

A MESSAGE FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DEAN
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

June 2008

Spotlight on...Re-glazing a Greenhouse to Go Green

There are many old lapped glass greenhouses remaining in use throughout New Jersey, but these greenhouses present a number of problems. Slipped glass, high energy costs, and drips washing out seedling trays have moved many owners to consider costly replacement or even abandonment.



At Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, an old greenhouse on the G. H. Cook Campus used by turf breeders



sorely needed re-glazing. It was debated whether to reset the original glass, re-glaze with a double-wall plastic panel, or demolish the greenhouse. There were many factors to be weighed: costs of the project, energy conservation, maintenance issues with glass vs. plastic, and overall life expectancy. After calculating how much time it would take to clean, caulk, and reset the glass, it was decided that the glass would be re-glazed with 8-mm polycarbonate. All work was performed by Rutgers' fabrication shop and greenhouse crew to reduce expenses.

Experiment station staff made sure the greenhouse structure was in good shape and that the heating and cooling systems were in working order before starting. A re-glaze is an investment lasting at least 10 years, and these components need to function for that long. If old wood glazing bars remain in good condition, they can be painted and reused to support the new glazing system's aluminum extrusions. This was done for the re-glazing project, which further reduced costs.



Through hard work and a little ingenuity, the greenhouse staff were able to save the greenhouse from demolition, and the result is a leak-proof, draft-free greenhouse and a substantial savings in energy use (approximately 30%).

Faculty and Staff Activities and Accomplishments

Laura Bovitz (Middlesex County 4-H agent) has been selected as a 2008 4-H Families Count: Family Strengthening Award winner for the Project GIFT program. This prestigious national award will be presented at the Galaxy Conference in September. With this recognition comes a \$15,000 cash award to further programming efforts. This award is jointly sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation through National 4-H Council.



Several members of the ARMA faculty and staff will be recognized for their outstanding educational materials at the National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA) Annual Meeting and Professional Improvement Conference in mid-July. In the 11 categories entered in the Communications Awards Program, 10 regional and national awards were earned by ARMA faculty and staff. All 10 placed first in the Northeast Region, three then moved on to become national finalists, and one was the national winner. The following list indicates only principal investigators.

- Published Photo and Caption: **W. Hlubik**, national finalist for "Lights, Camera: You Need to be Ready When the Press Comes Calling after a Produce-Borne Illness Outbreak"
- Slide Set or Computer Generated Graphics Presentation: **W. Hlubik**, national winner for "Wanted: Asian Longhorned Beetle"
- Program Promotional Piece: **S. Komar**, national finalist for "Marketing Meat Goats in New Jersey"
- Personal Column: **W. Hlubik**, regional finalist for "There's a New Bug in Town – Don't Invite It into Your Home" and "Getting an Early Start – Tips for Early Tomatoes"
- Feature Story: **R. Samulis**, regional finalist for "Rooted Cuttings, a Cranberry Planting Innovation"
- Individual Newsletter: **M. Cumming**, regional finalist for Clippings: A Journal of the Master Gardeners of Gloucester County"
- Team Newsletter: **W. Bamka**, regional finalist for "Acres Today"
- Video Tape/Television: **W. Hlubik**, national finalist for "Wanted – Asian Longhorned Beetle"
- Publication: **G. Flimlin**, regional finalist for "Aquaculture Situation and Outlook Report 2007: New Jersey"
- Learn Module/Notebook: **W. Kline**, regional finalist for "Developing a Plan for Third-Party Audits"

Lou Cooperhouse (Rutgers NJAES Food Innovation Center) has been elected to serve a three-year term on the Board of Directors of the National Business Incubation Association (NBIA). NBIA—a private, nonprofit membership organization based in Athens, Ohio—is the world's leading organization advancing business incubation and entrepreneurship. An elected board of directors, representing the world's leading incubators, governs the association.

The Barnegat Bay Shellfish Restoration and ReClam the Bay programs were the recipient of the Governor's Tourism Award on April 10 at the Governor's Conference on Tourism. The award was given for the overall accomplishments of the Barnegat Bay Shellfish Restoration Program and its volunteer arm ReClam the Bay, as well as the "Clam Trail" educational scavenger hunt. Ocean County Resource Management Agents **Gef Flimlin** and **Cara Muscio** run the Barnegat Bay Shellfish Restoration Program in conjunction with ReClam the Bay and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Shellfisheries. The program uses clams and oysters as a teaching tool to get both residents and tourists to learn about and become more active in protecting the health of the coastal environment.



Grants

Bill Hallman (Rutgers NJAES Food Policy Institute), **Beverly Tepper** (Food Science), **Rick Ludescher** (Food Science), **Cara Cuite** (FPI), **Mary Nucci** (FPI), and **Dietram Scheufele** (University of Wisconsin) have received a USDA CSREES National Research Initiative grant for "Food Nanotechnology: Understanding the Parameters of Consumer Acceptance." The proposal has been approved for full funding (\$200,000) beginning in September 2008.

