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Catholic Charities Receives Donations of Fresh, Organic Produce From New Hope Community's Hope Farm

MONTICELLO – Already this harvest season, Catholic Charities of Orange, Sullivan, and Ulster has been the recipient of more than 300 pounds of fresh, organic produce cultivated at New Hope Community's Hope Farm. The produce, harvested at the farm located on the SUNY Sullivan campus in Loch Sheldrake, is used to supplement and enhance the menu provided at Catholic Charities residential programs in Monticello. As part of the program, Catholic Charities clients have even helped with harvesting some of the vegetables that later ended up on their plates.

"Catholic Charities is grateful to benefit from the incredible collaboration between New Hope Community and SUNY Sullivan," said Dr. Michael Weddle, Catholic Charities Medical Director, who made the connection between Catholic Charities and Hope Farm. "A fresh, wholesome diet plays an important role in a person's overall health and well-being, especially when people are recovering from addiction which has put so much stress on the body. Having produce fresh from the farm adds an important aspect to the treatment plan," added Dr. Weddle.

Catholic Charities staff and clients visit the farm each week to collect the donated produce. They began the season with a tour of Hope Farm and as the season progressed even helped with picking the fresh produce which has included tomatoes, peppers, potatoes, garlic, green beans, radishes, eggplant, kale, spinach, and collard greens.

Hope Farm is a planned organic farm project initiated in collaboration with SUNY Sullivan's Sustainability Team, Culinary Program. This health-focused, community-centered project is being cultivated on a three-acre plot that was provided by SUNY Sullivan.

"Hope Farm provides the people New Hope Community supports with experiences and opportunities that meaningfully develop their agricultural capabilities and more deeply connects them with our community members," said Debra McGinness, New Hope Community's Chief Executive Officer. "Our farmers believe that all things grow and thrive when grounded in a deep appreciation for the gifts of nature and we are happy to begin a new partnership with Catholic Charities to enable this wonderful organization to also reap the benefits of our harvest."

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Catholic Charities of Orange, Sullivan, and Ulster, as one of the human service agencies of Catholic Charities of The Archdiocese of New York, is committed to building a compassionate and just society. Catholic Charities of Orange, Sullivan, and Ulster serves the homeless, the hungry, the emotionally and physically handicapped, as well as immigrants, and the marginalized and vulnerable of Orange, Sullivan, and Ulster Counties. Catholic Charities collaborates with parishes, Catholic, and non-Catholic partners alike to help people of all religions who are in need, regardless of ability to pay. For more information, visit www.cccsos.org.

CUTLINE: Staff and clients from Catholic Charities and New Hope Community's Hope Farm show off the fruits of their labor from a recent harvest. Pictured are Anthony Martinez, Farm Assistant, Miranda Koskey, Renee LaNye, Audrey Tesseyman, volunteers from Catholic Charities, Jon Jon Thomas, Farmer, Dean, a New Hope Community volunteer, Kimberly McKay, Farmer/Horticulture Assistant, and Hassina Brodie, Counselor Assistant, Catholic Charities.