



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FARM SERVICE AGENCY

FARM LOANS

2014 FARM BILL
FACT SHEET

March 2014

Farm Loan Information Chart

The following chart summarizes FSA farm loan information, effective March 12, 2014. Additional details are available at local FSA offices and on FSA's website: www.fsa.usda.gov.

Program	Maximum Loan Amount	Rates and Terms	Use of Proceeds
Direct Farm Ownership (FO)	\$300,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate based on agency borrowing costs Term up to 40 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase farm Construct buildings or other capital improvements Soil and water conservation Pay closing costs
Direct Farm Ownership (FO) Participation	\$300,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate is direct FO rate less 2% with a floor of 2.5% if at least 50% of loan amount provided by other lender Term up to 40 years 	Same as Direct FO
Direct Down Payment Farm Ownership Program	The lesser of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45% of the purchase price, 45% of the appraised value, \$300,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate is direct FO rate less 4% with a floor of 1.5% Term of 20 years Down payment of at least 5% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase of farm by a beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer
Direct Operating (OL)	\$300,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate based on agency borrowing cost Term from 1 to 7 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase livestock, poultry, equipment, feed, seed, farm chemicals and supplies Soil and water conservation Refinance debts with certain limitations
Direct Operating Microloan (ML)	\$35,000	Same as Direct OL	Same as Direct OL
Direct Emergency	100% actual or physical losses \$500,000 maximum program indebtedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate is based on the OL rate plus 1% Term from 1 to 7 years for non-real estate purposes Term up to 40 years for physical losses on real estate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restore or replace essential property Pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year Pay essential family living expenses Reorganize the farming operation Refinance debts with certain limitations
Guaranteed Operating	\$1,355,000 (Amount adjusted annually for inflation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate determined by the lender Term from 1 to 7 years Loan guarantee fee is 1.5% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as direct OL
Guaranteed Farm Ownership	\$1,355,000 (Amount adjusted annually for inflation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate determined by the lender Term up to 40 years Loan guarantee fee is 1.5% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as direct FO except loan may be used to refinance debts
Guaranteed Conservation Loan (CL)	\$1,355,000 (Amount adjusted annually for inflation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate determined by the lender Term not to exceed 30 years, or shorter period, based on the life of the security Loan guarantee fee is 1.5% Eligibility requirements expanded to include large and financially strong operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement any conservation practice in an NRCS approved conservation plan May be used to refinance debts related to implementing an NRCS approved conservation plan
Land Contract (LC) Guarantee	The purchase price of the farm cannot exceed the lesser of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$500,000 The current market value of property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate cannot exceed the direct FO interest rate plus 3% Amortized over a minimum of 20 years with no balloon payments during the first 10 years of loan Down payment of at least 5% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sell real estate through a land contract to a beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer Guarantee is with the seller of the real estate

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USDA Farm Service Agency Announces Key Dates for New 2014 Farm Bill Safety Net Programs

USDA announced key dates for farm owners and producers to keep in mind regarding the new 2014 Farm Bill established programs, Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC). The new programs, designed to help producers better manage risk, usher in one of the most significant reforms to U.S. farm programs in decades.

Dates associated with ARC and PLC that farm owners and producers need to know:

- **Sept. 29, 2014 to Feb. 27, 2015:** Land owners may visit their local Farm Service Agency office to update yield history and/or reallocate base acres.
- **Nov. 17, 2014 to March 31, 2015:** Producers make a one-time election of either ARC or PLC for the 2014 through 2018 crop years.
- **Mid-April 2015 through summer 2015:** Producers sign contracts for 2014 and 2015 crop years.
- **October 2015:** Payments for 2014 crop year, if needed.

USDA leaders will visit with producers across the country to share information and answer questions on the ARC and PLC programs.

USDA helped create online tools to assist in the decision process, allowing farm owners and producers to enter information about their operation and see projections that show what ARC and/or PLC will mean for them under possible future scenarios. The new tools are now available at www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc. Farm owners and producers can access the online resources from the convenience of their home computer or mobile device at any time.

Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (which includes short grain rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat. Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity.

Producers can contact their local FSA office for more information or to schedule an appointment.

USDA Unveils Key New Programs to Help Farmers Manage Risk

USDA just unveiled highly anticipated new programs to help farmers better manage risk, ushering in one of the most significant reforms to U.S. farm programs in decades.

New tools are now available to help provide farmers the information they need to choose the new safety net program that is right for their business.

