

A MESSAGE FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DEAN
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

March 2008

Faculty and Staff Activities and Accomplishments

Bradley Hillman (Plant Biology and Pathology) was named a fellow of the American Phytopathological Society (APS). Fellows are chosen for their significant contributions to the science of plant pathology. The formal award will be given this summer at the annual meeting of the APS in Minneapolis, MN.

Mark Robson, director of NJAES, received the Jessie B. Leslie award for his outstanding service to mosquito control work in New Jersey. The Associated Executives of Mosquito Control-NJ cited Robson's "pivotal role in the evolution of the mosquito program by elevating the program to center status." Robson received the award at the New Jersey Mosquito Control Association's Annual Meeting earlier this month in Atlantic City.

The plant breeding program in the **Department of Plant Biology and Pathology** received the following U.S. Plant Variety Protection Certificates issued in the first quarter of 2008:

Titanium tall fescue #200400113
Cochise III tall fescue #200400109
Inferno tall fescue # 200400145
Justice tall fescue # 200400130
2nd Millennium #200400129

The Institute of Food Technologists has selected **Thomas Montville** (Food Science) as this year's recipient of the Bernard Oser Award for Food Ingredient Safety.

The **Department of Food Science** has developed the Culinology curriculum, which fits in the General Food Science option of undergraduate Food Science curriculum leading to a B.S. degree from Rutgers. This will be a joint curriculum between the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences and Mercer County Community College (MCCC). Students will begin training in the Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Management program at MCCC for two years, supplemented by food service-culinary experience at Mercer's and/or Rutgers' student dining services or in a restaurant, during which time they will obtain Certificate of Proficiency in Professional Cooking and complete matriculation requirements for transfer to Rutgers university. During the final two years, students will complete food science training in Rutgers' Department of Food Science and participate in industry experience that will be arranged collaboratively through Rutgers' Center for Advanced Food Technology and Food Innovation Center, food industry partners at Research Chefs Association, and Rutgers' Office of Cooperative Education.

Grants

Gladis Zinati (Extension specialist) received a SARE Partnership grant from University of Vermont for her project "Low-Input Management Practices for Container Ericaceous Nursery Crops." The project team includes Ed Overdeest, Don Blew, Ann Gould, John Dighton, Jim Johnson, and Gladis Zinati.

RUTGERS
THE STATE UNIVERSITY
OF NEW JERSEY

School of Environmental and Biological Sciences and New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station
SEBS.RUTGERS.EDU • EXECDEANAGRICULTURE.RUTGERS.EDU • NJAES.RUTGERS.EDU



Stacy Bonos (Plant Biology and Pathology) was awarded a \$971,000 grant from the USDA/Department of Energy in support of her project “U.S. Native Grass Breeding Consortium to Identify Regional Optimum Biomass Productivity on Marginal Land.” In addition to her own research on this project, she is serving as the lead and will be overseeing five subcontracts (Ernst Conservation Seeds, USDA/ARS Dairy Forage Research Center, South Dakota State University, USDA/ARS Pasture Systems and Watershed Management, and Ohio Seed Improvement Association).

Christopher Obropta (PI, Environmental Sciences), in partnership with the South Jersey Land and Water Trust, received a \$68,000 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to implement a watershed restoration plan for the Oldmans Creek watershed in Gloucester County. Obropta also received \$28,000 for a New Jersey Sea Grant Cooperative Agreement. This project is a continuation of the 2006 memorandum of agreement between Rutgers and the New Jersey Marine Sciences Consortium. It provides co-funding staff time devoted to Extension programs in water resources for homeowners (Stormwater Management in Your Backyard), watershed groups (Restore-a-Waterway), and municipalities (NJ NEMO).

