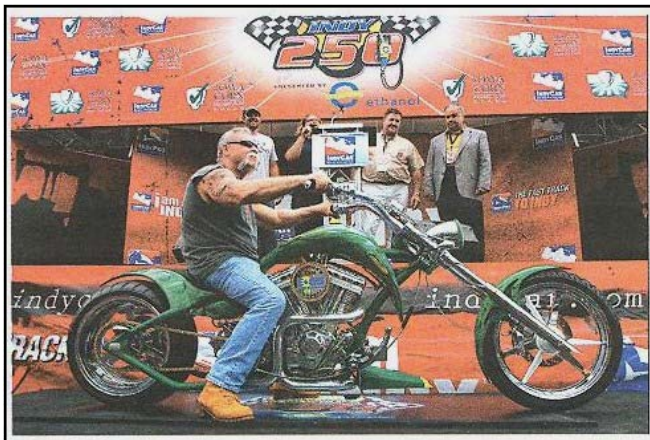




Agent's Overview

Going Green – If you're a fan of the TV show American Chopper, you might have seen the episode where they build a custom Harley Davidson fueled by ethanol – a tribute to the American farmer and bio-renewable energy sponsored by Farm Bureau. Some analysts say that this demand for alternative fuel from corn is the main reason for the doubling in price to over \$4.00 a



bushel. While production increased 15% in US acreage to 92 million acres, the price continued to rise as did the price of soybeans with \$9. Meanwhile, the drought in August led to very low yields of hay and straw with \$8 bales. Maybe commodity agronomics isn't dead yet in the Garden State. As diesel prices rise, local production with less transportation costs can prosper. Also, new agronomic crops are entering the scene. Some progressive growers are trying out a summer annual Teff hay for droughty summer conditions while NJAES is evaluating perennial switchgrass varieties as better biofuels.

Changing over to specialty crops like ethnic vegetables continues to demonstrate strong market demand. Now is the time to connect with specific Chinese, Indian, Caribbean, African or Hispanic markets.

I just returned from speaking engagements in Ontario, Canada where the growers, government, university and industry groups were enthusiastic about their local ethnic markets. I thought Jersey with over 30% ethnic population was really high but in Toronto there is a 45% ethnic population within their 4 million urban citizens.

To learn more about marketing such specialty crops (maybe even to eastern Canada) and lot of other exciting ag topics, please make a special effort to attend the former NJVGA-RCE conference in Atlantic City. The new name is Atlantic Coast Agriculture Conference and Trade Show. This year's sessions are designed to appeal to a wider ag audience with agronomic crops, fruit, ornamentals and more. Changing culture is stressed in the Sustainable and Organic sessions. Our educational program also has a super trade show planned along with special events for farmers and their families. So please register to attend and prepare for another challenging growing season ahead.

Happy Holidays.

Bill Sciarappa

Master Gardener Class of 2007

On the evening of Friday, November 9, over 100 guests helped celebrate the graduation of the Master Gardener class of 2007. The 28 graduates began their journey last February with 20 classes held at the Agriculture Building, Deep Cut Park, and Brookdale Community College. Learning about Soils, Botany, Houseplants, IPM, and all aspects of home horticulture for 10 weeks, they soon realized their real training began



Rich Obal, Freeholder Lillian Burry and Diane Zahorsky

when they answered questions on Helpline after the classes were finished.

The Class of 2007 volunteered a total of 2,670 hours this year. As was started last year, many of them planted and maintained the 2000 SF vegetable garden behind the Ag building. The result this year was over 1400 pounds of produce harvested from that garden and brought to Open

(Continued on page 5)

Sustaining Farming on the Urban Fringe



NJ Agriculture at a Glance—Floriculture - Jack Rabin & George Wulster



Floriculture is the growing of potted flowering plants, baskets, herbaceous perennials, bedding plants, cut flowers, and other plants bringing beauty to your life and our world. Think of hardy mums, Easter lilies, or patio plants and you are thinking of floriculture farming in the Garden State.

