



Agent's Overview

Hats off to those hard-working farmers handling the summer heat wave. There have been miserable days out in the field when I cruised back by mid-afternoon to the cool of the office yet I saw many of our local growers drenched in sweat as they handled their crops, weeds and equipment at 99° F and 90% RH. Impressive! But please remember to work safely, wear a hat, drink frequently, sunscreen if necessary, etc. This heat, lack of timely rain and high winds have severely stressed the crops as well over this summer. Thanks to irrigation, the general agricultural situation is okay. Quality is good and prices are reasonable, although the input costs are rising faster than the temperatures.

At the farm markets, I've noticed lots of new specialty vegetables and ethnic crops such as miniature eggplants of various colors. In the supermarket we see big increases in tomatillos and hot peppers as well as organically produced fruit and vegetables like blueberries and grape tomatoes. All of these crops are relatively easy to grow. If you want to learn better how to go into an ethnic enterprise or organic practices, call me to discuss. I can arrange to give you a personal tour of our Rutgers-USDA Ethnic Crop demonstration plots at Creamridge or transition some of your farm to organic. Even just utilizing more organic fertilizers and manures will help rebuild your soils and may cut your conventional costs.

Out of Jersey and over into Africa. I was privileged to conduct a horticultural assessment for USAID in Africa. Wow – what a trip! Not only do those farmers battle serious heat, most lack a lot of basic “necessities” like potable water, electricity, and paved roads. To top it off, the bigger growers need to use very stout fencing to deter herds of antelope and elephant! Our university group is identifying some new African crops that could add to our ornamental industry and the specialty crop grower.

In this summertime issue, we update you on IPM, Farmland Preservation and local happenings. You're over a big hump, take a little breather. Try to get out of the hot sun, cool out, hydrate and enjoy life and your newsletter.

Bill Sciarappa

Upper Freehold and Colts Neck Farms Preserved

UPPER FREEHOLD

The Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders announced the addition of two more farms to one of the largest farmland preservation project areas in New Jersey. In June, the county acquired the development rights to the Jennings property, which has been incorporated into the adjacent Walnford Stud Thoroughbred operation, and the Honadle Farm, a 14-acre nursery on Holmes Mill Road in Creamridge. As part of the acquisition, the Monmouth County Park System acquired acreage along Crosswicks Creek, adding an important linkage to the several-thousand-acre Crosswicks Creek Greenway. “Preservation of the first farm in the



Charles Kuperus and Freeholder Lillian Burry at Jennings Farm - photo Matt Shipkey

Hill Road Project Area began back in 1989,” Freeholder Director William C. Barham said. “It is a testament to the continued commitment of Monmouth County to farmland preservation efforts that in such a short period of time we have ensured that the landscape of this

street will forever remain agricultural in nature. County residents traveling down this street 100 years from now will be able to enjoy the same scenic vistas of Monmouth's horse country.”

New Jersey Agriculture Secretary Charles M. Kuperus said, “Our equine and nursery farms are very important sectors of New Jersey's agricultural industry. We are pleased to partner in the preservation of both the Jennings Farm, which will help expand the largest thoroughbred breeding operation in the state, and the Honadle Farm, which furthers the successful farmland preservation efforts in the Crosswicks Creek corridor.”

“We are aware that this is

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the last opportunity we have to preserve our historic agricultural heritage, and we are working all across Monmouth County to protect this threatened resource,” Freeholder Lillian G. Burry said. “The staff of the Farmland Preservation Program is currently pursuing the preservation of more than 60 farms comprising some 3,500 acres. This is more than double the amount of active projects pursued at any one time by the Program in the past.”

“One-fifth of all farmland in Monmouth County has been permanently preserved,” Freeholder Deputy Director Robert D. Clifton said. “Monmouth County now

ranks fifth among counties in the number of preserved farms, and has preserved significantly more farmland than other counties with similar development profiles. Monmouth County is committed to continue saving our remaining farmland because, in doing so, we also are preserving our rural vistas and quality of life.”

COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP

Agriculture Secretary Charles M. Kupurus announced the preservation of the 108-acre Greenfields farm through a partnership with Colts Neck township and Monmouth County. “We’re pleased to partner in the preservation of this

thoroughbred farm, which further our efforts to strengthen NJ’s equine industry and will be appreciated by generations of Colts Neck residents to come,” said Kuperus.

