

A REPORT FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DEAN
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
January 2018



Ray Samulis

After 41 years of service, **Ray Samulis** has retired as agricultural agent for Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Burlington County. Samulis' primary responsibilities were vegetable crops, especially sweet corn; cranberries; and farm safety. Samulis served for 19 years on the Burlington County Agriculture Development Board, contributing to the preservation of over 18,000 acres of county farmland and making Burlington County a state leader and ranked among one of the top 10 county-based Farmland Preservation programs in the nation. In 2010 Samulis was granted funding of \$40,000 for instituting the "AgrAbility" program, which assists farmers in dealing with disabilities that prevent them from completing their farming activities and he served as co-director of the Mid-Atlantic AgrAbility Project. Samulis received many awards during his long career, including distinguished service awards from New Jersey Farm Bureau, New Jersey Nursery Landscape Association, Burlington County Board of Agriculture, Pesticide Association of New Jersey, and National Association of County Agricultural Agents.



Joe Heckman

Extension specialist in soil fertility **Joseph Heckman** is working with organic grain expert Elizabeth Dyck on a demonstration of 20 different value-added grains, including malting barley, hulless barley and oats, and the ancient wheats einkorn, emmer, and spelt, at Rutgers Snyder Research Farm. One aspect Dyck and Heckman are investigating is how einkorn (a grain in high demand) responds in rotation with a nitrogen-fixing cover crop. In addition to providing data, the einkorn experiment and the grain demonstration plots will be the focus of a Field Day on value-added grains this summer. According to Heckman and Dyck, while growers currently get very good prices for value-added organic grains, over-production must be avoided to keep prices high. Dyck, who runs the Organic Growers' Research and Information-Sharing Network (www.ogrin.org), will be speaking at NOFA-NJ's winter conference on January 28 at Rutgers in New Brunswick and at the 2018 NJ Agricultural Convention & Trade Show in Atlantic City on February 7.

Gloucester County agricultural agent **Michelle Infante-Casella** and **Brian Schilling**, extension specialist in agricultural policy in the Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics, co-authored a paper published in the December 2017 issue of *Journal of Extension*, titled, "Necessary Role of Extension in Development of Agricultural Regulations." They found that while input of extension professionals is often sought on technical information and consultation on agricultural issues, there appears to be lack a perception that extension professionals can fulfill an equally important role in assisting with development of regulations. In New Jersey, extension faculty are appointed to regulatory boards and committees as neutral parties who can provide un-biased, science-based information. Extension faculty in the state have become trusted resources for providing information for legislated programs, such as right-to-farm regulations and agricultural conflict resolution. As an example, the authors cite that regulations on topics such as right-to-farm protections have been influenced by extension faculty in New

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Jersey where regulators have turned to Rutgers NJAES extension faculty to develop documents to detail accepted agricultural practices specific to New Jersey.

RUBREW (Rutgers University Brewing Research and Education Work) is a comprehensive program on growing brewing crops. Burlington County agricultural agent **Bill Bamka** is the RUBREW team leader, while members include agricultural agents **Michelle Infante-Casella**, **Steve Komar** (Sussex), and **Megan Muehlbauer** (Hunterdon), **Brian Schilling**, and assistant director of research technology **Lucas Marxen**. Bamka and Infante-Casella are currently working with NJDA and NJDEP on environmental topics for this emerging industry (brewing, distilling, and brewed ciders and mead). Extension programming provides brewers and distillers assistance from start to finish with finding local products, regulation, and disposal of spent materials and waste water. This year Bamka and Komar will again host a day-long session at the NJ Agricultural Convention & Trade Show, featuring speakers representing the industry. The RUBREW program web page can be found at sare.rutgers.edu/brew_introduction.html.

On December 11, senior government officials signed a joint statement acknowledging the productive work of the World Trade Organization's Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) in building knowledge and capacity for developing countries in the area of pesticide maximum residue levels (MRLs). STDF provided the funding for the USDA's IR-4 Project to provide the direct training for each country involved. IR-4, based at Rutgers NJAES, trained the countries on conducting field and laboratory trials under Good Laboratory Practices. The data from these trials was submitted to the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues with the goal of establishing new MRLs. Marlynne Hopper from the office of STDF commented, "We were delighted to see this reference to the Standards and Trade Development Facility in the Joint Statement from MC-11, signed by 17 governments. It's wonderful to see this concrete illustration of how the three STDF MRL projects in Africa, Association of Southeast Asian Nations and Latin America – with USDA, IR-4/Rutgers University and the many other public and private sector partners – helped to build knowledge and capacity on pesticide MRLs in developing countries, and also played a catalytic role in encouraging more regional and international collaboration on this topic."

Events:

The Annual Horse Management Seminar will be presented by Rutgers Equine Science Center and Rutgers Cooperative Extension on February 11. This year's focus will be Gastrointestinal Health and Management. The location will be Cook Campus Center, 59 Biel Road, New Brunswick, NJ. For more information, contact carey.williams@rutgers.edu.

The 2018 Central Jersey Turf and Ornamental Institute will be held March 18 at Battleground Country Club in Manalapan, NJ. This annual program is sponsored by Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Middlesex, Monmouth, Mercer, and Somerset counties. Seminar topics benefit workers in grounds maintenance, covering turfgrass, landscape, and nursery crops. For more information, visit: www.cpe.rutgers.edu/CJTOI.

