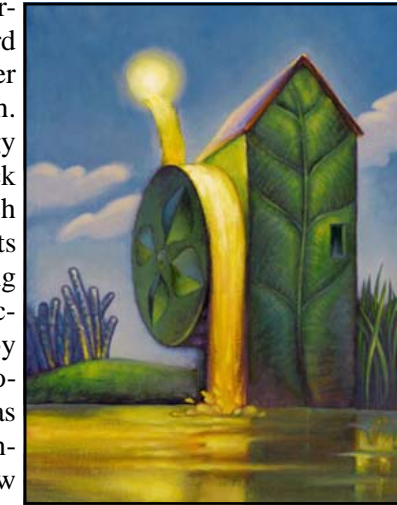




## Agent's Overview

A big boom in **Bio-Energy** interest was initiated when the word "Switchgrass" was mentioned by former President and Big Oil man G.W. Bush. Most recently, the alternative energy thrust of our new President Barack Obama has fueled more USDA research programs. These visionary developments have excited progressive growers seeking new sources of income through production agriculture and/or energy savings by reducing their reliance on petrochemicals. While our newsletter has dealt with local development in solar energy and wind power on the farm, new bio-fuel crops and energy processing technology offer even more ways to improve crop economics and reduce farm energy expenses.



external partnerships. New academic classes are being offered and old courses are being updated on campus for students while commercial conferences and seminars are oriented toward alternative energy education for growers. Farm Bureau's recent all-day sessions with BPU sponsorship and RCE assistance drew packed houses in north, south and central NJ. We note promising applied research efforts of Drs. Stacey Bonos and Bill Meyers with the grass crops switchgrass and Miscanthus species, the energy extraction processes from equine manure with Dr. Fennell, renewable technology at the Rutgers Eco-Complex with Dave

NJAES (New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station) has engaged this exciting opportunity with an emphasis in bio-energy by expanding applied agricultural research, establishing a sustainable task force, forming an outreach education program and cultivating

Specca the pelletization process project at the Earth Center with Agent Bill Hlubik and the experiences and insights of Energy Specialist Dr. Zane Helsel. All of these people and programs, among others, are interacting with the agri-business industry and the policy makers that will help shape how these new energy options develop.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## MONMOUTH COUNTY FAIR 2009



*"This tradition actually started back in the 1800's, and today's Monmouth County Fair continues to honor our county's agricultural roots"*

*Freeholder Lillian Burry*



In her video message on the Monmouth County website, **Freeholder Amy Mallet** urged everyone to visit the 2009 Monmouth County Fair and celebrate our county and all it has to offer. The fair is presented by the Monmouth County Park System in cooperation with Rutgers Cooperative Extension 4-H. The agriculture nature of the traditional county fair is maintained with

the home and garden entries, crafts, races, pie eating, etc. and the numerous 4-H animal competitions and exhibits. **Freeholder Barbara McMorrow** said "So many groups come together to celebrate what the fair is all about." She urged everyone to visit the 4-H tents stating, "**4-H is the heart and soul of the fair.**" Visitors left with a sense of pride in our county and a desire to return.

Dates of the 2010 fair are July 21st - July 25th . Fair questions & information regarding vendors or sponsors - call 732-842-4000 or email [info@monmouthcountyparks.com](mailto:info@monmouthcountyparks.com)

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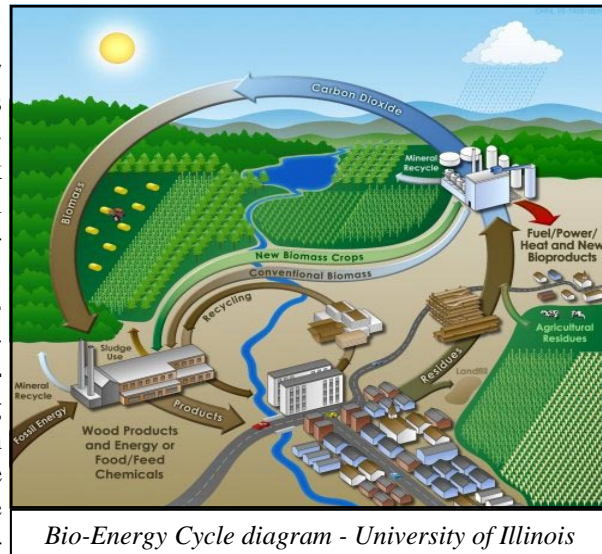
Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County  
4000 Kozloski Road  
PO Box 5033  
Freehold, NJ 07728-5033