The new programs, Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC), are cornerstones of the commodity farm safety net programs in the 2014 Farm Bill, legislation that ended direct payments. Both programs offer farmers protection when market forces cause substantial drops in crop prices and/or revenues. Producers will have through early spring of 2015 to select which program works best for their businesses.

To help farmers choose between ARC and PLC, USDA helped create online tools that allow farmers to enter information about their operation and see projections about what each program will mean for them under possible future scenarios. The new tools are now available at www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

At this time, farm owners may begin visiting their local Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices if they want to update their yield history and/or reallocate base acres, the first step before choosing which new program best serves their risk management needs. Letters sent this summer enabled farm owners and producers to analyze their crop planting history in order to decide whether to keep their base acres or reallocate them according to recent plantings.

The next step in USDA's safety net implementation is scheduled for this winter when all producers on a farm begin making their election, which will remain in effect for 2014-2018 crop years between the options offered by ARC and PLC.

Producers can contact their local FSA Office for more information on ARC and PLC or to schedule an appointment to update their yield history and/or reallocate base acres.

USDA Announces New Support for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

Department Implementing New Farm Bill Programs, Unveiling New Centralized Online Resource to Support Next Generation of Farmers

USDA has announced the implementation of new Farm Bill measures and other policy changes to improve the financial security of new and beginning farmers and ranchers. USDA also unveiled www.USDA.gov/newfarmers, a new website that will provide a centralized, one-stop resource where beginning farmers and ranchers can explore the variety of USDA initiatives designed to help them succeed.

USDA's www.usda.gov/newfarmers has in depth information for new farmers and ranchers, including: how to increase access to land and capital; build new market opportunities; participate in conservation opportunities; select and use the right risk management tools; and access USDA education, and technical support programs. These issues have been identified as top priorities by new farmers. The website will also feature instructive case studies about beginning farmers who have successfully utilized USDA resources to start or expand their business operations.

The policy announcements in support of beginning farmers and ranchers include:

- Waiving service fees for new and beginning farmers or ranchers to enroll in the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the 2014 crop year. NAP provides risk management tools to farmers who grow crops for which there is no crop insurance product. Under this waiver, announced via an [official notice](#) to Farm Service Agency offices, farmers and ranchers whom already enrolled in NAP for the 2014 crop year and certified to being a beginning farmer or social disadvantaged farmer are eligible for a service fee refund.
- Eliminating payment reductions under the [Conservation Reserve Program](#) (CRP) for new and beginning farmers which will allow routine, prescribed, and emergency grazing outside the primary nesting season on enrolled land consistent with approved conservation plans. Previously, farmers and ranchers grazing on CRP land were subject to a reduction in CRP payments of up to 25 percent. Waiving these reductions for new and beginning farmers will provide extra financial support during times of emergency like drought and other natural disasters.
- Increasing payment rates to beginning farmers and ranchers under Emergency Assistance for [Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program](#) (ELAP). Under this provision, beginning farmers can claim up 90 percent of losses for lost livestock, such as bees, under ELAP. This is a fifty percent increase over previously available payment amounts to new and beginning farmers.

In the near future, USDA will also announce additional crop insurance program changes for beginning farmers and ranchers – including discounted premiums, waiver of administrative fees, and other benefits.

Additional information about USDA actions in support of beginning farmers and ranchers is available [here](#).

Livestock Disaster Assistance Sign-up Underway

Livestock disaster program enrollment opened on April 15, 2014. These disaster programs are authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill as permanent programs and provide retroactive authority to cover losses that occurred on or after Oct. 1, 2011.

Eligible producers can sign-up for the following livestock disaster assistance programs:

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP):

LIP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law. Producers who suffered livestock death losses should submit a notice of loss and an application for payment to their local FSA office by January 30, 2015.

Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP):

The enrollment deadline for the 2014 Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) is Nov. 1, 2014. The deadline for 2012 and 2013 ELAP has already passed.

How do I sign up for the FSA Newsletters and Bulletins?



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acres with more than a million blooming black oil sunflowers. Accompanying the maze are a variety of on-farm activities, including a kids' scavenger hunt, build your own scarecrow contest and a self-guided bug safari. Many farms around New Jersey invite the public during the fall season for hay rides, corn mazes, pumpkin and apple picking and many more activities. These activities bring added revenue to farms to make them more viable and helps to ensure that the land remains in active agriculture. New Jersey had 347 farms that offered agritourism activities in 2012 that generated \$18.4 million in revenue. New Jersey ranks 9th in the nation in total agritourism dollars and nine New Jersey counties rank in the top 10 percentile in agritourism sales, including Sussex County, which ranks 85th in the nation with more than \$1.5 million in agritourism sales. The number of farms in the county offering agritourism more than doubled from 22 in 2007 to 49 farms in 2012.

