



Agent's Overview

Now that the holidays are behind us and Santa has put his reindeer herd back into the barn, I think it's time to harp on our over abundance of deer. We're all getting tired of averting our eyes to the gnarly mash of deer parts on our roads and highways. Over the years, many well-meaning programs of the various management agencies and universities have made significant efforts to manage the problem of excessive deer populations. Damage to crops has been somewhat mitigated on high value crops by emphasizing grower investment in fencing. Nonetheless, central Jersey continues to suffer damage to large acreage agronomic crops, homeowner shrubbery and forest understory. We may complain about replanting crops and ornamental plants in the short-term but may be unaware of the long-term



problem of losing our natural shrub and tree sapling understory. With no tree replacement due to feeding damage, the forests will not regenerate normally and traditional habitat will be lost. Of even more immediate concern are the car-deer collisions and the epidemic plague of Lyme disease.

Several years ago I had my first vehicular encounter with a large buck at night. I learned that it was not my first accident in over one million miles of driving but this was my first "incident" as these matters are officially termed. I

learned that it was the eighth incident that season for just county cars. I also learned that there were 1,500,000 vehicular collisions nationwide annually, 110 human deaths annually and thousands of human

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Master Gardener Graduation — 10th class & 110,000 hours!

In February 1999 the Master Gardener program was initiated in Monmouth County. The program is a cooperative effort of Rutgers University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Monmouth County Board of Agriculture and the county Boards of Chosen Freeholders. Monmouth County's program involves the county office of Rutgers Cooperative Extension, Brookdale Community College and the county Park System.

The first class of 30 Master Gardeners graduated in November 1999, and on November 14, 2008 the 10th class of 28 celebrated graduation among friends, family and invited guests.

Freeholder Lillian G. Burry attended the event and noted that the public spaces and private places are more beautiful and more prolific as a result of the Master Gardeners' work over the past decade.

Rich Obal, Resource Management Agent and county department head, was proud to say that the 10 year total of trained volunteers was 293, with 153 still active. The class of 2008 gave an impressive 3,815 hours of service since May, which is an average of 136.25 hours per person and two times the required 60 hours. For 2007-2008, the total given by all Monmouth County Master Gardeners is

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3,000 hour award recipients R to L: Evelin Gaffney, Irene Wanat, Karin Poorvin and Diane Zahorsky, Master Gardener Coordinator for the past ten years.

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18,024 hours. The grand total for ten years is 110,000 hours of volunteer service to Rutgers, Monmouth County and various communities. Those hours translated into dollars would be approximately \$2,000,000!

Specifically, the class of 2008 donated 1,737 pounds of produce to Open Door Food Pan-

try from their Plant-A-Row garden and the children's garden donated 450 pounds of food. Other projects included new community gardens, environmental work with rain gardens and IPM programs, stewardship with a compost programs, education and beautification. Their work goes on tirelessly year round under the supervision of Diane Zahorsky, program coordinator.

The graduation event also recognized milestones and included: 23 recognized for 100 hours of service; 16 for 250 hours; 15 for 500 hours; 8 for 1,000 hours; 1 for 2,000 hours; and 3 for 3,000 hours. Rich Obal concluded the program by saying, "We take great pride



in recognizing your enthusiasm, persistence, accomplishments and willingness to give back to your community. We hope we have provided you with the tools and opportunity for personal growth. To all our Master Gardeners – thank you! You have made a difference."

How could 15% of the population consistently blunder into cars??? Try some new math. What if only 5% of the deer were killed by cars? That would mean we have 600,000 deer running about.

Hopefully our Rutgers Against Hunger campaign could follow the lead of Hunters Against Hunger. Last year, Oklahoman Hunters Against Hunger donated 40,000 pounds of ground venison to the needy. They have harvested the herd and helped the hungry. A New Jersey venison market could evolve further with more incentives for the hunters, farmers, large land owners and suburbanites. We start by training select sportsmen, trophyize the doe baggers and build an anti-hunger infrastructure that subsidizes hunting supplies, butchering and food delivery. Adding these new societal benefits of nutrition may well lead to a win-win-win situation that is workable and effective. I wonder what NJ would be like if we had Governor Sarah in the Garden State.