New Jersey Agricultural  
Experiment Station  
**RUTGERS**

(Continued from page 1)

Hopefully, we will find new crops for agronomic producers and energy options for greenhouse growers, tractor and truck drivers and powering general farm infrastructure (see side diagram).

The **NJAES Bio-Energy** and Sustainable Committee shared by **Dean Peggy Brennan-Tonetta** is strengthening such essential partnerships within the university and among state and national agencies. These partners will meet again at Adelphia in September to tour research plots of the Plant Science Department (see bio-energy article below) and plan upcoming extension programs like a university research symposium set on campus in New Brunswick.



Bio-Energy Cycle diagram - University of Illinois

Already in the works is a two-day session on Bio-Energy topics at the Atlantic Coast Conference & Trade Show in Atlantic City - January 13 & 14, 2010. These sessions are in collaboration with the New Jersey Vegetable Association, NJAES, RCE, Farm Bureau, NRCS, NJDA and leading producers. Growers with these farming interests in producing new energy crops, developing bio-fuels and using alternative energy sources, should plan on participating. Please don't miss this important conference and mark it on your calendar now. Look forward to details in the near future as we engage the next agricultural evolution.

*Bill Sciarappa*

### Bio-Energy Twilight

On August 4, Rutgers Cooperative Extension held the first Bio-Energy Crops Twilight Meeting in conjunction with the NJ Grain and Forage Producers at the Rutgers Plant Science Research Farm in Adelphia. Agricultural Agents **Bill Sciarappa** and **Bill Bamka** of Monmouth and Burlington County coordinated a BBQ seminar that led off with a **Bio-Energy crops** overview by **Specialist Dr. Zane Helsel**. Agency interest and partnerships were discussed by **Tom Beaver of Farm Bureau**, **President Bob Frieberger of the Forage and Grain Association**, **Directors Tim Dey of USDA-FSA**

and **Troy Joshua of NASS**. Then **Drs. Bill Meyers and Stacy Bonos** led the group of 40 participants over the bio-energy and sustainable research plots disbursed about the 250 acre research farm. Exciting results were seen in the switchgrass variety trials and the Miscanthus fertility blocks – *M. giganteus* growing to 12 feet tall or more, even with little fertility. Sustainable pasture grass plots for equine operations, teff variety plots for hay production and pecan/hazelnut crops for oil production also led to considerable group discussion in the field. The group looks forward to **Bio-Energy Twilight II in 2010**.



Grass breeder Dr. Bill Meyer, Agent Bill Bamka & Bio-Energy Specialist Dr. Zane Helsel (L to R) kick off the Applied Research Twilight sessions.



Dr. Stacy Bonos demonstrates the incredible growth of Miscanthus giganteus—a new bio-energy crop.



The Bio-Energy audience observes the Switchgrass variety trials described by Stacy.

## CALENDAR

### SEPTEMBER

**27-29 - Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association annual convention.** The Breakers, 1 S. Country Rd. Palm Beach, www.ffva.com

### OCTOBER

**2-5 - Fresh Summit International Convention & Exposition - Anaheim Convention Ctr., Anaheim, CA.** www.pma.com/freshsummit/2009/index.cfm

**5-7 - Pack Expo - Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas.** http://pelv2009.packexpo.com

**12-16 - National Assoc. Farmer's Market Nutrition Programs Annual Conf.** Trump Plaza, AC, NJ www.nafmnp.org

**29 - South Jersey Nursery Meeting** RCE Cumberland, 8:30—4:15. Jim Johnson 451-2800

### DECEMBER

**1-2 - North Carolina Veg Growers' Assoc. Southeast Veg & Fruit Expo.** Myrtle Beach, SC. Cathy Price 919-334-0099 or www.ncvga.com