“In addition to its agricultural merit, the farm has significant environmental value abutting Willow Brook, which drains directly into the swimming River Reservoir,” said Joseph McCarthy, chairman of the Monmouth County Agriculture Development Board. He credited Freeholder and former Colts Neck Mayor Lillian Burry for her support of the project at both the township and county levels.

To date, more than 1,400 farms covering 148,000 acres have been preserved statewide.

Nursery Research & Extension Meeting
Bill Sciarappa

On Thursday, August 17 the Nursery Research and Extension meeting was held at the Rutgers Experiment Station in Creamridge. County Agent Rich Obal organized an excellent agenda for over 80 participants and a farm tour that started with a warm welcome from the Deputy Mayor of Upper Freehold, Bill Miscoski. The Deputy Mayor pointed out the long and successful history between the Rutgers Research farm and the adjacent community of farmers and other citizens as well. Dean Bob Goodman followed these remarks by acknowledging this important connection to the state agricultural effort as well as his intentions to continue support and service to major clients like nurserymen. The Dean also spoke on continued restructuring at Cook College to a more applied programmatic approach rather than the traditional academic arrangement with separate department specialties. We can expect a new and well known agricultural leader – Mark

Robson to head this effort starting September 1.

In the educational portion of the program, Dr. Gladis Zinati gave detailed research findings into fertilizer type and substrate media for nursery crops from both a horticultural and environmental perspective. Rick Henkel of Princeton Horticultural Services gave an eye-opening overview of current market trends and real world advice based on his 40 years in the business.

Dr. Cristi Palmer of IR-4 stressed the importance of such specialty crop research there at Creamridge in ornamentals and the need for teamwork among this government agency, the university and the growers. Such collaboration can more efficiently provide crop protection materials. Dr. George Hamilton and Agent Ray Samulis provided practical tips on applicator safety in an informative and entertaining manner.



Dr. Gladis Zinati points out embedded probes for recording soil data and nutrients

Outside, Rutgers diagnostician Rich Buckley provided samples of key pests and pathogens from nursery crops and discussed control measures. This demonstration was followed by a wagon tour of the farm with four full hay wagons. Drs. Ann Gould and Jim Lashomb gave groundbreaking updates on their applied research programs for our region with new elm varieties and new threats to tree crops from the Asian Ambrosia beetle. This picture perfect day ended with some fine food and time to socialize as the sun set.

REMEMBER WHEN...Rutgers Fruit Research & Extension Center

Vivian Quinn & Bill Sciarappa

Sherry (Probasco) Wright has greeted and assisted researchers and visitors to the Rutgers Fruit Research Center in Cream Ridge for the past 21 years. Sherry is quite knowledgeable about the farm and seems very much at home. In fact, the Rutgers research farm property is where she and her six siblings called home twice in their lives.

The present day Rutgers Fruit Research Center was originally two separately owned farms. William Probasco, Sherry's grandfather, bought his parcel in 1941 and along with his son, Milton, farmed potatoes and small amounts of corn, wheat and rye. The family lived in the farmhouse which was built in 1790. When Sherry comes to work she still sees her childhood home surrounded by orchards and fields, but now the home is occupied by another farm family.

The potatoes gave way to tree fruit breeding when Dr. Frederick Hough was looking for good land in order to expand the Rutgers tree fruit breeding program, which

was started nearly 50 years before. So in 1963, William Probasco and the owner of the adjoining acreage sold a total of 250 acres to Rutgers University for the purpose of research. After the selling the farm and moving out of the farmhouse, Milton Probasco then accepted a job working for Rutgers on the current research farm which was his former home. He eventually became farm supervisor and for the next 18 years the Probasco family made the farmhouse their home for a second time.

In 1985, Dr. Barbara Goullart started research on brambles, berries and grapes and the office building was constructed. Greenhouses, orchards, vineyards and additional buildings were added over the years. Many of the top peach varieties grown in New Jersey were bred at the facility, and in 2006, eight new varieties were released. Saturn, a doughnut-type, is the leading niche market peach in the United States and was bred at the research farm. In the last four years, research has concentrated on



Dr. Joe Goffreda and Sherry Wright outside the original farmhouse (circa 1790)

the ornamental and landscaping plant industry, specialty crops, strawberries, apples, apricots, nectarines, hazelnuts and Integrated Pest Management practices. In 1995, Dr. Joseph Goffreda, a fruit breeder, became director of this important research facility. In a state with rapidly changing land use, Dr. Goffreda strives to incorporate the new demands of the market, growers and people of the Garden State and the nation.

