



## Agent's Overview

**A** very positive overview point is the emerging philosophy that "Local is the New Organic." As much as organic production has captured the imagination of the consuming public, local produce is trumping that market segment with an even broader market appeal. The major food distributors and ag leaders are really getting this marketing trend right judging by the recent news print advertising, radio spots and in-store promotions. We all aim to support the local farmer regardless if it's organic, a smaller quantity and less available year long. At least we know where it came from, what conditions it was grown in and how far it traveled. Our Jersey Fresh produce is definitely more flavorful and supports the regional economy of the consumer rather than the west coast, corporate farms or foreign imports from halfway around the world. Such imports have a huge carbon-petrochemical "footprint" and their prices don't reflect the true cost of transporta-

tion and its negative impacts to our global environment. It appears that a major result of NAFTA was to let imports exceed levels of US exports and local production. Our nation now swaps food supplies back and forth across the ocean. The agri-business distributors and transportation leaders make the money and the politicians build their power on the back of American production. This last decade of playing off our local Ag production and the livelihood of the small local farmer may be declining. There is a turn in the tide as our gas prices continue to rise. While we complain at the \$3.50 price per gallon and high fertilizer costs, the importers are really suffering as their excessive "food miles" eat into profits. This makes local production a better choice economically and energetically, as well it should be. The world is eating more vegetables and fruits everyday and this new Green Revolution may mean more "green" for local producers.

Have a productive and safe summer.

*Bill Sciarappa*

## BOARD OF AGRICULTURE ANNUAL DINNER



**L to R - Rutgers Dean Mark Robson recognizes Freeholder Emeritus Ted Narozanick, FFA Members with Freeholder Barbara McMorrow, BOA Vice President Tom Freiberger congratulates Ag Agent Rich Obal 30 years of service**

The 2007 BOA Dinner was held on March 10, with recognitions, awards, and a great dinner. "Freeholder Emeritus" Ted Narozanick was recognized for his 48 years of service as a Monmouth County Freeholder. Rich Obal was recognized for 30 years of service to the agricultural community, serving as county Agricultural and Resource Management Agent in Monmouth

County since 1977. The Outstanding Service to Agriculture award was presented to Frank J. D'Amico (see p. 3 "Remember When"). Ag Secretary Kuperus, Dean Karyn Malinowski and Farm Bureau President Rich Nieuwenhuis joined our 100 BOA members. FFA Members and Bill Sciarappa rounded out the evening with informative presentations.

## Sustainable Farming on the Urban Fringe



### NJAES - a small experiment station but a plant breeding powerhouse

Jack Rabin, Associate Director – Farm Programs

Innovative plant breeding releases from NJAES scientists frequently start with inauspicious names, but result in *world-class* products sustaining local agriculture, processors, landscape ornamental, and turf industry needs.

Take nectarine NJN-100, for example. NJN-100 is a new NJAES nectarine with knock-your-socks-off great tasting white-fleshed fruit, beautiful red skin and high sweetness combined with juicy tartness. Outside NJAES, stone fruit selection focuses on fruit size, appearance, and on “sub-acid” flavor high in sweetness, but low in acid, which is preferred by aging, western, and Asian consumers. New Jersey consumers find sub-acid fruits bland, preferring a balance of tree-ripened sweetness with juicy tartness, better taste, better quality & fewer pesticide inputs. Nectarine NJN-100 also benefits farmers and agricultural environmental quality. NJN-100 was bred in New Jersey. It is less susceptible to devastating bacterial spot disease common to stone fruit trees brought here from other regions, which require repeated pesticide applications. NJN-100 also suffers less from low temperature chilling damage than trees selected for Mediterranean climates.

As with any variety, the marketplace ultimately decides if NJN-100 achieves success. In the meantime, NJN-100’s breeder NJAES Professor Joe Goffreda has a fabulous group of at least 10 selections of apples, peaches, nectarines, and ornamentals undergoing release, with more on the horizon. These trees are targeted to commercial farms, small market farms, homeowner fruit growing, and ornamental landscape uses.

Beach plum is a native New Jersey coastal fruit tree with potential to create local value-added small

farm products in Cape May and other locations. While Extension Agent Jenny Carleo and cooperators evaluate native beach plums, Professor Goffreda maintained beach plum tree BP-1. BP-1 fruits assayed positive for compounds which reduce bacterial adhesion of urinary tract bacteria, similar to cranberry juice. Goffreda also crossed native beach plums, and has sterile trees wonderful as native species for environmentally friendly low maintenance landscapes.

