



## Agent's Overview

Trick or Treat! Growers in Central Jersey were really tricked by Mother Nature this season. After an elongated dry spell of over 12 weeks without rain in most parts, we received over 12 inches of rain in one week. This climatic prank plagued both agronomic and vegetable crops with poor growth, increased diseases and reduced yields. Crop damage estimates on some farms showed disaster level losses for tomatoes, peppers, pumpkins, sweet corn and other crops as well as greatly reduced yields for field corn, soybean and hay. First you couldn't put enough water on even if you had irrigation and then you couldn't turn it off when the heavy rains came. This kept everyone out of the fields for a



while this fall and some farms will get their cover crops in very, very late or maybe not at all.

If you're still feeling down about the weather and the difficulties of farm life, get out and treat yourself to a movie. I'd suggest "Dreamer" with Kurt Russell and little Dakota Fanning. This semi-documentary is a feel-good film for the family and especially for the horse crowd. This honest and kind movie is about being as down as you can get such as when their bread-and-butter race horse

breaks a leg. The family resists putting the filly down and they tediously nurse it back to health. They fight off the credit collectors and eventually enter the star thoroughbred Sonya into the Breeders Cup. Check this winner out.

Speaking of animals, your county agent has had a bumper season in the field – we're talking bear, beaver, bald eagle and coyote. It's Great Adventure in the Garden State. I've got photos. Of course we have all seen way too many deer again this season. To manage the herd, Jack Rabin, NJAES, and John Grande, Snyder Farm director, along with the Rutgers crew in Cream Ridge, ran an excellent seminar for installation of deer fence. Almost 100 growers showed up on a very, very hot and humid day. More fence may be

*(Continued on page 2)*

## 2005 FFA Career Development Event

The 2005-2006 Career Development Event for the FFA was held on November 17 on Cook College – Rutgers University. This event provides students with an opportunity to apply skills learned in their agriculture, food and natural resource classes in a competitive setting. These events are held



R to L: Nancy Trivette - FFA Program Leader, McKenzie Manley - FFA Woodstown Chapter, Bill Sciarappa—Rutgers

throughout the year and test student skills in specific occupational areas. Each event targets certain skills in various segments of the agricultural industry. Students compete individually in most events, and are ranked individually and in teams. These events are Forestry, Poultry Judging, Horse Judging, Dairy Foods, Land Judging, Turf Management and Fruit and Vegetable Identification. Twenty-six schools throughout NJ participated with over 200 students.

Again this year County Agent Bill Sciarappa and Program Assistant Vivian Quinn assisted the FFA in the fruit judging and vegetable identification tests, in the Agriculture Museum. The final results were extremely close with BCIT-Westampton winning with a total

team score of 1,800, Allentown coming in 2<sup>nd</sup> at 1,790, Monmouth County Vocational School 3<sup>rd</sup>, followed by Phillipsburg, Belvidere, Northern Burlington Mid, Union County, Woodstown, Northern Burlington, Newton and Freehold. See more results on page 2.



In the midst of the NJ Agriculture Museum, student evaluates three grades of apples. Produce donated by Delicious Orchards.

## Howell Farm gets Protected Status

HOWELL — The Archbold Farm, a beef cattle and hay farm on Crow Hill Road, was entered into the Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Program on October 4, the 95th farm protected by the program. It's the sixth township farm in the program. The \$1.093 million being paid to the family is split among the state, county and township.

Since nearly half the farm property lies in Freehold Township, Howell officials expect to recoup some of their money from the neighboring township, said John Costigan, chairman of the Howell Township Preservation Task Force.

Elsie Archbold said the site had long been a dairy farm and continued in that use for several years after the 1972 fire. "We had 50 cows, and my husband went in the barn and got all of them out when the fire struck," she recalled. "We took our cattle to another farm, and my husband struggled to make it

work, but it was too much, and we had to get out of the dairy business." Elsie's husband, Donald B. Archbold Sr., died of cancer in 2002. He was 76.