It has been 43 years since Rutgers made the decision to purchase the land in Cream Ridge. Since then there have been many improvements, and many great minds have converged on this western Monmouth County farm to do research and collaborate with other scientists and progressive growers. Their ultimate goal has always been to provide state growers with competitive advantages and to help them produce a better product.

We are all impressed by the innovative on-farm demonstrations at Cream Ridge of pot-in-pot technology, future fruit cultivars, amazing ornamental varieties and the possibility of growing hazelnuts in NJ; but we wish we could just catch a glimpse of those former times through Sherry's eyes-when her family actually lived the classic country life of a productive field crop farm in Central Jersey.

Deer Fence Installation Demonstration using Hi-Tensile Woven Wire

Tuesday, September 12, 2006 from 9 AM to 12:00 PM Noon

Rutgers NJAES Cream Ridge Research Farm, 283 County Route 539
Cream Ridge, NJ 08514

Landowners, landscapers, farmers, their employees, or others who may be considering installing their own deer fencing may attend this free workshop. There are many alternative fencing options for landowners to construct for non-lethal exclusion of problem deer from their land. This brief workshop demonstrates uses hi-tensile woven wire wildlife exclusion fence as the strongest, longest lived, and most durable fencing method for farming operations. We will also demonstrate erecting a portable electric fencing option for seasonal protection of small fields.

Landowners may also visit our Rutgers NJAES Snyder Farm deer fencing methods demonstration. This self-guided tour has six fencing alternatives constructed for comparison. The fencing demonstration is located at the corner of Locust Grove Road and Pittstown Roads adjacent to Rutgers NJAES Snyder Farm at 140 Locust Grove Road, Pittstown, NJ 08867. For directions, visit our website at: <http://www.snyderfarm.rutgers.edu/>



County Program Assistant Vivian Quinn works with Master Gardener Dick Biddle to collect insect light trap catch at Pyle Farm

Integrated Pest Management in Monmouth

In response to an emergency lack of IPM coverage in central Jersey, the RCRE office of Monmouth County put together training for staff and Master Gardener volunteers for monitoring and field scouting of vegetable insects and diseases. Eight Master Gardeners and four program assistants installed insect light traps and pheromone detection systems at three representative farms for key insect pests like corn earworm, corn borer and armyworm species in conjunction with the Rutgers IPM program statewide. Data from these farms provided good estimates of insect populations to forecast threats to crop production and better adjust spray timing decisions. Thanks to IPM program trainers Joe Mahar and Kris Holmstrom.

Muscio receives awards for Natural Resources Extension programming

Cara Muscio, a marine agent for Rutgers Cooperative Extension, recently received recognition at the Association of Natural Resources Extension Professionals (ANREP) Biannual Conference and Awards Ceremony in May.

Muscio received a Silver Award for the project titled “The Water Quality Connection” in the Computerized Graphic Presentation or Slide Set Category, and a Bronze Award for the project titled “Barnegat Bay Shellfish Restoration Program Brochure” in the Promotional Materials Category. These materials are a part of the Barnegat Bay Shellfish Restoration Program, which she and Marine Agent Gef Flimlin coordinate in Ocean County.

She also received a Bronze Award for the “Rutgers Cooperative Research & Extension Seafood Safety Web Site: <http://www.rcrc.rutgers.edu/seafoodsafety/>” in the Web site Category, on which Flimlin also collaborated. ANREP is a national association for Cooperative Extension Service professionals working in environmental education, fisheries, forestry, wood sciences, range, recreation, waste management, water, wildlife, and related disciplines.

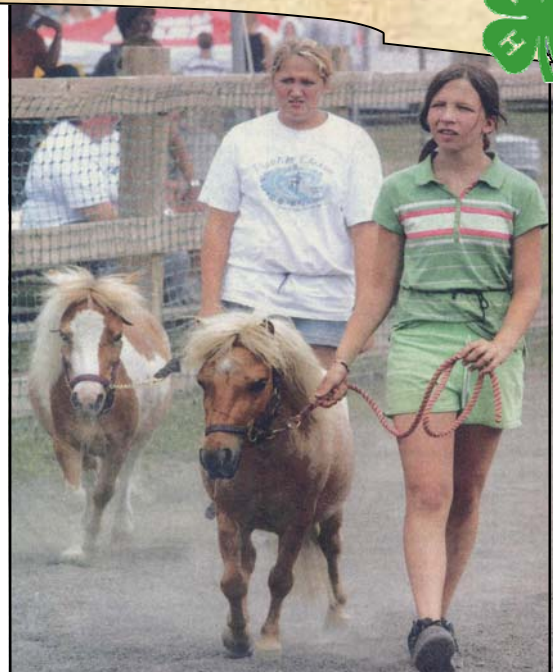


4-H Monmouth & Ocean County Fairs 2006



Monmouth County Fair

4-Carrot Rabbit Club camps at Fairgrounds.
Below - Rabbit “Silver Streak” goes to judging area