**MONMOUTH COUNTY BOA**  
7:30 PM - 9-15, 10-20, 11-20, 12-15

**BASIC PESTICIDE TRAINING CORE—9 am - 1 pm 2009**  
10-13, 11-10, 12-29

**Category 3B - 9 AM - 3 PM**  
10-20, 11-24

To register call 800-524-9942  
**Held at**  
**Rutgers Cooperative Extension Ag Building**  
**4000 Kozloski Rd. Freehold, NJ**  
**732-431-7260**

Changing Times is produced and edited by **Bill Sciarappa and Vivian Quinn** - sciarappa@njaes.rutgers.edu  
Past Issues on the web  
www.visitmonmouth.com/07050coopext

### NRCS ANNOUNCES SIGN-UP FOR NEW CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM Continuous Enrollment for Producers Began Aug. 10

New Jersey State Conservationist Tom Drewes announced that the Natural Resources Conservation Service began continuous sign-up for the revamped Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) on Aug. 10 with the first signup period cutoff scheduled for Sept. 30. CSP encourages agricultural and forestry producers to maintain existing conservation activities & adopt additional ones on their operations. For additional information about CSP, including eligibility requirements and the interim final rule, please visit [http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new\\_csp/csp.html](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new_csp/csp.html) or contact the local office.

### GUIDES TO MINIMIZE MICROBIAL FOOD SAFETY HAZARDS OF MELONS, LEAFY GREENS AND TOMATOES

**Dr. Wesley Kline, Agricultural Agent Cumberland County**

The Food and Drug Administration published draft guidance documents for melons, leafy greens and tomatoes in July. The industry has approximately 60 more days to comment before final adoption. The documents are available at <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/GuidanceDocuments>



<http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/plantandpestadvisory>

A new Rutgers online resource for vegetable growers. Easily access all vegetable info in one spot. Log in and sign up to receive new content as it becomes available.  
**www.njveg.rutgers.edu**

### PESTICIDE CONTROL PROGRAM WEBSITE

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

Cooperating Agencies: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and County Boards of Chosen Freeholders, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, a unit of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.

## Oasis - Ongoing Autistic Success in Society

Autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) are a group of developmental disabilities in which affected individuals are faced with significant social, communication and behavioral challenges. Individuals with autism and other related ASDs process sensory information differently than other people. Currently, the CDC reports an incidence of 1 in every 150 children being diagnosed with autism in the United States. The incidence in New Jersey reported as 1 in 94. Impact OASIS was created because children with autism grow up. Parents of children with autism in the Middletown community wanted to create a functional place in society for their children with autism. Assessing the common characteristics of individuals with autism, their needs and the societal needs they could fulfill, brought them to connect their children to vocations in farming and horticulture. Their mission is to promote inclusion and acceptance of autistic individuals into their local communities by establishing environmentally exemplary farm centers that provide meaningful work, peaceful and healthy residences and community interaction.

**Impact OASIS**, a 501 (c)(3) public charity incorporated in September 2007. They have been working closely with The Township of Middletown, The Monmouth Conservation Foundation, NY/NJ Baykeeper, and State Green Acres, to put funds together to purchase their first farm. OASIS strongly believes that by working together they can create a better life for individuals with autism, and at the same time, contribute to society by using open space in a productive, regenerative, and envi-

ronmentally responsible manner. Currently, they are leasing seven acres of farmland at Stevenson's Park, Middletown. OASIS has agreed to use this area for farming, gardening and horticultural purposes as part of their Transitional/Residential Adult Independent Living (TRAIL) Center. This Center will provide services that will assist autistic individuals with the creation of a pathway to their adult life.

