CHANGING TIMES NEWSLETTERS - 2010

RUTGERS Changing Times

Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County — Volume VII, No. 1 Winter 2009/2010

Agent's Overview

Former Joe awakened to a lend rooster call simulated from the digital alarm "Cock-a-doodle-doooooo"! As Joe staggered to the bathroom and on over to breakfast, the holographic image of the Secretary of Agriculture automatically came on and discussed the economic disaster of slumping prices for pork and grain. Joe smiled and cared not. With great foresight and wisdom, Great Grandfather had given up those commodity markets in the late 1990's and transitioned to new emerging Ag opportunities.

Fellow farmers of that time said Great Grandfather was foolish. "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush". But as "Mavericks" - they understook some serious risks. Fortunately, the family had prudently done their homework, prospered and outlasted the conventionalists. Now Joe was reaping the benefits of their foresight and the generous passing of their preserved farms over the last six decades in New Jersey. With a steaming cup of Jersey Fresh, greenhouse grown organic coffee, Joe walked outside to proudly view their families collective creation; 257 acres of:

- 12% organic matter soil for growing nutritious foodcrops
- Beautiful rolling pastures permanently sequestering carbon into rich, fertile soil providing a permanent income flow through natural resource rebates
- Clean, flowing springs that provided drinking and irrigation water derived from the watershed buffer and recharge program. This open space farmland was recharging fifty million gallons annually amidst "Water Wars" throughout the region.
- Lush forest in a woodlot management program gave carbon tax credit and yielded cleaner - cooler air.

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2010 Atlantic Coast Agricultural Convention and Trade Show

Planning is well underway for the 2010 Atlantic Coast Agricultural Convention and Trade Show sponsored by The Vegetable Growers Association of New Jersey. This annual event is a cornerstone for the ag community within the Garden State and well beyond. Once again, it will be held at the Taj Mahal in Atlantic City, on January 12, 13 & 14. The entrance fee for the three day event is included in the annual membership of $100. The farmer member and one guest are admitted under each membership. Additional guests are $25 each. One Day Passes will be $50. Room rates at the Taj are dropping to $79. The wine and cheese has been incorporated into the Tuesday night Social.

The Educational Sessions are organized by Rutgers Cooperative Extension Specialists and Agents. They do an outstanding job of tapping into leaders in each of the many subjects covered throughout the event. Sessions on classic topics include Sweet Corn, Cucurbits, Peppers and Tomatoes. A new look at an old theme is the session on Specialty Potatoes. This should appeal to many who target a retail clientele. Customers are always interested in something a little different. Tree fruit, blueberry and small fruit sessions round out the production aspect. This convention is more than just vegetables, and is designed to bring together many aspects of ag production. To that end Animal Topics are included on Tuesday along with Bedding Plants. Cut Flowers are addressed on Wednesday and the cutting edge subject of Bioenergy, including producing bioenergy crops, is scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday. New Farmer Training also spans the two days but for farmers facing the challenges of running an existing business, Wednesday's session on Ag Mediation and Leadership offers insight into conflict management. Wes Kline will address Food Safety on Wednesday followed by an update on Third Party Audits on Thursday. For a complete listing of the most recent schedule of Educational Sessions visit the VGANJ website at www.njvegetables.org.

We hope to see you there!

Pegi Ballister-Howells

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Spotlight - Dean's Report

2010 Board of Agriculture

SPRING 2010

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AGENT'S OVERVIEW

Community Outreach

Monmouth County Fair

Lima Strawberry Fair

Freedom Fest

SUMMER 2010

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AGENT'S OVERVIEW

Vegetables, Fruit & Human Health

Farm Bureau Convention & Master Gardener Graduation

FALL 2010