The finishing of the deed-restriction paperwork means the site will remain a farm, Karen Archbold, 42, said, "That's what Dad wanted. I truly hope to see the farm stay in the family. I'll do what I can to see it happen. I really believe it can happen."

Howell Township has preserved about 300 acres of open space in the last three years and has negotiated with land owners to preserve several hundred more acres. Tuesday's announcement was also attended by Freeholder William C. Barham, who said, "The county is committed to working with municipalities to preserve their threatened agricultural resources."

According to information provided by Barham, there are 9,392



Howell Councilman Wayne Lucey (left) and Monmouth County Freeholder William C. Barham discuss the Archbold Farm, the latest property added to the Farmland Preservation.

acres of preserved farmland in the county, and the county Planning Board is working on the preservation of an additional 42 farms comprising nearly 2,000 acres.

Officials said the acquisition was processed through a state Planning Incentive Grant. The county Farmland Preservation Program is overseen by the county Agriculture Development Board and administered by the county Planning Board. The Monmouth Conservation Foundation also participated.

Bob Jordan—AP Press—10/5/05

2006 Career Development Event Results						
School	Fruit-Veg	Turf	Horse	Dairy	Poultry	Land Judging
Allentown	2 <sup>nd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	-	1st	1 <sup>st</sup>
Freehold	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	-	15 <sup>th</sup>	-	-
Monmouth	3 <sup>rd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	-	-	-	-
N. Burlington	5 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	9th	2nd	5th

For complete results - [http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/rural/ag\\_ed/cderesul06.htm](http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/rural/ag_ed/cderesul06.htm)

(Continued from page 1)  
given away from NJDA in 2006, so get on their list now and call me if you need a letter of support.

Hope you had a full-filling Thanksgiving holiday. Come to think of it, I saw more turkeys around the farm edges this year than I ever have seen in my entire life. Maybe you bagged one the old fashioned way? In any event, finish up in your fields and get ready for the winter. I've heard that the Farmer's Almanac calls for lots of

snow and cold weather yet the woolybears I've seen all have very thin fur coats – a difference of opinion? We'll soon see whose right as the temperatures have dropped quickly after our Indian Summer.

Remember to schedule an appropriate educational meeting for yourself this winter such as the big NJVGA conference in Atlantic City from January 10—12 or the Central Jersey version at Freehold Gardens on February 3. For those agents and ag advisors involved with horse

pastures, there is a train-the-trainer seminar on December 8 in Hunterdon. For you landscapers, ornamental and sod producers, there is a conference in the Freehold Gardens in late February.

Finally, hope you find a new computer or fax machine under your tree this winter season so we all can continue to increase our communication capability and make our business operations more efficient. Happy Holidays.

Bill Sciarappa

## REMEMBER WHEN...BACK ON THE FARM

*Howell man returns to his roots ----- tending horses*

**F**orty years ago, Bill Height set out for greener, rather nostalgic pastures. He'd grown up in the 1930s and '40s on a 65-acre horse-powered farm on Wayside Road in Neptune, but veered as a young man into the sales world. In 1965, at age 31, he'd had it with selling cars.

"I got to the point where I hated people," says Height, who now lives in Howell. "I said to myself that I had to get back to my roots, to my original life -- to horses. It came back to me that I wanted to work again with animals." Height now trains and cares for eight horses at Tullo's, a stable in Howell. His days now start before dawn, just as they did when he was a barefooted boy directing the horses that pulled his family's plows and hauled vegetables in from the fields: He feeds the horses, gives them a rest, takes them for a therapeutic swim, exercises them on the track and escorts them to races. That's the prescription for every day. "I haven't had a vacation in 40 years, since I've been back in horses," Height says. He's no worse for the wear.