Bill Sciarappa

MG Class of 2008



(Agent's Overview continued from page 1)

injuries. This led to 1.2 billion dollars of damage and millions in carcass removal costs, incident investigations and increased insurance premiums. The large herds are directly associated with high human Lyme disease epidemics. I, myself, have had Lyme as have many of my friends and my dog a couple of times. I casually surveyed high school freshmen in our area at a 5 to 10 percent incident rate of infection. Conclusive studies in Connecticut show that reducing deer numbers reduces Lyme disease. NJ has the 3rd largest disease rate in the USA at 39 people per 1,000.

Unfortunately, to solve this complex problem, some form of stronger intervention may be needed to prevent damage to autos, crops, forest ecology, homeowner property and human health. Now I like Bambi as much as any environmental biologist, but with the odds of about 100:1 of striking a deer in central Jersey, the time has come for a big change in managing our deer herd in pocket – suburban

areas. This may sound like a reasonable proposal but the realities are that we run up against a very well-meaning and organized environmental coalition and against a very well entrenched sporting activity. Nationwide, deer hunters spend one hundred million dollars annually (1.6 million dollars per hunting day). Both activist citizens and hunters simply want more deer - deer living off of our farmland and parkland.

In 2000, Rutgers' Dr. David Drake estimated an agricultural crop loss to deer damage at about 10 million dollars. He proposed an incentive based program to increase lease and fee hunting on private lands in New Jersey. Perhaps we should add to that incentive to increase mortality by incentivizing our human Hunger Programs with free butchering and supply to our residents in need. A conservative estimate of 10,500 deer collisions in 2000 was superceded by a recent estimate of over 30,000 road kill deer annually. Now the NJ Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife routinely estimates that there are only 200,000 deer or less in New Jersey.

CALENDAR

JANUARY 2009

13-15 Atlantic Coast Agricultural Convention and Trade Show, (NJ Vegetable Meeting); Trump Taj Mahal, Atlantic City. Mel Henninger at 732-932-9711 x120.
14-15 NJ Nursery & Landscape Trade Show—Garden State Exhibit Center Somerset. 800-314-4836.
16, 22 & 23 - IPM - NJAES Cont. Ed., 102 Ryders Lane, New Brunswick www.cpe.rutgers.edu/landscape
19-21 - North American Strawberry Growers Assoc. Annual Mtg. - New Orleans. 613-258-4587
28 - Mid-Atlantic Pumpkin School - 9AM, RCE Burlington Cty. 609-265-5050. Michelle Casella - 856-307-6450 X-1.
31 - NOFA-NJ 19th Annual Winter Conference—8am—5 pm. Greener Fields, Greener Pastures. Cook Campus Center. www.nofanjer.org

FEBRUARY 2009

1-7 - North American Farmer's Direct Marketing Convention - Savannah, GA www.nafdma.com
3-5—2009 Mid-Atlantic Fruit & Veg Conv., Hershey Lodge. 717-694-3596.
4 - Managing Diseases of Ornamental Plants, NJAES Cont. Ed. Call 732-932-9271 x 625 or www.cpe.rutgers.edu/landscape
5-7 - PASA "Farming for the Future Conference, State College, PA www.pasafarming.org
6 Feb - Central Jersey Veg Meeting, Ag Building, 4000 Kozloski Rd., Freehold - 732-431-7260 Terry/Madge
10-11 - 2009 NJ State Ag Convention, Crown Plaza Hotel, Cherry Hill
10-12 - Empire State Fruit & Veg Expo, Oncenter Convention Center, Syracuse 315-687-5734.

MARCH 2009

8 - Central Jersey Turf & Ornamental Meeting - Battleground Club, 732-431-7260
28 & 29 Horses 2009
www.esrutgers.com/Horses2009

RUTGERS
New Jersey Agricultural
Experiment Station
Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County

**Central Jersey
Vegetable Meeting
Friday, Feb. 6, 2009
"Ag Building"
Freehold**

DEP PESTICIDE CREDITS
CORE - 3 units
Category 1A - 2 units
Category PP2 - 2 units
Category 10 - 2 units
Call - 732-431-7260 to register

**RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
MONMOUTH COUNTY
New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station**

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

Cooperating Agencies: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and County Boards of Chosen Freeholders, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, a unit of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.

