



Agent's Overview

Happy Holidays to all. We know its been a blur since finishing fall field production to getting Thanksgiving business taken care of and now the winter Holidays. Whew! From what I've gathered, many of our value-added agri-entrepreneurs have done pretty well sales-wise over both holiday periods, especially pies, wreaths & Christmas trees. On the other hand, others have struggled earlier at the production end with reduced grain yields, scorched vegetables and diseased pumpkins. It seems that the UPS & DOWNS are happening much more frequently and the weather shifts are relentless.

To help stay ahead of the next crisis & be ready to adjust, set aside some time to attend the many great Ag meetings scheduled soon. Especially mark down our Central Jersey Vegetable Conference on February 9th and the Turf and Ornamentals meeting on February 7th, both at Freehold Gardens, as usual. Please be advised that the NJVGA-RCE sessions in Atlantic City on January 16-18 have been moved back to the Taj Mahal by popular demand. Also, there is another timely Pumpkin school in January.

We expect a lot of new and pertinent topics at these sessions, with knowledgeable speakers along with your active participation.

On a final note, I have a request for your continued input on extension programming & projects. Please tell me what types of programming or applied research you need. For instance, Hal Rifkin recently suggested we include more information on bedding plants & greenhouse flowers for diversifying vegetable growers & so we incorporated this for the February meetings. Please give a little thought about where you & your farm friends are going business-wise and how Rutgers Extension can help assist your efforts. I'll look forward to your call at 732-421-7260/61 or sciarappa@rcrc.rutgers.edu

Wishing you a Happy, Healthy & Prosperous New Year.

Bill Sciarappa

Mark Robson Returns "Home" for the Long Haul

Connexions Fall 2006



Thirty-three years after he first set foot on Cook Campus as an undergraduate, Mark Robson is returning "home." It is a return to a

home with which he has maintained strong linkages through the years. But this time, with an appointment as Director of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES), Robson expects to be here for the "long haul."

Robson's appointment commences at a pivotal time in the history of Cook College (transitioning to the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences) and the NJAES. His was one of the first major appointments made by Executive Dean Bob Goodman.

In his new position at the NJAES, Robson is focusing on the "core mission" of the Experiment Station. "We need to keep our focus on production agriculture, as well as expand our efforts on the environment and public health needs of New Jersey's nine

million residents," he said.

Robson's initial goals are twofold. First, he is taking a careful look at existing programs to determine if they are responding to the needs of New Jersey citizens. "I am challenging the NJAES leaders to reinvigorate their programs to meet the contemporary needs of New Jerseyans in the 21st century," he said.

The reinvigorated programs eventually will be organized around multidisciplinary themes such as grain and forage, mosquito control, or integrated pest management, etc."

Robson's second initial goal is to review the history of the NJAES to determine how the Experiment Station can build upon the strengths of its past. Control of mosquito-borne and other vector-borne diseases, human nutrition, and public health are high on the list. "Rutgers and NJAES have contributed for more than a century in controlling mosquito vector-borne diseases," said Robson. "Today, current West Nile Virus and Equine Encephalitis have placed New Jersey at the epi-center of vector diseases. Research into vector-borne diseases is one example

(Continued on page 2)



NJAES Research in Nursery Crop Pathogens - Jack Rabin

Why NJAES investigators initiated this field research

In 2003, given the risks of recycled water use spreading plant pathogens and the costs and efficacy of fungicides, NJAES field researchers started asking questions about these nursery practices.

New Jersey nursery farmers are encouraged to install retention ponds and beneficially re-use nursery irrigation water in plant production. USDA NJ-NRCS offers cost-sharing incentives for constructing recycling practices through the federal Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

What did we expect to find?

Phytophthora blight diseases are extremely destructive to ornamental crops and farmers' livelihoods. Phytophthora blights, especially *P. ramorum* can wreak havoc.