First EEE Cases – Three horses from Burlington, Gloucester and Ocean counties were the first reported cases in 2014 of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE), a serious, mosquito-borne illness in horses. The 4-year-old mare from Gloucester County began showing neurologic signs of EEE on August 10 and was humanely euthanized on September 10. A 2-year-old Ocean County mare began showing neurologic symptoms on September 11 and died on September 14. The Ocean County horse had been vaccinated for EEE in the spring. The 6-year-old Burlington County gelding was not vaccinated and began showing signs of illness on September 21 and was euthanized that day. EEE causes inflammation of the brain tissue and has a significantly higher risk of death in horses than West Nile Virus infection. West Nile virus is a viral disease that affects horses' neurological systems. The disease is transmitted by mosquito bite. The virus cycles between birds and mosquitoes with horses and humans being incidental hosts. EEE infections in horses are not a significant risk factor for human infection because horses (like humans) are considered to be "dead-end" hosts for the virus. In 2013, New Jersey had two cases of EEE in August. No cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) were reported last year.

Agricultural Achievement Award -- New Jersey residents who are entering their senior year in high school this fall and are planning a career in agriculture or science may apply for the New Jersey Agricultural Achievement Award. One winner will be selected and awarded a scholarship to honor their achievements. The New Jersey Agricultural Achievement Award, sponsored by Dr. Amy Butewicz, a former New Jersey Equestrian of the Year, was started because of her desire to give back to the community. Worth \$500, this scholarship is meant to assist its recipient in beginning their future in agriculture. The qualifications for receiving this award include submitting an application, found here www.jerseyequine.nj.gov/agachievementapplform.pdf, a resume along with an essay answering the question, "How has your involvement within your respective nominating organization helped to shape your future career choice?" In addition, a contestant is required to be a current, active member of an organization either on the New Jersey Equine Advisory Board and/or represented at the Youth Reception portion of the New Jersey State Agricultural Convention. Each organization on the New Jersey Equine Advisory Board and a participant of the State Agricultural Convention is able to nominate a maximum of two contestants. The winner of the Agricultural Achievement Award must attend the Annual New Jersey Bred Equine Breeders Award Luncheon to be held on Sunday, January 26, 2015 in Eastampton and will read his or her essay to the attendees.

NJ Department of Agriculture Hydrologic Stormwater Database -- The Department and the 15 Soil Conservation Districts are continuing to load engineering, GIS and land use data into the Department's web-based stormwater management database. The database warehouses the locations of stormwater management basins, outfall structures and water quality improvement structures along with copies of site plans and management plans for virtually all stormwater basins constructed in New Jersey dating back to 1986. Design and land use data can be used to model stormwater runoff, water quality, perform environmental analysis and planning and identify target areas for basin restoration or retrofits. Future plans include the ability to upload and view stormwater basin maintenance information. Data is viewable online at: <http://hydro.rutgers.edu/sw>



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NJ Farms and Registration Management System

high-quality products through best practices and environmental health.

After returning from school and working as a full-time employee responsible for the family herd, in 2007 Byma and his father formed a business partnership, By-Acre Holsteins, LLC. Since then, Byma added a 42-stall milking barn to an existing 64-stall barn and made other changes that enabled them to cut costs and increase herd production averages from 18,900 lbs. of milk per year to 21,700 lbs. of milk per year. He installed a 21-stall calf barn to provide a healthier, more efficient environment for calf development and enrolled in the New Jersey Cattle Health Assurance Program in which the farm is evaluated on its handling of herd health and cow comfort and the herd is tested for ailments.

Byma also has undertaken several conservation practices including use of cover crops to reduce soil erosion and water run-off; planted no-till corn to prevent soil erosion; and planted orchard grass to prevent water contamination. In 2012, a complex drainage system was constructed on the farm to reduce barnyard run-off and the farm is currently working with the Walkkill Watershed and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to develop a roof system on farm building to collect rain and consolidate the run-off into the stock pond, already on the premises. They also have implemented a Conservation Nutrient Management Plan that allows them to more efficiently fertilize their fields while reducing any negative effects on water supplies.

"As the father of three young children, I feel it is essential to protect and preserve the natural resources all around us so that our children will have a bright future," said Byma.

Byma said his goal is sustainability of his operation so he has partnered with Lioni Latticini, Inc. to produce fresh mozzarella that is being sold in local supermarkets.

"We believe this partnership is just one more step in making By-Acre dairy a more profitable and, therefore, longer lasting business – a business that will be around for generations to come," said Byma.

