
  – Identify all agricultural commodities in zones
  – Notify appropriate individuals
NY EDEN and Hurricane Sandy

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Learning from Irene & Lee

Develop state-wide set of standard operating procedures

Formalize a system-wide team to respond to all-hazards (CCE DART)
Campus-County Partnerships are Key

Our educational approach, for both preparation and recovery, rely on the connection between research and effective outreach.

NY EDEN Advisory Committee
CCE Associations
Colleges and Departments
Program Work Teams
State and Federal partners

Beneficiaries – families, businesses & communities
Campus Roles & Responsibilities: Generic example related to Sandy

Integration with The Consumer Education Program for Residential Energy Efficiency

Energy Town Meeting: Repairing your flood damaged home with an eye toward energy efficiency

Presentation on Re-entering a flooded home.
Response to Sandy

Information packets to Local Association E.D.s

Cornell resources (bulletins, fact sheets)

FEMA resources

Appearances on local TV, radio stations, and in print media

REQUESTS FOR SITREPS FROM ALL COUNTIES IN THE AFFECTED AREA
Diverse Communication Venues

CCE-DISASTER-L CCE-DISASTER-L@list.cornell.edu

E-mails from CCE Extension Disaster Education Network (NY EDEN) disaster@cornell.edu

cce-dart-L@cornell.edu – Use this list to make widespread announcements to subscribers (presumably this would be used during the period of an emergency or disaster). Anyone can subscribe.
Social Media

• Twitter account: CCE_Disaster

Follow @CCE_Disaster

• EDEN on Facebook:
https://www.facebook.com/CceEden
CCE Suffolk County Association perspective relative to Sandy

• Damage Assessment
• Farmer Consultations
• CCE’s responses
• Campus-County partnership
• Lessons learned in terms of readiness to deal with future storms
Key Takeaways

Extension has great potential to be useful in disaster contexts as information brokers

• We have (or can get) the information needed by residents
• We have the capacity to disseminate that information
• We have the ability to gather situational awareness on the ground via stakeholders within the county extension system