The NJ Floriculture industry is a unique agricultural industry that predominately relies on controlled environments (greenhouse structures) for year around production. In 2005 the Industry consisted of approximately 360 producers producing a wide variety of species. Producers make great investments in technology and automation to produce the greatest amount of plant material possible in the smallest area. It is safe to say the production efficiencies of a modern greenhouse are unmatched in any other form of agricultural or horticultural enterprise. It may seem hard to believe but NJ producers generate 150 million dollars of product on a mere 350-400 acres of land!

NJ floriculture crops ranked 9th in the nation with expanded wholesale sales of \$147 million for 2005. New Jersey reports 359 grower families with sales over \$10,000 and 184 of these grower families have sales of \$100,000 or more. The 184 growers selling \$100,000 or more represent just

51% of growers, but produced \$140 million—95% of the total value of NJ's production.

Controlled environment horticulture (a.k.a. greenhouse production) encompasses growing systems for bedding plants, pot plants, cut flowers, plugs, and vegetables. Greenhouse production incorporates some type of structure and related environmental control and plant growing systems. The structures range from simple shades to fully enclosed structures. The degree of environmental control ranges from simple (often manual and controlling a limited number of environmental parameters) to highly sophisticated (computer control of all impacting environmental parameters). Similarly, the growing systems employed range from entirely manual to fully automated. Often, the availability, affordability, and skill of the local labor force significantly determine the necessary degree of environmental control and growing system automation. Greenhouse production systems are found across the state and are specifically used to overcome the vagaries of outside weather conditions.

Research and demonstration efforts at NJAES help to make this happen. They include such activities as: variety evaluations like the annual Poinsettia trial and "Open House", effects of environmental manipulation, and chemical treatments on plant morphology and production time, and the evaluation and improvement of important greenhouse systems such as those used for temperature management, irrigation and fertilization. New greenhouse structures and technolo-



gies such as the new "Open Roof" design, coupled with heated floors and recirculating irrigation systems are currently being evaluated. Marketing research and information is also provided to the industry.

Over the years results have improved energy efficiency and reduced heating and ventilation costs in greenhouse production. Research on temperature manipulation within greenhouses coupled with plant growth regulating compounds has reduced production time, and helped refine control of crop production. Variety trials and demonstrations help growers view and evaluate some of the constantly changing plant species while market and economic research help them understand their costs and decide how best to market their products.

Controlled environment horticulture fits well in the Garden State, makes beautiful contributions to the public, uses little land, and remains profitable for farm families. Water runoff from impervious greenhouse covers is easily captured and managed with environmentally engineered care for beneficial reuse, runoff avoidance, or percolation with engineered designs like the constructed wetlands on display at our Rutgers NJAES Snyder Research & Extension Farm.

Equine Farm & Land Management Short Course



Bill Bamka on weed ID



Dr. Karyn Malinowski - Purpose of Study



Bob Freiberger displays hay varieties

The Ag Building in Freehold and Stargate Farm in Allentown, NJ hosted the Equine Farm and Land Management Short Course on October 5th and 6th. Friday's program was classroom style education in a high-tech setting, while Saturday's event took place amongst pastures, barns and horses. Participants could attend one or both days, with the majority attending the entire program.



Art Morano, Carey Williams & Bill Sciarappa

Friday's program began with Dr. Karyn Malinowski, Dean of Outreach and Extension and Director of the Equine Science, speaking on the *Economic Impact of the Horse Industry in NJ*. The NJ equine industry -- valued at \$4 billion -- generates \$1.1 billion annually in positive impact on the NJ economy, according to a new



Bill Sciarappa & Steve Komar - soil test techniques

study released by the Rutgers Equine Science Center. A video on the NJ equine industry was also shown. The topic hit home with everyone present. To read the entire report and see the video go to— ww.esc.rutgers.edu

Dr. Carey Williams, Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE), presented on *Importance of Pasture to Horses*; her Saturday program *Horse Feeds*, was an excellent follow-up. Dan Kluchinski, RCE, educated everyone on *Soil Fertility*. Bill Bamka, RCE, taught *Weed Management* and on Saturday displayed samples of common pasture weeds, walking the pasture with attendees to help identify problems and solutions.

