



## Agent's Overview

Springtime has struggled along with some very cool and very wet weather. We are about two weeks behind last year and soil temperatures have just broken 50 degrees. Early plantings of sweet corn took a while to emerge but germination has been good. Expect yellowish, chlorotic leaves due to cold weather. One easy way to guesstimate soil temperatures and schedule your plantings in central Jersey is to watch the local weather channel and check the ocean temperature! This ocean water is often

pretty close to that of the soil within a few degrees most of the year. You almanac lovers can still watch the moon.

Over the winter we have had some really good extension meetings. The NJ Vegetable Growers drew well over 1,000 attendees in Atlantic City with an excellent three day trade show and conference. Our Central NJ Veg Growers conference in February at Freehold Gardens had 140 participants. We had informative crop production presentations by nine Rutgers Ag experts and another fine luncheon topped off with two dynamic pro-ag talks by Freeholder Ted Narozanick and Farm Bureau

President Richard Nieuwenhuis. Two weeks later, our turf and ornamental session, again at Freehold Gardens, attracted over 200 landscapers, lawn care operators and nurserymen. Agent Rich Obal brought in a very strong turf and ornamental lineup of presenters to help the diverse plant industry in our area. The "full house" was treated to a special turf presentation by Rutgers Plant Science Director Bruce Clark. Bruce's multimillion dollar landscape plan for the upcoming Olympics in China was selected over dozens of competi-

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## 2005 Board of Ag Dinner - Freeholder Narozanick & Dr. Stephen Dey Honored



BOA President Marty Bullock presents award to Freeholder Narozanick

this distinction for his 40 years of guidance, leadership and outstanding service to agriculture.

The Board also presented a "Special Recognition Award" to Monmouth County Freeholder Theodore J. Narozanick for his passion and devotion to the public good. Freeholder Narozanick was recognized for his lifetime support of farms and farmers and his sustained efforts in establishing a county-based agriculture and natural resource center, known as "The Ag Building." It also recognizes his 48 years of public service. In part, the award read "As County Administrator and County Freeholder for the last 19 years, Freeholder Narozanick has maintained a respect for the public trust and with that has gained the trust of all its citizens."

Present among the more than 100 attendees were Charles Kuperus, N.J. Secretary of Agriculture, Dr. Timothy Casey, Dean of Academic and Student Programs, Rutgers Uni-

versity, Mr. Thomas Byrne, 2nd Vice President of NJ Farm Bureau, Assemblyman Sam Thompson, Marty Bullock, Monmouth County Board of Agriculture President.

The evening also included presentations by the members of the Future Farmers of America on their ongoing educational efforts.

The Board once again put on an excellent program and honored two outstanding citizens. To read proclamations and see photos go to [www.visitmonmouth.com/07050coopext/](http://www.visitmonmouth.com/07050coopext/) click BOA.



Dr. & Mrs. Stephen Dey

The Annual Monmouth County Board of Agriculture dinner was held on March 4, 2005. This event recognizes the achievements of agricultural and civic leaders, and serves as a forum for issues of relevance to the agricultural industry.

One outstanding board member is recognized each year. This year Dr. Stephen Dey, Past President, NJ Board of Agriculture, received

## “War of the Worlds” at Merrick Farm

Mikey Azzara—NOFA-NJ

“NO ONE WOULD have believed in the last years of the nineteenth century that this world was being watched keenly and closely by intelligences greater than man’s and yet as mortal as his own; that as men busied themselves about their various concerns they were scrutinized and studied, perhaps almost as narrowly as a man with a microscope might scrutinize the transient creatures that swim and multiply in a drop of water.” So starts H.G. Well’s 1898 classic, “War of the Worlds,” that struck terror into the hearts of countless readers and even more through Orson Welles’ broadcast in the 1930’s.

For Steven Spielberg’s new blockbuster re-make of “War of the Worlds,” he needed a specific



Tom Cruise and Sue Keymer of Merrick Farm, Farmingdale, NJ

house, a specific driveway, and a wooded area. As luck would have it, he found what he was looking for at Sue Keymer and Juan George’s 20-acre Merrick Farm in Farmingdale, NJ.

