

EXECUTIVE DEAN
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
May 2011

Rutgers Launches National Farm Program "Annie's Project"

Business Program Helps Women Farmers Succeed

Rutgers Cooperative Extension launched the nationally acclaimed farm business educational program, *Annie's Project*, to benefit women farmers in New Jersey. *Annie's Project*, a six-week risk management educational program that began in the Midwest and spread throughout the country, is based on a real farm woman, Annette Fleck, who spent her lifetime learning how to be an involved business partner with her farm husband. The program was created by her daughter, Ruth Hambleton, who became a Cooperative Extension educator in Illinois.

Women farmers received the first New Jersey training in Cape May County in southern New



Annie's Project participant Carol Przewozny on her livestock farm near Glen Gardner, NJ. Photo credit: Nick Romanenko.

Jersey starting on February 10; northern New Jersey training began on February 22 in Hackettstown. *Annie's Project* takes Annie's farm management experiences and shares them with farm women living and working in the highly complex business of farming. The course, tailored to meet the needs of New Jersey women farmers, evolved out of two focus group meetings with female farmers in Sussex and Hunterdon counties in 2010, to determine what local women in agriculture-related businesses wanted to know.

According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, women operate 22% of the 10,327 farms in New Jersey. However, the average size of female

operated farms is only 29 acres and the average market value of products sold is only \$22,170 annually, compared to the New Jersey farm average of \$95,564.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension faculty **Robin Brumfield** (extension specialist in farm financial management), in cooperation with agricultural and resource management agents **Steve Komar** (Sussex County), **Bob Mickel** (Hunterdon County), and **Jenny Carleo** (Cape May County) facilitated the New Jersey programs.

Funding for *Annie's Project* in New Jersey was provided by the Northeast Center for Risk Management Education, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Farm Credit East, New Jersey Farm Bureau and Rutgers Cooperative Extension. Cooperating agencies include Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; the U.S. Department of Agriculture; USDA's Farm Service Agency; New Jersey Farm Bureau; Farm Credit East; New Jersey Department of Agriculture; and county Boards of Chosen Freeholders.

Read the Gloucester County Times [article](#). A Rutgers Focus article is available [here](#).



Spotlights

Jersey Jems™ Grape Tomato: Production and Marketing Opportunities for NJ Farms

One of New Jersey's major crops, fresh market, round red tomatoes, has lost market share to



other tomato categories such as grape tomatoes. Some New Jersey growers have started growing and marketing grape tomatoes but have found it difficult to compete with imported grape tomatoes from a variety of sources. One strategy for a competitive advantage is to grow a premium product and market it with an identifiable label or brand. Through field trials and consumer tastings, a team led by **Peter Nitzsche** (agricultural and resource management agent, Morris County), **Jack Rabin**, associate director - Farm Programs, Rutgers NJAES), and **Thomas Orton** (extension specialist in vegetables) has identified grape tomato varieties with flavors preferred by consumers. The team has developed and trademarked an identifiable brand name

and logo called Jersey Jems™. Grower cooperators continue to produce the select grape tomato varieties and test-market the brand through wholesale and retail channels.

Rutgers Scientists Study Seagrass Bed – an important fish and shellfish habitat

The seagrass bed in Barnegat Bay is an important habitat for fish and shellfish. The increasing



Seagrass bed shows signs of scarring from boat propeller. Photo credit: Scott Haag

turbidity and an overall degradation of the bay's water quality due to over-enrichment of nutrients from watershed runoff and atmospheric deposition has led to algal blooms, seriously affecting the health of the bay. Findings of a recent study, led by Rutgers scientist **Richard Lathrop Jr.** (director of the Rutgers Center for Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis), were presented on May 12 at the Barnegat Bay State of the Bay Conference at Ocean County College, in Toms River, New Jersey. "One of the Bay's key resources that has suffered in recent years is the bay's seagrass beds. These beds serve as habitat and food source for fish, shellfish, crabs and seabirds and are sensitive indicators of the overall health of the Bay," explains Lathrop. For the study, Lathrop collaborated with Scott Haag, formerly with the Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve, using boats along the bay in addition to conducting surveys using aerial photography during the summer of 2009 to assess the status and trends of Barnegat Bay's seagrass beds. The conference was hosted by the Barnegat Bay Partnership, a

partnership of federal, state, municipal, academic, business and private organizations working to restore and enhance the Barnegat Bay ecosystem. The partnership is one of 28 National Estuary Programs throughout the United States and is administered by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. [Read more.](#)



Spotlights

Promoting Equine Science at Rutgers and in New Jersey

Karyn Malinowski (director, Rutgers Equine Science Center and a faculty member in the Department of Animal Sciences) donated \$100,000 to the center in support of the equine program and the state's equine industry. Malinowski was central to the development of the



Rutgers equine studies program and considers it a privilege to be able to support a program so near and dear to her heart. The center produced the 2007 Economic Impact Study of New Jersey's horse industry and it continues to be widely referenced by politicians and equine advocates as New Jersey deliberates the future of horse racing, which is the economic driving engine of the entire equine industry in the state. The center, a unit of NJAES, holds a unique position within the equine industry, Malinowski said. It broadens the scope of what equine science could potentially do beyond the research of the animal science department by bringing together the talent and expertise of people professionally outside of the industry, who are equally

passionate about horses. Center research projects often utilize multi-departmental, interdisciplinary, and inter-institutional teams of faculty and staff which result in measurable outcomes. [Read more.](#)

NJAES' 35th Annual Home Gardeners School

Over 700 gardeners participated in the 35th Annual [Home Gardeners School](#) that took place on March 19. Hosted by the **Office of Continuing Professional Education (OCPE)**, the one-day event



