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**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**New York State Pawpaw Conference**

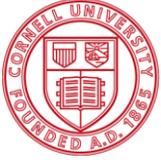
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oswego County (CCE Oswego County) and Cornell Cooperative Extension Harvest NY (CCE Harvest NY) will be hosting a state-wide conference on a native fruit called pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*). The conference will be held on Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup> from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the historic Kallet Theater in Pulaski, NY. Pawpaw is the largest edible fruit native to North America. It looks tropical and has a flavor most commonly associated with mango and banana. Its natural habitat extends from Michigan and New York to as far south as northern Florida, and as far west as Oklahoma and Kansas. While the fruit looks and tastes tropical, it can withstand cold temperatures down to USDA hardiness zone 5 and can be grown alongside other fruits right here in upstate New York. There are even historical records dating back to the nineteenth century showing that pawpaw was discovered in southern Oswego County near the Three Rivers Area. Today, however, most of the wild pawpaws are located in the western portion of the state. While pawpaws were grown by Indigenous Peoples in the past, sadly they became North America's forgotten fruit.

Recently, new cultivars have allowed for a niche industry to form and there is a lot of interest in seeing this native fruit return. Pawpaws are a wonderful crop with a lot of potential. In New York, the fruit begins to ripen in late September and continues through the first two weeks of October. One of the advantages of growing pawpaws is they are relatively pest free, making them attractive to small-scale agricultural producers. Beyond eating the fresh fruit, there are value-added products that can be made from pawpaw pulp, including pawpaw ice cream, jams, and even alcoholic beverages. However, one of the key challenges of creating a niche industry in New York is the lack of education and awareness. Most nursery managers, fruit growers, value-added producers and consumers are simply unfamiliar with this unique fruit. Therefore, the goal of the conference is to help bring the North American pawpaw out of the shadows. Conference organizers want to help fill in some important gaps in knowledge about this amazing fruit and to lay out a vision for the future.

This conference will cover pawpaw history, best fruit production practices, nutrition, processing, value-added products, and marketing. Some of our guest speakers will be recognized growers and researchers from across the country. Attendees will also be able to develop professional relationships and help build a network across New York. The cost to attend this all-day event is \$40 per person. Registration is required and seating is limited. Registration includes entry into the conference and an opportunity to try fresh pawpaw fruit provided by the Cornell Orchard. Attendees will also be able to taste some value-added products including pawpaw jam and pawpaw ice cream. Registration fees does not include lunch or the after-hour pawpaw alcoholic samplings led by Kallet Theater. Once attendees have registered online, they will receive a follow up email with the conference agenda and a list of restaurants within walking distance of Kallet Theater. There are numerous hotels or other accommodations in the area for those wishing to stay overnight. To learn more about the conference or to register go to the CCE Oswego website at: [thatscooperativeextension.org/events/2022/10/01/new-york-state-pawpaw-conference](https://thatscooperativeextension.org/events/2022/10/01/new-york-state-pawpaw-conference).

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CCE Oswego County and CCE Harvest NY are very excited about hosting the New York State Pawpaw Conference at the historic Kallet Theater in Pulaski, NY. The village of Pulaski is home to the world-famous Salmon River. During the months of September and October, anglers from all around the world travel to northern Oswego County to enjoy the amazing salmon run and steelhead season. There is a reason organizers selected the village of Pulaski to host this educational program! More details will be shared during the pawpaw conference.

For more information about the New York State Pawpaw Conference, please go to CCE of Oswego County website. For further information, please contact Joshua Vrooman, Agriculture Educator for CCE Oswego County at [jwv33@cornell.edu](mailto:jwv33@cornell.edu) or 315-963-7286 ext. 200 or Anya Osatuke, Small Fruits Specialist for CCE Harvest NY at [aco56@cornell.edu](mailto:aco56@cornell.edu) or 607-752-2793.

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