NJAES initiated this field survey research out of concern for, and expecting to find, *Phytophthora*



cinnamomi. Early results show *P. cinnamomi* might not be transmitted around nurseries, but rather is being imported on plant materials or from neighboring local plants. Our research has implications for residential gardeners with dying plants in their home landscapes, and the garden centers and landscapers providing services. Why? Fungicides sup-

press symptoms of *Phytophthora* plant diseases, but do not kill dormant infections on, or in the plants. What fungicides are not doing is producing pathogen free plants and what farmers want to be selling to consumers. People purchase a plant, put it in their landscape, and don't spray. The plant starts showing symptoms, spreads disease, and dies. NJAES investigators, and NJ farmers need to learn more about these disease problems. Since plant material moves widely, and the fungicide treatments are masking symptoms; the industry in the U.S. may be moving *P. cinnamomi* rather than spreading it within nursery operations like other destructive *Phytophthora* species.

To help fund such important research and find answers, please call 732-932-5000 x610.

(Continued from page 1)

of how we will be emphasizing public health."

Improving the health of New Jerseyans by engaging in cutting-edge research into the health-promoting qualities of foods is a top priority at the NJAES. For Robson, a New Jersey "farm boy," a return to the NJAES' historical roots also signifies a strong emphasis on providing assistance to the farm community. Robson recalls attending a recent meeting at the Morris County Board of Agriculture. Kurt Alstede, a successful young farmer and strong supporter of the NJAES, opened the discussion by saying, "Those of us who are still in New

Jersey Farming are in this for the long run."

"Kurt's comments about his experience as a successful farmer in New Jersey really brought into focus that the NJAES is essential to sustaining the viability of New Jersey agriculture," said Robson. "The industry is very diverse and capital-intensive. New Jersey farmers rely on pick-your-own, agro-tourism, fruits and vegetables and direct marketing to survive. Surprisingly, the largest crops in New Jersey, by acreage, are still corn and soybeans. There are many areas where the NJAES can help farmers thrive in this unique market."

At the same time, Robson emphasizes that the NJAES is here to serve all of the residents in New Jersey. "We're New Jersey's Experiment Station," he said. "We need to be as accessible to a homeowner in Bergen County as we are to a vegetable grower in Gloucester County."

Like New Jersey farmers, Robson is here for the "long haul." "I held the senior administrative position at the Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute (EOHSI) for more than a decade and expect my tenure here to be equally long-term," he said. "I look forward to doing this for many years."

REMEMBER WHEN...THE APPLLEGATES

Fourth Generation of Applegates keep up with Changing Times

What was once primarily a wholesale apple and peach business with a bit of retail mixed in on a farm that dates back to 1908 has emerged in the last 10 years as a well-known pick-your-own farm and retail market.

Now owned by the fourth generation of Applegates, Scott Applegate and his wife Lisa have converted the packing house that was built in the late 1960s on Wemrock Road into a full retail market. A collapsed roof in 2003 forced them to rebuild the barn-red country store that year. An adjacent building houses the cider-making operation.

The obvious draw to the year-round market is Battleview's freshly picked produce — peaches, nectarines, apples, sour cherries, strawberries and pumpkins. The farm just this year also successfully tried its hand at sweet corn. It's one of the few year-round retail markets that also grows its own produce, Scott Applegate said.

"The pick-your-own operation" — strawberries, cherries, peaches, apples and pumpkins — on 120 acres of state-owned land the Applegates lease also attracts



Battleview Orchards
"Farming since 1908"

customers. The Applegates grow 29 different varieties of peaches and 12 different types of apples. Today, there are less than 250 acres of apples and peaches grown in Monmouth County.

People still love to experience picking their own fruit instead of selecting it from a grocery store shelf, Lisa Applegate said. She said that Battleview continues to issue \$1 club membership cards that it started in 1972, which notify customers of picking dates each season and entitles them to store discounts.

But it's the bakery that has taken off over the years. The ap-

"You can't stay stuck in time," Lisa Applegate

ple cider doughnuts are the most popular item, especially when sold hot in the fall. The bakery is also known for its lemon "krunch" pie, yet it makes many more varieties including peach, pumpkin, blueberry "krunch," cherry, Dutch apple and coconut custard.