Monica McLaughlin (Rutgers Gardens horticulturist) instructs participants about succulents and cacti. Photo credit: **Rebecca Sheil Rathmill**, OCPE.

featured thirty-five workshops covering a variety of topics related to gardening and landscaping to help novices and Master Gardeners prepare for the 2011 growing season. Lectures included topics like container gardening, tree care, organic lawn care and edible plants for the landscape. There were 18 new topics offered this year, including "How to Become a Master Gardener," "'Uh-oh!' Plants," "Composting: As the Worm Turns," "Herb Growing, Harvesting and Storage," and "Landscape Weed ID & Control." Attendees also had the opportunity to attend a lunch-time keynote talk, "Best management practices for fertilizer use: It's the law in New Jersey!" presented by **James Murphy** (extension specialist, Plant Biology and

Pathology). The event featured speakers from the OCPE's commercial horticulture and landscape design programs, along with **Rutgers Cooperative Extension** and **School of Environmental and Biological Sciences** faculty and staff.



Faculty and Staff Activities and Accomplishments

George Hamilton (extension specialist and chair, Entomology), **Gerald Ghidiu** (extension specialist in vegetable entomology, Rutgers Agricultural Research and Extension Center - RAREC) and colleagues G. Dively, C. Hooks, T. Kuhar and J. Whalen were awarded \$135,000 by the USDA NE IPM Competitive Grants Program for "Development of management strategies targeting the brown marmorated stink bug, *Halyomorpha halys*, in pepper."

Cesar Rodriguez-Saona (extension specialist, Entomology) was invited to present "The use of pheromones in integrated pest management, with emphasis on blueberries," at the Universidad Nacional Agraria, La Molin, in Lima, Perú.

Albrecht Koppenhöfer (Entomology) and **Olga Kostromytska** (post doc associate, Entomology) were awarded \$90,000 for "Annual bluegrass weevil IPM: Plant resistance-tolerance and semiochemicals for monitoring and management" by the Center for Turfgrass Science.

Outreach Efforts: Public/Community Service

New Jersey Fertilizer Law Guide for Home Owners

Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station has created a comprehensive [website](#) for home owners seeking information on how the New Jersey fertilizer law may affect them. The website provides a number of tools for the home owner to calculate how much fertilizer is needed and to calibrate their fertilizer spreaders. In January 2011, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie signed the [fertilizer law](#) that impacts the entire state of New Jersey by establishing standards for certain fertilizer applications, requiring certification of professional fertilizer applicators, and regulating the labeling and sale of certain fertilizers. Quick facts are available at <http://snyderfarm.rutgers.edu/quickfacts.html>.



First Annual Master Gardeners Day at Giamarese Farm

Giamarese Farm in East Brunswick, NJ, was the site of the first Annual Master Gardeners Day held by the Middlesex County volunteers, who answered questions about growing and maintaining flowers and vegetables at the farm's market. Regular visitors to the Giamarese farm market were also treated to a rain barrel display, demonstrating the facility of harvesting rainwater from your roof. Rain barrels not only conserve water, but save money, reduce runoff, and protect valuable landscape. The Master Gardeners also provided fact sheets on stink bugs, deer resistant plants, ground hogs, flowers and other topics for gardeners. Owners Jim and Sue Giamarese invited the county Master Gardeners to provide area residents and shoppers with valuable information on how to grow produce in their own gardens. [Read more.](#)



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Mark Your Calendars!

Rutgers Gardens Farmers Market



WHEN: Open every Friday, from May to October, noon–5 p.m.

WHERE: 112 Ryders Lane, New Brunswick, NJ.

New vendors at this year's Farmers Market include A-mazing Roast - fresh squeezed lemonade; Beechtree Farms - grassfed beef, lamb, pork and chicken; Fontanarosa's Gourmet Specialty Foods - fresh pasta and sauces; Gourmet Nuts and Dried Fruits; and Kelly Bakes Me Happy – cookies, pies, and cakes.

MORE INFO: Visit <http://nbcfarmersmarket.org/default.asp>.

New Brunswick Community Farmers Market

WHEN: Open from June–October; Thursdays from 1–6:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m.–3 p.m.

WHERE: 178 Jones Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ.

MORE INFO: Visit <http://nbcfarmersmarket.org/default.asp>.

Twilight Wine Grape Growers Meeting in Southern New Jersey

WHEN: May 31, 2011, 6–9 p.m.

WHERE: Silver Decoy Winery, Hightstown, NJ.

WHAT: Sponsored by the Garden State Wine Grape Association and Silver Decoy Winery.

MORE INFO: Contact Meredith Melendez at 609-989-6830.

Twilight Wine Grape Growers Meeting in Northern New Jersey

WHEN: June 1, 2011, 6–9:30 p.m.

WHERE: Valenzano Winery, 1090 Route 206, Shamong, NJ.

WHAT: Sponsored by the Garden State Wine Grape Association and Valenzano Winery.

MORE INFO: Contact Jerome Frecon at 856-307-6450.

Turf Pest Problems

WHEN: June 7, 2011, 9 a.m. to noon.

WHERE: RCE Cumberland County, 291 Morton Avenue, Rosenhayn, NJ.

MORE INFO: Contact Viola Carson at 856-451-2800, ext. 4.

Twilight Cranberry Growers Meeting

WHEN: June 16, 2011, 6–9 p.m.

WHERE: Dutchtown Farms (Fred Miller's farm), Atsion Road, Shamong, NJ.

MORE INFO: Contact Ray Samulis at 609-265-5050.

This report is produced by the Office of Communications and is available online at <http://execdeanagriculture.rutgers.edu/boa/>.

For information or to provide comments, please contact Paula Walcott-Quintin at quintin@aesop.rutgers.edu or 732-932-7000, ext. 4204.



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