

A REPORT FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DEAN
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

**Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
June 2013**

A statewide conference was held at Rutgers on *Preparing for Climate Change in New Jersey* on May 22. In a panel session on “Preparing our Communities”, Mark Robson, dean of agriculture and urban programs, addressed preparing agricultural communities. Robson provided a summary of where we are now in reading the emergence and movement of disease and insects. He queried NJAES specialists and found that many of them feel that due to the early season we are seeing the emergence of insect problems not seen in the past. Robson also discussed some of the long term strategies for coping with climate change, including pest management approaches as well as breeding and other crop improvement strategies and water management.

Agricultural agents Pete Nitzsche and Bill Hlubik are working with several New Jersey farms to trial new flavorful strawberry varieties developed by Rutgers professor emeritus Gojko Jelenkovic, who retired in January 2013. Jelenkovic has spent over 35 years breeding strawberry cultivars with the aim of improving fruit quality, yields, disease resistance and flavor. In addition to the New Jersey farm trials, the team is working with North Carolina State, the Ohio State University and the University of Maryland to examine the potential of these varieties for the mid-Atlantic region. From these trials, several varieties have shown improved size, shape, color and greater sweetness over Chandler. The names of the new varieties are not yet official and they are in the process of being patented. Following commercial testing, the next step is to work with nurseries to produce germplasm for commercial production. Anticipated release onto the market is around 2015 – 2016.

In celebration of June as *Month of the Horse* in New Jersey, the Monmouth County Library featured a panel discussion on June 17 on the standardbred horse industry and pressing equine issues in the county and the state. Rutgers Equine Science Center director Karyn Malinowski was a key speaker among several other leaders, and agricultural agent Bill Sciarappa served as panel moderator. Issues included the migration of the New Jersey horse industry to neighboring states like New York and Pennsylvania due to their equine friendly climate. The panel discussed the decrease in number of stallions in NJ from over 100 to just 2 as there are now dis-incentives to breed locally for standardbreds and thoroughbreds. Secondary infrastructure problems arise in agri-business, employment, hay and feed production, open space, recreational riding and the racing industry – all totaling over 1 billion dollars annually. Economic development, environmental benefits, options to re-growing the industry and generating more public support were explored; one example being educational events such as the Open Space Pace Race and Festival scheduled for September 21 at Freehold Raceway.

In honor of IR-4's 50th anniversary, the national IR-4 newsletter highlighted the anniversary events held in May in Washington, DC and at the founding office at Rutgers. An additional feature story highlighted the IR-4 supported work at Rutgers P.E. Marucci Center for Blueberry and Cranberry Research and Extension on mating disruption of oriental beetle. Beginning in 1998, the late Dr. Sridhar Polavarapu initiated the research at the Marucci Center, first testing a microencapsulated formulation of the pheromone for mating disruption of the oriental beetle. Dr. Cesar Rodriguez-Saona, with Dean Polk and the Fruit IPM team, continued the work by looking at reduced pheromone rates to make costs of mating disruption more affordable while maintaining efficacy. Further studies led to the development of a product that makes the cost of mating disruption for the oriental beetle comparable with using insecticides, increasing the likelihood of mating disruption becoming a part of an integrated approach to pest management in blueberry and in other systems. IR-4 prepared and submitted the pheromone registration and tolerance exemption package to EPA, and in May 2012, retrievable dispensers for mating disruption of oriental beetle became commercially available. Mating disruption for the oriental beetle shows promise across a range of



systems, including blueberry, cranberry, turf, and ornamentals. To read the full article, go to: <http://ir4.rutgers.edu/Newsletter/vol44no2.pdf>.

Of Interest:

- The Rutgers NJAES *Plant & Pest Advisory* has moved to an all-electronic delivered publication, as reported at the May Board meeting. Subscriptions are now free. Instead of advisories waiting one to two weeks, they are delivered to farmers and ag industry as each topic unfolds, by email or RRS feed. This enables NJAES to be more responsive in helping farmers succeed at crop, landscape and turf management. The new format has been well received, with 1,300 subscribers as of June 2013. Each article is printable. The advisories are now archived for reference by web search. Subscriptions include: Food Safety, Tree Fruit, Small Fruit (blueberry, cranberry), Vegetable Crops, Field and Forage Crops, Landscape Ornamentals, Nursery & Turf and Plant Diagnostic Clinic. To sign up, visit the *Plant & Pest Advisory* web page at: <http://plant-pest-advisory.rutgers.edu>.
- The factsheet *Poisonous Weeds in Horse Pastures* by Bamka, W., Barbour, B., Williams, C., & Gladney, L. has been updated and is available at county offices or: <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/fs938/poisonous-weeds-in-horse-pastures.asp>

Events:

Direct Marketing Twilight Meeting, Tuesday, July 16 at 7:00 PM, Duffield's Farm Market
Corner of Greentree and Chapel Heights Rd., Sewell, NJ 08080 <http://www.duffieldsfarm.com>
Co-sponsored by Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension Agritourism Working Group and the New Jersey Farmers Direct Marketing Association. Contact: Michelle Infante-Casella, agricultural agent, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Gloucester County at minfante@aesop.rutgers.edu or 856-307-6450 ext. 1.

Dust off those old lawn ornaments that used to be productive farm and garden equipment and bring them to the Cape May County 4-H Foundation's first-ever **Farm and Garden Equipment Auction** on Saturday, July 20, 2013. The live used tractor and implement auction takes place during the annual 4-H Fair, July 18, 19 and 20 at the Cape May Co. 4-H Fairgrounds. Cape May 4-H Foundation President John Webersinn is looking for lawn tractors and implements as well as farm equipment. The equipment may be previewed during the public hours of the fair, from noon to 9:00 p.m. For more information and consignment agreements, visit www.cmc4h.com, or call the 4-H Events phone at (609) 465-5115, ext. 656. The 4-H fairgrounds are located at 355 Court House-S. Dennis Road in Cape May Court House.

Annual Snyder Farm Open House and Tomato Tasting, August 28, 3:00 – 8:00 pm, Rutgers Snyder Research and Extension Farm, 140 Locust Grove Road, Pittstown, NJ 08867. The event includes the very popular tasting of over 60 heirloom and hybrid varieties of beefsteak, plum, cherry, and grape tomatoes. Other highlights include tasting of apples and peaches from the NJAES Tree Fruit Breeding Program along with varieties of basil and honey. Wagon tours of the farm's research plots will be held throughout the event. Contact Joanne Stevely, 908-730-9419, ext. 3501 or RSVP on-line at snyderfarm.rutgers.edu/tomatoes.html

Visit our Rutgers NJAES online resources:

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

Sustaining Farming on the Urban Fringe: <http://njsustainingfarms.rutgers.edu>



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