

EXECUTIVE DEAN
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
August 2011

New Jersey Agricultural Leadership Development Program

On June 22, the **New Jersey Agricultural Leadership Development Program** (NJALDP) held its graduation exercises for its eighth class at the Rutgers EcoComplex in Bordentown, NJ. One of 40 national programs and a handful of international programs in Canada and Australia, the New Jersey ag leadership program is co-sponsored by the New Jersey Farm Bureau, New Jersey Department of Agriculture, New Jersey Agricultural Society, and Rutgers **New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station** (NJAES). A professional development program, it provides educational programming for farmers and others in ag-related businesses designed to train them to become informed, articulate leaders who can advance New Jersey's agricultural industry.

Each participant attends a two-year program that involves developing skills in communication, public speaking, team building, management, and marketing. In addition, participants are exposed to issues affecting agriculture, such as water, land use, and energy.

Tours of New Jersey, Washington D.C., and a week spent abroad enhance the participants' understanding of agricultural infrastructure, state and federal government, agricultural economics, and effects of globalization on agriculture and the U.S. economy. Each class goes on one international excursion that exposes New Jersey ag leadership students to agriculture and other industries in countries including Italy, Costa Rica, Belgium, Spain, Panama, Germany, and the Netherlands. The graduates of the eight class spent a week in Chile.



NJALDP graduates at the Rutgers EcoComplex in June. Seated, L-R, are President, New Jersey Agricultural Society William Griffin; New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Douglas Fisher; Executive Dean of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Rutgers **Robert M. Goodman**; President, New Jersey Farm Bureau Rich Niewenhaus. Standing in the first row, at left, is **Mary Nikola**, director of NJALDP. Photo credit: **Jack Rabin**, associate director, NJAES Farm Programs.

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Establishing Creative Alliances to Expand Reach of Agriculture

To date, the program has close to 180 graduates says **Mary Nikola**, NJALDP director. The class that graduated in June of this year is its eighth over the 18 years of the program's existence. She has seen first-hand the far-reaching impacts of the program and many of the program graduates have gone on to hold leadership positions on various New Jersey boards of agriculture and other agencies.

One such graduate who has become a seasoned public speaker is Meredith Compton, current vice president of the **Rutgers NJAES Board of Managers**. A former tree fruit IPM Program



NJALDP members touring a livestock operation in Italy

Associate with Rutgers NJAES, and current co-owner with her husband Jeremy of Peaceful Valley Orchards in Pittstown, NJ, Compton learned more about state government and how it affects her business. "Thanks to the ag leadership program, I learned how to effectively communicate with legislators and I regularly invite them to events at the farm to give them first-hand exposure to what we do."

The connections made through the program have brought closer ties with the conservation community in New Jersey. John Parke, stewardship project director for the Conservation Department of the [New Jersey Audubon Society](#), was asked to be a speaker



A NJALDP class observes oyster seeding bed in Barnegat Bay, New Jersey

for the ag leadership program; he enrolled in the next year's class! Since then, the alliance between ag and conservationists in New Jersey has been boosted by the society's initiatives, including use of local product for birdseed and bird feeder production. Parke's participation in NJALDP helped additional farmers enlist in the program and receive *Jersey Grown* certifications, which, in turn, opened the door for new opportunities for farmers and the society to collaborate on projects.

Parke admits that the biggest impact NJALDP had on him goes beyond any specific project. "I have gained much knowledge and insight on all types of New Jersey agriculture from perspectives that I had previously either not considered or did not know enough about. This program had a major impact on how I do my job, the way I approach conservation issues, and I have a greater understanding on how certain conservation initiatives impact New Jersey ag," said Parke.

For more on the NJALPD, visit <http://www.njagsociety.org/njalpd/njalpd.htm>.

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Spotlight

SBOA-New Jersey Hosts Rutgers Equine Science Center Gala

On August 4, the Standardbred Breeders and Owners Association – New Jersey (SBOA-NJ) hosted a VIP gala to honor the **Rutgers Equine Science Center (ESC)**, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year. The gala was held at the Commissioners Club in the New Meadowlands Stadium, in East Rutherford, NJ.



Karyn Malinowski, center, with Mike Gulotta and Scott Fellin, Deo Volente Farms

Robert M. Goodman, executive dean, welcomed the guests and Brian Cashman, General Manager and Senior Vice President of the New York Yankees, delivered the keynote address. In a statement, Cashman said, "Superb leadership and financial support are two vital components needed in order to build an organization on a standard of excellence. With **Karyn Malinowski** (director, ESC) at the reins, I am completely confident that the Equine Science Center can maintain its status as a world-class research center.

My goal in lending support is to ensure that others recognize the necessity of a financially sound Center; it is crucial to the sustainability of the entire horse industry in New Jersey."