The business can be difficult, both said, because it relies so much on the weather. "A lot of factors can make or break a season," Scott Applegate said.

But the two clearly enjoy running their business. The key to their success, they say, is growing their own quality fruit, maintaining a clean business and changing with the times. "You can't stay stuck in time," Lisa Applegate said.

Karen Sudol - Freehold Bureau
Asbury Park Press Excerpt 9/2/06



The Applegates grow 29 varieties of peaches and 12 types of apples

TIMELINE

- ◆ 1908 - Charles R. & Carrie Applegate purchase 130 acres deeded as Battleview Farm.
- Second Generation**
- ◆ 1929 - Second generation takes over - Leslie and C. Richard. They grow 500 acres of apples and sell mostly wholesale.
- ◆ 1939 - NJ ranked 6th in the U.S. and Monmouth County ranked 2nd in NJ for apple producing.
- ◆ 1945 - Leslie and C. Richard terminate partnership and break into Battleview and Wemrock Orchards.
- ◆ 1964 Retail begins in Revolutionary War barn.
- ◆ 1965 - 100 acres becomes part of Battlefield State Park
- Third Generation**
- ◆ 1965 - Norman & Betty Lou become the owners.
- ◆ 1969 - Battleview Orchards retail market opens with state-of-the-art packing and processing equipment.
- ◆ 1969 - Famous Apple Cider Donuts are introduced by Betty Lou.
- ◆ 1970 - Operation expands to peaches, strawberries, blueberries, sour cherries & pumpkins.
- ◆ 1972 - Pick-Your-Own starts
- ◆ 1987 - Scott joins business
- Fourth Generation**
- ◆ 1995 - Scott & Lisa buy business
- ◆ 1995 - Retail business doubles
- ◆ Present - Scott & Lisa continue to farm and retail with the same values of previous generations, while trying to keep up with the changing times.

Cook College Student Selected as FFA National Proficiency Finalist

Dale Cruzan III of Bridgeton, a sophomore in environmental planning and design at Cook College, was named the national winner for Agricultural Sales Placement Proficiency during the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The title is awarded to FFA members who exhibit excellence in a supervised agricultural experience (SAE) program. As a participant in the program, Cruzan engaged in experimental learning as an employee at Marlboro Farm Market & Garden Center in Bridgeton. Since 2001, Cruzan has worked in customer sales on the retail nursery lot, pesticide application on greenhouse



crops, product marketing, and research for new plants and growing practices.

Cruzan, pictured above with his parents, was chosen as one of the top four national finalists for his category. He was interviewed by a panel of industry experts,

gaining the top honor, which brought with it a cash award of \$500. As part of his recognition, Dale will be participating in a 10-day educational travel seminar in Costa Rica this June.

"I gained practical knowledge in retail sales, the growing of ornamental crops, and overall management of a business," said Cruzan. "Marlboro farm market sells seasonal items, ranging from trees and shrubs in spring and summer, chrysanthemums in fall, Christmas trees, poinsettia and greens in winter, and Easter lilies at Easter. My project allowed me to work directly with many of these crops in 27 growing greenhouses."

Biotechnology High charters state's 37th FFA chapter

Freehold – Agricultural education has grown to encompass a wide range of technological and scientific advances in the fields of agriculture, food and natural resources.

To prepare students to enter those fields, agricultural education can now be found in some of the most progressive educational institutions including the new Biotechnology High School, a career academy in the Monmouth County Vocational School District.

The state's 37th Future Farmers of America chapter was chartered on Sept. 13 at the high school with New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Charles M. Kuperus, acting Commissioner of Education Lucille E. Davy, and Dr. Larry Case, National FFA Advisor and Program Coordinator for the U.S. Department of Education, in attendance.