His independence, his penchant for solitude, started when he was a boy. The Heights, who continued a family tradition of running the stagecoach line from Squan Village (now Manasquan) to Perth Amboy, didn't need much but what they raised themselves. "We basically grew vegetables," Height says, "green beans, corn, tomatoes, lettuce, all kinds of greens -- collards, kale -- a lot of greens. I used to go with my father to the farmers' market in Bradley Beach. All the little groceries in the area would



A young Bill Height worked with horses on his family's farm on Wayside Road in Neptune. (PHOTO: COURTESY OF BILL HEIGHT)

### A young Bill Height worked on his family's farm on Wayside Road in Neptune

come buy vegetables from us -- the local mom-and-pop shops. We used to go six nights a week." Meanwhile, Height's mother would make sure their produce had a year-round shelf life. "We used to have a root cellar, where we'd put sweet potatoes, regular potatoes, green tomatoes wrapped in the Asbury Park Press; they'd be red by January," Height recalls. "We'd can and preserve everything -- beans, tomatoes -- and we'd make our own ketchup, tomato sauce, dill pickles. Right next to the root cellar, there was a preserves pantry, with everything in Ball jars, all lined up. My mother would make our own cream, cottage cheese, butter, and we had our own milk, of course. Everything was from our own milk cows." Sundays were big-dinner day. "Every Sunday at 2 p.m., we'd have a large dinner, a roasted chicken from our farm, three different pies, all kinds of vegetables and at least 12 to 15 people there."

Actually, he finds horse life a lot more relaxing than farm life, in

*"I haven't had a vacation in 40 years, since I've been back in horses." - Bill Height*

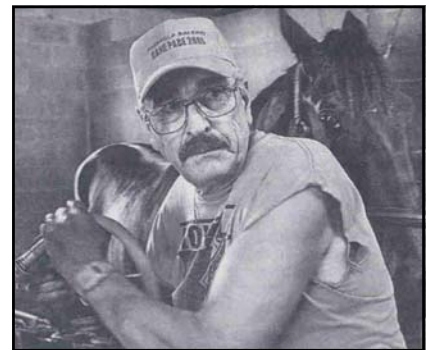
spite of the fact that racing days turn dawn-to-dusk horse tending into no-nap marathons. But Height is only at the track, mostly Freehold Raceway, occasionally the Meadowlands, "several times a week." Register that twinkle again, please, and remember that horses eat seven days a week.

Back in the stable, Powerful Paul is doing just that, as are Candy Man, Cronkite and Ambro Anthony. The aptly named Peaceful has finished and is munching on the equine equivalent of digested hay. It's nudging on

to early evening and Height's about to settle things right for the overnight. But Height's got a thorn in his side. Or, to be a bit more blunt, in his butt.

"See that over there?" he asks, pointing to a sulky, a fragile-looking two-wheeled, one-horse, metal-seated cart that he uses to exercise his horses on the track. "When it's near-zero on a winter morning, that seat is really cold. *Really* cold." As if on cue, Cronkite grunts.

**By ANDREA CLURFELD**  
Staff Writer — AP Press 10-2-05



## N.J. Farms' Latest Innovation: Solar Power

**M**ove over, Jersey tomatoes. Some farmers are producing a new crop: energy. They're putting solar power systems over barn roofs and fields to make electricity for their homes and reduce farm pollution at the same time. A further lure is a unique program that uses state rebates, credits and investor funds to cover all the upfront costs of the expensive solar power systems, including maintenance. The program also guarantees farmers at least 10% savings on their electric bills.

Barely a year into what's called the Power Crop Initiative, two dozen farms have solar power systems running or are getting them installed soon, and dozens more are planned. "It's a great concept," said Ronny Lee, owner of Lee Turkey Farm in suburban East Windsor, which also produces fruits, vegetables and flowers. Lee, who last fall became the first farmer to get a solar system under the project, said his system on sunny days produces more energy than he uses. "What I don't use goes back through my line and into the public grid, and I get credit for it," said Lee. "It makes a lot of sense."

Lee had his system installed on a barn roof that faces south to capture the most sunlight and shade the roof, keeping turkeys inside cooler



**Ronny Lee - East Windsor & Sue Keymer - Howell on the farm with their solar power systems**

during the summer. He said farmers could also set up solar systems over marshy areas to produce electricity from unusable land.

The initiative is a partnership of New Jersey Farm Bureau and Flemington-based Sun Farm Network. At the end of the farmer's contract, typically 20 years, the balance is paid off and the electricity is free.

