

Monmouth County Cooperative Extension



2011 Annual Report

Our Vision

Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County helps individuals, groups and organizations to address their needs, problems and concerns. We identify emerging and established issues and can then provide the leadership, organizational skills and commitment to develop appropriate solutions through the educational process. We seek to build multi-disciplinary teams to assess complex problems in a more comprehensive manner.

Our Mission

Helping the diverse population of Monmouth County adapt to a rapidly changing society and improve their lives by applying current science-based information. Our mission focus is on issues and needs relating to Agriculture and the Environment, Management of Natural Resources, Food Safety, Quality, Nutrition & Health; Family Stability; Economic Security and Youth Development.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension

Rutgers Cooperative Extension is an integral component of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) of Rutgers - the State University. This linkage provides a diverse range of research, extension and education programs that serve the people of New Jersey and their urban, suburban and rural communities. Through our Cooperative Extension offices in all 21 NJ counties, 4-H Agents, Extension Specialists, Family & Community Health Sciences Educators and Agricultural and Resource Management Agents work in serving NJ residents in every area of our state. This structure partners with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The School of Environmental and Biological Sciences and New Jersey county governments to provide practical education for all people. RCE faculty and staff provide outreach programs in Agriculture and Resource Management, Sea Grant Extension, 4-H Youth Development, and Family and Community Health Sciences. The staff is supported by groups of trained volunteers who serve on advisory boards and who increase our educational outreach and services to Monmouth County.

This annual report highlights some of our program outreach in 2011.

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Agriculture and Resource Management

Overview - The Monmouth County clientele base includes commercial agriculture, horticulture, aquaculture, homeowners, governmental agencies and natural resource interests. Retiring Agricultural Agent Richard Obal and new Department Head William Sciarappa, Horticulturist Diane Larson and Program Assistant Vivian Quinn again reached record numbers of clientele in 2011 through new programs, services and applied research activities. Our agents provide technical and educational programs on a regional basis in the fields of vegetable, nursery and greenhouse production. We work with USDA-NRCS, Farm Service Agency, Freehold Soil District and Shade Tree Commission, all internally within the Agricultural Building to efficiently serve county clients. With our external outreach programs in ag-chemical education and stormwater runoff, we partner with the Monmouth County Board of Agriculture, the Monmouth County Agricultural Development Board, New Jersey Department of Agriculture and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, NJ Farm Bureau and regional watershed committees.

Agricultural Production - Despite a sluggish economy, the agricultural industry in Monmouth County is still very diverse, and economically strong. Total farm sales (excluding equine) in 2009 was estimated at \$84 million (5th in State) on 54,966 acres of land. Statewide the county ranks 1st in equine breeding and training facilities, although a sharp decline is developing due to reductions in state support. Roadside and community farmers markets and pasture acreage remain as state leaders; 2nd in nursery and floriculture crop production horse farms, Asian vegetables and pumpkins; 3rd in sweet corn, sod production and Christmas tree farms; 5th in alfalfa, soybean, pepper and tomato production; 6th in hay and forage. In total, Monmouth County ranks first in the value of total annual agricultural production in North Jersey at \$105 million (2007) and 2nd or 3rd to South Jersey counties. This production level accounts for over one-quarter of northern sales and over one-tenth of state sales not including equine sales.

Production agriculture had a most difficult 2011 season due to extreme weather and unprecedented levels of rainfall near harvest which destroyed many high value crops as well as commodity crops. Rutgers Cooperative Extension assisted USDA-Farm Service Agency in documenting crop damage claims and assessing subsequent disease problems.



Extension Outreach

Agribusiness in Monmouth County provides food, forage, fiber, feed, ornamental products and services. Our educational programs enhance the financial viability of these operations and help preserve our environment. Outreach topics were landscape, greenhouse and nursery production, sustainable and organic farming practices, specialty crop production, equine pasture management, animal waste management, bio-energy and sustainable energy resources, pesticide use, pest management, farm viability, regulatory matters and agricultural methods.

- 31 meetings held with 1,475 farmers, educators, horticulturists, environmentalists and general public
- 46 educational presentations to 1,590 participants
- Communication categories totaled 1,255 phone responses and 1,640 client emails.
- 12 county wide/ agricultural interest newsletters and program announcements with a total circulation of over 1,200 farm readers each
- 37 farmers were documented as having farm site plans in animal waste management.