Recent contributing releases include:



- Stellar series of hybrid ornamental dogwood, and hollies from Professor Elwin Orton.
- Award winning world-class fine turf varieties by breeders Reed Funk, Bill Meyer, and Stacy Bonos.
- New cranberry varieties Crimson Queen and Mullica Queen with superior color and yield from Professor Nick Vorsa and Jennifer Johnson-Cicalese.
- A range of new **all-male hybrid asparagus** varieties like 956 and 978 with tighter, higher quality spears and better yields, with increased warm climate potential that leverage on previous NJAES hybrids like Jersey Giant and other proven winners.

**Farm-to-fork benefits** of public variety releases: Locally adapted varieties support local and regional farm and food system sustainability because they tolerate variable local weather and climate stresses, pests, and diseases with fewer chemical inputs. Performance improvements are “built-in” to the product and locally adapted higher yielding varieties provide quality yields on a smaller land base. This sustaining increased sales and profits on fewer expensive acres.

In New Jersey, every acre counts.

## REMEMBER WHEN... FRANK J. D'AMICO - EAST GATE NURSERY

By Vivian Quinn & Bill Sciarappa

**T**he 2007 Board of Agriculture Outstanding Service to Agriculture Award went to Frank J. D'Amico who has had an outstanding career and a phenomenal family history in agriculture. Frank was born in 1938 in Closter, NJ, the ninth of ten children. Along with his father Alfonso and two brothers Mario and Al, he began truck farming 14 acres of vegetables the "hard way;" all hand labor with no hardware. Frank led the horse while his brother worked the cultivator. In 1955, Frank moved with his family to Millstone Township and attended Allentown High School.

Frank married Estelle 42 years ago and they raised three children and have four grandchildren. Farm life has made the D'Amicos a very close family because they depended on the children even at a very young age. They learned about responsibility, what life was all about and the satisfaction of growing a nice crop.

In the 1970's and 80's, the agricultural operation expanded to include berries, apples and peaches as well as became the first farm in the area to grow ethnic specialty crops, especially cilantro.

In 1983 Frank went out on his own to start East Gate Farms. As time went on, the farm produced Indian, North and South Caribbean and Mexican crops. As the Mexican population grew, they were able to supply the demand for Mexican crops. Of course marketing is essential for success, and Frank had the know-how in this area. Frank says "he was in the right place at the right time, especially since they had three children in college."

Joining with his oldest son Frank, Jr., in 1987 he purchased an 88 acre farm in Robbinsville which



Frank & Estelle at BOA Dinner

*"If the wind doesn't blow right, you have to adjust the sails."*

became East Gate Nursery in 2002. By the early 1990's, The D'Amicos were farming over 500 acres of fruits and vegetables and currently operate over 100 acres of farmland. However, last year for the first time they stopped vegetable farming and are now 100% landscape. The D'Amicos felt it was time to make a change in their operation from food crops to ornamental shrubbery. In the future they will go with whatever works, and as Frank said, "If the wind doesn't blow right, you have to adjust the sails."

Besides being a skilled and innovative grower and fluent in three languages, Frank shares his time and talents with all, including the Millstone Planning Board for 34 years, Tri-County Cooperative for 20 years, New Jersey Apple Growers Association for 15 years, Millstone Variance Board 10 years, a member of several Environmental and Open Space committees and the Economic Board.

Frank is described as a hard-working and very committed person who takes the time to share with his friends and family. He is a generous, honest, helpful and compassionate person.

Frank, Jr. has taken over East Gate Farms, but Frank Sr. is still working to keep the Garden State green with Jersey Grown landscape.



## *There is a Reason the State Animal of NJ is the Horse*

The result of more than 12 months of work is reported in this document. The numbers show that the horse industry – which generates \$1.1 billion in economic impact annually – is comparable to such widely recognized sectors as golf courses, landscaping, biotechnology, marine fisheries and aquaculture, and many others. In terms of impact on working agriculture, the horse industry accounts for one in five agricultural acres, more than any other segment of agriculture.