MONMOUTH COUNTY BOA
7:30 PM - 1-20, 2-17, 3-17, 4-21

**BASIC PESTICIDE TRAINING
CORE—9 am - 1 pm 2009**
1-27, 2-17, 3-10, 4-14, 5-5, 6-2

Category 3B - 9 AM - 3 PM
1-13, 3-24, 4-21
Category 3B - 3 PM - 9 PM - 6-16-09

Category 3A - 3 PM - 9 PM - 5-19-09
To register call 800-524-9942
**Held at
Rutgers Cooperative Extension
Ag Building
4000 Kozloski Rd. Freehold, NJ
732-431-7260**



A new Rutgers online resource for vegetable growers. Easily access all vegetable info in one spot. Log in and sign up to receive new content as it becomes available.
www.njveg.rutgers.edu

**PESTICIDE CONTROL
PROGRAM WEBSITE**
Go to website: www.pcpnj.org

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



Dr. Mark Robson, Dean of Ag Programs

(Farm Bureau continued from page 5)

agricultural programs, Mark will oversee the re-imagining and revitalization of undergraduate agricultural education at the school.

With these new responsibilities, Robson will hand over the reins of NJAES leadership to Larry Katz, Director of Rutgers Cooperative Extension, and Brad Hillman, senior associate Director of NJAES and director of Cooperative Research.

After his talk, Katz responded to a question from a member who was concerned about budget cuts at Rutgers, its possible effects on county Extension



Dr. Larry Katz, NJAES Director

offices and Rutgers future commitment to agriculture programs.

“We will continue to have agents in each of the counties, and we have no intention of changing or modifying our commitment to agriculture. We will have to work through this together to get through these next few years.”

“But I’ve always been an optimistic sort. ... I think we will see some changes in our efficiency and our organization – but we are not turning our backs on agriculture.”

Photos Courtesy of Jim Reilly NJFB



President Rich Nieuwenhuis - Farm Bureau

AGENCY UPDATES

USDA/FSA

County Committee Elections – Please join FSA in congratulating the winners of this year’s County Committee election! The ballots were counted for LAA #2 (Mercer County and part of western Monmouth County) in a public forum on December 4, 2008 resulting in Barry Taylor being elected as the regular member, Gary Mount as the first alternate, and Judith Batcha as the second alternate

New Farm Bill Disaster Programs – To be eligible to participate in the new Farm Bill's Supplemental Agriculture Disaster Assistance Programs, producers MUST purchase at least catastrophic risk protection (CAT) level of crop insurance for all insurable crops and/or Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for all non-insurable crops. The most critical issue for eligibility is that every crop (including Forage and graze) must be covered by either the Crop Insurance (RMA) or NAP (FSA) applicable deadlines for 2009.

New NAP Service Fee Rate Schedule – The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act (Farm Bill) of 2008, which is now law, increased the administrative service fees for the Noninsurable Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) from \$100 to \$250 per crop, from \$300 to \$750 maximum per county, and from \$900 to \$1,875 per producer for all counties. the next deadline to purchase NAP coverage for some 2009 crops including Beans, Brussel Sprouts, Cantaloupe, Celery, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Honeydew, Oats, Okra, Peppers, Pumpkins, Sorghum, Squash, Sunflowers, Sweet Potatoes, Tomatillos, Tomatoes, Watermelon, and Yams is March 15, 2009.

Equine News Update

<http://www.esrutgers.com/>



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

Fall Career Development Event

The 84th Annual Fall Career Development Event took place on November 20 at Rutgers University, Cook Campus. 235 FFA students from 21 high school chapters tested 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 Specialist Erin Noble.

Career Development Events provide students with an opportunity to apply skills learned in their agriculture and food and