"In order to ensure continued economic growth in New Jersey and

the agricultural industry, specifically, we must strengthen students' math and science skills and align education and training strategies with employer needs in the industry," said Kuperus. "There is a great need for new workers in the food, agriculture and natural resources industries in the state. They need to possess the specialized skills Biotechnology High School is teaching its students, and the addition of an FFA chapter will help students develop leadership, personal and career skills to become the future leaders in these important industries."

School principal Linda Eno said the biotechnology of agri-

culture deals with the genetic modification of plants to increase output and reduce pesticide use and the adaptation of plants for difficult environments. She added agriculture fits well with the mission of the school.

"We see agriculture as a fundamental application and career," said Eno. "With the addition of an FFA chapter, students will be able to apply classroom theory and lab skills to real-life situations through internships and experiential learning; then combine it with personal and leadership development to be ready for a college and career experience. FFA also will provide top students with local, state and national recognition through awards and scholarships."



A Legacy of Service - Dean Goodman

For those of you who missed my photo in the August issue of this publication, my name is Bob Goodman, and I am the new Dean of Rutgers' Cook College. I am also the Executive Dean of agriculture and natural resources and the Executive Director of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES).

As a newcomer to New Jersey, I've spent much of my summer touring this state. The breadth and scope of natural resources and the programs and services offered by Extension offices throughout New Jersey are staggering. In my travels, I've had a chance to see the strong partnerships we have in every country and to meet with many of the entrepreneurs in the gardening and farming communities of New Jersey. I must say that I am impressed by the innovation and tenacity that I have seen. For example, the folks at Princeton Nurseries in Allentown have taken a small, family-owned business and turned it into a cutting-edge facility, where they use new breeding and propagation techniques to produce better and more desirable nursery stock.

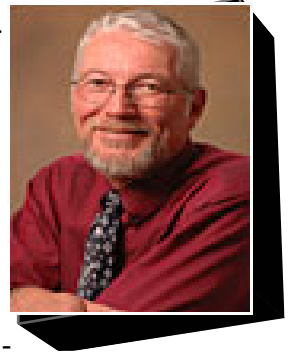
At Silver Decoy Winery in Wrightstown, the owners there have experimented with grape varieties, seeing what works best with the climatic and soil conditions in central New Jersey. They started with Cabernet Franc and Chardonnay grapes and now have Merlot, Chambourcin, Marechal

Foch and Traminette vines in addition to some smaller test plots.

The owners of Silver Decoy Winery did their homework before they started. They received help from Rutgers' Cook College and NJAES by way of soil testing and advice on varieties, irrigation techniques and the like, and you can, too. Think of Integrated Pest Management when you have a problem with Asian Longhorned beetles in your garden. Think of our Soil Testing Laboratory if you want to know if your soil needs pH optimization or additional nutrients. Think of the Food Innovation Center in Bridgeton if you need help putting together a business plan or want advice on how to grow your business. The Center works one-on-one with farmers, cooperatives, entrepreneurs and businesses of all sizes and offers seminars for those new to the food business.

Of course, we're also working hard behind the scenes to improve the lives of New Jerseyans. Our Entomology Department produced the first mosquito repellent and now it employs science-based monitoring programs to control mosquitoes (and, in turn, diseases like West Nile) without overusing pesticides. And our programs don't just benefit New Jersey. Did you know that approximately half of all premium turfgrass seed sold in the United States originates from the Rutgers' Center for Turfgrass Science? Or that virtually every major U.S. producer, distributor and

marketer of turfgrass relies on the center for new varieties?



In addition to our research, we offer seminars and fact sheets that aim to improve the lives of our citizens through life-long learning. Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension offers fact sheets and bulletins on numerous gardening and landscaping topics for free on its website www/rcrcr.rutgers.edu/about/extension.asp). For those of you who can't join us in the classroom, we produce "If Plants Could Talk," a television program broadcast on New Jersey Public Television's NJN that features gardening tips from local university experts, farmers, Master Gardeners, and many other plant experts. If you still have gardening questions, you can always call your county's Master Gardener Helpline for friendly advice or become a Master Gardener yourself.

