Challenges of scale

A drop in the bucket

An ocean of possibilities
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Over 81% of the US population lives in urbanized areas
Urban and Rural Population
1790-2010 (US Census)
Urbanization is a global process: Rates of urbanization differ from region to region, but urban proportions of populations are rising in all regions.
Population densities vary (1 dot = 1 person)
The population of the United States is not distributed evenly. Instead, we tend to bunch up in communities, leaving the spaces inbetween more sparsely inhabited. Most Americans live in or near cities; today 53 percent live in the 20 largest cities; 75 percent of all Americans live in metropolitan areas.

This map shows population density. The relative height of each radar city reflects the city's population level.

- Go West! Nevada is the fastest growing state, followed by Alaska, Hawaii, and Utah.
- Wyoming has the lowest population density of all states; it is the one state with more people per square mile.
- What happens in the empty spaces? Some oil is found in Wyoming. More of America's crops and livestock grow in this great state. One third of all corn is produced in the United States.

- Chicago, the city's land is a population of about three million people. There are 21 cities with populations smaller than this city.

Largest metropolitan area
- Includes New York City and portions of New Jersey and Long Island with a total population of 20 million.

Population density is highest in New York City, where there are 22,000 people per square mile.

Coastal areas are home to more than half of all US residents.

Distributing our population evenly would put an average of 75 people per square mile.

- New Jersey is the most densely populated state with an average of more than 1,000 people per square mile.
- Alaska is a sparsely populated state with an average of one person per square mile.

- Wet, some states are full of water. For example, Louisiana includes more than 7,000 square miles of lakes and wetlands. That's an area larger than Connecticut and Rhode Island combined.
Racial diversity varies, increasing overall
Patterened diversity of perceived interests

Town and country
Population density and vote share, by county, US presidential election 2016

- Trump wins in more rural areas
- Clinton wins in more urban areas

Sources: Atlas of US Presidential Elections; Census Bureau; The Economist
Challenges of History

The cooperative extension system formed before the demographic transition

Programs and funding streams must transform to prioritize urban needs

We are uniquely positioned to bridge urban-rural interests and to work towards equity for all
Cornell Cooperative Extension’s Mandate:

To ensure that all New York residents can benefit from Cornell’s research... particularly research from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the College of Human Ecology
Challenges of scale:

Small organization, big mandate

How can we make a major impact in the largest US city?

Ratio of staff to population is less than 1/125,000!
1. Name the New York City airports and where are they located?

2. An island is a piece of land surrounded by water. Name 4 islands in New York City.

3. If you want to travel from Far Rockaway to Harlem, what train do you take?

4. If I were a king looking for a bride in New York City, in what borough would I search?

5. Find 3 parks in New York City.
Strategies
Partnerships and Consortia

Long-term connections and collaborations with a wide range of community-based organizations, agencies and institutions
Community Recruitment

Design programs so that we tap into the diversity of NYC communities in hiring staff and engaging participants.
Multipliers
Conduct ToT programs for educators who have deep reach into their own agencies, communities, and social contexts
Foster Change in Settings and Systems

Use ecological approaches that strengthen family relationships, improve policies, and create settings that support optimal health and development.
Focused Programs Serving Specific Locations

Enable the development of long-term relationships, partnerships, trust, and sustained changes in practice
Practice and Promote Positive Youth Development

A core practice sparking collaboration across all program areas
Build systems for planning, assessing and prioritizing
Thank you!

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