

A REPORT FROM THE  
EXECUTIVE DEAN  
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture  
October 2017



*Newly renovated natural grass field at Rutgers Marco Battaglia Practice Complex*

As part of the “R Big Ten Build” targeted campaign, Rutgers Athletics completed a top-to-bottom renovation of the existing football practice field complex. In the Fall of 2016, extension specialist in turfgrass management **Jim Murphy**, Department of Plant Biology, was asked to participate in developing a state-of-the-art design concept for re-constructing two natural grass practice fields. The project was done on a fast timeline, with initial design concepts done in October, donor agreement in November, ground breaking in March, and first sod transplanted in June. The grand opening of the renovated complex was August 6, 2017. The cutting-edge field design of the sand-based rootzone, as well as the drainage and irrigation systems was based on Murphy’s research at

the Center for Turfgrass Science at NJAES. The sod selected was Kentucky bluegrass variety developed by Rutgers world-renowned turfgrass breeding program and grown at Tuckahoe Turf Farms in Hammonton, NJ. The irrigation system allows highly customizable scheduling and highly accurate application within the fields. It also includes soil water sensors, which enables very accurate and efficient irrigation scheduling. Murphy was assisted by Plant Biology graduate students **Kyle Genova** and **Hui “Eric” Chen**, who helped monitor the field construction process and recommended necessary modifications to the fields during construction.



*Snyder Farm apples bound for Rutgers dining halls.*

The Clifford E. and Melda C. Snyder Research and Extension Farm in Pittstown, NJ, continues its support of fruit research, while conducting maintenance, harvest, and processing of apples, pears, peaches, and cherries produced on the 13-acre plots. Between 120,000 and 130,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables have been donated to area food banks this year by Snyder Farm, facilitated by the Rutgers Against Hunger program. Snyder Farm is also continuing its placement of fruit at targeted high-visibility locations in University dining halls on the New Brunswick campus, helping to acquaint the student population with locally-grown quality and varieties.

### In Memoriam

**Daniel Kluchinski**, associate director of Cooperative Extension and chair of the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, passed away on October 16. Dan received his undergraduate degree from Rutgers (CC’85) and his master’s from Purdue University in 1987. He spent his career at Rutgers NJAES as a professor and agricultural agent, working with Cooperative Extension of Mercer County prior to the position he held at the time of his passing. Dan was an outstanding scientist, educator, administrator and mentor, and his passing is a tremendous loss to NJAES.

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## Of Interest

The National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA) is the professional organization for Extension educators and other professionals who work in agriculture, horticulture, forestry and natural resources, 4-H youth development, community development, administration, aquaculture and Sea Grant, and related disciplines. Each year, NACAA recognizes members for outstanding work programs, communications, and service through its awards program. At the 102nd Annual Meeting and Professional Improvement Conference of the association in July in Salt Lake City, Utah, a number of agricultural agents and staff members from Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension were recognized for their work, both as national and regional winners for the Northeast Region. Featured below are numerous Rutgers award winners from the 2017 conference:

- National Winner for Northeast Region/NJ Achievement Award, **Amy Rowe**, Essex County Environmental and Resource Management (ERM) Agent
- National Winner Computer Generated Graphics Presentation, **Steven Yergeau**, Ocean County ERM Agent
- National Winner Fact Sheet, **Hemant Gohil**, Gloucester County Agricultural Agent
- National Winner Learning Module, **Madeline Flahive DiNardo**, Union County Agricultural Agent
- State Winner Personal Column, **Nicholas Polanin**, Somerset County Agricultural Agent
- Regional Winner Publication, **Steven Yergeau**, Ocean County ERM Agent
- National Finalist Video Presentation, **Michele Bakacs**, Middlesex County ERM Agent
- National Finalist Search for Excellence in Environmental Quality, Forestry and Natural Resources, **Pat Rector**, Morris County ERM Agent
- National Winner Search for Excellence in Farm Health and Safety, **Meredith Melendez**, Mercer County Agricultural Agent
- National Winner 1st Place Extension Education Poster, **Michele Bakacs**, Middlesex County ERM Agent

The following fact sheet is now available on the NJAES Publications page: FS1278, "Silicon Needs of Soils and Crops. **Heckman, J.** [njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/fs1278](http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/fs1278)

## Events

January 9 & 11, 2018 – “Developing Future Leaders for the Equine Industry” winter course will be taught by **Karyn Malinowski**, extension specialist in the Department of Animal Sciences and director of the Equine Science Center at Rutgers. For more information, contact [karynmal@njaes.rutgers.edu](mailto:karynmal@njaes.rutgers.edu).

January 26, 2018 – The Organic Farming Research Foundation, in partnership with Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey and Rutgers, is hosting the 2018 Organic Farming Research Conference at the Rutgers–New Brunswick campus on the Friday before the NOFA-NJ Winter Conference (January 27-28). The theme for this year’s NOFA conference is “Regenerating Our Communities, Restoring Our Land.” Information is available at [nofanj.org/winter-conference](http://nofanj.org/winter-conference).

