

A REPORT FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DEAN
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
February 2016



Agritourism on a Hunterdon County farm.

For many farmers, agritourism is a new business model, necessitating a shift from a production-centric focus to providing and marketing service and hospitality as well as extending the growing season. But agritourism also increases a farm's liability. A NESARE-funded project, whose multistate team of Cooperative Extension faculty was led by **Brian Schilling**, specialist in agricultural policy, Rutgers Department of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics, developed a train-the-trainer curriculum and supporting educational materials to help Northeast farmers minimize risk and liability associated with farm visits, mitigate

financial risk through enterprise budgeting, and improve marketing strategies. More than 690 extension educators, agency staff, and other agricultural service professionals and 760 farmers attended the project's 31 workshops, trainings, webinars, and small-group farm assessments throughout New Jersey, Vermont, Delaware, and Maine, exceeding the project's training goal. Team members presented to national audiences at professional meetings, which led to extension professionals outside the Northeast region requesting curricular materials. Nine of the events were hosted in NJ and four out-of-state venues drew NJ participants. The programming was delivered to approximately 250 NJ farmers, and 270 NJ-based agricultural service providers. Educational resources including training modules, webinar recordings, fact sheets, a corn maze budgeting tool, farm assessment checklists, and educational videos remain available for use by educators and farms from: <http://agritourism.rutgers.edu/training>.

Rutgers NJAES Pest Management Office program associate **Pat Hastings** hosted a webinar, titled "The Registration of Imidacloprid and the Evolution of EPA Pollinator Protection," on February 5. The presentation traced the regulatory path from imidacloprid's registration in 1994 to EPA's current proposed pollinator protection regulations for the neonicotinoids. This included a review of EPA's pollinator protection labeling project; proposed rule for stronger mandatory label statements for crops under contract pollination; Managed Pollinator Protection Plans; risk assessment process for bees; New Jersey regulations on "Notification to Apiarists"; and reporting bee incidents.

The IR-4 Project has been instrumental in identifying solutions and supporting registrations to control Varroa mites in bee hives. IR-4's latest success has been the registration of HopGuard II. The active ingredient (potassium salts of hop beta acids) is derived from the hop plant and is the same ingredient used in flavoring of beer. By formulating the acid onto strips and placing them in beehives, the acid helps to manage the parasite known as Varroa mite, which has been implicated in colony collapse disorder. Some of the early research on this product was facilitated by USDA-ARS. The data from USDA-ARS, along with information about hops in the scientific literature, was submitted to EPA by IR-4 to support its registration. IR-4 also funded efficacy studies and helped maintain the Section 18 (emergency use permits) in many states. Because this is a food-grade product, it enables beekeepers to manage Varroa mite, even during honey flow when conventional pesticides are not allowed.

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Brett Blaauw, postdoctoral research associate in the Department of Entomology, is the principal investigator of an award totaling \$5,697. The project, titled *Identifying Movement and Distribution Patterns of the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug in Peach Orchards*, is being supported by the Horticultural Research Institute.

Of Interest:



In the mid-20th century, up to 72% of New Jersey's tomato acreage was dedicated to the 'Rutgers' tomato. Working with a strain that was crossed at Campbell Soup Company, Rutgers vegetable breeder **Lyman Schermerhorn** developed and tested the variety on New Jersey farms before releasing it in 1934. While no longer grown commercially on a wide scale, the Rutgers tomato today remains a popular garden variety. Since the original seed was not maintained at NJAES, **Tom Orton**, specialist in vegetable breeding in the Department of Plant Biology and Pathology, and **Pete Nitzsche**, Morris County agricultural agent, endeavored to recreate the variety. This was made possible when the team worked on a project with Campbell in 2010, during which Campbell provided the original parent variety seed of the Rutgers tomato from its seed storage. **Orton** and **Nitzsche** developed a fresh line from the cross and for 2016 are releasing the variety as the 'Rutgers 250' tomato, named for the University's 250th anniversary. Commercial growers interested in bulk seed can obtain this variety, along with Ramapo tomato seed, from Rohrer's Seed: <http://njfarmfresh.rutgers.edu/CommercialGrowerInformation.htm>.

Longer growing seasons, milder winters, more frequent flooding, heavier rains, and hotter summers are some of the expected impacts that New Jersey farmers and fishermen will see more of as a result of climate change. To prepare for these changes, they will gradually need to adopt new or alter certain management practices in their operations, including what kinds of crops they grow, what kinds of fish they catch, and how they care for their livestock. Rutgers Climate Institute has released a new guide, "Climate Change and Agriculture, Including Aquaculture and Fisheries, in New Jersey," which provides an overview of the various impacts of climate change as well as how New Jersey farmers and fishermen may adjust to meet these changes. The guide can be found at: <http://climatechange.rutgers.edu/resources/climate-change-and-agriculture>

Events:

Pumpkin School: South Jersey Meeting: Wed, March 2, 2016, RCE of Burlington County, 2 Academy Dr., Westampton NJ – or – North Jersey Meeting: Wed, March 16, 2016, Warren Grange No. 110 Hall, 102 Broadway-Asbury Rd. Broadway, NJ. Contact: (south) 856-307-6450 ext. 1 or (north) 908-475-6511.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Marketing Conference: March 3, 2016, RCE of Warren County, 165 County Road 519, South Belvidere, NJ – or – March 10, 2016, RCE of Gloucester County, 1200 N. Delsea Dr, Bldg A, Clayton, NJ. Contact: (south) 856-307-6450 ext. 1 or (north) 973-948-3040.

Central Jersey Turf & Ornamental Institute: Thursday, March 3, 2016, Battleground Country Club Manalapan, NJ. Contact: 848-932-9271, option 2.