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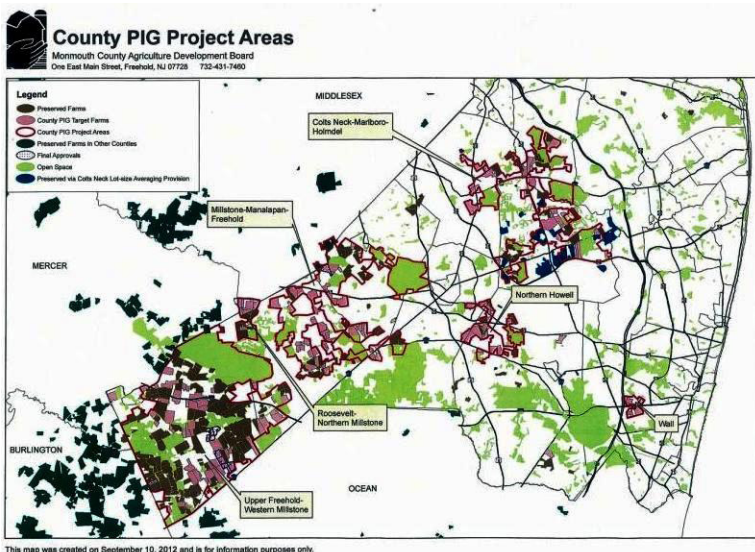
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Agriculture and Resource Management

Resource management programs had another very productive year in Monmouth County. Rapid development and landuse changes have put our water quality and quantity at risk from many sources of pollution. Extension programming in cooperation with Monmouth County Watershed Partnership and local organizations have communicated to citizens effective ways to protect our water supplies. Highlights included rain garden construction for water recycling and assessing the financial value of environmental benefits of farmland and open space. Constructing a total of 39 public rain gardens stimulated the adoption of over 200 private rain gardens which helped recharge over 6 million gallons of stormwater runoff. We continue to progress towards our goal of 1,000 county rain gardens by 2015.



Farmland Preservation - Cooperative Extension has played a prominent educational and advisory role for municipal and county boards and the farming community. Strong public support and the effort of county Freeholders and Commissioners has resulted in preserving the agricultural land base. Over 14,000 acres of farmland on 190 farms have been permanently preserved. This represents more than 20% of the agricultural land in the county.



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Master Gardeners

29 Monmouth County residents successfully completed the Master Gardener program in 2011, which entailed 60 hours of formal training, followed by at least 60 hours each of community volunteer service. Monmouth County has trained a total of 372 Master Gardeners since its inception in 1999, retaining 180 active Master Gardeners. Master Gardeners provided 23,400 hours of volunteer service in 2011, and responded to over 2200 gardening inquiries from the public on the Helpline. Of the total hours of volunteer time, 4115 hours were spent performing consultation and diagnostic duties at Helpline events, 9326 hours were spent performing Community Outreach where the public was educated on horticulture on an informal basis, and 3162 hours were spent formally teaching the public through the Speakers Bureau. These volunteer areas alone, totaling 16,603 hours, which, according to the Independent Sector's value of volunteer time for New Jersey, calculates into a cost factor of \$425,700.

Community Projects

- Master Gardeners expanded their participation in the development and/or continuing efforts of Community Gardens to 20 sites throughout the county. These gardens were in Aberdeen, Allentown, Asbury Park, Atlantic Highlands, Belmar, Freehold, Holmdel, Howell, Keyport, Long Branch, Middletown, Oceanport, Tinton Falls, and West Long Branch.
- The Master Gardener created a School Programs Committee to meet the continued demand for garden advice and programs at schools. They volunteered at 20 different schools last year.
- The Master Gardeners continue to expand their involvement in new and existing rain gardens at 10 sites throughout the county.



Educational Outreach

Educational displays at 18 public venues. Outreach displays focused on rain barrels, rain gardens, and integrated pest management.

2011 Highlights

- Plant a Row for the Hungry and Junior Master Gardener gardens behind the Agriculture Building yielded over 3,000 pounds of produce that was donated to Open Door Food Pantry in Freehold.
- Children's Committee organized their third 'Bugs, Birds, and Beyond' childrens educational day in cooperation with 4H in September, with over 250 in attendance.
- 2 scholarships totaling \$1000 were awarded to two high school seniors who were planning on studying a field in plant science in college.
- The Monmouth County Fair educational display focused on Rain Barrels and Rain Gardens. A mock house was designed and built demonstrating how a rain barrel works, with the overflow shown going into a rain garden. At the end of the fair a hand painted rain barrel was given to a resident.



