

A REPORT FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DEAN
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
June 2014

One of three Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (NESARE) grant awards funded for New Jersey for 2014 is “Bringing IPM and natural enemies back to the orchard post-BMSB,” which is led by **Anne Nielsen**, extension specialist in entomology at RAREC. The brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) has disrupted long-standing tree fruit integrated pest management (IPM), with growers drastically changing their management practices to combat this invasive, difficult pest. Current management for BMSB calls for weekly, season-long applications of broad-spectrum insecticides that are costly, risk pest resistance, kill natural enemies and pollinators, cause secondary pest outbreaks, and may have negative impacts on water quality and soil. The project will take a systems approach to management by using border sprays and IPM in a commercial peach orchard, thus reducing pesticides and input costs. Outreach will be through extension, a field day event and an educational video. This project was funded for \$14,970. The other two 2014 NESARE grants for New Jersey are “Evolving cage design for floating oyster farms in Barnegat Bay, NJ” and “Minimizing risks of *Vibrio* bacteria in farm-raised oysters grown in intertidal environments of the Delaware Bay.”

A second round of funding has been awarded for the testing of NJAES-developed strawberry varieties. The project, “On-farm performance and nutrient requirements of new strawberry varieties for the Eastern United States,” is funded in the amount of \$125,000 by the National Strawberry Sustainability Initiative Grants Program (NSSI) Phase II, made possible with a gift from the Walmart Foundation and administered by the University of Arkansas System’s Division of Agriculture Center for Rural and Agricultural Sustainability. Rutgers NJAES team members include Agricultural Agents **Pete Nitzsche** and **Bill Hlubik**; **Jessica Buitrago**, project manager; **Gojko Jelenkovic**, professor emeritus; **Brad Hillman**, director of research; **Win Cowgill**, agricultural agent; **Dan Ward**, extension specialist in pomology; **Beverly Tepper**, professor of food science; **Tiemi Curry**, research assistant; and **David Smela**, public information assistant.

The new Director of the Rutgers Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Upper Deerfield is **Daniel Ward**, extension specialist in pomology, who replaces **Brad Majek**, extension specialist in weed science. **Ward** also serves as founding director of the New Jersey Center for Wine Research and Education.

Of Interest:

RCE of Cumberland County’s newsletter *Cultivating Cumberland* advises that farmers who suffered hail damage from the May 22 storm in South Jersey should report such damage to the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. FSA needs to know acreage and crops damaged, in addition to building or equipment damage. Make sure to take pictures, which will help prove damage in the event of a disaster declaration.



The May 22 storm produced substantial damage at RAREC. **Tom Orton**, extension specialist in vegetable breeding, reports that hail damaged greenhouses, tree fruit, winegrapes, annual crops, and transplants for variety trials. As a result, research this year will be somewhat curtailed in the areas of plant breeding, pathology, horticulture, entomology, and weed science.

Dave Schmitt, IPM program associate, reports the beginnings of an outbreak of bacterial spot on stone fruit. Schmitt says it is reminiscent of the epidemic of 1997, although so far the current outbreak does not appear as widespread. Many blocks are dropping leaves and fruit lesions are appearing. Extension Specialist in Tree Fruit Pathology **Norm Lalancette** provided a comprehensive summary of label restrictions for copper formulations for bacterial spot in “Copper Bactericides for Peach Bacterial Spot Management,” which appears in the *Plant and Pest Advisory* newsletter blog.

Andy Wyenandt, extension specialist in vegetable pathology, reports Basil downy mildew has been reported for the first time this season near Millville, NJ, in potted Thai and Cinnamon basil plants being sold at big box stores, as well as in sweet basil located in one field, to date. **Wyenandt** recommends that all basil growers in New Jersey should scout their fields on a daily basis.

Three farm energy efficiency articles by **A.J. Both**, extension specialist in bioresource engineering; **Tom Manning**, bioresource engineer; and **Jack Rabin**, associate director for farm programs, are posted on the *Sustaining Farming on the Urban Fringe* blog: “Understanding On-Farm Utility Costs and Billing,” “Lowering On-Farm Utility Costs with Electricity Monitors,” and “Assessing Farm Equipment Efficiency.” <http://sustainable-farming.rutgers.edu/farm-energy-use-self-audits>.

For growers who have written a food safety plan and are preparing for a third party audit, the Rutgers On-Farm Food Safety Team offers farm “walk-throughs” to help evaluate the written plan and compliance activities. **Wes Kline**, agricultural agent, and **Meredith Melendez**, senior program coordinator, report that over many years of performing walk-throughs, they’ve found some common situations that can foil the goal of making it through the audit process on the first go-round. Farmers should make sure they’ve fully in compliance in areas that have tripped-up fellow New Jersey growers. Information on the program is available at: <http://plant-pest-advisory.rutgers.edu/category/commercial-ag-updates/food-safety>.

Visit our Rutgers NJAES online resources:

Vegetable Crops Online Resource Center: <http://niveg.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>