This is only the tip of the iceberg in terms of the work that we do, but I hope to continue to share with you the programs and services we have in place at Cook College/NJAES in future columns. I am extremely proud of the services we offer to the citizens of New Jersey and I am excited to expand and improve on our commitment to you.

Gardener News





The 82nd Annual Fall Career Development Event gave 235 FFA students from 30 high school chapters the opportunity to test their skills in agriculture in a competitive setting. Fruit-Vegetable, Turf, Poultry, Dairy, Equine and Land Judging were represented in this year's competition which was coordinated by State FFA Advisor Nancy Trivette and State FFA Specialist Robin McLean.

The 2006 Fruit and Vegetable Identification event took place at Cook Campus Center with a re-

FFA 2007 Career Development Event Results				
School	Fruit-Veg	Turf	Poultry	Land Judging
Allentown	1 st	3 rd	2 nd	1 st
Freehold	5 th	5 th	-	-
Monmouth	2 nd	1 st	-	-
N. Burlington	2 nd	-	4 th	7 th

Complete results - <http://www.jerseyageducation.nj.gov/cderesu07.htm>

cord number of participants. One competition arranged by Ag Agent Bill Sciarappa and assistant Vivian Quinn involved the identification of 40 fruits and vegetables and grading of five varieties. Delicious Orchards graciously donated all the produce. The chart above highlights Monmouth County and N. Burlington schools with quite respectable results. The local teams from Monmouth Vocational, Freehold Regional, Allentown and Burlington were led respectively by: Crystal Mathews, Melissa Whoeler, Tonya Kneipp, Kim Majewski,

Shawn Cusak, Bobby Sutphen, Chris Conway & Justin Allison; Rebecca Gluckman, Kaitlyn Lord, Cassie Halpin, Allison Karr, Matthew Mattia, Aaron D'Addio, Gabrielle Ritzer & John Pascrell; Michelle Runge, Dustin Zukus, Theresa Scotto, Zoe Strand, Karis Byram, Ryan Carney, Matt Carney, Abigail Chek, Josh Alster, Dan Zafos, Frankie Scotto & Rachel Dey; Stephen Specca, Victoria Zablocky, Kyrsten Craig, Sophia Perrakis, David Specca, Thomas Hlubik, Chris Sichel, Nathan Potts, Adam Wainwright, Jacob Way & Amy Loesser. Congratulations everyone.

AGENCY UPDATES

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

County Committee Elections – Please join us in congratulating the winners of this year's County Committee election. Richard Bullock was elected as the regular member, Debra Kauffman as the first alternate, and Richard Stern as the second alternate beginning January 2.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) – FSA's NAP program provides financial assistance to growers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occurs due to natural disasters. Producers who have no crop changes from their 2006 NAP contracts will have the option of continuous coverage, meaning that you don't need to visit the office or fill out any new paperwork if the applicable service fee is paid by the application closing date. A producer seminar is scheduled for NAP programs at 2 p.m. on January 24.

PLANT & PEST ADVISORY

a seasonal management newsletter available in four editions:

- ◆ Vegetable Crops (weekly) ◆ Fruit (weekly)
- ◆ Landscape, Nursery & Turf (biweekly)
- ◆ Cranberry (biweekly)

2007 Season

- ✔ Stay informed of insect and disease advisories
- ✔ Get the latest information on your crop and region
- ✔ Reduce costs through IPM and more effective use of pesticides
- ✔ Learn effective cultural practices and the latest results of New Jersey crop research
- ✔ Improve storage/handling procedures. Learn new marketing techniques and opportunities
- ✔ Be informed of upcoming meetings, seminars and trainings

To subscribe visit website www.visitmonmouth.com/07050coopext/upload/forms/2007ppabro.pdf



CROP INSURANCE WEBSITE
<http://saalem.rutgers.edu/cropinsurance/index.html>

CROP INSURANCE CLOSING DATES
JANUARY 31—Adjusted Gross Revenue Adjusted Gross Revenue - Lite (Existing Policy)