An important lunchtime topic was funding options through NJ Natural Resource Conservation Service with Nicole Ciccaglione. Steve Komar, RCE, addressed *Pasture Renovation* and the next day covered *Nutrient Management, On Farm Composting and other Manure Disposal Options*. Fred Kelly from NJ Natural Resource Conservation Service covered *Nutrient Management*, as he quickly summarized as "best practices equal good common sense." This subject segued right into *Environmental Concerns with Equine Operations*, presented by Dr. Bill Sciarappa.

At Stargate Farm, Bob Freiberger came with a truckload of hay to teach *Hay Evaluation and Costs*, with participants taking home samples. Dr. Chris Obropta, RCE, spoke on *Drainage and Buffering Systems for a Dryer, Healthier Farm*, touring the farm property while addressing these environmental issues.

This two-day, top-notch event brought together the expertise of Rutgers faculty, state agencies, and industry. People attending really appreciated the hands-on, one-one-one attention they received. Attendees left with new knowledge, a course notebook, text books, soil test kits and most important contact information for key people in the field.

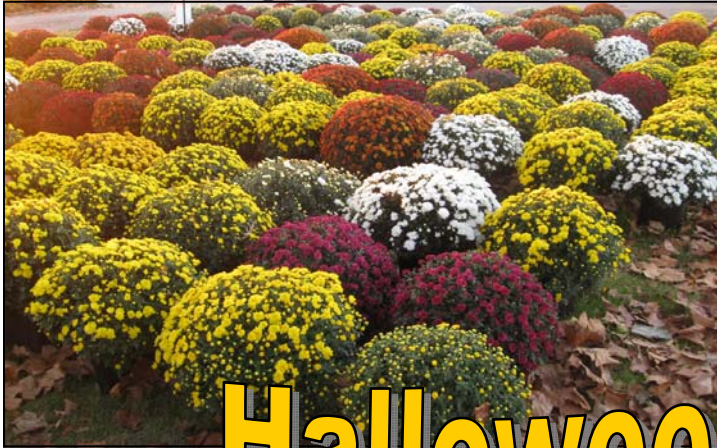


Chris Obropta - a healthier farm environment

We thank Art Morano of Stargate Farms for his hospitality, the Rutgers Equine Science Center, NE-SARE for partially funding the program, Office of Continuing Professional Education for providing books through the USDA grant, Farm Family for the breakfast, the instructors, and most of all the participants who are vital to keeping the equine industry strong in the Garden State.

Vivian Quinn





Halloween 2007





2007 FFA Career Development Events

The 83rd Annual Fall Career Development Event gave 208 FFA students from 22 high school chapters the opportunity to test their skills in agriculture in a competitive setting. Fruit-Vegetable, Turf, Poultry, Dairy, Equine and Land Judging were represented in this year's competition which was coordinated by Nancy Trivette, State Program Leader for Agricultural Education/State FFA Advisor.

The 2007 Fruit and Vegetable Identification event took place at Cook Campus Center. Bill Sciarappa, Monmouth County Agricultural Agent, Ag Assistants Vivian Quinn and Brian Hulme arranged the identification of 40 fruits and vegetables and grading of five varieties. Delicious Orchards graciously donated all the produce. The chart highlights Monmouth County and N. Burlington schools with quite respectable results. The local teams from Monmouth Vocational, Freehold Regional, Allentown and Burlington were led respectively by:



Karis Byram, State Secretary; Nancy Trivette, Stacey Daniels, State Parliamentarian



Monmouth: Janelle Garzon, Melissa Whoeler, Megan Anderson, Christine Ciangetti, John Humphrey, Caitlin Venezia, Sasha Collazo & Pat Fantasia.