And so, for a few weeks this past November, Spielberg’s cast and crew invaded the farm.

“Just a ton of people,” muses Sue, “including Tom Cruise and his personal catering company.” But

the one person that Merrick’s Juan George could not get over was “the coffee dude.” This guy was there only and explicitly to make coffee for Tom. Cappuccino, double espresso, latte, whatever. When Tom wanted it, the coffee dude was there.”

Along the driveway, the crew took down the existing barb-wire fence and erected a brand-new one with wooden posts. “Not exactly what we would have chosen, definitely more cosmetic than practical, but we’ll take it. It’s certainly a step up from what we had.”

According to Sue, there was a great deal of preparation but the actual filming only lasted one day. Spielberg was there around 4:30 am and they were finished by the end of the day. If and when you see the movie, know this: “When the aliens land in the lagoon, that’s Merrick Farm!”

## Annual Stakeholders Meeting—Monmouth Looks Ahead...

FREEHOLD – The agricultural industry in Monmouth County is diverse, dynamic and economically strong. To help keep it that way and to help it grow, the Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension provides educational and advisory support to commercial agriculture and aquaculture, homeowners, governmental agencies and natural resource interests. Each year Rutgers Cooperative Extension meets with agents from participating departments, representatives from state and federal agencies, local contributors and elected officials to review recent accomplishments, and gather input for help in programming future educational outreach.

Recently, 47 clients attended the annual Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension of Monmouth County’s stakeholders meeting,



Presentations in Ag Building Conference Room

including Freeholder Theodore J. Narozanick "We are indeed fortunate to have the staff of Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension of Monmouth County diligently working to provide the many varied programs and services that educate and enrich the lives of our residents," Freeholder Narozanick said. "I believe

*The focus is on issues and needs relating to agriculture and the environment, management of natural resources, food safety, quality, nutrition and health, family stability, economic security and youth development."*

Rich Obal

these programs are the finest in New Jersey and the general public should be made aware of what Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension is doing to enrich their lives."

According to Rich Obal, who heads up the county extension service, total farm sales in Monmouth County in 2003 were \$81 million, which was third in the state, on 47,000 acres of farmland. Statewide, the county ranks first in greenhouse and sod production, first in the number of horses, equine farms and farm markets, second in nursery crops and sixth and seventh, respectively, in vegetable and field crop production.

"Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension helps the diverse population of Monmouth County adapt to a rapidly changing society and improves their lives through an

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## REMEMBER WHEN...THE WIKOFF FARM

VIVIAN QUINN & BILL SCIARAPPA

Recollecting her childhood memories of Monmouth County, Lydia Stillwell Wikoff said, "There have been so many changes that it is hard to describe the area as it was. We are just completely surrounded by developments now, so there really is nothing but our farm that is the same." The farm she is referring to is the Wikoff Farm (also known as The Killdee Farm) located on Route 9 and Gordon's Corner in Manalapan.

In 1839, Joseph Stillwell purchased the original 176-acre parcel of The Killdee Farm which now consists of 219 acres. Over the next 100 years, the farm prospered and produced vegetables and hay for feed. In 1937, the farm was almost sold by the family, but Oliver Stillwell, Lydia's father, secured the land and continued to farm. He grew a wide variety of vegetables and fruits which were sold at vegetable markets and tended dairy cattle, turkeys and pigs. Oliver was growing specialty vegetables and diversifying his operation when it was not the thing to do. He was also ahead of his time when it came to soil conservation. He had equipment coming to the farm making contours in the field coming down from the hill.

In 1948, Lydia and Charles Wikoff, Jr., (see photo) rented the farm and took over its operation. They started to raise potatoes and dreamed of marketing them. In the words of Lydia Wikoff, "I considered myself fortunate to marry a fellow who was determined to farm, even though my dad cautioned me that farming meant hard times ahead." After four years,



Charlie & Lydia Wikoff at the recent BOA dinner with donated flower arrangement from FFA students

they decided to change to corn and other grains. Shortly after, tremendous changes in harvesting methods became available along with improvements in drying and storage. Charles Wikoff, Jr. worked with the Department of Agricultural Engineering at Rutgers University to install machinery that would reduce the moisture content of small grains.