The sun's rays don't just help Howell farmer Sue Keymer grow organic produce. She uses the power of the sun to generate electricity to run everything at her farm from water pumps to the toaster in her home. Keymer said her bill from Jersey Central Power & Light "is down to almost nothing." Besides saving on her electricity bill, she touted solar energy's clean environmental benefits over electricity produced by fossil fuels.

"People should just try to be sustainable when they can and burn less fossil fuels because they are polluting the earth," she said. "If

you can cut it a little bit, you should." Keymer's Merrick Farm is one of 12 in New Jersey – and two in Monmouth County – that farm the sun's rays for electricity.

The New Jersey Farm Bureau notified its 8,000 farmer members about the project 18 months ago, and at least 15 percent have shown interest, said bureau president Rich Nieuwenhuis.

Jackson farmer Jeff Adams plans to have a system installed this fall at The Farms of Stan-Mar, his family farm. He will use solar panels to generate electricity for a barn and two apartments. He was attracted by the program's incentives. "Bringing the technology of solar power... onto the farm would be a perfect natural," he said.

Solar power helps farmers reduce their costs and helps them to stay in business. "As we look to sustaining agriculture in New Jersey, we want to make sure we preserve our farmland," said Charles M. Kuperus, state secretary of agriculture. "Understand that preserving our farmland is only one part of our strategy. Sustaining and keeping these family farms vibrant and thriving is another part."

**David P. Willis AP Press 8/11/05**



Ag Secretary Kuperus with Peach Queen Alyse Scaffidi for Jersey Fresh in Monmouth



Monmouth 4-H 'ers Christin Sagui, Sabrina DiBenedetto & Abbey Lanz at State Horse Show



Master Gardeners Working at the FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties

## Cream Ridge Nursery Research & Extension Meeting

Richard Obal, Monmouth County Agricultural Agent

August 24, 2005 was a beautiful, warm, sunny day for the fourth annual Nursery Growers Meeting at the Rutgers Cream Ridge Research Station. Over 70 growers, researchers and educators attended this showcase for the ornamental nursery industry, which was sponsored by Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension in cooperation with the New Jersey Nursery and Landscape Association.

Carl Nordstrom of the NJNLA and Dr Joe Goffreda, Director of



R to L - Dr. Jerry Baron of IR-4 observes Dr. Jim Lashomb handing a sample to Dr. Cristi Palmer, also IR-4

the farm; welcomed the participants and spoke of the continued expansion and development of research at the Upper Freehold Research Station. Dr. Steve Hart, kicked off the program with an update of fall weed control programs and new chemistry herbicides and combinations. Dr. Gladis Zinati gave an extensive overview of her research on growing medias, irrigation and fertility management practices and their potential impact on runoff water from the nursery – an emerging environmental issue in NJ. New guidelines for Nursery Crop Insurance and information on how to survive a DEP, Worker Protection Standard Inspection were the topics of lively discussion among the growers. The always popular plant diagnostic workshop led by Rich Buckley provided a hands on experience for the audience.

It was a perfect day to load the three hay wagons to view the research plots and hear more speak-



County Agent Rich Obal holds up a diseased limb from the Tree Canker research plots for the audience

ers. Dr Cristi Palmer spoke of the expanding IR-4 Research plots and received input on future initiatives for the program. Rich Obal introduced the tree canker research plots and Dr Ann Gould showcased the National Elm Trials. Dr Jim Lashomb wrapped up the program with a presentation on emerging insect pests, including the Asian ambrosia beetle which caused significant economic damage to nursery crops this past season.

## Monmouth County Board of Agriculture Transitions

At the November 22 meeting of the Monmouth County Board of Agriculture, the Executive Committee gave their sincere thanks and appreciation to outgoing president Marty Bullock for his three fine years of service. The Board elected a new slate of officers for 2006 and welcomed in their new President



2005 BOA L to R: Tommy Frieberger, Marty Bullock, Bill McCormack and Ross Clayton

Dr. Stephen Dey, Vice President Tom Frieberger, Corresponding Secretary, Chuck Palmer, Treasurer Ross Clayton and Recording Secretary Debbie Kauffman. Nyna McKitrick was approved for the Executive Committee. At the meeting, plans were made for the annual winter BOA dinner to be held at Freehold Gardens.