Freehold Regional: Allison Karr, Lauren Maskowitz, Aaron D'Addio, Kaitlyn Lord, Jacklene Oakes, Kerri Caponetto, and Jordan Horowitz.

Allentown: Bridget Levine, Lauren Jeffery, Matt Carney, Lauren Duarte, Justine Sherer, Michelle Runge, Dan Wolek, Rob Welle, Dustin Zukus, Dan Wolek, Theresa Scotto, Melissa Wright, and Alec Azzarello.

North Burlington: Nicholas Ricci, Jacob Way, Julianne Robinson, Heather Shinn, William Mills, Clint Carty, Levi Wainwright, Kyle Pribell, Thomas Hlubik, David Specca, Nathan Potts, Amy Loesser, Tom Spain, Josh Jones, Joe Stout, Chris Tomori, Russell Stupienski, Rodolfo Horta and Chris Bailey.

Burlington Middle: Stephen Spacco, Jane Sutton, Wesley Bouchelle, Allyson Lebak, Joey Goodenough, Sarah Hamner, Brittany Matthews, Tom Haslam

Congratulations to everyone.

FFA 2007 Career Development Event Results

| School | Dairy | Fruit-Veg | Horse | Land Judging | Poultry | Turf |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Allentown | - | 1 st | 1 st | 1 st | 2 nd | - |
| Freehold | 6 th | 4 th | - | - | - | - |
| Monmouth | - | 3 nd | - | - | - | 1 st |
| N. Burlington | 10 th | 8 nd | - | 4 th | 1 st | 3 rd |
| N. Burlington Middle | 5 th | 12 th | | | | |

Complete results - <http://www.jerseyageducation.nj.gov/cderesul07.htm>

(Continued from page 1)

Door Food Pantry in downtown Freehold.

Distinguished speakers at the night's event included Freeholder Lillian Burry, who gave a history of the Master Gardener program in the U.S., Dave Compton, Superintendent of Monmouth

County Parks System, who spoke about the positive impact that the Master Gardeners have had at Deep Cut Park, Thompson Park, and Mt. Mitchell, and Ron Kudile, biology professor at Brookdale Community College. Ron was one of the 'founding fathers' of Monmouth County's Master Gardener pro-

gram, meeting with Rich Obal and Mike Bennett, Superintendent of Deep Cut Park, back in the mid 90's, to initiate the program. When Diane Zahorsky, Home Horticulturist at RCE was hired in 1998, she coordinated the final details and has been running the program in Monmouth County since its first class in 1999.

AGENCY UPDATES



CSA: Organic or not, a better way to reach consumers has come Don't miss it - February 12, 2008

Rutgers Cooperative Extension is sponsoring a meeting where organic and conventional growers alike can learn about Community Supported Agriculture, what it is and how it can completely change your marketing & sales plans to improve your economic condition

by selling your products before you grow them and getting help finding those opportunities.

The meeting will take place on February 12th (10:00 a.m.) at the Rutgers Ecocomplex located on 1200 Florence-Columbus Rd. Bordentown, NJ 08505. and will have

the participation of Just Food, a NYC not for profit organization that links farmers with consumers. Rutgers Extension Agents & Specialists will also be there to answer specific questions about your particular situation. Please call 609-989-6830 for more information.



2008 Regional Women in Agriculture Conference January 24-25th at the Dover Downs Conference Center in Dover, Delaware. More information can be found by contacting Laurie Wolinski at 302-831-2538 or lqw@udel.edu.

Visit the Women in Agriculture website at:

<http://ag.udel.edu/extension/kent/womeninag.htm>. The conference will be presented by the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension in collaboration with the Cooperative Participants in the 2006 Regional Women in Agriculture conference in Dover, DE Extension Services of University of Maryland, Rutgers the State University of New Jersey, and Delaware State University. It is sponsored by the Northeast Center for Risk Management and Education & Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES).