Ocean County Fair - Miniature horse show

Sustaining Farming on the Urban Fringe



Monthly Highlights from the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

The NJAES EcoComplex recently hosted 37 teachers from 35 NJ high schools and three county colleges participated in an Agriculture Education geospatial skills building event sponsored through the NJ Dept. of Ed and the NJDA..

Peter Oudemans at the NJAES Marucci Center and Jack Rabin are completing an NJDA grant that created a Handheld Mobile GIS software/hardware application improving farm management while simultaneously easing environmental regulatory recordkeeping burdens. A handful of farmers adopted the tools and guided in their development. Some Atlantic and Burlington County growers so depend on this application they hired young employees tasked with using them to track their farms' activities.

While Precision Agriculture GIS/GPS tools enable NJ farm operators to more efficiently manage farms and natural resources, much of the potential is unrealized due to a technology barrier. There is a generation gap slowing adoption of GIS/GPS precision ag tools for tasks from logging IPM scouting recommendations, tracking spray and fertilizer applications by field, guiding equipment, to recording and retrieving field notes. Oudemans recognized NJ farmers need younger geospatial trained employees to see these tools adopted on-farm.

With New Jersey's Ag Ed teachers, collaboration is growing future farm, landscape, environmental science, and technology trained employees. Ag Ed can become the vehicle by which geospatial technologies enter the high school curriculum, benefiting all science students.



NJAES' Peter Oudemans provides one-one-one guidance to Bill Hilgendorff of Northern Burlington Regional HS

The US Department of Labor has identified geospatial technology skills as one of six leading critical technology employment areas of the future. USDOL will continue investing in this area. In farming, we know this area of "Precision Agriculture." Farmers need a trained future youth workforce to adopt tools like GPS-based tillage or spray guidance, GPS/GIS guided IPM scouting, variable rate applications, yield monitoring, easier environmental compliance record keeping of nutrients, pesticide applications, and irrigation.



On September 30 at the Tweeter Center in Camden, NJ, rockers Dave Matthews, Willie Nelson, Neal Young and John Mellencamp will be featured entertainers as they support the small American farmer in a benefit concert. The mission of Farm Aid is to keep family farmers on their land. Family farmers are our only guarantee for fresh, local food. Their goal is to bring together family farmers and citizens to restore family farm-centered agriculture. Family farmers ensure safe, healthful food, protect natural resources, and strengthen local economies. Willie Nelson, President of the Farm Aid Organization said "The fight to save family farms isn't just about farmers. It's about making sure that there is a safe and healthy food supply for all of us. It's about jobs, from Main St. to Wall St. It's about a better America." Willie started the first Farm Aid concert in 1985 to raise awareness about the loss of family farms and has since raised \$27 million dollars in support of the family farm system through public education and grants.

AGENCY UPDATES

NRCS

Apply Now for 2007 Farm Bill Funding New Energy Incentives 2007

It's not too soon to contact your local NRCS office and start the application process for 2007 Farm Bill Programs according to Tony Kramer, State Conservationist for the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in New Jersey. Contracts for the 2006 applications were awarded in May. "Beginning the process well in advance of application period closings affords more time for applicants to work with NRCS Soil Conservationists to develop conservation plans and decide what they want to accomplish on their land without the pressure of a deadline."

Through EQIP, farmers may receive financial and technical help with structural and management conservation practices that address soil erosion, conservation of irrigation water, and livestock-related concerns, including rotational grazing practices.

EQIP

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary conservation program that supports production agriculture and environmental quality as compatible goals. Through EQIP, farmers may receive financial and technical help with structural and management conservation practices on agricultural land.

Practices that receive high priority for funding include those that address the following resource issues: soil quality, surface water quality, airborne particulate matter, threatened or endangered plant and animal habitat, water quantity for irrigation, and excess nutrients or pesticides in runoff water.

New Practices for 2007 that address air quality issues in NJ will be eligible for payment! These include: **Use of alternative fuels** (biodiesel and ethanol) or power (solar, wind, methane); **Installation of solar pumps** for low-flow irrigations systems; **Replacement of older diesel irrigation pumps**.

