Spotlight on Launch of NB Community Farmers Market

On July 10, the vacant lot at 178 Jones Avenue on the border of the George H. Cook Campus was transformed into the vibrant New Brunswick Community Farmers Market, which was officially declared open with a public ribbon-cutting ceremony. The market is operated by Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences and the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, thanks to a generous grant from Johnson and Johnson and with the support of the city of New Brunswick.

Executive Dean of Agriculture and Natural Resources Robert Goodman, who served as MC at the opening ceremony, welcomed Rutgers President Richard McCormick, Worldwide Chairman, Johnson & Johnson Consumer Group Colleen Goggins, New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Douglas Fisher, Mid-Atlantic Regional Administrator, USDA Food and Nutrition Service Yvette Jackson, District 17 Assemblyman Upendra Chivukula, and Middlesex County Freeholder Ronald Rios to the official launch ceremony.

Citing current USDA figures that show there are more than 4,600 farmers markets operating throughout the United States, with 130 farmers markets operating in New Jersey, Goodman told the crowd, “Farmers markets have become a vital part of the urban landscape and will continue to rise in popularity as consumers clamor for fresh, locally grown products direct from the farm.” With the opening of this new venture, Rutgers currently operates two farmers markets, both in the city of New Brunswick. In 2008, the Rutgers Gardens’ Farmers Market on Ryders Lane was launched as a partnership between the university and the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, under the leadership of Bruce Crawford, manager of the Rutgers Gardens.

![Cutting the ribbon at the opening of the New Brunswick Community Farmers Markets, from left to right, are Upendra Chivukula, Ronald Rios, Douglas Fisher, Richard L. McCormick, Colleen Goggins, Robert Goodman, and Yvette Jackson](image-url)
New Brunswick is home to the largest of Rutgers three campuses and has been a strong partner in the university’s growing urban experiment station initiative. In addition to being home to the two Rutgers-operated farmers markets that will bring fresh produce to neighborhood residents, New Brunswick is also home to the newest 4-H club launched by Rutgers in May this year. Both farmers markets are part of the mission of the university’s Rutgers Against Hunger initiative, which was established by President Richard L. McCormick last fall to address the issues of hunger and food scarcity through education, research and civic engagement.

At the opening ceremony of this latest farmers market, Goodman praised Rutgers’ long and beneficial relationship with the US Department of Agriculture, which funds the Expanded Food Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) administered by Rutgers Cooperative Extension. EFNEP is a critical program that assists families of limited means to improve their eating behaviors through focused nutrition education. The opening of the New Brunswick Community Farmers Market, which will serve the growing Mexican-American population in New Brunswick, continues that tradition of promoting nutrition and health in our inner cities.

William Hallman, director of the Food Policy Institute, was widely praised at the ceremony for spearheading Rutgers’ effort to create this newest farmers market that offers residents ready access to a variety of nutritious fresh produce. In an earlier statement, Hallman said, “It will be a place where people can buy both familiar “Jersey Fresh” fruits and vegetables as well as more exotic produce essential to the diverse cuisines enjoyed by city residents. It will also be a family-friendly gathering place for the community, where local farmers, artisans, and craftspeople can sell their goods, and a place where people can taste new foods, learn new recipes, and buy the ingredients to make them at home.” The market will be served by all Middlesex County farmers offering fresh produce and local vendors selling baked goods and crafts.

Through the extensive outreach services offered by the experiment station and Rutgers Cooperative Extension, the market also offers nutrition counseling, advice on food budgeting and food safety, conducted in both Spanish and English, along with on-site food preparation and activities for children.

The New Brunswick Community Farmers Market opens on Tuesdays from noon to 5 p.m. and Fridays from 2 to 7 p.m. through September. The market accepts SNAP (Food Stamps), WIC, and coupons from the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP).

The Rutgers Gardens’ Farmers Market, located at 112 Ryders Lane, New Brunswick, NJ, opens every Friday from 1 to 6 p.m. through the end of October.
Spotlight on NJAES Extension Farm Summer Internship Program

The NJAES Field Research & Extension Farms Paid Undergrad Summer Internships was reinvigorated in 2006, although over the preceding decades, there has been some form of farm internship experience available to students at Rutgers. The current program and its previous iterations offer life-changing summer research and extension farm work experience for undergraduates at NJAES extension farms.

According to NJAES Associate Director of Farm Programs Jack Rabin, “John Grande (director, Snyder Research and Extension Farm), Andy Wyenandt (extension specialist in Vegetable Pathology) and I reflected how some of the outstanding agricultural scientists of our generation, and many others in varied fields, in fact got their life-changing, experiential push forward with meaningful, paid summer experiences, and we felt the farm internship program needed to be revitalized.”

Also open to non-Rutgers students, the program places interns at the Snyder Research and Extension Farm, in Pittstown, Hunterdon County, the Rutgers Agricultural Research & Extension Center (RAREC) in Upper Deerfield, Cumberland County, or the Philip E. Marucci Blueberry & Cranberry Research & Extension Center in Chatsworth, Burlington County. Extension farm staff ensures that the interns are integrated into the complexities of the workplace while they gain valuable experience for their educational and career goals.

The internship program has a promising track record of training students who have developed outstanding careers in agriculture and related fields. The restructured program has grown, from the one applicant it attracted and placed at the Snyder Farm in 2006, to the nine, high quality applicants for summer 2009.