Sharon Kinsey (Camden County 4-H agent) received \$600 in Jersey Fresh funds from the New Jersey Department of Agriculture for their 50th Anniversary 4-H Fair Yearbook, to be debuted at the August 1–3 county fair and "A Day at the Farm" exhibit, which will inform and educate fair visitors about the importance of agriculture.

James Nichnadowicz (Union County 4-H agent) received \$9,873 in funding for the 2008 Union County 4-H Summer Science Program from the Schering-Plough Corporation.

Chad Ripberger (Mercer County 4-H agent) received \$5,390 from the Princeton Area Community Foundation, Dorothy Katz Reading and Recreation Fund, for 4-H Afterschool Adventure's horse program in collaboration with the Mercer County Equestrian Center.

Cesar Rodriguez-Saona (PI), **Dean Polk** (IPM agent), **Peter Oudemans** (associate professor), **Gary Pavlis** (Atlantic County Agricultural agent), **Brad Majek** (specialist in weed science), K. Demchak, J. Harper, and A. DeMarsay received \$180,000 from USDA-SARE for "Spatially Based Whole-Farm Integrated Crop Management (ICM) Systems for Northeast Highbush Blueberry Production."

Cesar Rodriguez-Saona (PI) and **Dean Polk** received an \$18,000 IR-4 biopesticide grant for "Flowable SPLAT OB for mating disruption of the oriental beetle."

Conference, Seminars, and Other Events

Rutgers conducted a three-day food science workshop for middle- and high-school science teachers from June 23 through June 25 at Gloucester County College. The workshop, which provided 18 professional development units, focused on food science as an academic discipline, as well as career opportunities available within the food industry. Workshop topics included food chemistry, food microbiology, food product development, sensory aspects of food, and food engineering.

Nicholas Polanin, Somerset County agricultural agent, facilitated the first of three regional Master Gardener Helpline/Advanced Training sessions, held in the Freehold, Monmouth County RCE office. More than 100 Master Gardener volunteers were in attendance for the full-day session, which included presentations by **Richard Buckley** and **Sabrina Tirpak**, Rutgers Plant Diagnostic Lab; **Peter Nitzsche**, Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension in Morris County; and **Pedro Perdomo**, director of regulatory and government affairs for the Cleary Chemical Co.



Under the director of **Joel Flagler**, Bergen County agricultural agent, Rutgers Master Gardeners of Bergen County joined the County Executive, Dennis McNerney, in a streamside stabilization planting along the Van Saun Creek in Paramus, NJ, on April 18. The event marked the official county celebration of Earth Day, and 250 trees were planted. The Bergen County Environmental Council (BCEC) hosted and coordinated the annual event. Flagler, a charter member of the BCEC, demonstrated planting techniques to the 53 volunteers. In addition to the Master Gardeners, there were volunteers from local corporations and service organizations such as Genzyme International, Rotary, and the League of Woman Voters.

Nicholas Polanin, Somerset County agricultural and resource management agent, was the invited keynote speaker at the 163rd Annual Meeting of the New Jersey Historical Society (NJHS), held April 24 in Newark. The presentation covered community gardening, the value of urban forestry efforts, the Jersey Fresh promotional effort, and general information on Rutgers and NJAES. An evening reception followed for the opening of the new exhibit, "Feast Your Eyes—The Unexpected Beauty of Vegetable Gardens," a traveling exhibit from the Smithsonian Institute. A companion exhibit, "Community Gardening in New Jersey," is also being exhibited until the end of October 2008. This companion display is a collaborative effort between the NJHS, NJAES, and Rutgers University. NJAES collaborators included **Mark Robson**, director of NJAES; **Barbara Bromley**, Mercer County horticulturist; Bruce Crawford, director, Rutgers Gardens; **Bill Hlubik**, Middlesex County agricultural agent; **Peter Nitzsche**, Morris County agricultural agent; **Bill Sciarappa**, Monmouth County agricultural agent, and **Nicholas Polanin**, as well as Bonita Craft and Ron Becker (Rutgers Library). More information on this exhibit and available viewing hours at the NJ Historical Society's Newark office is available online at www.jerseyhistory.org.

FYI

Future Trends in Nursery Production: Using Natural Mycorrhizae, A Hands-On Experience

WHEN: 6/25/2008, 5:00 p.m.–8:15 p.m.

WHERE: Cooperative Extension of Cumberland County Office, 291 Morton Ave., Millville

CONTACT: Carl Nordstrom, njnla1@aol.com, 609-291-7070

Twilight Sustainable Tree Fruit and Wine Grape Research Tour and Demonstrations

WHEN: 6/26/2008, 4:15 p.m.–8:00 p.m.

WHERE: Rutgers Agricultural Research and Extension Center, 121 Northville Rd., Upper Deerfield

CONTACT: Jessica Fisher or Jerome Frecon, 856 307-6450, ext. 1

Cumberland County Fair

WHEN: June 30–July 5

WHERE: Cumberland County Fairgrounds, Millville

For more information: www.cumberlandcofair.com

Ocean County Fair

WHEN: July 8–13

WHERE: Robert J. Miller Air Park, Route 530, Berkeley Township

For more information: www.oceancountyfair.com



Rutgers Gardens' Farmers Market launches off Route 1

By Mary Jo Patterson



For five years, maybe more, people talked about starting a Rutgers farmers market. It seemed like a natural for a university once associated with the world's most famous tomato. The timing also felt right, given the popularity of urban farm markets and the rise of "locovores," people looking to eat locally grown food.