FFA Fruit & Vegetable Judging

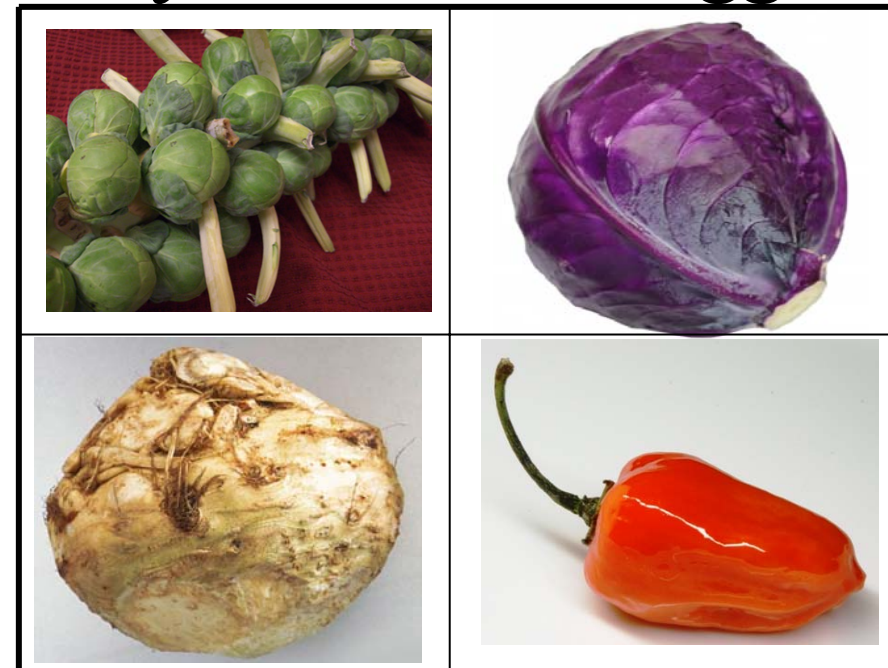
natural resource classes in a competitive setting. These events test student skills in specific occupational areas of the agricultural industry. Students compete individually in most events, and are ranked individually and in teams.

The Fruit and Vegetable competition was arranged by Ag Agent Bill Sciarappa and assistant Vivian Quinn and involved the identification of 40 fruits and vegetables and the grading of five varieties. Produce was once again donated by Delicious Orchards. Ron Gassaway and Bill McDonald are very generous and eager to be a part of this event. We sincerely thank them for their support. The chart below highlights Monmouth County and N. Burlington schools.

Vivian Quinn

FFA 2008 Career Development Event Results						
School	Fruit-Veg	Dairy	Turf	Poultry	Land Judging	Equine
Allentown	1st	6th	-	2nd	1st	2nd
Freehold	5th	-	-	-	-	-
Monmouth	3rd	-	1st	-	-	-
N. Burlington HS	9th	9th	-	1st	3rd	3rd
N. Burlington MS	13th	8th	-	-	-	-
Complete results - http://www.jerseyageducation.nj.gov/cderesul07.htm						

Can you ID these veggies?



Answers: Top L - brussel sprouts, top R - red cabbage; bottom L - root celeriac; bottom R - habanero pepper

Moving Forward with Doc Dey - Bill Sciarappa

We're pleased to begin our new series "Moving Forward" with ag leaders showing the vision, insight and wherewithal to foster agricultural innovation and enhance best management practices. Such progressive leadership is amply demonstrated by Monmouth County's own Doc Dey. Dr. Stephen P. Dey is a well-known veterinarian with commercial farming and business skills. He and his family have forged a very successful farming operation that mesh agronomic crop production with standardbred breeding. Heritage Hill Farm covers 505 acres with 350 in crops and the remaining pastureland, all of which are preserved for agriculture under Farmland Preservation.

Doc has initiated considerable change on the home front as well as statewide. He has shared his experience and knowledge widely through his leadership roles in the NJ Board of Managers (Rutgers – SEBS), the State Board of Agriculture and the Equine Science Center of Excel-



lence – RUBIA Committee and the NJ Equine Advisory Board among many others. His opinions have influenced farm friendly legislation in important areas as equine science, Right to Farm, Farm Preservation easements, agricultural management practices, emergency drought planning, water rights and nutrient management plans. Heritage Hill Farm

operations involve innovative ag procedures, especially environmental



stewardship and alternative energy.

In the area of environmental stewardship, Heritage Hill Farm showcases wide areas of grass filter strips, riparian buffers and a special infrastructure for water conservation. Doc proactively realized the importance of managing manure and preventing soil erosion. He instituted improved storage facilities with the help of NRCS and avoided environmental degradation in soil, water and air. Protecting our natural resources and those of our neighbors downwind or downstream is really look-



ing ahead on a broader basis. Dr. Dey has also utilized no-tillage seeding, rotational grazing and drywell construction for aquifer recharge. WHEW!

