

A REPORT FROM THE  
EXECUTIVE DEAN  
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture  
December 2017



*L-R: Erick Doyle, Deba Dutta, Bob Goodman and Brad Hillman at Readington River Farm*

NJAES executive director **Robert Goodman** and NJAES research director **Brad Hillman** led an introductory tour of New Jersey agriculture and NJAES off-campus research facilities for Chancellor of Rutgers–New Brunswick, **Debasish Dutta**, on December 5. The tour began with a visit to Readington River Buffalo Farm in Flemington, where owner and son of the farm's founders, Erick Doyle, presented his agricultural operation. Doyle, who is a member of the NJ State Board of Agriculture, raises American Bison and practices agritourism. At nearby Rutgers Snyder Research and Extension Farm in Pittstown, Dutta was given an

overview of the facility by director **John Grande** and farm supervisor **Ed Dager**. Over lunch, Department of Plant Biology members, distinguished professor **Jim Simon** and associate professor **Tom Molnar**, discussed their breeding projects, which are bringing new products on stream for New Jersey growers while enhancing existing crop lines as well as offering new niche markets. The tour concluded at Beneduce Vineyards, a family operation in Pittstown that practices sustainable farming methods. The winery's event director, Justen Beneduce Hiles, is a graduate of Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences. Dutta, a strong proponent of the land-grant mission, acknowledged that supporting statewide agriculture is an integral part of the land-grant system and he will be engaged in learning more about NJAES research and extension. Upcoming tours for Chancellor Dutta will cover southern/coastal and central New Jersey farms and off-campus research stations and extension offices.

**Robert Goodman** announced on December 12 that **Brian Schilling**, extension specialist in agricultural policy in the Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics, will be the new director of Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) as of July 1, 2018, when current director **Larry Katz** will step down and return to his faculty duties in the Department of Animal Science. Katz has served as the director of RCE for the past 10 years.

Agricultural agent **Michelle Infante-Casella** (Gloucester) and **Brian Schilling** received a three-year, USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education grant of \$120,000 to study ethnic demographics in New Jersey. They are co-principal investigators with team members, assistant director of research technology **Lucas Marxen** and web/application developer **Daniel Farnsworth** of the Rutgers Office of Research Analytics, and agricultural agents **Bill Bamka** (Burlington), **Stephen Komar** (Sussex), and **Rick VanVranken** (Atlantic). Demographic information tied with ethnic crops research is not new to studies at NJAES, however much has changed over the past decade and data has evolved to enable updating tools for growers to employ when marketing specialty crops in one of the most diverse and densely populated states in the nation. The group will be conducting outreach on their findings at major agricultural events over the next few years and training agricultural service providers.

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The Vegetable IPM Program, led by **Joseph Ingerson-Mahar**, senior program coordinator, and **Kristian Holmstrom**, research project coordinator, is now in its 45th year. While the number of farms enrolled in the program varies over the years, annually there are approximately 65 farms across the state that are actively involved with integrated pest management activities, including field scouting, insect trapping and monitoring, and disease management. The program emphasizes threshold-based, cost-effective management of various vegetable crop pests. The team conducts research on significant vegetable pests, such as bacterial canker of tomatoes and pepper weevil, and evaluates the impact of invasive pests like brown marmorated stinkbug and allium leafminer. The program also involves participation in regional projects such as determining insecticide resistance in corn earworm and the seasonal migration of fall armyworm. The Vegetable IPM Program supports the New Jersey vegetable growing industry through these activities and keeps farmers and agribusiness updated on current pest conditions via the Plant and Pest Advisory newsletter blog.



*Karyn Malinowski addresses a full house on ESC accomplishments*

The Rutgers Equine Science Center (ESC) hosted its 27th annual “Evening of Science and Celebration” on November 9 in New Brunswick, NJ. Prior to the event, a high-speed treadmill demonstration was given at the Equine Exercise Physiology Lab by professor **Ken McKeever**, Department of Animal Sciences. The keynote address was given by professor **Karyn Malinowski**, director of the center, who presented the preliminary results of a pilot study detailing “The Effect of Equine Assisted Activities Therapy (EAAT) on the Well-Being of Horses, and Veterans Diagnosed with PTSD.” This study was done in a partnership between the ESC, Special People United to

Ride (SPUR), Sunnyside Recreation Area of the Monmouth County Park System, Monmouth University, and the Lakewood Veterans Affairs, and aimed to provide data on how EAAT affects the horses that are interacting with humans during therapy. Members of the New Jersey 4-H Roundup team were honored at the event. Brittany Smith of Warren County did a presentation on the history of the Triple Crown, which placed fifth at the Eastern National 4-H Roundup in Kentucky a few days earlier. A check from the 4-H program, which raised money at the New Jersey State 4-H Horse Show in August, was also presented to the ESC. The center presented the “Spirit of the Horse” Award to Laurie Landy, founder of Special Strides Therapeutic Riding, and the “Gold Medal Horse Farm” was awarded to Dorsett Farms in Gloucester County.

*Wishing Everyone a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season*

**Of Interest:**

The following fact sheets and bulletin are now available on

**[NJAES Publications:](#)**

FS1280 Supporting Bees in Your Garden and on Your Farm. **Winfrey, R., Criscione, J., Lowe, E., and Weinman, L.** [njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/fs1280](http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/fs1280)

FS1282 Downy Mildew in Hop Yards. **Infante-Casella, M. and Bamka, W.** [njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/fs1282](http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/fs1282)

E351 Farm Animal Dentition – What Teeth Can Tell You. **Westendorf, M., Conlin, C., Emmanouilidis, E., and Williams, C.** [njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/publication.asp?pid=E351](http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/publication.asp?pid=E351)

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