Byma and his wife, Christine, are active in the agricultural community. Henry is Vice President of the Sussex County Holstein Association and a member of the Sussex County Milk Producers Co-op, National Holstein Association, New Jersey Holstein Association, New Jersey State Fair/Sussex County Farm and Horse Show, Sussex County Board of Agriculture, and New Jersey Farm Bureau. Both he and Christine are active in 4-H and host and organize dairy judging clinics, as well as donate calves to exemplary 4-H members. Henry is a member of the Beemerville Volunteer Fire Company and a Deacon at the Sussex Christian Reformed Church.

The Bymas have three sons, ages 7, 5 and 3.

New Jersey annually recognizes the outstanding achievements of a young farmer who is an upstanding leader, respected agriculturalist and is active in community or faith organizations. The Department of Agriculture is now accepting applications for the Year 2016 Outstanding Young Farmer (OYF) Award. The submission deadline for nominations is January 15, 2015.

Nominees must be farm operators, deriving a minimum of two-thirds of their income from farming and must be between the ages of 21-40, not becoming 41 prior to January 1, 2015. Candidates who have a financial interest in the farm operation (a sole proprietor, partner, or a corporation) will receive higher ranking in the OYF judging process. However, nominees may also include salaried farm managers and employees who are actively involved in policy and management decisions. Submission of a financial statement is not required for state competition.

A panel of five judges reviews each nominee's application based on the

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CHRISTIE ADMINISTRATION CELEBRATES NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK

Secretary Visits New Brunswick Middle School's Lunch Program



For Immediate Release: October 16, 2014


Contact: Lynne Richmond
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(NEW BRUNSWICK) – New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Douglas H. Fisher today marked National School Lunch Week with a visit to New Brunswick Middle School to applaud the New Brunswick School District's efforts to offer students meals that are nutritious and appealing.

Secretary Fisher observed a school lunch period and spoke with students and food service officials about the healthy menu items being offered.

"We are proud of how school districts around the state have embraced the new federal nutrition school lunch guidelines and have worked hard to involve students in the process," said Secretary Fisher. "We know that serving more nutritious foods at lunch only accomplishes its goal if children eat the meal. We congratulate New Brunswick for being a leader in school lunch."

the school districts providing healthy meals every day. The New Jersey
Department of Agriculture administers the program in the Garden State.

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offering testing and necropsy services. The AHDL can be contacted by calling (609) 406-6999 or e-mailing jerseyvetlab@ag.state.nj.us.



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More information about the tests offered can be found on the AHDL website: <http://www.jerseyvetlab.nj.gov/>



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Deer that appear to exhibit any of the symptoms associated with bluetongue or EHD should be reported to the Division of Fish and Wildlife Bureau of Wildlife Services at (908) 735-7040 or the Division's Office of Fish and Wildlife Health and Forensics at (908) 236-2118.



Jersey Equine



Farmland Preservation / Right to Farm

Both diseases are contracted from the bite of a species of midge fly known as *Culicoides sp.* Outbreaks typically begin in late summer. Symptoms in deer may include difficulty standing, drooling, and emitting foam from the mouth or nose. Because the disease causes fever, sick or dead deer are often seen in or near water.




Jersey Ag Education



NJ Farms and Registration Management System

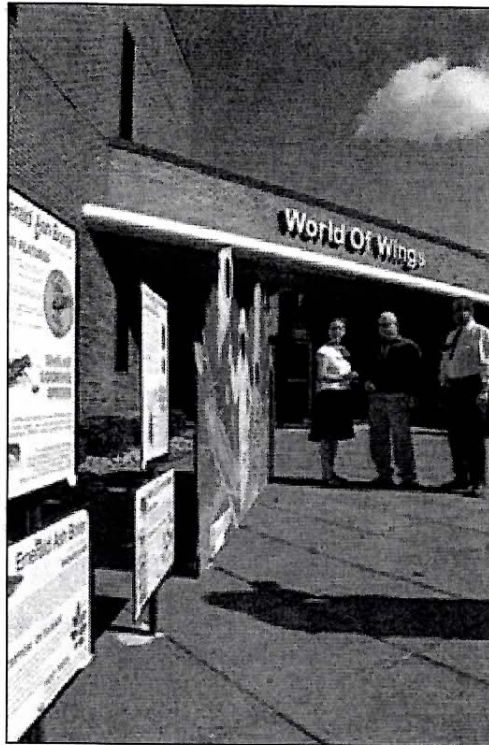
Clinical signs in livestock include, but are not limited to, fever, listlessness, edema and congestion of mouth, nose, eyes, and coronary bands, mouth sores, lameness and a characteristic swelling of the tongue. Affected animals may act as carriers for an extended period after recovery.

