

EXECUTIVE DEAN
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
November 2011

Preparing Our Future Farmers

The Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences has been engaged in an intense revisioning and rebuilding of its oldest major: *Ag Sciences*. The curriculum, starting with a proposed new name, *Agriculture and Food Systems*, will incorporate a business model and various non-degree components as the university strengthens its role and commitment to preparing future farmers for New Jersey's diverse agricultural interests.

Even as these proposed substantive changes to the way we teach agricultural sciences await approval before the school's Committee on Education Policy, **Mark Robson** (dean of Agricultural and Urban Programs; Entomology), charged with revisioning the *Ag Sciences* major, and a creative cadre of faculty and administrators have engaged a diverse group of potential future farmers taking advantage of the current curriculum of ag courses. Below is a spotlight of ag field trips of one such innovative course.

Agriculture and Landscape Colloquium Field Trips

Holly Nelson (instructor, Landscape Architecture) developed the course *Agriculture and Landscape Colloquium*. During this fall semester, Robson and Nelson have led students enrolled in the colloquium on several field trips to local farms. The first trip was held on September 30 to the Howell Living History Farm. Tour guide Larry Kidder shared with the students the evolution of the farm and instructed them in harvesting methods from the turn of the century, such as how to flail wheat to separate wheat from the chaff.



Agriculture and Landscape Colloquium students on a tour of Howell Living History Farm with guide Larry Kidder (pointing)



Student **Nick Holdorf** flailing wheat at Howell Living History Farm

On October 14, Nelson took some of the students on a visit to Honey Brook Organic Farm to learn how community supported agriculture (CSA) works. The students were very intrigued about farming in the protected Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed and were

delighted to discover that the farm delivers boxed organic vegetables weekly to its members in nearby Highland Park. In addition to walking the productive fields, the students saw the washing and processing stations.



Sherry Dudas explains farming at Honey Brook Organic Farm

Also on October 14, Robson took another set of students to Terhune Orchards in Princeton, where they interacted with owner Gary Mount who was extremely generous with his time in discussing his operation and answering questions from the students. Mount is the 10th generation of his family to pursue farming. He and his wife Pam purchased Terhune Orchards about 30 years ago.

Rutgers graduates, Sherry Dudas (Cook '93) and her husband Jim Kinsel (RC '83), grow local, seasonal organic produce at Honey Brook Organic Farm, one of the largest CSAs in the nation. The farm, which has five sites that also include parcels in Hopewell and Chesterfield, is a national model for sustainable farming and an important example of a partnership between farming and an environmental group.



Gary Mount (seated) makes a point to students **Adam Cesarne**k, **Nick Holdorf**, and **Kenny Macnish**

Together, they farm over 200 acres on preserved farmland and operate a very successful farm market, bakery, cider press, and winery. Mount, a graduate of Princeton University, did a stint in the Peace Corps before choosing to farm for a living. His daughter and her family now comprise the 11th generation of Mounts involved in farming. Mount is known as a very motivated, entrepreneurial, and generous person, and is considered by many to be a positive role model and an inspiration to young farmers.

Spotlight

USDA NIFA Honors Signature Rutgers Program

Get Moving–Get Healthy New Jersey (GMGHNJ), a health promotion initiative developed by Rutgers Cooperative Extension's **Department of Family and Community Health Sciences** and the **Department of 4-H Youth Development**, was honored by the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) award for Innovative Program Models.

Presented by the USDA at its headquarters in Washington, DC, in a ceremony on October 6, the 2011 NIFA Partnership Awards honored four grantees for their "exemplary work and outstanding contribution in support of the USDA mission and for their positive impacts on agriculture." The award presented to Rutgers credits the GMGHNJ health initiative with "helping New Jersey families improve their eating behaviors and increase their physical activity for the past four years." The awards were presented to the lead institution for each project.



L–R, Dr. Chavonda Jacobs-Young, acting director of NIFA, **Kathleen Morgan**, **Virginia Krzyzanowski**, **Mary Jane Willis**, and **Bob Goodman** at the awards ceremony.

"This award is a multi-disciplinary, integrated effort between our two departments and by partnering on this Get Moving–Get Healthy message, we are able to reach adults and youth with a proactive health message," said Kathleen Morgan, associate professor and chair of the Department of Family and Community Health Sciences, who leads the initiative.

Rutgers attendees at the awards ceremony were Executive Dean **Bob Goodman**, along with **Morgan**, GMGHNJ Program Associate **Virginia Krzyzanowski**, and RCE Associate Director **Mary Jane Willis**.

The mission of Get Moving–Get Healthy New Jersey is to improve the health of New Jersey youth, individuals, families, and communities by teaching them how to make healthy eating and physical activity part of their daily lives. To achieve this, Rutgers Cooperative Extension works in partnership with state and local government agencies, professional groups, private organizations, and businesses.

The award-winning program has launched a number of statewide projects, including the [Walk New Jersey Point-to-Point Walking Program](#) and the [Get Moving–Get Healthy with New Jersey 4-H](#), a collaborative venture with statewide 4-H. [Read more.](#)

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Spotlight

Joint Rutgers, New Jersey Farm Bureau, and NJDA Meeting

On October 17, several representatives from the Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences and the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) met in a joint meeting with members of the New Jersey Farm Bureau and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture at the Rutgers EcoComplex in Bordentown, NJ.