In addition to the impressive numbers, the impact on the quality of life in New Jersey is, undoubtedly, the most important contribution the horse industry makes. Horses are in every county in New Jersey and, by all accounts, are one of the top attractions for residents from the cities and suburbs when they tour the state. Clearly New Jersey is horse country, and this report provides the numbers to show why this is true.

### **New Jersey Equine Industry, 2007 Executive Summary**

#### **Economic impact of the equine industry**

- Total economic impact of \$1.1 billion annually
  - \$278.2 million annually for racing-related operations, not including racetracks
  - \$262.4 million annually for non-racing operations
  - \$117.8 million annually for equine owners without operations
  - \$647 million annually for the three preceding categories combined
  - \$502.3 million annually for NJ racetracks

#### **Employment**

- Nearly 13,000 jobs generated
  - 9,150 jobs generated by equine operations, not including racetracks
  - 3,820 jobs generated by racetracks

#### **Taxes generated**

- An estimated \$160 million annually paid in federal, state, and local taxes
  - \$85 million generated by equine operations and owners
  - \$75 million generated by NJ racetracks

#### **Acres to support equine facilities**

- 176,000 total acres reported by equine operations
  - 96,000 of these acres are directly related to equine activities
    - 78,000 of these acres are devoted to pasture & hay production
  - 46,000 additional acres in NJ produce hay and grain for horses
  - NJ equine-related acres represent about one-fifth of the state's 790,000 acres in agriculture

#### **Animals and operations**

- 42,500 equine animals housed in New Jersey
  - 30,000 in non-racing activities
  - 12,500 in racing-related activities
    - 8,200 racing-related Standardbreds
    - 4,300 racing-related Thoroughbreds
  - 7,200 equine operations in New Jersey
  - \$4 billion in equine-related assets
    - \$582 million in equine animals
    - \$2.9 billion in land and buildings (not including racetracks)
    - \$476 million in racetrack assets (land and buildings)



### Equine operations by county

The top three counties in both acres and number of operations are Hunterdon, Monmouth, and Burlington. The industry appears to be growing in the state's northwestern counties.

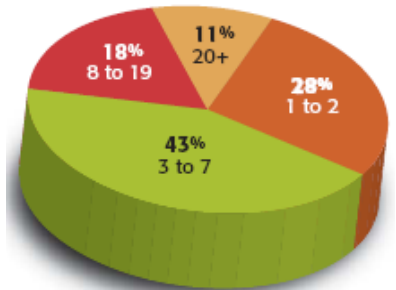
County	Number of Operations	Total Facility Acres	Acres that are Equine-Related	Acres Used for Pasture, Hay, and Grain
Atlantic	270	3,100	2,100	1,500
Burlington	850	20,700	12,100	10,100
Camden	160	1,600	1,100	1,000
Cape May	230	2,500	1,700	1,300
Cumberland	270	8,200	3,300	2,800
Gloucester	490	6,200	3,600	2,800
Hunterdon	1,110	29,400	16,600	14,000
Mercer	110	3,500	2,300	2,100
Middlesex	160	4,200	2,400	1,900
Monmouth	960	27,300	19,900	15,700
Morris	260	3,700	2,100	1,600
Ocean	290	4,000	1,500	1,100
Salem	500	12,900	5,600	4,700
Somerset	250	7,600	3,500	2,900
Sussex	640	20,000	10,300	7,800
Warren	500	18,800	6,800	5,300
All other NJ counties	150	2,100	1,100	900
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>7,200</b>	<b>176,000</b>	<b>96,000</b>	<b>78,000</b>

### Operations by number of head

This is largely an industry of smaller farms. More than 70 percent of the state's 7,200 equine operations had fewer than eight equine animals in 2006. These operations include not only small commercial facilities, but also horses kept in "backyards" and commodity farms that happen to keep a few horses. Although they make up only 29 percent of all operations, those having eight or more animals account for three-quarters of New Jersey's equine inventory of 42,500, while operations with 20 or more animals account for a third.

Number of horses per operation

- 1-2 horses - 28%
- 3-7 horses - 43%
- 8-19 horses - 18%
- 20+ horses - 11%



## Biofuels and Crop Production in the Mid-Atlantic Region

Greg W. Roth, Professor of Agronomy—Department of Crop and Soil Sciences Penn State

The recent interest in biofuels could be one of the most significant developments in agriculture in a long time. We will likely see many impacts on how we do business. We have already seen a dramatic increase in crop prices and will likely see shifting uses in crops, different cropping systems evolve and lots of opportunities for those who understand the issues.