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Florence Rutherford of World of Wings with the NJDA's Paul Kurtz and George Nelson of USDA

The concept and design for the display came from Paul Kurtz, Department entomologist and Forest Pest Outreach and Survey Program Manager. He worked with the World of Wings, as well as the Turtle Back Zoo in West Orange and the Cape May County Zoo in Cape May Court House to locate displays at the facilities to reach a greater number of people. Each exhibit cost \$3,000, with funding coming from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Pest Outreach and Survey Program.

World of Wings opened in December of 2012 as an entertainment and education center focused on butterflies, amphibians and reptiles. One major attraction is the Butterfly Atrium, which features butterfly species from around the world, many of which are at risk of extinction. James Yoon of World of Wings said the invasive pest display fits well with the museum's mission.

"Families come to look at the display as they enter," said Yoon. "It's good for taking pictures and educational for the kids."

The Department of Agriculture works to suppress and eradicate harmful insects that kill trees in New Jersey. Currently, the Department is tracking infestations of emerald ash borer in Mercer, Burlington and Somerset counties. Asian longhorned beetle was successfully eradicated in the state by the Department, USDA and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection last year.

Most invasive insect discoveries in the United States have been made by private citizens. In both the New Jersey emerald ash borer and Asian longhorned beetle infestations, members of the public alerted authorities.

To learn more about emerald ash borer, visit the New Jersey Department of Agriculture's website at <http://bit.ly/Zc948j> or the USDA's site at <http://bit.ly/1sXM3CW>. For Asian longhorned beetle information, go to <http://asianlonghornedbeetle.com>.

Report signs of these beetles to the Department of Agriculture at 609-406-



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project website; encourage more sustainable management practices including more efficient use of pesticides, fertilizers and water.



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New Jersey Farm Bureau – Facilitate the matching of aspiring urban farmers with farm management expertise of Rutgers Cooperative Extension. Using Ag in the City, an association of urban farmers, candidates will be selected for training on urban farming.



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New Jersey Blueberry Growers Association – Working with Rutgers Cooperative Extension, provide New Jersey blueberry growers with statewide integrated pest management (IPM) information and work to improve pest management and monitoring practices, while addressing invasive species and the pesticides used to control those pests.



Jersey Equine

Cape May Beach Plum Association – Increase the number of high quality beach plum plants; create a beach plum marketing and promotion program; offer paid internships to agri-science high school students; educate farmers and educators about what was learned during the project.



Farmland Preservation / Right to Farm

Cumberland County Board of Agriculture – Increase awareness of non-farm residents of Cumberland County about the importance of crops grown in the county; increase the number of residents who buy local crops from direct marketing outlets in the county; request retailers source products from local growers; train specialty crop growers in county on marketing strategies.



Jersey Ag Education

New Jersey Agricultural Society – Hold educational workshops for New Jersey Agriculture Leadership Development Program geared toward enhancing special crop production; develop website for program to include news articles and success stories of alumni specialty crop growers and specialty crop-related issues.



NJ Farms and Registration Management System

New Jersey Beekeepers Association – Conduct a study to identify the types and quantities of pesticides being collected by honey bees in different areas of the state at different times of year to learn which areas are least toxic to bees; hives throughout the state will be tested monthly for a broad spectrum of 180 pesticides.

New Jersey Nursery and Landscape Association – Develop a Plant Something Campaign marketing program to increase the sale and use of New Jersey-grown landscape flowers, trees and plants.

New Jersey Peach Promotion Council – Promote the quality and availability of locally grown Jersey Fresh peaches; compile the NJ Peach Buyers' Guide and distribute it to consumers retail, institutional and wholesale buyers; plan and stage various media events; consumer and produce merchandising contests, coordinate retail promotional events; provide education and information to consumers, buyers, and the media via print advertising, website and other social media information, and personal contacts and via audio and video methodology; market impact studies, and conduct product development and handling research.

New Jersey White Potato Association – increase in the volume of Jersey Fresh-branded potatoes sold by embracing the slogans "Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food" and "Locally Grown;" develop point of purchase materials that feature the 11 New Jersey potato farm families to tell the story of the New Jersey potato farmer; distribute to 750 targeted stores over 2 years with the goal of significantly increasing "Jersey Fresh" potato sales.