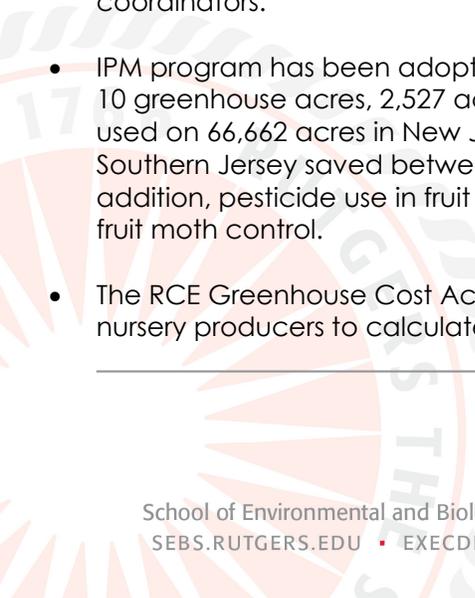
Conferences, Seminars, and Other Events

Nurgul Fitzgerald gave an invited talk, “Communicating the nutritional benefits of New Jersey agricultural products to consumers,” at the 4th Annual Emma Lausten Horticultural Symposium at Rutgers NJAES EcoComplex on February 21.

Spotlight on Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension

Over the past two years, Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension (RCE) faculty and staff have garnered more than \$32 million in outside grants and contracts. For every dollar of federal funding, RCE has leveraged \$4.26 of state and local support. For every dollar of grant funding, RCE has leveraged \$1.41 of federal, state, and local support. Some of RCE's major accomplishments over the past year:

- In cooperation with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection and the NJ Environmental Federation, RCE has offered 26 School Integrated Pest Management (IPM) training sessions in 12 counties attended by nearly 2,000 private and public School IPM coordinators.
- IPM program has been adopted on 7,400 acres of blueberries, 508 acres of nursery stock, 10 greenhouse acres, 2,527 acres of apples, and 27,500 acres of vegetables. In all, IPM is used on 66,662 acres in New Jersey. As a result of adopting IPM practices, farmers in Southern Jersey saved between \$1,200 and more than \$4,000 in application costs. In addition, pesticide use in fruit trees was reduced between 50 to 80 percent for Oriental fruit moth control.
- The RCE Greenhouse Cost Accounting program was developed to help floriculture and nursery producers to calculate individual costs for their businesses. Upgrades and



RUTGERS
THE STATE UNIVERSITY
OF NEW JERSEY

School of Environmental and Biological Sciences and New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station
SEBS.RUTGERS.EDU • EXECDEANAGRICULTURE.RUTGERS.EDU • NJAES.RUTGERS.EDU

modifications were made to the program to allow clientele to monitor labor costs more closely, calculate break-even costs, use more cost categories, calculate the costs of producing plants outdoors, and input income statement and balance sheets so that financial ratios can be calculated and business financial health can be tracked over time. Over 200 people now have access to the Excel version of the program. A simplified version of the program is available on the Rutgers Farm Management website at <http://aesop.rutgers.edu/~farmmgmt>. An Excel version is also distributed through RCE so that producers can calculate their own costs.