Biofuels, like grain and cellulosic ethanol and biodiesel, have fairly broad political support that was especially spurred by the spikes in gasoline prices this summer. But even before that, government policy was shifting to provide significant support to biofuel development at both the national and state level. The Energy Policy Act of 2005 passed by our federal government and much state recent legislation has provided a great boost to investment in this industry.

Biofuels are a new market for our grain crops and provide some basis for higher prices and in some situations can provide relief for high prices of imported oil. The impetus for biofuels goes beyond grain prices or gas prices at the pump. Rural

development due to biofuels is an important consideration. Reducing our dependence on foreign oil is another issue. Another issue as well as reducing the flow of dollars to oil producing countries that may not be that stable or friendly. Still another issue is the global warming issue and the need to reduce carbon emissions to the atmosphere. A long term vision that includes biofuels, other alternative fuels, and energy conservation is needed.

A few of these issues for several of our regional crops are summarized below.

**CORN** is a major crop in the region and can be used for ethanol production or for direct combustion in grain stoves or furnaces. Both of these areas have been experiencing rapid growth. Corn yields have been increasing in the U.S. by about 2% per year, causing surpluses and low prices. Corn is often undervalued based on its energy content. For example, a bushel of corn at \$2.50/bushel could be converted into 2.7 gallons of ethanol valued at \$2.50/gallon and 17 pounds of distillers grains.

(Continued on page 6)

## Agency Updates

**NRCS** - NOW is the time to contact your Freehold NRCS for conservation assistance. Land managers applying for funding through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) and Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) can submit applications to the local Freehold Natural Resources Conversation Service (NRCS) office at any time. Newly added practices are the Renewable Energy Incentives. These will include the Air Resource Management Practices. These practices will focus on replacement of diesel engines for irrigation pumps to meet current EPA air quality standards, and providing incentives for the use of biodiesel and ethanol fuels. Incentive payments will be made for solar or wind energy generation for solar irrigation and livestock watering systems. 732-462-0075.

**USDA - COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS** – Nominations for candidates for the Farm Service Agency’s County Committee election representing Local Administrative Area #2 (Middlesex County) will be accepted starting **June 15 through Aug. 1, 2007**. A nomination form (FSA-669A) and details may be picked up at your local USDA Service Center, FSA county office <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/publications/elections>. **ACREAGE REPORTING** All cropland on the farm must be reported to receive benefits from the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), Marketing assistance loans and Loan Deficiency Payments. Conservation Reserve Program acreage must also be reported to receive annual rental payments.

**Crop Insurance Website** <http://salem.rutgers.edu/cropinsurance/index.html> **CROP INSURANCE CLOSING DATES**  
**JULY 31 - Forage Seeding - New SEPT. 30 - Barley, Wheat, Forage Production - New**

*(Continued from page 5)*

**BARLEY** is an alternative energy crop that is used as a substitute for corn. It requires less fertilizer and also grows over the winter, protecting the soil. In addition, many farmers can grow a crop of soybeans after they harvest the barley. Barley markets have been low as many feed companies prefer corn. One special type of barley is called hulless barley. Hulless barley has a theoretical ethanol yield of about 2.4 gallons of ethanol/bushel, slightly lower than corn. In Pennsylvania we averaged 90 bushels of hulless barley (about 214 gallons of ethanol per acre) plus straw and then double crop the fields with soybeans.

**SOYBEANS** are a major Mid-Atlantic crop and are targeted as a key crop for biodiesel development. Soybean acreage has been increasing in Pennsylvania recently. Soybeans contain about 20-22% oil and 40% crude protein, so they contain much more protein than oil. The protein is used for animal feed. Oil yield per acre for a typical soybean yield for 41 bushels per acre is about 58 gallons. Increasing demand for soy oil has some new biodiesel plants planning on the capability to use multiple feedstock to deal with shortages of soybean oil.

**RAPESEED/CANOLA** is another alternative oilseed crop that could be used for biodiesel production. Canola is a special type of rapeseed

that produces food grade oils. These crops can be grown here and will yield well but there are no existing markets for the crop. Canola typically contains 40% oil and can produce oils yields of 129 gallons of biodiesel per acre from a production of 56 bushels per acre, so this crop has the potential of significantly increasing biodiesel production per acre compared to most other crops. Canola has some production issues like winterkill, disease, and shattering.