Outer Coastal Plain Vineyard Association -- conduct a survey of wine grape pests across the state of New Jersey to identify the distribution and severity of key insect pests in the state; use this information to form a coherent IPM program for New Jersey wine grape growers; conduct a survey for grape root borer larvae in commercial vineyards, allowing us to map locations of high abundance and correlate it to soil type and prevalence of entomopathogenic

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CHRISTIE ADMINISTRATION DISTRIBUTES \$28,000 TO FOOD BANKS FROM COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY CHECK-OFF FUND

Money to Assist in Food Purchases



For Immediate Release: October 3, 2014

Contact: Lynne Richmond
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(TRENTON) – New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Douglas H. Fisher today announced the distribution of almost \$28,000 to New Jersey’s six food banks to supplement their food supplies. The funding represents two years of contributions through the Community Food Pantry Fund, a state income tax form check-off program.

“New Jersey residents have again shown their generosity to their neighbors who find themselves in need to provide food for their families,” said Secretary Fisher. “We encourage state taxpayers to seek out this check-off on their income tax form and donate to this worthy cause.”

Funds were distributed to: Community Foodbank of New Jersey, Hillside, \$18,277; Food Bank of South Jersey, Pennsauken, \$3,496; FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties, Neptune, \$3,216; Southern Regional Food Distribution Center, Vineland, \$1,193; Mercer Street Friends Food Bank, Ewing, \$1,226; and NORWESCAP, Phillipsburg, \$487.

The fund was the result of recommendations from the state’s Hunger Prevention Advisory Committee in an effort to create an on-going funding stream to assist with the acquisition of emergency food to enhance the emergency food provider system.

The check-off was first available on the 2010 tax year forms. It allows taxpayers to either contribute a portion of their tax refund or make a donation. Money collected for the fund administered by the Department of Agriculture must be used exclusively for food purchases. Those wishing to contribute will find the check-off item on their NJ-1040 income tax form.

Governor Christie and the State Legislature allocated \$6,818,000 for the current fiscal year’s New Jersey Department of Agriculture State Food Purchase Program (SFPP). That money is distributed quarterly to the state’s six food banks for the purchase of healthy foods, with an emphasis on buying produce from New Jersey farmers. The SFPP is in its eighth year.

The Department also distributes United States Department of Agriculture-donated food to the six food banks through the Emergency Food Assistance Program.



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NJ State FFA National Officer Candidate Lauren Fillebrown learns more about the Mobile Edible Wall from a South Hunterdon FFA member during the presentation

More said the wall is a great way to illustrate the farm to table concept within her school and provide students with fresh, nutritious and locally grown produce throughout the year.

Beth Feehan, Executive Director of the New Jersey Farm to School Network, said she first saw an "edible wall" like the South Hunterdon agriculture students are using at a conference and felt it would be beneficial in the Farm to School program.

"These Mobile Edible Walls work as indoor school gardens, allowing students in all different settings to see how plants grow, to experience the successes and failures of growing food and to have hands-on experience right in their classrooms."

There has been much focus on Farm to School recently. Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno last month signed a package of bills that support New Jersey's Farm to School program by increasing student access to healthy, locally grown foods.

For the first time, the Department of Agriculture will provide additional funds this school year to schools for connecting their Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program with the Farm to School Program. The schools must provide Jersey Fresh produce a minimum of two days each month from September to November and from April to June and must verify where the produce was grown. Eighty percent of the 158 schools are participating. The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program is federally-funded and administered by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture to provide healthier food choices; expand the variety of fruits and vegetables children experience; and increase children's fruit and vegetable consumption.

The Department also initiated a program this year to recognize schools and farmers who work together to ensure students have access to healthy Jersey Fresh fruits and vegetables in their school cafeterias. The Jersey Fresh Farm to School Recognition Program helps schools expand their farm to school efforts, highlight Jersey Fresh produce in their meals and educate students about good nutrition and the state's agriculture industry. The program is a new marketing opportunity for farmers to strengthen the relationship between their farm and the community. Schools in the recognition program are required to have programs during Jersey Fresh Farm to School Week. The applications for the recognition program can be found online at: <http://bit.ly/1erIfPb>.



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THREE HORSES CONTRACT EASTERN EQUINE ENCEPHALITIS

First Reported Cases of 2014



For Immediate Release: September 25, 2014

Contact: Lynne Richmond
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(TRENTON) – Three horses from Burlington, Gloucester and Ocean counties are the first reported cases in 2014 of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE), a serious, mosquito-borne illness in horses.

The 4-year-old mare from Gloucester County began showing neurologic signs of EEE on August 10 and was humanely euthanized on September 10. A 2-year-old Ocean County mare began showing neurologic symptoms on September 11 and died on September 14. The Ocean County horse had been vaccinated for EEE in the spring. The 6-year-old Burlington County gelding was not vaccinated and began showing signs of illness on September 21 and was euthanized that day.