OASIS plans to use the Stevenson Farm Tract to teach skills and produce goods to sustain life at the TRAIL Center. Many young volunteers, community members and autistic individuals have taken part in this aspect of the project. Bill Sciarappa of Rutgers County Extension and **George Richdale of Monmouth County Parks System** have been assisting them in their endeavor. OASIS Members along with autistic young adults, and several teenagers from area schools fenced in a portion of the area by hand. An Eagle Scout took on the project this year of reinforcing the fence against groundhogs. Throughout the spring and summer they enlisted the help of young adults with autism in the planting, weeding and harvesting. Individuals with autism worked alongside non-disabled peers, which included volunteers from local community schools and family members. Crops included, strawberries, melon, a variety of vegetables, including edamame and potatoes, and flowers. Their goal is to keep things organic and apply for organic certification through **NOFA (Northeast Organic Farm Association)**. They plan to bring produce for sale at local farmers markets next year.

OASIS is currently seeking a farmer to oversee the Stevenson's Tract portion of their project.

### Farmer Wanted



**Impact OASIS** leases a 7 acre parcel of land from the Township of Middletown for a horticultural program involving individuals with autism. We have fenced 4 acres for farming. We are currently seeking a farmer with experience in organic farming. The land was cultivated for the first time last year. We grew a variety of flowers, vegetables and herbs. This coming season, we would like to sell at local farmers markets and to local restaurants. We are not currently certified, but will seek certification in the future. There are two major challenges to be overcome. The first is that the land adjoining ours is operated by a conventional farmer. The second is that currently, there is no irrigation system in place. We are seeking a skilled farmer to work with student apprentice. He/She must have experience in sustainable organic agricultural practices.

#### Qualifications

3+ years in organic farming. Relevant further education subjects such as Agricultural Engineering; Agriculture; Botany; Crop & Plant Science; Economics; Environmental Science; Horticulture; Soil Science

**Season:** March through November

**Contact Mai Cleary or Barbara D'Augusta**  
**impactoasis@gmail.com.**

For additional information on the project, please visit their website  
[www.impactoasis.org](http://www.impactoasis.org).

## From The Clubhouse



"Knowledge is Horse Power" was the theme of the highly successful "Horses 2009" symposium held the last weekend in March. Over 800 attendees, sponsors and vendors helped the Center extend its outreach activities as we celebrated the value of the horse to the socio-economic environment of the Garden State. Keynote speakers included Scott Palmer, VMD of the New Jersey Equine Clinic, who spoke about responsible horse ownership, and Eric Scott, Millennium Radio 101.5 FM, who addressed the state of the state. Dr. Palmer's presentation was so outstanding that I have suggested he take it on the road. To that end, Dr. Palmer will be the keynote presenter on the same topic at the 2009 American Horse Council's annual convention in the nation's capitol in June.

"Horses 2009" was supported by more than two dozen partners and sponsors. Platinum Partners included the New Jersey Farm Bureau, Fort Dodge Animal Health, Purina Mills, Rick's Saddle Shop and Rutgers Cooperative Extension. Evaluations from the event were extremely positive. Most importantly, ninety-nine percent of attendees said they planned

to use what they learned at "Horses 2009" in future equine activities. This is exactly how we accomplish our mission of "Better Horse Care through Research and Education." I would like to thank all of the Center faculty and staff who worked tirelessly on the event and the student volunteers who were just great! We couldn't have done it without you!

As usual, the Equine Science Center was well-represented on Rutgers Day/Ag Field Day. Thousands of visitors flocked to campus to view the Annual Young Horse Teaching and Research Horse Show and to visit the Equine Exercise Physiology Lab for the high-speed treadmill demonstration. "Queenie" performed beautifully in front of a more than capacity crowd for both sessions.

I also have had the opportunity this spring to attend one of the animal waste management training sessions given by Dr. Mike Westendorf. As New Jersey becomes more environmentally cognizant it is imperative that horse owners everywhere become knowledgeable in the field of environmental stewardship. Check our website, [www.esc.rutgers.edu](http://www.esc.rutgers.edu), for details on upcoming events and lectures.

*Karyn Malinowski, Director Equine Science Center*

## Mc Kittrick Sworn in to Seat on State Board Agriculture

*Filling Unexpired Term (Trenton)* – A nursery owner from Monmouth County was sworn in to fill an unexpired term on the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture during the board's June meeting at Tabernacle Town Hall.

Hugh McKittrick will fill the unexpired term of William Randolph, who resigned from the board earlier this year. That term will expire in 2010.