Representing Rutgers were Executive Dean of Agriculture and Natural Resources **Bob Goodman**; Senior Associate Director, NJAES, **Larry Katz**; Dean of Agricultural and Urban Programs **Mark Robson**; Dean of Academic Programs **Rick Ludescher**; Associate Director, NJAES, **Peggy Brennan**; Associate Dean and Director of the Office of Grants Facilitation **Xenia Morin**; and Chair of the Department of Landscape Architecture **Laura Lawson**. They joined New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture



Doug Fisher

Doug Fisher and New Jersey Farm Bureau's Executive Director Peter Furey and President Richard Nieuwenhuis in an informal but productive "summit" begun some years ago to discuss their shared goal of strengthening the agricultural sector and working together towards a viable economic and environmental outcome.

Brennan presented "The Importance of 'Agriculture in the Middle' Farms to the Future Viability of New Jersey Agriculture," underscoring Rutgers collaborative efforts to preserve this sector, which is viewed as critical to the sustainability of the agricultural supply chain and infrastructure in New Jersey, yet is considered most at risk. "Agriculture in the Middle" farms account for 5 percent of all New Jersey farms, 32 percent of total cropland, and 25 percent of gross agricultural sales.



Bob Goodman



L-R: Peter Furey, Richard Nieuwenhuis, and Larry Katz

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Faculty and Staff Activities and Accomplishments

Jim Simon (Plant Biology and Pathology) was among the Rutgers faculty to earn the top 15 largest competitive awards for the first quarter of FY11-12, according to Michael J. Pazzani, vice president for research and economic development at Rutgers. Simon received an award of \$1,866,558.00 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for "Strategies for improving the U.S. responses to fusarium, downy mildew and chilling injury to production of sweet basil (10784435)."

Rutgers IPM Program Honored by New Jersey Farm Bureau

The Rutgers Cooperative Extension Fruit IPM program was presented "The Distinguished Service to New Jersey Agriculture" award by the New Jersey Farm Bureau at its 93rd annual meeting on November 14. This team award for the IPM programming delivered over the years to blueberry, tree fruit, and wine grape growers, honors the outstanding work of NJAES fruit IPM coordinator **Dean Polk**; county agricultural and resource management agents **Jerome Frecon**, **Winfred Cowgill**, **Peter Nitzsche**, and **Gary Pavlis**; researchers and specialists **Peter Oudemans**, **Cesar Rodriguez-Saona**, **George Hamilton**, **Bradley Majek**, **Norman Lalancette**, and **Daniel Ward**; and program associates **Eugene Rizio**, **David Schmitt**, and **Atanas Atanassov**.

New Jersey
IPM



Rutgers NJAES Leads Project for Turkish Women Farmers

A pilot program conducted by a Rutgers-led partnership to train approximately 45 Turkish women farmers who are small-scale citrus and tomato greenhouse producers is being conducted in Kumluca, Turkey, from October 24 to November 18. **Robin Brumfield** (extension specialist in farm management, Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics) and Mick Minard, photographer and communications strategy consultant with an expertise in reporting the



Sebahat Kilinc, left, a Turkish farmer, is interviewed by **Robin Brumfield**, center, and Burhan Ozkan of Akdeniz University, Turkey. Photo: Mick Minard @REEF Reports

impact of market-based strategies for social change formed this important partnership with Akdeniz University in Antalya, Turkey. Inspired by the impact of *Annie's Project*, a nationally recognized risk management educational program for female farmers operating in the United States, Brumfield and partners adapted the *Annie's Project* model to train Turkish women farmers on the basic skills and best practices necessary for them to sustain and scale profitable agricultural businesses.

"Women currently account for approximately 45% of Turkey's agricultural workforce," said Brumfield. They implemented "the Women Farmers Project in recognition of women farmers as critical agents for enhancing

agricultural and rural development and food security in Turkey," added Brumfield. The project aims to develop the technical and managerial capacities of Turkish women farmers through education, while supporting the region's economic advancement toward sustainable agriculture and gender equality. [Read more.](#)

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Huang is new Endowed Chair in Turfgrass Science

Bingru Huang (Plant Biology and Pathology) was approved as the Ralph Geiger Endowed Chair in Turfgrass Science by the Rutgers University Board of Governors on October 12. Huang succeeds **Bruce Clarke** (Plant Biology and Pathology; director of the Rutgers' Center for Turfgrass Science), who was named the inaugural chair in 2005. The Ralph Geiger Endowed Chair in Turfgrass Science was funded by an endowment from Ralph Geiger, an avid golfer and philanthropist who donated generously to the Rutgers Center for Turfgrass Science. The center is regarded as one of the premier research, teaching, and outreach institutions of its kind in the world and its cultivars can be found everywhere from New York's Central Park to the White House and Lambeau Field, home of the Green Bay Packers. Huang, an expert in turfgrass stress physiology, joined the faculty in the Department of Plant Biology and Pathology at the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences in 2000 and has served as the Director of the Graduate Program in Plant Biology. [Read more.](#)



Bingru Huang examines Rutgers turfgrass cultivars in greenhouse. Photo courtesy of Bingru Huang.

Mark Your Calendars!

Ornamental Pest Control Training

WHEN: November 21, 2011, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

WHERE: Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Gloucester County, 1200 N. Delsea Drive, Clayton, NJ.

WHAT: Category 3A training for Department of Environmental Protection exams.

MORE INFO: Call 856-307-6450, x1, or email cummings@njaes.rutgers.edu.

South Jersey Landscape Conference

WHEN: November 29, 2011.

WHERE: Masso's Crystal Manor, 210 S. Delsea Drive, Glassboro, NJ.

MORE INFO: Contact Jerry Frecon, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Gloucester County, at 856-307-6450, x1.

36th Annual Green Expo Turf & Landscape Conference

WHEN: December 6–8, 2011.

WHERE: Taj Mahal, Atlantic City, NJ.

MORE INFO: Contact the New Jersey Turfgrass Association at 973-812-6467 or visit www.njturfgrass.org.

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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