"Horse owners need to be vigilant in vaccinating their animals against diseases spread by mosquitoes," said New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Douglas H. Fisher. "Vaccinated animals are much less likely to contract deadly diseases such as EEE and West Nile Virus."

EEE causes inflammation of the brain tissue and has a significantly higher risk of death in horses than West Nile Virus infection. West Nile virus is a viral disease that affects horses' neurological systems. The disease is transmitted by mosquito bite. The virus cycles between birds and mosquitoes with horses and humans being incidental hosts. EEE infections in horses are not a significant risk factor for human infection because horses (like humans) are considered to be "dead-end" hosts for the virus.

In 2013, New Jersey had two cases of EEE in August. No cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) were reported last year.

Effective equine vaccines for EEE and WNV are available commercially. Horse owners should contact their veterinarians if their horses are not already up-to-date on their vaccinations against both EEE and WNV.

For more information about EEE in horses, visit www.cfsph.iastate.edu/FastFacts/pdfs/easter_wester_venezuelan_equine_ence

EEE and West Nile virus, like other viral diseases affecting horses' neurological systems, must be reported to the state veterinarian at 609-671-6400 within 48 hours of diagnosis. The New Jersey Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory is available to assist with EEE and WNV testing and can be reached at 609-671-



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Julie Acton and Bruce Bobbitt and District Superintendent John Swain

At Salem County Career and Technical High School, Secretary Fisher joined students in taste-testing salsa, visited the school's garden and learned about their Farm2You project. Students also were able to sample produce in the cafeteria from A.T. Buzby Farm in Pilesgrove.

Carly Chaapel, the district's Garden Coordinator, said the salsa was made from the school's summer garden, with yellow pear tomatoes, various heirloom varieties, plum tomatoes and peppers. They had a volunteer day in July where they chopped, cooked and froze the salsa. Last year, she worked with school food service on tastings of local produce and she plans to continue that this year to assist in incorporating new menu items that feature seasonal, fresh produce,

As a FoodCorps service member last school year, Chaapel helped start the school's garden, growing a wide variety of fruits, vegetables and herbs. Now that she works for the district, the school has another FoodCorps service member, Annalise Van Vranken, who is helping with garden projects.

"I try to follow 'seed to plate' when I can, taking the same class out to plant the seeds, tend the plants, harvest and cook," said Chaapel. "I find ways to make learning in the garden applicable to nearly every class, so it really becomes a communal space. The kids want to come out and help all the time."

Chaapel said Farm2You is a joint project between the Salem County Vocation Technical Schools, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Gloucester County, Salem County Health Department, Salem County Health and Wellness Foundation and FoodCorps service members. They received a truck for free from the Special Services District. The students have done all the labor to make the truck into a mobile educational tool that will bring farm to school to Salem and Gloucester counties. She envisions visiting schools with the truck filled with produce purchased from local farmers.

There has been much focus on Farm to School recently. Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno last month signed a package of bills that support New Jersey's Farm to School program by increasing student access to healthy, locally grown foods.

For the first time, the Department of Agriculture will provide additional funds this school year to schools for connecting their Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program with the Farm to School Program. The schools must provide Jersey Fresh produce a minimum of two days each month from September to November and from April to June and must verify where the produce was grown. Eighty percent of the 158 schools are participating. The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program is federally-funded and administered by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture to provide healthier food choices; expand the variety of fruits and vegetables children experience; and increase children's fruit and vegetable consumption.

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By law, Farm to School Week takes place each year the last week in

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CHRISTIE ADMINISTRATION CELEBRATES JERSEY FRESH FARM TO SCHOOL WEEK IN MIDDLESEX COUNTY

Ceres Elementary School Lauded for Commitment to Jersey Fresh

For Immediate Release: September 23, 2014

Contact: Lynne Richmond
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(PERTH AMBOY) – New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Douglas H. Fisher today celebrated the fourth annual Jersey Fresh Farm to School Week with a visit to Anthony V. Ceres Elementary School in Perth Amboy, where Jersey Fresh fruits and vegetables are highlighted in their Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program and the students grow a school garden.

The Department of Agriculture’s Jersey Fresh Farm to School Week, taking place September 22 to 26, highlights efforts to connect schools with New Jersey farmers to purchase local produce for school meals. It also seeks to teach children where their food comes from by growing it themselves in school gardens.