"Hugh McKittrick is a welcome addition to the state Board of Agriculture," said New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Douglas H. Fisher. "His experience and enthusiasm will be great assets as the Board tackles issues that will impact the future of the agriculture industry."

McKittrick owns McKittrick Nurseries in Colts Neck, a family-run business. They produce liner plants for wholesale distribution nationally, and sell retail and wholesale finished plants at their Colts Neck location.

"I look forward to serving the agricultural industry on the State Board of Agriculture," said McKittrick. "My goal is to help protect the interests of the farming community and the general public, both fiscally and policy-wise."



**2009/2010 NJ State Board of Agriculture (L to R):** Al Murray, Assistant Secretary, Jim Giamarese, Hugh McKittrick, Andrew Borisuk, Scott Ellis-Board Vice President, Dr. Lewis DeEugenio, Roger Kumpel-Board President, Henry DuBois, Ann Dorsett, Secretary Douglas H. Fisher - Photo—NJDA website

McKittrick is a past president and long-time member of the Monmouth County Board of Agriculture and a past chairman of the Monmouth County Agricultural Development Board. He served on the State Agriculture Development Committee's ad hoc committee on problem resolution and on the policy committee. He is a member of the U.S. Congressional District 12, Agricultural Advisory Committee, and he served one term on the New Jersey Farm Bureau Board of Directors.

The State Board of Agriculture, comprising eight members, is the policy-making body of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture. Its members serve for four years, with two members being replaced each year. By law, at least four of its members must represent the top commodity groups in the state. Members serve without salary, but may be reimbursed for expenses. For more information, visit New Jersey Department of Agriculture release

[www.nj.gov/agriculture/about/sba](http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/about/sba).

A REPORT FROM THE

EXECUTIVE DEAN  
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Spotlight on 20th Anniversary of Snyder Farm & Annual Tomato Tasting - August 2009



The Annual Great Tomato Tasting at the Snyder Research and Extension Farm was held on Wednesday, August 26 in Pittstown, featuring the tasting of both heirloom and hybrid tomatoes and wagon tours of the farm's research plots. To mark the milestone of the 20th anniversary of the farm as a Rutgers Center for Sustainable Agriculture, a special program was held to honor the generosity and vision of Clifford E. and Melda C. Snyder who bequeathed their farm to Rutgers in 1988. In addition, the special ceremony honored the Lance family of Hunterdon County and the family's stewardship of the Snyders' dream to transform their traditional farm to the hub of sustainable and scientific research it is today, benefitting New Jersey farmers and residents alike.

As part of the special celebrations, the Rutgers University Alumni Association brought area alumni to the farm as part of its signature "Rutgers In your Own Backyard" program, an ongoing educational series in which alumni have the opportunity to discover the reach of the university and its alumni population. Vice President for Alumni Relations Donna K. Thornton welcomed Executive Dean of Agriculture and Natural Resources **Robert M. Goodman**, Rutgers University President **Richard L. McCormick**, Congressman **Leonard Lance**, Director of Farm Programs for NJAES **Jack Rabin**, Snyder Farm Director **John Grande**, alumni, Dean's Cabinet members, and special guests, among whom were New Jersey Farm Bureau President **Richard Nieuwenhuis**, NJAES Board of Managers (BOM) President **Stephen Dey** and BOM members **Ramesh Pandey** and **Chan Leung**.

Goodman praised the dedicated faculty and staff at the Snyder farm and in his remarks placed in context

the relevance and importance of agricultural research, like that conducted at the farm. He said, "I find the need for an integrated program of scientific research to be even more vital today if we are to pursue agriculture that needs not only to be profitable, but also sustainable." President McCormick recognized the outstanding research and outreach of the farm. "The work done at Snyder Farm merges two vital goals for our state:



Dean Robert Goodman, Congressman Leonard Lance & Rutgers President Richard McCormick

keeping our agricultural heritage strong and protecting our precious environment. Making sure that these two goals are compatible is a core value of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station," said McCormick.