Presently, the grandchildren of Lydia and Charles Wikoff Jr. represent the family's seventh generation to live on and operate the farm. James Wikoff runs the farm with the help of his father Charles. Declining income from grain prevents them from hiring anyone else. James feels that farm life has helped his daughters develop great work ethics, but, according to James, a down side of farm life is "you work all the time and life goes by so fast you miss some of it." Along with running the farm, James has served as past President and past Vice President of the Monmouth County Board of Agriculture, past reasurer of the Soybean Board, past Director of NJ Farm Bureau, past President of the 4-H Alumni and is a Director of Farmers Brokerage.

Changes over the last 10 years include diversification to higher value crops as sweet corn, sunflowers and pumpkins. Conventional planting of corn has been replaced by no-tillage techniques. Soybeans are still conventional but Round-up has made great improvements in weed control. Both new practices are saving a lot of money in time and labor. Looking to the future, they are not sure of what direction they might take. The populated area makes driving machinery down the road difficult and the profitability of the commodity market is dropping dangerously low. A direct market road stand could be a possibility for the future.

The Wikoff Farm entered Farmland Preservation in 2000 and will always remain a farm, albeit many changes. Whatever develops, we hope their strong family heritage will persist and continue to provide quality food and feed from the Garden State. Central Jersey citizens are blessed with a beautiful and precious piece of open space in this important decision to preserve their farm.



Farmer Jimmy Wikoff combining a soybean yield trial at the Wikoff Farm & County Agent Bill Sciarappa

# Soybean Rust in the United States - [www.usda.gov/soybeanrust](http://www.usda.gov/soybeanrust)

Bill Bamka—Burlington County Agent

**S**oybean rust, a disease spread primarily by windborne spores, has now been confirmed in nine states since it was first discovered here in the United States on November 10, 2004, in Louisiana. The most recent samples testing positive for soybean rust (*Phakopsora pachyrhizi*) were from Memphis, Tennessee. Other states where the presence of soybean rust has been confirmed include Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Missouri, and South Carolina.

The arrival of soybean rust in the United States this year, is well ahead of the two to three years predicted by many. The very active hurricane season is the reason for the early arrival. The discovery of soybean rust in Louisiana is attributed to hurricane Ivan, based on the progression of symptoms present on the infected plants.



Middle stage of development: upper and lower leaf surfaces and canopy.

*meibomia*, the New World species. The Asian species is what has recently been discovered in the United States. Affected plants are quickly defoliated, reducing pod set and pod fill, yields and seed quality.

Soybean rust had previously been reported in Asia, Australia, Africa and South America. Yield losses due to the disease has ranged from 10 to 80 percent in these areas. Until this year, the United States was the only soybean producing area without soybean rust.

**What does soybean rust look like?** Soybean rust is difficult to identify in the early stages of infection, as symptoms are very small, poorly defined, and occur in the lower canopy of the plant, where it is humid. Initial symptoms of soybean rust include formation of small, gray spots on soybean leaves, particularly on the undersides of leaves. Spots are likely to occur on lower leaves.



Middle stage of development—lower leaf surface—Photos Missouri Extension

Following are some frequently asked questions regarding rust:

**What is soybean rust?** Soybean rust is an extremely serious fungal disease of soybean. Soybean rust is caused by either of two fungal species – *Phakopsora pachyrhizi*, also known as the Asian species, and *Phakopsora*

Spots increase in size over time and change color from gray to tan or reddish-brown. Tan lesions mature to form small pustules on the lower leaf surface. Pustules contain powdery tan spores.

Reddish-brown lesions are composed of primarily necrotic (dead) tissue and typically have a limited number of pustules.

Soybean rust infection may be mistaken for spider mite damage or foliar diseases such as septoria brown spot, bacterial blight or bacterial pustule. Unlike lesions from spot diseases, soybean rust pustules are raised, mainly on the underside of the leaf.