Tom Luchento, president of SBOA-NJ, who also welcomed attendees, praised the Center. "Thanks to the work of the Equine Science Center, we know how important horses are to the agri-business of New Jersey, we understand the role of horses in the maintenance of open space in this state, and we have the data related to the economic impact of the equine industry."

The event was sponsored by corporate and private donors including Sandy Denarski, chair of the **Rutgers University Board for Equine Advancement**; Hanover Shoe Farms; Showplace Farms, Pfizer Animal Health; and over a dozen additional supporters.



L-R: NJ Senator Raymond Lesniak, Tom Luchento, and Brian Cashman



L-R: Max Spann Sr.; Tom Charters, president and CEO of the Hambletonian Society; and Max Spann Jr.

Spotlight

Sussex County Fair Honors the late Warren Welsh, Rutgers Ag Agent

The organizers of the Sussex County Fair created a memorial garden between the livestock pavilion and the Snook Museum at the Sussex County Fairgrounds to honor those individuals who were instrumental in supporting The New Jersey State Fair®, also known locally as the Sussex County Farm & Horse Show.



Letitia "Letty" Welsh, widow of Warren Welsh, and Dennis Sensale, Sussex Board of Agriculture

One of the main proponents of the fair was **Warren Welsh**, a Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) ag agent, who died this past year and who was honored at a Rutgers Rising memorial ceremony in May.

Welsh became part of Sussex County's agricultural history when he joined the RCE office of Sussex County as its agricultural agent in 1950. New to Sussex County, he embraced the position and became a friend and supporter of its farmers. As an agricultural agent, it was his job to take the

most current research-based information and share it with farmers in a practical and useful way.

For years, Welsh assisted farmers through good times and bad, visiting them whenever and wherever needed. He set a high standard for what was expected of a Sussex County agent. Warren was also asked to weigh in on other innovative agricultural programs. Farmland preservation in Sussex County started with the creation of the Sussex County Agriculture Development Board on July 12, 1983.

In 1940, the Sussex County Farm & Horse Show was incorporated. In 1964, Welsh was elected to the position of Secretary – the fourth in its history – and a position he held for many years. He dedicated himself to promoting agriculture at the state's largest agricultural fair. Many Sussex residents grew up listening to "Five Minutes With Your County Agricultural Agent," an early morning radio show hosted by Welsh. The Fair could not be officially opened until Welsh's famous rooster crow graced the airwaves!

The International Association of Fairs and Expositions presented Welsh with the 1996 Hardee's American Heritage Award, which honors individuals with at least 10 years of volunteer fair management experience. In 2001, he was honored with the State Board of Agriculture's Distinguished Service award. This award, begun in 1932, recognizes "people who have given unselfishly of their time and talents to the advancement and betterment of the agricultural industry and rural life in New Jersey."

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Faculty and Staff

New Faces at the Rutgers EcoComplex

Serpil Guran has been appointed Director of the Rutgers EcoComplex in Bordentown, NJ, effective immediately. She formerly held the position of Research Scientist at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for 11 years, most recently with the Office Economic



Growth and Green Energy. Guran's responsibilities as Director will include management of the EcoComplex operations, programs, business incubator and facilities, as well as providing vision and leadership to establish the EcoComplex as a nationally recognized center for the commercialization of environmental and alternative energy technologies. In addition, she will serve as a liaison to the regional environmental and alternative energy business communities, government agencies, and related organizations.

Kevin Lyons has been tapped to become the Associate Director for Business Development at the EcoComplex, beginning September 1. Lyons will be responsible for developing and integrating global environmental, social, economic, ethical criteria and data into supply



chain/procurement systems and processes. His expertise includes conducting environmental health-checks on global supply chains and the resulting benefits of reduced risk management impacts and costs. In addition to his new responsibilities at the EcoComplex, Lyons is a faculty member at the Rutgers Business School in the Supply Chain Management and Marketing Sciences Department and a Research Professor in Budgeting and Finance for the Graduate Department of Public Policy and Administration at Rutgers-Camden.

Mark Your Calendars!

Hunterdon County 4-H Fair

The 2011 New Jersey Rutgers 4-H County Fair season ends in [Hunterdon County](#), August 24-28.

21st Annual Great Tomato Tasting at Snyder Farm

WHEN: August 31, 2011, 3 p.m. to dusk.

WHERE: 140 Locust Grove Road, Pittstown, NJ.

MORE INFO: Visit <http://ruevents.rutgers.edu/events/displayEvent.html?eventId=69986>.

Vegetable-Herb Disease Control Research Plot Viewing

WHEN: September 7, 2011, 5 to 7 p.m.

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

MORE INFO: Contact Wes Kline at 856-451-2800, ext. 1, wkline@njaes.rutgers.edu.

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 848-932-4204.



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