The deadline for 2007 applications is **October 27, 2006**. To sign-up contact the Freehold NRCS office at 732-462-0075 ext. 3. The application, eligible practice list, and additional information are available at:

www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/programs.eqip

DEP

Notice of Rule Proposal: Agricultural, Aquacultural, and Horticultural Water Usage Certification - N.J.A.C. 7:20A

Public Notice – Take notice that the NJ Department of Environmental Protection is proposing to readopt with amendments the agricultural, aquacultural, and horticultural water usage certification rules – N.J.A.C. 7:20A. The rules establish the schedule and reporting procedure that persons having the capability to divert 100,000 or more gallons of water per day for agricultural, aquacultural, or horticultural purposes. A copy of the proposal is available from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection by calling 609-292-2957 or www.nj.gov/dep/rules/proposals/071706b.pdf

Farmer's Market in Freehold Borough

Freehold Borough residents and workers in the downtown area can shop for fresh-from-the-farm produce and other Jersey Fresh products without traveling too far. The market is operated by the Freehold Center Partnership, which works to bring business into the downtown area. For complete information on locations, days and hours of community farmers markets throughout New Jersey, visit www.state.nj.us/jerseyfresh/searches/urban.htm



NJDA

The first West Nile virus (WNV) positive bird for 2006 has been confirmed. The blue jay was collected on August 7, 2006 from Toms River, Ocean County. To date, 100 birds from 19 counties have been tested. There have been no equine cases reported at this time.

Rutgers Food Innovation Center

The Rutgers Food Innovation Center has been awarded a \$2-million grant from the United States Economic Development Administration from their Public Works and Economic Development Facilities program. Louis Cooperhouse, Director of the Center said, "This is the final piece of funding that is needed for our business incubator facility." The Center has secured \$7.4 million, which will enable construction of a 23,000-square-foot facility to be located on Route 49 in Bridgeton. The facility will house state-of-the-art food processing equipment, technical and business support facilities and services, and a hub for distance learning and continuing education.

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 2006

9-5 to 12-12 - Horse Management, Continuing Professional Education, Cook College Rutgers. 732-932-9271. web site: www.cookce.rutgers.edu

9-12—**Deer Fence Installation Demo** using Hi-Tensile Woven Wire, Rutgers NJAES Creamridge Research Farm. (see p. 3)

9-16 & 17—2006 Northeast Small Farm and Rural Living Expo - NJ Fair-Sussex County Farm and Horse Show Plains Road Augusta, NJ. More info (973) 948-3040 or www.smallfarmexpo.org.

9-19 - Twilight Ag Tour/BBQ 5 PM & BOA Meeting 7:30 PM
Rutgers Research Farm at Cream Ridge. Contact Terry at 732-431-7260.

9-28 - Introductory Greenhouse Short Course: Design & Operation of Greenhouse, High Tunnel and Nursery Systems. 8:30 to 5:00 pm. Rutgers Agriculture Research & Extension Center, Bridgeton. Contact Donna 856-455-3100 X4102.

OCTOBER 2006

10-6 & 7 - U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council Fall Meeting - Regency, Bar Harbor, Maine. (207)288-9723

10-6 & 7 - EXPO 2006 - The International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Exposition. Louisville (800) 558-8767.

10-26 & 27 - Greenhouse Design and Operation - New Brunswick, NJ. Two-day program will review greenhouse design parameters, including heating, cooling, lighting, shading, glazing, environmental control, planning, open-roof greenhouses, crop production, greenhouse economics and high tunnels. Contact Dominick Mondì (732)932-9271 x 604 or mondi@aesop.rutgers.edu



2007 Conference
Taj Mahal, Atlantic City
January 16, 17, 18

Crop Insurance Website
<http://salem.rutgers.edu/cropinsurance/index.html>

CROP INSURANCE CLOSING DATES

SEPTEMBER 30 - Barley, Wheat
Forage Production - New

NOVEMBER 20
Apples, Peaches,
Blueberries & Cranberries

DECEMBER 31 - Potatoes

2007 Central Jersey
Vegetable Meeting
February 9, 2007

MONMOUTH COUNTY BOA
★ ★ ★
Special Meeting 9/19
Twilight Ag Tour 5 PM; Mtg. 7:30 PM
Rutgers Research Farm at Cream Ridge

7:30 PM
10-17, 11-21, 12-19 at Ag Building

BASIC PESTICIDE TRAINING CORE—9 am - 1 pm
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>

Rutgers Cooperative Research & Extension, Ag Building
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