But the idea never got off the ground until this year, when food science major Paul Valetutti, a 25-year-old former chef who describes himself as "passionate about food," took on the job as a cooperative education project. On May 23, after months of planning and collaboration, the weekly farmers market at Rutgers Gardens opened for business off Ryders Lane, with a half dozen vendors offering New Jersey-grown or New Jersey-made products, from strawberries to cheese and chicken pot pies.

More vendors are expected as the growing season progresses. The market also promises to integrate town, gown, and food producers: Area restaurants have promised to shop at the market, Rutgers Dining Services has made a commitment to buy unsold produce, and there are plans for restaurant chefs to do cooking demonstrations on site. A wide array of fresh produce, including crates of strawberries, from local growers is available at Rutgers Gardens' Farmers Market.



The farmers market will run every Friday from 2 to 6 p.m. until October 31. Valetutti and other organizers hope it will become a community institution, and are looking for sponsors.

"There's always a risk with a new venture, but we got a good response as soon as we started promoting it," said Bruce Crawford, director of [Rutgers Gardens](#) and Valetutti's supervisor. It was Crawford who suggested the market be staged on the edge of the 180-acre botanic garden, just east of Route 1. His hope is that it will draw commuters and others from outside the university community. While the location is inconvenient for students, a bus route may be set up to accommodate them, he said.

The market actually got its start last winter when Valetutti learned that the university was looking for a student to get the project off the ground. He was not unfamiliar with food marketing, having worked in his family's cured meats and sausage business in New York City, Salumeria Biellese. He signed on, earning an extra credit during the spring semester and \$10 an hour. Only later did he realize how much work was involved.

"It was really like starting a business," said Valetutti, who enrolled at Rutgers last fall to study food science and culinology. After high school in Bergen County, he studied engineering at Boston University. Later he moved to Arizona, where he worked as a chef while attending Arizona State part time.

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Valetutti networked with others who had started successful farmers markets, including a Princeton University senior who had started one on her campus the year before. He used family connections to learn more, and he reached out to potential farmers and vendors.

“We wanted to stay within a 30-mile radius, but we found out that most of the farms within that radius have closed,” Valetutti said. He did find one – the Giamarese Farm in East Brunswick, a family-owned farm since the 1940s.

Jim Giamarese was interested, as was a second grower. Other vendors who showed interest included Valley Shepherd Creamery in Long Valley, Griggstown Quail Farm, Readington Buffalo Farm, the Village Bakery in Lawrenceville, the Cook College student organic farm, and A Taste of Rubies, an internet-based cheesecake business in New Brunswick.

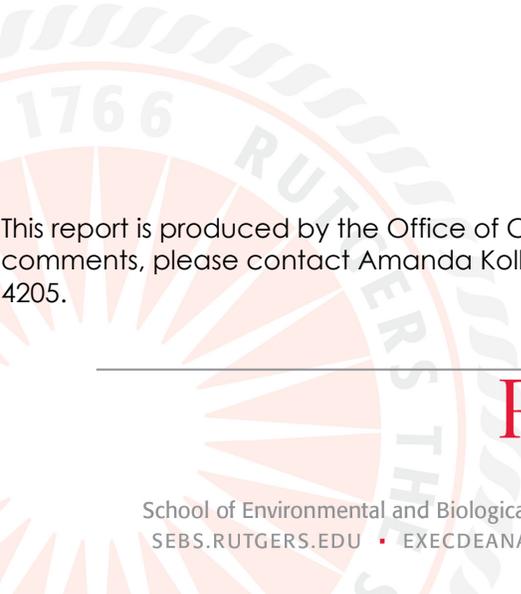
At that point, Valetutti had the beginnings of a market. But when should it run? Weekdays weren’t a great idea, and the area was saturated with Saturday markets.

“We decided to do our market on Friday because that’s what the farmers wanted,” Valetutti said. Highland Park, just across the Raritan River, also has a Friday farmers market, but Valetutti did not think the two would be in direct competition.

A dizzying number of formalities remained. The market required permits, insurance, a public safety official, a portable john, and a hand-washing station. Lacking an advertising budget, Valetutti also had to get the word out with banners and flyers.

Opening day went smoothly, with a fair amount of traffic. Among the visitors was East Brunswick resident Joel Kopel, who came with his daughter, Dana, an undergraduate at New York University. Kopel eyed the leafy greens stacked on a shelf and asked the farmer where they had been grown.

It was exactly the kind of exchange Valetutti had hoped for. “Part of our purpose will be educating people about food,” he said.



This report is produced by the Office of Communications. For information or to provide comments, please contact Amanda Kolling at kolling@njaes.rutgers.edu or 732-932-7000, ext. 4205.

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