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Marine

Professor and Marine Extension Agent Gef Flimlin is embarking in a new programmatic area for fisheries and aquaculture in NJ. Working from an idea from 2003 and partnering with the NJ Sea Grant Consortium, he is seeking to infuse seafood into Community Supported Agriculture farms or CSAs.

These farms, typically using organic farming techniques, sell shares of the farm to shareholders at the beginning of the grow-ing season. Each week the shareholders pick up some produce or fruit from the farm. The new concept is to have a separate share of seafood (cultured clams or oysters, lobsters, scallops, squid, or finfish) that the shareholders can purchase and have with their produce share. This is currently working in one CSA and he will be expanding the program to other CSAs in the state.



CSA owner, Jennifer Lamonaca, center, Ray Crema, clam farmer with Nautical Nuggets, right, and Art Brown, former County Ag Agent and Secretary of Agriculture, left, on whose farm the CSA is operating. Ray was delivering the cultured clams for the weekly seafood share. (George Mathis photo)



Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County

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Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders



Director, John P Curley
Deputy Director, Thomas A. Arnone
Lillian G. Burry
Serena DiMaso
Gary J. Rich

Teri O'Connor, County Administrator

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey The NJ Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES)

Dr. Robert M. Goodman
Executive Dean of Agriculture and Natural Resources
Executive Director of NJAES

Dr. Larry S. Katz
Senior Associate Director, NJAES
Director Cooperative Extension

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Family & Community Health Sciences

FCHS... Promoting Healthy Families,
Schools and Communities



The main initiative for the Department of Family and Community Health Sciences (FCHS) is helping residents gain a better understanding of healthier lifestyles and being more active in turn reducing health care costs. Many of today's health problems - obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and cancer - can be reduced through good nutrition and healthy living. Through science based advice, FCHS encourages residents to make personal choices to improve health.

This educational outreach spans much of the county with our collaborating partners as local agencies, nearby Hospitals, Senior Centers, the FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties and Monmouth County Vocational Schools. Other presentations, events and demonstrations include Monmouth County Wellness Day, Health Fairs and the Monmouth County Fair also give us the opportunity to improve overall well being.

Get Moving – Get Healthy NJ Wellness Initiative

The objective of this key initiative encourages healthy lifestyles, especially healthy eating and physical activity through educational programs, an interactive website publications and targeted marketing campaigns. For more information visit www.getmovinggethealthynj.rutgers.edu. There are also many programs offered by FCHS as educational seminars that focus on a various topics such as nutrition, food safety, functional foods and health benefits. Our educators encourage today's busy families and individuals in making personal choices to improve health.

New Jersey School Wellness

Incorporating concepts of health and physical activity through the on-going New Jersey School Wellness project is required as nutrition instruction. The academic curriculum and overall school environment is emphasized in our SNAP-Ed program as specific programming to administrators, staff and parents at all educational levels.

SNAP-ED

The *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program- Education* (SNAP-Ed) federal grant in Monmouth County remains a top priority; with a focus on offering nutritional education to culturally diverse and SNAP eligible residents. The desired educational outcomes with this education remains are increased knowledge of the essentials of human nutrition; increased ability to select and buy foods that satisfy nutritional needs; improve practices in food production, preparation, storage, safety and sanitation; and increased ability to manage food budgets and related resources. Overall, the goal of this program is enhancing knowledge and skills necessary to achieve proper diets while contributing to food security family nutritional welfare.

21st Century Community Learning Center Grant

FCHS continues to grow the collaboration with the Keansburg School District and Freehold Boro in support of the *21st Century Community Learning Center* grants. Both youth and adults that attend the nutrition education classes provided during after-school activities, lectures, and summer programming have shown how progress can be made through setting personal goals set. This multi-faceted approach promote better nutritional choices and healthier lifestyle behaviors.

Additional Outreach

Many resources are used as an accompaniment to the education we provide. Our fact sheets, publications and additional outreach such as our Visions newsletter help encourage people to stay healthy, enjoy life, be active and reduce health care costs. In 2011, a combined audience total of over 3,500 individuals with approximately 725 meetings participated in FCHS activities as well as various seminars, programs, trainings, in-services and health fairs. In addition, the Visions newsletter, published four times a year, was distributed to more than 750 individuals per issue. FCHS continues to provide nutrition education to strengthen the county residents' ideals of good health and develop partnerships in building healthy lifestyles.