MARCH 15 - Adjusted Gross Revenue - Lite (New Policy), Corn, Corn Crop Revenue Coverage, Corn Group Risk Plan, Corn Group Risk Income Protection, Forage Seeding (Spring), Fresh Market Sweet Corn, Grain sorghum, Oats, Processing Beans, Processing Tomatoes, Soybeans, Soybean Crop Revenue Coverage, Soybean Group Risk Plan, Soybean Group Risk Income Plan, Small Grains.

MAY 31 - Nursery

CALENDAR

JANUARY 2007

Jan 16, 17, 18 - NJ VGA, Atlantic City
Jan 17, 18 - Central Jersey Turf & Ornamental Institute - Landscape & Nursery 1/17; Turf 1/18. Rich Obal 732-431-7260/61.
Jan 25 - Mid Atlantic Pumpkin School Mt. Holly, Michelle Casella 856-307-6450
Jan 27 - NOFA Annual Conference. 8-5 Cook College Campus Center. Call 609-737-6848
Jan 30, 31, 2-1 - Mid Atlantic Fruit & Veg Conference & Trade Show, Hershey, PA. 856-307-6450 X1.

FEBRUARY 2007

Feb 7 - Central Jersey Turf & Ornamental Institute - Freehold Gardens. Contact 732-431-7260, Terry/Madge
Feb 9 - Central Jersey Vegetable Growers Meeting - Freehold Gardens. Contact 732-431-7261, Madge/Terry
Feb 15 - Central NJ Veg IPM Growers Meeting - RCE Burlington Cty.
Feb 15 - NJ Flower & Garden Show, Edison, NJ
Feb 12, 13, 14 - NJ State Agricultural Convention - Tropicana, Atlantic City, 609-292-3976
Feb 24 - Grape Expectations—A Viticultural & Enological Symposiu - Jamesburg, NJ 609-758-7311 x10
MARCH 2007
March 10 - BOA Dinner, Colts Neck



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



PESTICIDE CONTROL PROGRAM WEBSITE
www.pcpnj.org



IMPORTANT

FARMER TRUCK PLATE CERTIFICATES

Starting in 2007, all farmers who come to our office for New Jersey Truck Plate Certificates, will be required to fill out and sign an application form prior to issuance of the Certificate.

This is a state mandated requirement


You can reduce the time it takes to complete the application by providing **a copy of your Farmland Assessment Application (FA-1)**. Otherwise a detailed acreage accounting will be required.


MONMOUTH COUNTY BOA
 7:30 PM
 1-16, 2-20, 3-20, 4-24, 5-15
BASIC PESTICIDE TRAINING
CORE—9 am - 1 pm
 1-9, 1-30, 2-21, 3-6, 3-27, 4-17, 5-8, 6-5
Category 3A & 3B—9 AM—3 PM
 1-16, 5-10, (3A)
 1-16, 2-1, 4-4, 5-5 (3B)
 To register call 866-851-4389
<http://www.njpma.com/nj/events/article.asp?EventID=39>
Held at
Rutgers Cooperative Extension
Ag Building
4000 Kozloski Rd.
Freehold, NJ - 732-431-7260

RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
MONMOUTH COUNTY
New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

4000 Kozloski Rd, PO Box 5033
 Freehold, NJ 07728
 Agriculture: 732-431-7260
 Family & Consumer Science: 732-431-7271
 4-H: 732-431-7263;7264
 Fax: 732-409-4813

Rutgers Cooperative Extension— Agriculture, Family and Community Health Sciences, 4-H Youth Development, Resource Management, and Marine Studies— welcomes this opportunity to send you the enclosed materials for your information and use. Educational programs and information are provided to all people without regard to sex, race, , national origin, or handicap


 Richard G. Obal
 County Agricultural Agent


 Bill Sciarappa
 County Agricultural Agent

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



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