# AGENCY UPDATES

**NRCS** The Conservation Security Program (CSP) is a program which rewards producers who are actively protecting soil and water quality on their farms. Informational meetings about this new opportunity will be held throughout the Raritan Watershed to assist applicants with sign-up preparation. Meetings will be held on Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at the Hunterdon County SCD Office at 1:00 p.m. and on Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at the Middlesex County Research & Extension office at 1 p.m. For more information, please contact NRCS at (732)462-0075 ext. 3, or visit the website at: [www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp](http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp)

**FSA** Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) – FSA’s NAP program provides financial assistance to producers of noninsurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occurs due to natural disasters. The application closing date for asparagus, beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, greens, herbs, horseradish, kohlrabi, leeks, lettuce, parsnips, peas, potatoes, radishes, rhubarb, and turnips is December 31, 2005. Remember that NAP coverage is a requirement for anyone who received a disaster payment under the 2003/2004 CDP Program. Please call to make an appointment to enroll: 732-462-0075.

**Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment**

**Program (DCP)** – Producers are required to sign and if necessary, update their DCP contracts every year. The deadline is June 1, 2006 for signing 2006 DCP contracts and related documents. Late-filed applications will be accepted through September 30, 2006, if accompanied by a \$100 late fee. If you have bought or sold land, or you are renting new land, please notify the office as soon as possible so that we may update your records or perform a reconstitution to add or remove land from the operation.

Direct payment rates for 2006:	
Soybeans	\$0.44/bu
Corn	\$0.28/bu
Barley	\$0.24/bu
Oats	\$0.024/bu
Wheat	\$0.52/bu
Sorghum	\$0.35/bu

**Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP’s)** – With commodity prices close to or below posted county prices, loan deficiency payments are available. This year there is a new form called the CCC-633EZ. It was developed to streamline the LDP program and to help producers maintain eligibility for the LDP payment.

**Crop Insurance Website**

<http://salem.rutgers.edu/cropinsurance/index.html>

**CROP INSURANCE CLOSING DATES**

**JANUARY 31**  
Adjusted Gross Revenue  
Adjusted Gross Revenue—Lite

**MARCH 15**  
Corn  
Forage Seeding - **New for 2006**  
Fresh Market Sweet Corn  
Processing Beans  
Processing Tomatoes  
Soybeans  
Winter Squash  
Grain Sorghum  
Small Grains  
Crop Revenue Coverage for Corn  
Crop Revenue Coverage for Soybeans

**MAY 31**  
Nursery

**JULY 31**  
Forage Seeding - **New for 2006**

**SEPTEMBER 30**  
Barley  
Forage Production - **New for 2006**  
Wheat

**NOVEMBER 20**  
Apples  
Peaches  
Blueberries  
Cranberries

**DECEMBER 31**  
Potatoes

**Mosquito Commission** The Monmouth County Mosquito Extermination Commission initiated a new program that will allow county residents to bring a tick to its Wayside Road facility for identification and testing to determine whether the tick has Lyme or some other transmissible disease. Robert D. Clifton, the freeholder board’s liaison to the mosquito commission, said each tick will be identified within 24 hours at no charge. Residents can then decide whether to pay a \$25 lab fee to determine whether the tick is infected with a disease. That process takes another 3-9 days. Patricia V. Smith, president of the Lyme Disease Association Inc., said there are only a few counties nationwide offering this service. Monmouth’s Tick ID and Testing Service is being touted as the most extensive tick-related information service available at a single location in NJ. Sean P. Healy, an entomologist with the mosquito commission, said the program will serve as a first alert for those who fear they may have contracted a disease. Some ticks do not carry disease. Healy will inspect engorged ticks and may decide to send the tick to the Mosquito Commission’s lab at Rutgers University in New Brunswick to test for the presence of the Lyme disease-causing organism. The lab will also test for other diseases as babesiosis, ehrlichiosis and Rocky Mountain spotted fever.