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4-H Youth Development Program

Educational Programming



The Monmouth County 4-H Program offers youth a hands-on, informal educational environment – a place where they can feel both connected and valued. In 2011, over 1,750 youth, grades K-13 in Monmouth County participated in a variety of 4-H opportunities including community and project-based clubs, school enrichment programs, after school programs, special interest events, and

local, state and national events. Participation in the 4-H Program helps youth master life skills and gain a deeper understanding of generosity by becoming active, engaged citizens. In addition, there are various opportunities for teens to improve leadership skills, while achieving a great deal of personal growth and independence.

Service

Join the Revolution of Responsibility! In 2011, a new national slogan branded the service-minded mentality that the 4-H Youth Development Program has become well-known for over its 100+ year history. The 4-H Program engages young people, both individually and collectively, in making a difference in their own communities, and beyond, through skills development in problem solving, leadership and teambuilding. In the Monmouth County 4-H Youth Development Program, members are actively involved in the planning and implementation of various community service projects, such as food and clothing collections and environmental cleanups. Service learning takes community service one step further by an educational focus on specific community issues. This deepens the service experience and multiplies the benefits within the community.

Volunteers

Caring adult volunteers are the core of the 4-H Youth Development Program. In Monmouth County, adult volunteers contribute by leading community and project-based clubs, directing advisory groups, and instructing special interest programs, like community service events and camping weekends. This year, 154 adult volunteers donated, on average 220 hours, preparing for club meetings and guiding youth in the program, which translates to a donation of more than \$738,000.00 in service to our Monmouth County 4-H Program. Youth volunteers are also significant contributors to our program. This year, 33 teen volunteers



Department & Staff

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County Extension Department Head

Agricultural Department

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*Gef Flimlin-Marine Extension Agent
732-349-1152*

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Vivian Quinn, Program Assistant

Theresa Hansen, Secretary

Madgeline Quince, Secretary

4-H Department

Kaitlin Everett, Supervisor, 4-H Agent

Virginia Krzyzanowski, Program Associate

Sabrina Brown, Program Assistant

Gladys Tarantino, Secretary

Family & Community Health Sciences

Rachel J. Tansey, Supervisor FCHS/SNAP-Ed Program Associate

Sharese Porter, FCHS, Senior Program Coordinator

Sandie Merritt, FCHS/SNAP-Ed, Secretary

Shakkie Clark, SNAP-Ed, Community Assistant

Jennifer Garcia, SNAP-Ed, Community Assistant

Amanda Nail, SNAP-Ed, Community Coordinator

Rutgers Master Gardeners

Helpline – 732-303-7614

Monday - Friday - 9 AM – 4 PM

E-mail questions

mgarden@co.monmouth.nj.us

For more info visit our website:

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shared their skills with younger 4-H members and with other local youth; a major asset of the 4-H Program.

Clubs

4-H clubs meet at various locations throughout the county, in suburban and urban settings. Trained 4-H club leaders worked with 40 4-H clubs in 2011, serving as instructors and mentors. The 4-H mission is to implement the youth development program using a hands-on learning approach that meets the needs of young people in a positive way – we call it “learning by doing”. Youth develop many life skills by participating in specific project areas of their choice, such as leadership and citizenship, animal science, expressive and performing arts, healthy living, environmental science, engineering and technology.

Collaborations

For over 36 years, the Monmouth County 4-H Youth Development Program has partnered with the Monmouth County Park System to present the Monmouth County Fair. This collaboration has been a positive, productive effort, benefiting both Monmouth County and the thousands of fairgoers who visit and enjoy the event each year. The Park System also works with 4-H to provide camping facilities so many of our 4-H youth and families can

enjoy outdoor, educational opportunities in Monmouth County. Other community agencies that are valued partners to Monmouth County 4-H Youth Development Program include the United Way of Monmouth County, Monmouth County Workforce Investment Board, school districts throughout Monmouth County, the YMCA of Western Monmouth, the Monmouth County Library and the National 4-H Council.

Grants

In 2011, Monmouth County 4-H received a National 4-H Mentoring Grant from National 4-H Council (\$82,000) focusing on delinquency prevention in at-risk communities. In Monmouth County, high school youth were screened and trained as small group mentors for at-risk middle school peers. The high school mentors assisted in the implementation of weekly after school clubs and with six catered Family Night events. In addition, Monmouth County 4-H Youth Development collaborated with after school sites within the county on 21st Century Community Learning Center Programs and School-Based Youth Services Grants. 4-H programming at these sites included instruction on nutrition and physical activity, environmental sciences, engineering and technology, leadership and citizenship.

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For a comprehensive list of our publications visit www.njaes.rutgers.edu.

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.

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