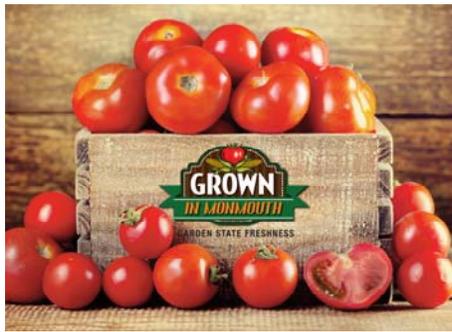


A REPORT FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DEAN
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
January 2016

Michael Westendorf, extension specialist in the Department of Animal Sciences, is the principal investigator of a \$162,000 grant (2015-2017) from the New Jersey Department of Agriculture Animal Waste Management Program to facilitate the implementation of Best Management Practices on 12 farms (dairy, equine, and other livestock) within priority impaired New Jersey watersheds. Co-investigators on the grant are agricultural agents **Dave Lee** (Salem), **Bob Mickel** (Hunterdon), **Steve Komar** (Sussex), and **Bill Bamka** (Burlington), and **Carey Williams**, extension specialist in equine management, Department of Animal Sciences.

In a first-of-its-kind initiative in New Jersey to strengthen and promote local agriculture in an individual county, Monmouth County received USDA funding to conduct a comprehensive study of the changing rural agricultural economy, and to develop ways to boost agricultural opportunities and promote a “Grown in Monmouth” brand. The \$80,000 award for an ag marketing survey and strategy plan will involve agricultural agent **Bill Sciarappa** and staff of Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County, who will partner with Monmouth County Freeholders, and the county’s Division of Economic Development, Farmland Preservation Program, and GPS/GIS staff. Over the next year, the program partners will conduct meetings, listening sessions, workshops, and interviews with the Monmouth County agricultural community, institutional food-service industry, food distribution industry, restaurant industry, and others to make baseline assessments and develop a marketing strategy for “Grown in Monmouth.”



New Jersey’s agricultural industry plays an important role in the State’s economy, sustainability, and environment. Thanks to farmers and industry personnel who are willing to take on leadership roles, the voice of agriculture is heard by government officials and the general public. In order to educate those interested in leadership roles and to foster new leadership within the industry, **Michelle Infante-Casella**, agricultural agent in Gloucester County and **Brian Schilling**, extension specialist in agricultural policy authored a new Rutgers fact sheet, “Guidance for Directors and Leaders of Agricultural Organizations in New Jersey” (FS1250). The publication covers the obligations and responsibilities of a director of a board or association. It also explains how directors may take on additional roles, such as a delegate to a convention representing their board or association, or an officer of the board or association. For the past three years **Infante-Casella** used this information for teaching new and existing directors of the Gloucester County Board of Agriculture. She felt that this information would benefit others in the industry and worked with **Schilling** to publish the information for broader availability. The fact sheet can be viewed at <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/fs1250>.

Reminder: 2016 New Jersey Ag Convention and Trade Show Feb. 9, 10, 11, 2016, Harrah’s, Atlantic City

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Taking advantage of the unseasonably warm weather in December 2015, construction was started on a YMCA-operated 20' x 36' high tunnel, part of a community garden project in East Orange, NJ, to be



Construction of 20' x 36' high tunnel (EastPoint, Rimol Greenhouse Systems, Inc.) in East Orange. *Photo by A.J. Both*

completed in the spring of 2016. The construction crew included several military veterans enrolled in the Rutgers V.E.T.S. work training program led by **Jan Zientek**, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Essex County. Also involved are **Meredith Taylor**, research associate, Office of Agriculture and Urban Programs; **Tom Manning**, project engineer, Ag Engineering Services; and **A.J. Both**, extension specialist in bioresource engineering. Funding for this project was provided by the New Jersey Farm Bureau and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture Farm to School Program, through a USDA Block Grant.

Associate director of farm programs **Jack Rabin** reports there will be between two to four paid student internships at NJAES research farms for 2016, supported by Rutgers and corporate sponsors. To date, 29 students have taken advantage of the 35 paid training internships available over the years. **Rabin** cited the example of **Anthony Noto**, a biotechnology major who received the Rutgers-FMC Corp. Crop Protection 2015 paid summer farm research internship. **Noto** operated farm equipment, managed vegetable crops under commercial conditions, designed field studies, as well as collected and reported data. **Noto** spent two weeks at the FMC Corp. Global Innovation Center in Ewing, NJ, with the support of FMC Corp., a global agricultural chemical company, including FMC's Sr. Herbicide scientist Gurinderbir Chahal, who served as **Noto's** mentor, and extension specialist in Vegetable Plant Pathology **Andy Wyenandt**, who served as his Rutgers field studies mentor.

The Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey holds its annual conference January 30-31, in Lincroft, NJ. There are over 50 workshops featuring several speakers from NJAES. There will be a panel discussion with extension specialist in Soil Fertility **Joe Heckman**, Dept. of Plant Biology and Pathology, and extension specialist in food science and distinguished professor **Don Schaffner**, Dept. of Food Science on permitting raw milk distribution from New Jersey dairy farms. Other Rutgers faculty and staff presenting include **Kris Holmstrom**, research project coordinator II, Vegetable IPM Program; **Marjorie Kaplan**, associate director, Rutgers Climate Institute; **Laura Lawson**, dean, Office of Agriculture and Urban Programs; and agricultural agents **Meredith Melendez** (Mercer County) and **Bill Sciarappa** (Monmouth County).

Events:

North Jersey Commercial Vegetable Growers Meeting, February 17, 2016, Hunterdon County Complex, 314 State Route 12, Building #1, Flemington, NJ. Contact: 973-285-8304.

Central Jersey Vegetable Growers Meeting, February 26, 2016, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County, 4000 Kozloski Rd., Freehold, NJ 07728. Contact: 732-431-7260, ext. 7280.

