FY 2012 PROGRAM WORK TEAM ANNUAL REPORT

1. Full name of your Program Work Team (PWT):

   PROGRAM WORK TEAM ON POVERTY AND ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

2. Please list names, affiliations and e-mail addresses of the PWT Co-Chairs: (With an asterisk [*], please indicate the co-chair responsible for finalizing this report.)

   *Tom Hirschl, Department of Development Sociology
   Nancy Welch, CCE-Hamilton County

3. Please identify your PWT’s activities, accomplishments, and, most importantly, outcomes and impacts over the past year.

The program work team is a collaboration of efforts across five counties in New York State. The team holds monthly conference calls to share knowledge and experience, and to plan future activity. Brief descriptions about programs in each county follow this paragraph.

Hamilton County: Hamilton County is a large county in terms of land area (approximately equal in size to the State of Connecticut), yet the population is 4,836 (2010).

Awareness of poverty and hardship in the area is manifest in the growing use of the “Hamilton County Community Action Agency Food Pantry” that more than doubled between 2005 and 2010, from 823 to 2,207 individuals. Pantry access is not restricted by means testing, and has become a widely used and necessary resource for community members in need.

The program is working with the pantry to develop capacity for freezing locally grown vegetables for year round consumption. The plan is to work with this project to deliver education about poverty and economic hardship.
**Tompkins County:** The program is working with “Building Bridges Toward Socially Just and Ecologically Sound Local Economy” that is supported by several area organizations, including CCE-Tompkins. The goal of the program is to develop a set of robust indicators to measure program effects.

**Schuyler County:** This program is working with an advisory group of stakeholders who work extensively with area food pantries. The goal is to develop educational media and organize forums to raise awareness about the development of poverty within the county.

**Chemung County:** Chemung has started a VISTA Project that will investigate affordable housing and food insecurity in Chemung. The goal is to gain a better understanding of poverty in Chemung County using resources from Cornell University to assist with development of a community survey and poverty related data analysis. The VISTA project will establish a Poverty Reduction Coalition that will develop Chemung County poverty education materials, convene community education programs on poverty and develop a Chemung County Poverty Reduction Plan. Finally, the VISTA member will develop public education campaigns to encourage the use of public nutrition benefits at farmers markets and to alert county residents to the emerging affordable housing needs in the county.

**Genesee County:** Genesee has a high percent elderly that is at-risk of rising out-of-pocket medical expenses. A program presentation before the Genesee County Office of the Aging spurred an attempt to establish a plan to deal with current and future elderly poverty. The plan will involve local government elected officials, CCE, and campus cooperation.