**How is soybean rust transmitted?** The fungus is primarily spread by windborne spores that can be transmitted long distances. Seed borne transmission has not been documented. Clouds of spores are released if infected plants are disturbed by wind or by individuals walking through rust-infected areas.

**How mobile is soybean rust?** Soybean rust spores can be carried long distances by wind currents. Plant pathologists believe soybean rust is likely to spread much like wheat stem rust or southern corn rust. Long distance dispersal from south to north is dependent on wind patterns and weather conditions. Most rust diseases travel 20 to 30 miles a day from south to north in the US.

**Are fungicides effective against soybean rust?** Soybean rust can be managed with the careful use of fungicides. Early detection is necessary for the most effective control. Monitoring soybean fields locally and regionally will be important during the 2005 growing season. Weather patterns and crop growth stage will determine the need to spray. Currently there are three fungicides registered for soybean rust in the United States. Products containing chlorothalonil (Bravo), azoxystrobin (Quadris), and pyraclostrobin (Headline) are labeled for preventative control of soybean rust. Section 18 Emergency Use Permits have been requested in NJ for other fungicides.

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education process that uses science-based knowledge," Obal said. "The focus is on

issues and needs relating to agriculture and the environment, management of natural resources, food safety, quality, nutrition and health, family stability, economic security and youth development.

In 2004, this agency moved to a 43,000-square-foot office, joining related agencies – USDA-NRCS, Farm Service Agency, Freehold Soil District and Shade Tree Commission. The group worked coop-

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eratively to reach record numbers of clientele through new programs, services and applied research activities.

In regards to Farmland Preservation, Rutgers Cooperative Extension has played a prominent educational and advisory role for municipal and county boards as well as the farming community in preserving the agricultural land base. More than 9,000 acres of farmland on 85 farms have

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tors worldwide. His local advice on turf grass disease management was especially relevant to key problems back home. New faculty member Dr. Stacy Bonos followed with detailed performance information of new turf grass varieties for New Jersey. A ton of plant and pesticide information was provided by the next seven speakers. Many pesticide credits were generated at these meetings. A sample pesticide inventory form is in this newsletter.

Water certification and farm regulations continue to be an increasing concern that consumes a lot of ag agent time. DEP is ratcheting up their expectations and enforcement. Many of our farm clients feel "picked on" and selected out unnecessarily. I have to agree. Farmers are an easy target and seem to get an inordinate amount of attention despite the fact that less than 4% of our total water supplies are used by agriculture. We're in New Jersey – not in Kansas or California. Those ag states don't get 55 inches of rainfall a year. They are lucky with 15 inches and often only get 5 inches. That is why they have to use a high percentage of available water over their large crop acreages. Much of this evaporates off while most of

our water use drains down into the groundwater replenishing underground supplies for everyone. It takes about five times more water on the west coast to grow lettuce and other vegetables there - so when water prices come to exceed that of gas later this century we many have local food production return to the water blessed east coast. In the meantime, DEP should assist, encourage and preserve farmers and concentrate on the truly big land use issues like sprawling suburban development. This "Dumb Growth" paves over perfectly perculating soils and puts people and malls right on top of the headwater sources of our drinking and irrigation supplies. This residential and industry water is often a one use only; wastewater that gets jettisoned through the sewerage treatment plant down the river to the salty ocean – lost forever. Let's put our enforcement where it really matters and get off the backs of the small farmer.

Not that farming doesn't have its share of water related issues like erosion, excessive nutrients and bacterial contamination. There are some really good NRCS/USDA grant programs to buffer streamsidess, prevent erosion and contain farm nutrients. Rutgers Extension will continue to engage these problems as well and

been permanently preserved in Monmouth County, representing nearly 20 percent of the agricultural land in the county.