**SWITCHGRASS** is a warm season perennial grass that has gained much popularity recently as a possible energy source for either cellulosic ethanol or in the near-term, as a feedstock for pellet stoves. Switchgrass requires relatively low inputs and can provide excellent winter wildlife cover.

Agent Sciarappa notes in attending a “New Crops” Symposium last year that private industry had bred a very winter hardy version that is 2-3 times larger than conventional switchgrass varieties, *Miscanthus giganteus*. Its energy content was as good or better than the world’s best energy crop sugarcane, which can only be grown in semi-tropical regions. Conventional equipment was used to cut and bale these new switchgrass types in Illinois and England with highly encouraging results. Hopefully any corn-based ethanol production plant can convert to other biomass sources such as switchgrass in the future.

# CALENDAR

## June 2007

**6-26-27 - Onsite Wastewater Systems.** Rutgers Eco-Complex, Bordentown, NJ For info visit [www.cookce.rutgers.edu](http://www.cookce.rutgers.edu) or 732-932-9271.

## July 2007

**7-13-15 - Produce Marketing Association Foodservice Conference & Exposition.** Monterey, CA. 302-738-7100 or [solutionctr@pma.com](mailto:solutionctr@pma.com)

**July 15-17 - American Society of enology & Viticulture Eastern Section Annual Mtg.** For info visit <http://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/fst/asev>

**July 16-19 NACAA - Grand Rapids, Michigan**

**July 28 - Open House.** Tours of the Display Garden and Plant Sales, 9am-3pm. Rutgers Univ. 112 Ryders Lane, New Brunswick. 732-932-8451.

**July 25- 29 - Monmouth Cty Fair -** [www.monmouthcountyparks.com/fair/fair\\_main.asp](http://www.monmouthcountyparks.com/fair/fair_main.asp)

## August 2007

**8-7 - Fall Nursery Weed Control Twilight Meeting** 5-7 PM. Overdevest Nursery 578 Bowentown Rd., Bridgeton. 856-451-2800 - Jim Johnson.

**8-8 Tomato Tasting -** Rutgers Agricultural Research & Extension Ctr. Bridgeton, NJ - Free - 732-932-9271

**8-16 - Cream Ridge Nursery Research & Extension Meeting.** 732-431-7260

**8-29 Tomato Tasting & Open House -** Rutgers Snyder Farm. 908-713-8980. [www.snyderfarm.Rutgers.edu](http://www.snyderfarm.Rutgers.edu)

# 2007 County Fairs

Atlantic 4-H Fair	Aug 9-11
Bergen 4-H & Ag Fair	June 9
Burlington Farm Fair	July 18- 21
Camden	Aug. 2- 4
Cape May County 4-H Fair	July 19- 21
Cumberland County Fair	July 2- 7
Essex 4-H Fair	April 21
Gloucester Fair & Peach Festival	July 26- 29
Hunterdon 4-H Ag Fair	Aug 22- 26
Mercer 4-H Fair at Freedom Fest	June 30
Middlesex County Fair	Aug. 6-12
Monmouth Cty Fair	July 25- 29
Morris Cty 4-H Fair	July 27- 29
Ocean Cty Fair	July 10- 15
Passaic Cty 4-H Fair	July 18- 22
Salem Cty Fair	Aug. 7- 10
Somerset Cty 4-H Fair	Aug. 15- 17
NJ State Fair/Sussex Cty. Farm & Horse Show	Aug. 3-12
Warren Cty Farmers Fair	Jul 29-Aug 4

## MONMOUTH COUNTY FAIR HOURS



Wednesday - Friday 5pm-11pm  
Saturday, 11am-11pm  
Sunday 11am-6pm



**MONMOUTH COUNTY BOA**  
7:30 PM  
6-20, 9-19, 10-17, 11,21, 12-19

**BASIC PESTICIDE TRAINING CORE—9 am - 1 pm**  
7-27, 10-17, 11-14, 12-5  
**Category 3A & 3B**  
10-24 & 11-28 9 AM—3 PM  
To register call 800-524-9942  
<http://www.njpma.com/nj/events/article.asp?EventID=39>  
**Held at**  
**Rutgers Cooperative Research & Extension, Ag Building**  
**4000 Kozloski Rd.**

**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

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