# CALENDAR

## December 2005

**Dec. 5**—USDA Value Added Producer Workshop 856-459-1125  
Rutgers Food Innovation Center

**Dec. 8 & 15** - SARE Seminars for Horse Pasture Advisors.  
732-932-5529

## January 2006

**Jan. 10-12** - Vegetable Growers Association of NJ Convention & Trade Show— Atlantic City. Register call 609-426-1690 or <http://www.njveggies.org/>

**Jan. 18-19** - NJ Trade Show, sponsored by NJ Nursery & Landscape Association. Garden State Exhibit Center. 609-291-7070.

**Jan. 28** - Northeast Organic Farming Association of NJ, Winter Conference—Cook 609-737-6848

**Jan. 31-Feb. 2** - Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Meeting - Hershey 908-475-6505

## February 2006

**Feb. 3** - Central Jersey Vegetable Growers Mtg.— Freehold Gardens, 732-431-7260

**Feb. 6-8** - NJ State Ag Convention—Tropicana 609-292-8896

**Feb. 16-19** Flower, Garden & Outdoor Living—Feb 16-19, NJ Convention Center, Edison

**Late Feb.** Central Jersey Turf & Ornamental Institute. Freehold Gardens Hotel. Call 732-431-7260

## USING THE PESTICIDE CONTROL PROGRAM WEBSITE

Go to website: [www.pcpnj.org](http://www.pcpnj.org)

### To get information on Certification/Licensing/Exam Sign-Up, etc.

1. At the home page click on Licensing (left hand column)
2. Click on the category or topic of interest

### To check personal information

1. On the home page click on Online Reports (left hand column)
2. Click on DEP On Line Reports Portal (highlighted middle of page)

### For your License information click on:

1. [Commercial Certified Pesticide Applicators](#) – Specific Information
2. [Private Certified Pesticide Applicators](#) – Specific Information
3. [For your exam information click on: Pesticide Certification Exam Sign-up Info](#)
4. [For recertification courses availability and dates click on: Recertification Courses Available](#) (at the bottom of page)



Monmouth County 4-H youth led by Ellen Williams (right) at Boxwood Farm during Farm Camp in August 2005

### Monmouth County Board of Ag

7:30 PM

12-20, 1-17, 2-21, 3-21,  
4-18, 5-16, 6-20

### Basic Pesticide Training

CORE—9 am - 1 pm

1-10, 2-1, 3-7, 4-4, 5-2, 6-6

To register call 800-524-9942

Held at

Rutgers Cooperative Research & Extension, Ag Building  
4000 Kozloski Rd.  
Freehold, NJ - 732-431-7260

### RUTGERS COOPERATIVE RESEARCH & EXTENSION MONMOUTH COUNTY New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

4000 Kozloski Rd, PO Box 5033  
Freehold, NJ 07728  
Agriculture: 732-431-7260  
Family & Consumer Science: 732-431-7271  
4-H: 732-431-7263;7264  
Fax: 732-409-4813

Rutgers Cooperative Research & Extension— Agriculture, Family and Community Health Sciences, 4-H Youth Development, Resource Management, and Marine Studies— welcomes this opportunity to send you the enclosed materials for your information and use. Educational programs and information are provided to all people without regard to sex, race, , national origin, or handicap

Richard G. Obal  
County Agricultural Agent

Bill Sciarappa  
County Agricultural Agent

*Changing Times is produced and edited by Bill Sciarappa and Vivian Quinn - [sciarappa@rcrc.rutgers.edu](mailto:sciarappa@rcrc.rutgers.edu)  
Past Issues on the web [www.visitmonmouth.com/07050coopext](http://www.visitmonmouth.com/07050coopext)*



NJ AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION  
**RUTGERS**  
COOPERATIVE RESEARCH & EXTENSION

Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County  
4000 Kozloski Road, PO Box 5033, Freehold NJ 07728

---

Official Business

NONPROFIT STANDARD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
FREEHOLD NJ  
PERMIT NO. 166