“Farm to School Week is a great time for schools to celebrate New Jersey’s abundance of fresh produce grown so close to where we live and to teach children the health benefits of eating fruits and vegetables,” said Secretary Fisher. “We applaud the schools that have connected with our farmers and regularly serve local produce to their students.”



Ceres School Principal Michelle Velez, Secretary Fisher and school health teacher Linda Kovalsky



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CHRISTIE ADMINISTRATION CELEBRATES NJ'S PUBLIC GARDENS AND ARBORETA

Agriculture Secretary Encourages Garden Visits, Fall Planting



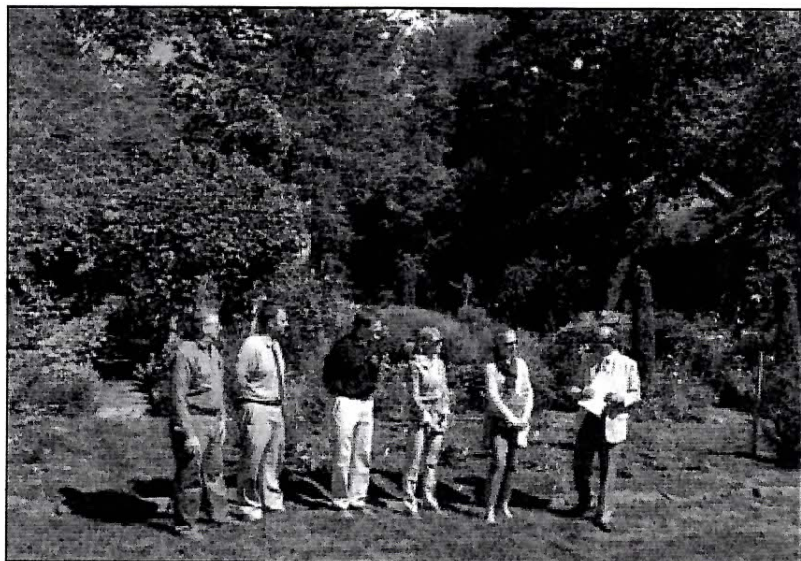
For Immediate Release: September 17, 2014

Contact: Lynne Richmond
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(CHESTER) – New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Douglas H. Fisher today visited Willowood Arboretum in Chester and encouraged public garden and arboretum visits this fall. He also reminded residents and visitors that fall is a great time to tend to home gardens with new plantings.

"People in the tri-state region are just a short trip away from dozens of New Jersey public gardens, each offering a unique and special experience," said Secretary Fisher. "At the same time, these gardens offer numerous ideas for the home gardener. This is the perfect time of year to plant for a beautiful spring garden."

New Jersey has more than 60 gardens and arboreta in 15 counties for the public to enjoy. Susan Lowry and Nancy Berner, authors of a new book, "Gardens of the Garden State," spoke about what attracted them to the Garden State – the tradition of agriculture, heritage of garden making and plant collecting, and hundreds of garden clubs around the state. They presented Secretary Fisher with a copy of their book for the State Library.



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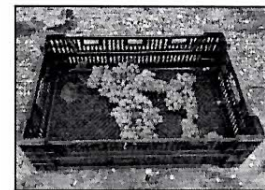


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SHOWCASING NEW JERSEY'S GRAPE HARVEST

Secretary Fisher Kicks Off New Jersey Wine Week with Visit to Local Garden State Winery



For Immediate Release: September 16, 2014

Contact: Lynne Richmond
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(EAST WINDSOR) – New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Douglas H. Fisher today visited Working Dog Winery in East Windsor to announce the beginning of Wine Week in New Jersey, celebrating the Garden State's 2014 grape harvest. He encouraged people to visit the state's wineries to learn more about the harvest and wine making in our state.

Governor Christie signed a proclamation declaring September 19 to 28 New Jersey Wine Week, honoring the wine industry for being a growing contributor to the state's economy.

"New Jersey's wineries are increasingly being recognized around the nation and the world for producing high quality and unique wines," said Secretary Fisher. "The Garden State wine industry is an integral part of the state's agricultural and tourism industries, contributing to the economy and preserving open space."

New Jersey has 50 licensed wineries. New Jersey is 10th in the nation in wine production, with 1.6 million gallons produced in 2012. Last year, New Jersey wineries sold 447,425 gallons of wine.

"The wine industry is like the wine itself: the environment needs to be right for it to thrive," said Michael Halfacre, Director of the Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control, New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety. "Our Division is receiving significant interest from wineries looking to expand their businesses and other entrepreneurs who are looking to enter the business for the first time. This is a good time to be a winemaker in New Jersey and celebrate the industry."