The internship program has been actively supported and funded by Executive Dean of Agriculture and Natural Resources Robert Goodman, Dean of Agricultural and Urban Programs Mark Robson, and Dean of Academic Programs Jerry Kukor.

The current 2009 Snyder Farm interns L-R: Eli Holvey-Slifer, incoming Rutgers student; Shanon Eide (graduate, Rutgers Class of 2009), Megan Muehlbauer, junior at Rutgers; Elizabeth Cichonski, sophomore at Lehigh Univ.; Colin O’Such, Delaware Valley HS; Samantha Massa, sophomore Virginia Tech; and Scott Sakos, sophomore at Pennsylvania College of Technology.
Outreach Efforts: Public/Community Service

The recently published Rutgers NJAES Master Gardener Program Annual Report contains information on the efforts and accomplishments of the program for 2008. Highlights include: 18 county-based programs trained 391 new Master Gardener interns during the year. A total of 2,281 Certified Master Gardeners volunteered 142,111 hours during the year, a value of over $3.4 million. Since the establishment of the Master Gardeners Program in 1984, it has trained 5,832 residents who have provided 1.36 million volunteer hours, valued at over $21 million. The annual report offers additional information on statewide and local activities, accomplishments, and impacts of the Rutgers NJAES Master Gardener Program. Nicholas Polanin (Somerset County agricultural and resource management agent) serves as Master Gardener Program coordinator.

Farmers Against Hunger Service Initiative
Four incoming students to the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences and one recent graduate were among 30 Rutgers students who devoted several hours on June 28 to plant pepper and tomato plants as part of a Farmers Against Hunger (FAH) initiative at Giamarese Farm in East Brunswick. This service opportunity is part of Leadership Quest, a four-day leadership program run by Rutgers Student Life. According to Judy Grignon, Program Director for FAH, “this is part of an ongoing relationship with Rutgers, but this year, for the first time, the students are actually planting and maintaining this ½ acre field, whereas in previous years, farmers have called us to harvest previously planted crops.” Over 1,000 pepper plants were purchased from Kube Pak of Allentown, NJ, while several hundred tomato plants were donated by Jim Giamarese, who played a key role in getting FAH off the ground in 1996.

Uta Krogmann (extension specialist, solid waste management) assists multiple municipalities and the agricultural community in addressing various recycling issues. For example, mixed glass cullet (crushed broken recycled glass containers) is stockpiled uncovered before being used as roadway construction aggregate or as drainage layer or daily cover in landfills. When rain percolates through these stockpiles, they release runoff. Krogmann, in collaboration with Peter Strom and Ching-Ling Tsai (Environmental Sciences), developed recommendations for the storage of glass cullet to assist recycling companies and municipalities in New Jersey in reducing runoff from glass cullet stockpiles. The team also helps the state to assess runoff from stockpiles of other materials. Tsai is also researching a glass container mass balance for the state and its associated energy consumption, to inform future waste management policy decisions.
**Mike Haberland** (Burlington County environmental and resource management agent) teamed with the Camden County Soil Conservation District to install wetlands plants in the basin bottom of the Surry Place detention basin in Cherry Hill. This will enhance storm water detention, filtration of pollutants, and increase infiltration of runoff into the ground. In addition, Haberland teamed with **Rebecca Szkotak** (Camden County agricultural program assistant), **Mary Cummings** (Gloucester County agricultural program associate), five members from the Camden and Gloucester Soil Conservation districts, and five Watershed Project managers from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, to install wetland plants in a basin bottom at Atkinson Park, Washington Township.

As part of RCE’s continued collaboration with the NJ Environmental Federation, NJ Department of Environmental Protection, and others, to develop and conduct IPM trainings focusing on the landscape and turf component for school district IPM programs, **William Hlubik** (Middlesex County agricultural and resource management agent) and **Richard Weidman** (Middlesex County agriculture associate) presented two sessions in Jackson and Piscataway, NJ.

RCE of Bergen County completed its pilot program of a brand new Horticultural Therapy and Life Skills Training Program for the Garfield Middle School. This new $53 million school includes a greenhouse and craft classroom and several life skills labs. **Joel Flagler** (Bergen County agricultural agent) designed and delivered the horticulture program for the school’s developmentally disabled students. **Tamara Pellien** (Bergen 4-H program associate) designed and delivered the life skills training for non-disabled students.

**Mark Your Calendar!**

County Fairs continue for the month of August. Visit the 4-H website for a schedule of a remaining County Fair near you!

**Tomato and Peach Tasting and Vegetable Integrated Crop Management Twilight Meeting**

**WHEN:** Tuesday, August 18, 4:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

**WHERE:** Rutgers Agricultural Research and Extension Center, Bridgeton, NJ

**WHAT:** Tomato and Peach Tasting will be held from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., with the Vegetable Integrated Crop Management Educational Tour beginning at 6:00 p.m.

**MORE INFO:** Contact Michelle Casella, 856-307-6450, ext.1 or view the attached brochure.

**19th Annual Great Tomato Tasting**

**WHEN:** Wednesday, August 26 at 3:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** Snyder Farm, 140 Locust Grove Road, Pittstown, NJ

**WHAT:** The annual Snyder Farm Open House and Great Tomato Tasting

**MORE INFO:** Contact Pat Lobb at 908-713-8980, lobb@njaes.rutgers.edu or visit the event page.

This report is produced by the Office of Communications. For information or to provide comments, please contact Paula Walcott-Quintin at quintin@aesop.rutgers.edu or 732-932-7000, ext. 4204.