Dr. Karyn Malinowski, senior associate director of the Extension, reviewed the Ag Station Annual Report and a fact sheet entitled, "What the New Jersey Experiment Station is," giving examples of programming offered, such as Land Use and down zoning, the Economic Analysis of Horse Racing, Water Quality Allocation and Youth Farm Stand.

will help farmers remain good neighbors. On June 30 at the Rutgers EcoComplex in Burlington County, I am coordinating a Bacterial Source Tracking Seminar related to ag concerns in food safety, water supplies and watershed sampling. Experts from DEP, Rutgers University, Monmouth University and private industry will discuss new technology and lab techniques. Once identified, bacteria become easier to track down and locate specific sources of pollution – whether humans, horses, pets, deer, livestock, wildlife and waterfowl. This Rutgers Center intends to start a new lab for water quality analysis under the leadership of Director Dave Specca and Extension Water Specialist Chris Obropta.

Finally, I am very pleased to announce that I was granted promotion and tenure by the Rutgers' Deans. I'd especially like to thank our growers for their help in working with me to develop successful farming programs over the last six years. Your strong support has been well noted. So look forward to again seeing me on the farm or in the office and reading more issues of Changing Times.

Have a healthy and safe season.

*Bill Sciarappa*

# CALENDAR

## MAY 2005

**May 12 - NJ Farm & Rural Energy Seminar**—2005—Rutgers Food Innovation Center, Bridgeton. 9 am-12 pm. 856-787-7750.

**May 20** - Cook College Graduation

**May 24-25** - FFA Annual Conference - Hickman Hall, Cook College.

**May 24 - Vegetable ICM Twilight** - Cumberland County - 856-451-2800

## JUNE 2005

**June 30 - Bacterial Source Tracking Seminar** - 732-932-9271. Application [www.visitmonmouth.com/07050coopext/](http://www.visitmonmouth.com/07050coopext/)

## JULY 2005

**July 27-31 - Monmouth County Fair** - East Freehold Park

**July 20-23**—Burlington County Fair

### NJ INSURABLE CROPS CLOSING DATES

**May 31**—Nursery  
**Sept. 30**—Selected grains

**800-308-2449** or  
<http://salem.rutgers.edu/cropinsurance/>

**Rutgers Research & Extension  
On-line Learning Center for  
Pesticide Use and Storage  
DEP credits on line**

[www.ifplantscouldtalk.rutgers.edu/pesticide\\_education](http://www.ifplantscouldtalk.rutgers.edu/pesticide_education)

### Monmouth County Board of Ag

7:30 PM

5/17, 6/21, 9/20, 10/1

### Basic Pesticide Training

**CORE—9 am - 1 pm**

5/17, 6/7, 7/19, 8/9,  
10/11, 11/8 & 12/6

**3A—10/25 - 9 am - 3 pm**

**3B—11/15 - 9 am - 3 pm**

To register call 800-524-9942

**Held at**

**Rutgers Cooperative Research  
& Extension, Ag Building**

**4000 Kozloski Rd.**

**Freehold, NJ**

**732-431-7260**

## Pesticide Storage Inspections

All licensed pesticide applicators are reminded that they are required by law to provide your local fire company with a list of the materials in storage on your property. This is required by May 1st of each year. You must also include a cover letter explaining to the fire company what the materials are used for. Be sure to keep a copy of this list in a location separate from the storage area itself.

Our pesticide specialist, Dr. George Hamilton, has an excellent website [www.pestmanagement.Rutgers.edu/PATrecord\\_forms.htm](http://www.pestmanagement.Rutgers.edu/PATrecord_forms.htm) where you can get a template that you can use for reporting materials, and where you can access more information about this and other issues. (See sample).

[www.pestmanagement.Rutgers.edu/PATrecord\\_forms.htm](http://www.pestmanagement.Rutgers.edu/PATrecord_forms.htm)

### Sample Pesticide Inventory Form

Name of Establishment: \_\_\_\_\_

Storage Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Updated: \_\_\_\_\_

Storage Location	Brand Name	Active Ingredient Name	EPA Reg #	Amount
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____





**RUTGERS COOPERATIVE RESEARCH & EXTENSION**

NEW JERSEY AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION  
RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

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