

A REPORT FROM THE  
EXECUTIVE DEAN  
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture  
May 2014

Rutgers NJAES sponsored a forum, “GMOs: Questions and Answers for New Jersey Farmers,” on May 9 at the Rutgers EcoComplex in Bordentown. Greg Jaffe, director of biotechnology at the Center for Science in the Public Interest, presented “Busting the Myths Surrounding Genetically Engineered Foods.” **Cara Cuite**, associate research professor, presented results from a study that she and **William Hallman**, professor of Human Ecology, conducted on “Public Perceptions of GM Food.” **Brad Hillman**, senior associate director, NJAES, and director of cooperative research, spoke on “Dissecting Issues of GMO Science and Policy.” There was a Q&A session conducted by the speakers and **Executive Dean Bob Goodman**. This forum was videotaped and will be available for viewing on the Rutgers NJAES website.

The cranberry weevil is a key pest of blueberries in New Jersey. The economic injury is due to the larvae, which feed and develop inside the flower buds and prevent the formation of fruit. Management strategies are targeted to the mobile adults, so monitoring plays an important role in control. However, clumped spatial distribution of adults makes current monitoring techniques unreliable and expensive. A reliable monitoring tool that estimates cranberry weevil population occurrences and densities is essential for an effective IPM program. Recently, Extension Specialist in Entomology **Cesar Rodriguez-Saona** and colleagues at the Marucci Center for Blueberry and Cranberry Research and Extension identified the main components of the cranberry weevil aggregation pheromone. In field evaluations, they demonstrated that sticky traps baited with a blend of aggregation pheromone components trapped significantly more cranberry weevil adults than unbaited controls. The goal of the project is to optimize the lure and trap by testing different trap designs, colors, placements, and blends of the cranberry weevil aggregation pheromone. The results will help in the development of a lure for monitoring as well as an attractant that can be used for bait. Development of these management techniques may lead to significant reduction in the use of pesticides targeted against cranberry weevil in blueberries.

Modified backpack sprayers offer versatile features, including simple design, inexpensive price, professional nozzle technology accuracy, as well as easy, safe filling and cleaning, which make them an efficient, ideal choice for small, organic, or urban farms; small jobs on larger farms; and for short season crops, spot problems, work around field impediments (fences, slopes), and work inside high tunnels and greenhouses. Rutgers NJAES Snyder Research Farm Director **John Grande** has tested and shared methods to modify backpack sprayers increasing their accuracy, improving ease of use, and for successfully applying organic products. The Rutgers Snyder Research Farm has produced seven short videos demonstrating more efficient and safer use of backpack sprayers on the farm:

<http://snyderfarm.rutgers.edu/Backpack-Sprayers-Video.html>

The Department of Agricultural and Resource Management Agents, Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension, announced the availability of two faculty positions – County Agricultural and Resource Management Agents – in Warren and Gloucester counties. The Gloucester County agent will provide leadership to develop, implement, and evaluate educational programming and applied and evaluative

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research appropriate to the needs of the clientele in commercial perennial crop production and management, specifically tree fruit, wine grapes, and nursery. The Warren County agent will conduct those services for clientele in agricultural-centered economic development, including farm-to-market business development, production and marketing of traditional and new agricultural products, enterprise analysis, agritourism, and other related economic and community development activities.

#### Of Interest:

The nation celebrated the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, which officially created the national Cooperative Extension System. May 8 was the primary day of the national celebration to signify the date of the actual signing of the landmark legislation. In New Jersey, the month of May was declared as Cooperative Extension Month by Governor Chris Christie. In commemoration of this 100th anniversary, and the 150th anniversary of Rutgers being designated New Jersey's land grant university in 1864, some information below on the contributions of Rutgers NJAES to New Jersey agriculture have been included in this month's report to the State Board of Agriculture.

#### Did You Know?

- Alva Agee, the first director of Rutgers Cooperative Extension, was also appointed New Jersey's first Secretary of Agriculture when the state Department of Agriculture was created in 1916.
- Two years prior to the signing of the Smith-Lever Act, formal extension work began in New Jersey in 1912, with the appointment of a county agent in Sussex County and the organization of a Department of Extension in the Experiment Station.
- 4-H began as corn and tomato clubs but has developed into the largest youth organization in the world.
- All of the agricultural innovations that were developed at Rutgers NJAES involved testing and trials on New Jersey farms. Pioneering New Jersey farmers were essential to the launch of:
  - The Rutgers tomato in 1934 (**Lyman Schermerhorn**, plant breeder)
  - Introduction of artificial insemination of dairy cows to the U.S. in 1938 (**Enos Perry**, dairy specialist)
  - Vaccine for Newcastle disease in poultry in 1948 (**Fred Beaudette**, poultry pathologist)
  - Development of disease resistant and all-male asparagus hybrids in 1950s through present day (**Howard Ellison**, asparagus breeder and his successors **Chee-kok Chin**, plant tissue culture researcher and **Steve Garrison**, extension specialist in horticulture)
  - Development of air-inflated, double-layer polyethylene greenhouse in 1965 (**Bill Roberts**, agricultural engineer)
  - Advances in the use of plastic mulch and drip-irrigation systems for vegetable crops in the 1960s (**Norm Smith**, Cumberland County agricultural agent).
  - The Ramapo tomato in 1968 (**Bernard Pollack**, vegetable breeder)

#### Visit our Rutgers NJAES online resources:

Vegetable Crops Online Resource Center: <http://njveg.rutgers.edu>

Plant & Pest Advisory: <http://plant-pest-advisory.rutgers.edu>

Commercial Ag Updates: <http://plant-pest-advisory.rutgers.edu/?cat=139>

Sustaining Farming on the Urban Fringe and blog: <http://sustainable-farming.rutgers.edu>

What's in Season from the Garden State: <http://www.njfarmfresh.rutgers.edu/archive.html>



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