Joke Corner

A cocky U.S. Department of Agriculture representative stopped at a farm and talked with an old farmer. He told the farmer, "I need to inspect your farm." The old farmer said, "OK, but don't go in that field right over yonder." The Agriculture representative said, "Mister, I have the authority of the United States Government with me. See this card? The card means I am allowed to go WHEREVER I WISH ON ANY AGRICULTURAL LAND. No questions asked or answered. Have I made myself clear? Do you understand!" The farmer nodded politely and went about his farm chores.

Later, the farmer heard loud screams and saw the Agriculture Rep running for the fence and close behind was the farmer's huge-horned prize bull. The bull was gaining on the Agriculture Rep with every step. The Rep was clearly terrified, so farmer immediately threw down his tools, ran to the fence and shouted out... "Your card! Your card! Show him your card!"



CALENDAR

JANUARY 2008

8 (Turf) 9 (Tree), 10 (Landscape) - North Jersey Ornamental Horticulture Symposium - The Skylands at Randolph, Randolph, NJ <http://events.rutgers.edu/pdfs/2008-01-hortsymposium.pdf>

15-16- 17 - 2008 Atlantic Coast Agriculture Conference & Trade Show - (NJVGA) Trump Taj Mahal, Atlantic City 609-426-1690

16 - Central New Jersey Turf & Ornamental Institute - Landscape & Nursery Session (Day 1 of 2) 9am-12:30 Holiday Inn, Somerset. Rich Obal 732-431-7260

17 - Central New Jersey Turf & Ornamental Institute - Turf Session (Day 2 of 2) 9am-12:30 Holiday Inn, Somerset. Rich Obal 732-431-7260

29 to 31 - 2008 Mid Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Conference and Trade Show 856-307-6546 <http://www.mafvc.org/html/>

FEBRUARY 2008

7-9 Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA) 17th Annual Farming for the Future Conference. Penn State Conference center, State College, PA www.pasafarming.org

8 - Central Jersey Vegetable Growers Association - Ag Bldg., 4000 Kozloski Rd. Freehold 732-431-7260

12 - CSA: Organic or not, a better way to reach consumers has come 10 AM Rutgers EcoComplex, Bordentown. Call 609-090-6830 for more info

20 - Central Jersey Turf & Ornamental Institute—8:30am—3:30 pm. Angelonis Cedar Gardens, Hamilton, NJ

All New 2008 ATLANTIC COAST AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE and TRADE SHOW

January 15, 16, 17

in conjunction with

53rd Annual Meeting
Vegetable Growers' Association
of New Jersey, Inc.

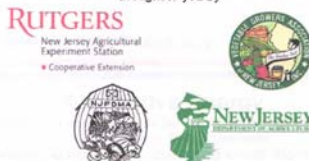
and the

Annual Meeting
New Jersey Farmers' Direct Marketing
Association

at the

Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort
1000 Boardwalk at Virginia Ave
Atlantic City, NJ 08401

Brought to you by



For Registration Materials
njveggies.org or 609-426-1690

Plan to attend!
Rutgers NJAES Cooperative
Extension
programs are open to all!



MONMOUTH COUNTY BOA
7:30 PM
12-18, 1-15, 2-19, 3-18, 4-15

BASIC PESTICIDE TRAINING
CORE—9 am - 1 pm

12-11, 1-8, 1-29, 2-26,
3-11, 4-15, 5-13, 6-10

Category 3A - 9AM - 3 PM
2-5, 3-18

Category 3B - 9 AM - 3 PM
1-22, 3-25, 5-13

To register call 800-524-9942

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

PESTICIDE CONTROL
PROGRAM WEBSITE
Go to website: www.pcpnj.org

RUTGERS COOPERATIVE 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 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@rcr.rutgers.edu
Past Issues on the web www.visitmonmouth.com/07050coopext

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