Approximately 1,600 attendees at the tomato tasting were able to enjoy the farm's ornamental plant and blueberry breeding programs, the columnar varieties of peach trees for the home landscape, and the ever-popular wagon tours led by faculty members and farm staff

who were available throughout the event to discuss the wide-ranging work of the farm.

Among the innovative features of this year's tomato tasting event were the unveiling of new varieties of basil from the breeding program of **Jim Simon** (Plant Biology and Pathology) and the display of new varieties of apples and peaches by **Win Cowgill** (Hunterdon County agricultural agent). Adding to the surprise of the day was the presence of Eno Terra restaurant and its co-owner, Rutgers alumnus **Raoul Momo**, who is a strong proponent of the "farm to fork" model through the use of locally-grown produce in its daily menu. Recently featured in the *New York Times*, the Eno Terra tasting booth served a number of tomato-based dishes at the event.

Rain Garden Specialist Training



On August 5 and 6, RCE Agricultural and Resource Management Agent **Bill Sciarappa** and assistant **Vivian Quinn** partnered with the Rutgers Water Resources Program to present the first pilot training session for certifying rain garden advisors and educators at the Agriculture Building in Monmouth County. This team-created program led by WRP's **Dr. Chris Obropta** consisted of his stormwater runoff and watershed overview, rain garden plans by Program Associate **Amy Boyajian**, engineering aspects by Resource Management Agent **Greg Rusciano**, rain garden construction approaches by Dr. Bill Sciarappa and horticultural selections and planting tips by Union County Agent **Madeline Fahive DiNardo**. The lively and

multi-faceted two-day program featured hands-on training in the parking lot for selecting sites and measuring drainage area, a walk through of the existing county rain garden and the group construction of a new rain garden at the nearby **Biotechnology High School**. There was a pre-test given manually and a post-test done on-line with Rutgers eCollege that was available as part of a whole curriculum website constructed by RCE Assistant Vivian Quinn. Class evaluations were overwhelmingly positive and began a new standard in certifying 55 Rutgers rain garden specialists and educators to accelerate rain garden construction and increase stormwater recharge privately at home and on the farm as well as publicly in municipal and county property.

Rain Garden Outreach

The RCE Rain Garden program received some excellent exposure recently in the Asbury Park Press ( See first page along side). Well known APP writer **Joe Sapia** and his photographer visited the Ag Building in Freehold during an outdoor work session with the extension staff and Master Gardeners of Monmouth County. After two hours of observing, interviews and photographs, an extensive 2 page article appeared in color on the front page of the local news section. This excellent piece captured the key environmental issues of protecting our natural resources in a people friendly and photographic manner. During the next few days, our office received requests for more information and assistance by clients interested in starting new rain garden projects. Such power of the media will help us surpass the construction goal of 100 rain gardens in Monmouth County by the end of 2010 and perhaps 1000 by 2015. Many thanks to the AP Press. For the complete article <http://co.monmouth.nj.us/documents/57/Rain%20Garden%20APP%209-09.pdf> or call us for a copy 732-431-7260.

For more information on rain gardens

[http://www.water.rutgers.edu/Rain\\_Gardens/RGWebsite/raingardens.html](http://www.water.rutgers.edu/Rain_Gardens/RGWebsite/raingardens.html)

ASBURY PARK PRESS | TUESDAY, SEPT. 8, 2009

# LOCAL NEWS

## Beauty and then some

**Rain gardens are useful tools to environment**

Along with their springtime blossoms, rain gardens like the one at the Monmouth County Agricultural Building can recharge groundwater supply, filter pollutants and absorb runoff.

By JOSEPH SAPIA  
STAFF WRITER

FREEHOLD TOWNSHIP — The peanut-shaped depression, connected to the Monmouth County Agricultural Building parking lot via a sloping battle of large stones, was a blur of activity.

Eight people, a combination of staffers from the local Rutgers University Cooperative Extension of

Above: Bill Sciarappa (left), an agent for the Rutgers University Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County, prepares to plant a blue flag iris, carried into place by Brian Hulme of Middletown. The two were working in a rain garden (being built, top) behind the Monmouth County Agricultural Building in Freehold Township. Below: Master Gardener Nancy Carew of Keyport sets out some flowers in the garden.