- The Rutgers NJAES Equine Science Center provides significant support to the state's \$4 billion equine industry. The center offered a two-day short course titled "Developing Future Leaders for the Horse Industry," the first of its kind in the nation. It also developed the *Economic Impact of the New Jersey Horse Industry 2007* study, which has been widely distributed and referenced. In the past year, the center has also made significant progress in building an environmental best management practices farm on Ryders Lane in New Brunswick. The demonstration horse farm will use environmentally sound practices.
- The peach industry has been supported through a number of efforts, mainly spearheaded by Jerome Frecon (Gloucester County agricultural agent): a wholesale peach buyers guide was mailed to 400 potential peach buyers; a website on New Jersey's peaches was created (jerseypeaches.com); the New Jersey Peach Festival was held in conjunction with the Gloucester County 4-H Fair and attracted 22,000 visitors; a peach media day was held for food writers and other members of the media; displays at various food festivals and conventions provided exposure to more than 100,000 consumers; and eight new peach cultivars were introduced to improve peach shelf space for growers.
- Don Schaffner (Extension specialist in food safety) conducts an Extension program with the food industry to provide safe food to millions of consumers. Over the last year, this assistance provided not only safer food, but also reduced product loss by \$1.2 million. Schaffner has initiated a testing program to determine microbiological contamination levels in NJ spinach on growers' farms and determined the appropriate microbial standards for flour used in bread making to control bread spoilage, among other activities.
- In 2007, eight RCE Youth Farmstands were implemented in diverse communities throughout New Jersey—three in Trenton, three in Gloucester County, one in Atlantic City, and one in Warren County (Phillipsburg). The program provided hands-on work and entrepreneurship experience to at-risk youth. Curriculum topics included workforce readiness skills, farmstand operations, Jersey Fresh marketing, agricultural careers, the food system, and job search skills. Approximately \$13,600 in produce (over 1,000 cases) was purchased from local farmers. More than 2,300 customers in economically disadvantaged areas purchased Jersey Fresh produce through the program, and 138 Farmers Market Nutrition Program vouchers were used at Youth Farmstands by senior citizens and WIC families.



- The New Jersey Agricultural Leadership Development Program (NJALDP), a joint initiative sponsored by NJAES, the NJ Farm Bureau, the NJ Department of Agriculture, and the New Jersey Agricultural Society offers professional development opportunities to individuals in farming and agribusiness. So far, five classes have graduated, providing 125 alumni who are actively involved in supporting New Jersey agriculture.
- Nicholas Polanin (Somerset County agricultural agent) has designed and implemented the Green Industry Vocational Training Program to prepare at-risk youth for careers in fields such as tree care, landscape maintenance, and horticulture. As a result of the program, the pilot class of 18 participants gained new skills and interest, with 66 percent now considering a career in the green industry. Six were placed in paid internships, and host companies graded interns 4 out of 5 (with 5 being the most satisfied).

FYI



Back by popular demand—the Ramapo tomato! The Ramapo tomato was developed at Rutgers NJAES in 1968. Many years ago, it disappeared from seed catalogues as seed companies were favoring varieties that produced higher yields for commercial growers. Despite its disappearance, Rutgers continued to receive many requests for this tasty tomato and produced small batches throughout the years. And now, the first commercial lot of organically grown, genuine Ramapo F1 hybrid seed is available

through Rutgers NJAES. Transplants will be ready next month; seeds are ready now. Visit <http://njfarmfresh.rutgers.edu/JerseyTomato.html> to order your Ramapo tomato seeds today!

Mark Robson will be leading a panel discussion titled “The Transformation of New Jersey Farms: Perspectives from the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station.” Panel speakers are Professor Emeritus William Roberts of Agricultural Engineering; Professor Emeritus Morris Fabian of Agricultural Economics; Charles Homes, retired Mercer County Senior Agriculture Agent; and Warner Thurlow, retired Middlesex County Senior Agent.

WHEN: April 10 at 5 p.m.

WHERE: Remeggio Pane Room, 1st floor, Alexander Library, College Ave., New Brunswick.

RSVP: 732-932-7505, or by sending an email to events@rci.rutgers.edu. If you need assistance with parking for this event, please indicate as such with your RSVP.

The Climate Ahead: Impacts of Climate Change on Water Resources

This symposium will address the effects of climate change on freshwater systems throughout New Jersey and the surrounding region.

WHEN: April 15, 2008, 8:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

WHERE: Rutgers Student Center, 126 College Ave., New Brunswick, NJ

For more information and to register, please visit <http://climatechange.rutgers.edu>.

Lunch will be provided, and registration is free, but seating is limited. To attend, please register by March 31st.

RUTGERS
THE STATE UNIVERSITY
OF NEW JERSEY

School of Environmental and Biological Sciences and New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station
SEBS.RUTGERS.EDU • EXECDEANAGRICULTURE.RUTGERS.EDU • NJAES.RUTGERS.EDU