Doc's recent steps into alternative energy started in 2004 with a

green energy project grant and expanded 2006 with a federal solar energy project of \$98,000. With this stimulus, he had constructed a large array of solar panels which collect the power of the sun as low ground mounts (see photo below). Working through a partnership program with JCP&L company and SREC credit, a 58,000 kilowatt ground-mounted system has been built on the farm. There are two sets of collectors measuring 3 x 5 ½ feet in row lengths of 225 feet installed by the manufacturer Vanguard Technology. A recent rule change removes the counterproductive infrastructure property tax. They look great at a cost of \$625,000 and have a payback period of under ten years. Imagine collecting a million dollars of pure solar energy for clean electricity instead of burning non-renewable petrochemicals. Imagine the savings to the environment, to the economic bottom line and to American society when one can produce home grown Jersey Fresh photonic fuel.



What's next? Doc speculates about turbine type wind-powered generators and how corn kernel furnaces may transition to pelleted soy, corn or switchgrass stubble furnaces. This is the type of foresighted action we appreciate and encourage our farming community to continue to seek new levels of efficiency, efficacy and environmental improvement.

A Farmer Who Works the Land



Don Pyle has been a farmer since 1952. He wakes up before the sun comes up to start his day. At age 84, many people much younger than him would be hard pressed to keep up with his work day.

Pyle started his own farm in 1962. He purchased 22-acres on West Hurley Pond Road. He also rents out the Thompson Farm next door, giving him a total of 50 acres of farmland in the area. He uses five acres for growing crops such as tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, cucumbers and melons, the rest of the other 45 acres are kept in sweet corn. Don has been a strong proponent of integrated pest management and keeps detailed weather records to make his farming more efficient (photo right). Don recently expanded into the ornamentals market with his polyhouse pictured above.

With the help of his daughter Louise, Pyle stays busy each day of the growing season harvesting and delivering the produce they have grown. Louise, 55, was born the same year her father went into the farming business, and she currently works with him, driving a tractor and picking corn and beans. The work, the Wall resident said, is "seven days a week. If you're gonna eat on a rainy day; someone's gotta pick it."

Ron Siemers, 60, Pyle's nephew, of Brick has been working part-time at the farm for the past four years. Ron has learned how the farm works by helping out over the years since he was a boy. According to Siemers, Pyle still works on the farm because "he loves doing it, that's all. Since he was a little boy, he always wanted to be a farmer."

Two farm markets offer the fresh produce from the farm. Pyle owns Sandra's Market Place, operated by Sandy Mitchell, 63, of Spring Lake Heights on Belmar Boulevard in Wall. The market was originally run by the Pyle family which they started about 35 years ago. Charlie's Farm Market in Normandy Beach, also sells "Don's Sweet Corn". Many people will go out of their way to stop at the farm markets to get Pyle's fresh corn. They can't wait for the first delivery every summer to start off another year of good eating.

The FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties has been a recipient of the farm's bounty as well. For the past 10 years Pyle has contributed fresh corn to the foodbank because he does not want anyone to ever go hungry. According to Susan Kennedy in an article in The Asbury Park Press, "He is just a very kind soul, and I think he is the epitome of a farmer and what a farmer stands for in New Jersey, and that's that they grow food, they plant crops and they're proud of their work and their product," Kelly said. "He goes beyond farming being a business for him, and I think he understands in his heart that no one should go hungry, and I think he exemplifies that in his life."

The agricultural community in New Jersey has been very lucky to have Don Pyle as their tireless advocate. His service, faith and integrity have provided Monmouth County with a lasting legacy to this, The Garden State. Thanks Don!

Nyna McKittrick



New Jersey Farm Bureau Meets for its 90th Annual Convention William Persson

PRINCETON – The 90th annual meeting of the New Jersey Farm Bureau occurred on Nov. 17-18. Richard Nieuwenhuis opened the proceedings with the president's annual address to the delegates. Nearly 90 resolutions were considered, including value-added agriculture, the Highlands dispute, dairy and food safety.

In a session titled, "Remarks from the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) and Cooperative Extension, Rutgers," Dr. Mark Robson,

Director of NJAES, and Dr. Larry Katz, current director of Cooperative Extension (a unit of NJAES), both spoke. As part of a concerted effort to reinvigorate the Agricultural Science major at Rutgers University, Mark Robson, Director of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) has accepted a new position as Dean of agricultural programs in Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences. As Dean of

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