

A REPORT FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DEAN
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Like many invasive species, the brown marmorated stinkbug (BMSB) had no major enemies in the U.S. to keep its population in check. USDA-ARS entomologists searched in Asia for natural enemies of BMSB for potential release in the U.S., and identified the samurai wasp (*Trissolcus japonicus*) as the most suitable. Research on these introductions requires restrictions and controlled laboratory conditions to ensure that, if released, they prove effective without harming native species. However, unplanned introductions of the parasitic species free researchers from some of the usual constraints, allowing them to explore key questions about a biocontrol agent's impact in field experiments rather than just the lab. An August article in *Science* features extension specialist in entomology **Anne Nielsen** (Department of Entomology) and colleagues at **Rutgers Agricultural Research and Extension Center** in Upper Deerfield, NJ, and their work on peaches and the descendants of the samurai wasp first discovered by Nielsen in a nearby New Jersey orchard in 2017—the first reported find of the wasp in a U.S. agricultural crop.

The American Fisheries Society, a non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening the fisheries profession, advancing fisheries science, and conserving fisheries resources, held its 148th annual meeting in Atlantic City in August. Distinguished professor emerita, **Bonnie McCay**, Department of Human Ecology, one of the plenary speakers, discussed participatory fisheries management. A component of the conference included a stakeholder engagement day, which offered fishing and aquaculture industry stakeholders an opportunity to learn about the research being conducted related to their industries and to stimulate collaborations among scientists and fishermen. Marine agent **Douglas Zemeckis** (Monmouth, Ocean, and Atlantic counties) is chair of the Committee on Stakeholder Engagement. Also on the committee, from Haskin Shellfish Research Laboratory, are **Eleanor Bochenek**, director, Fisheries Cooperative Center, and **Jason Morson**, laboratory researcher.

Thirteen School of Environmental and Biological Sciences (SEBS) students are participating in 2018 Internships in Production and Entrepreneurship Agriculture (IPEA), which runs May to October. The courses include: Agriculture and Food Systems Practicum, Agriculture and Food Systems Special Problems/Independent Study, and Special Topics in Plant Science. Interns engage in practical hands-on production agriculture in the field and under controlled environment, and engage in produce marketing, and independent study in Ag & Food Systems and Plant Science research. IPEA offers four options: Field Production of Exotic Crops, Indoor Crop Cultivation and Marketing, Marketing of Exotic Crop Produce, and Field Production of Exotic Crops and Marketing. IPEA interns identify SEBS/NJAES faculty mentors to guide them in defining their learning goals during the internship, and faculty give lectures to interns to provide a better understanding of how production agriculture and marketing work to support a vibrant agricultural economy in the Garden State. Assistant teaching professor **Albert Ayeni** (Department of Plant Biology) coordinates the Rutgers Entrepreneurship Ag Program which manages IPEA.

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Winners of the Search for Excellence in Young, Beginning, or Small Farmers/Ranchers achievement award: (l-r): Nick Polanin, Meredith Melendez, Jenny Carleo, Pete Nitzsche, Hemant Gohil

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 2018 annual meeting in Chattanooga, TN, a number of Rutgers NJAES county agents and staff members were recognized for their work, both as national and

regional winners for the Northeast Region. Featured below are some of the Rutgers award winners in agriculture from the 2018 conference:

Hall of Fame Award – **Kluchinski, D.** (*posthumous*); Extension Achievement Award – **Yergeau, S.**
Communications Awards:

- National Winner, “Common Insect Pests in Hop Yards,” **Infante Casella, M.** and **Bamka, W.**
- National Finalist, Published Photo and Caption – “This Summer, Where are the Local Plums?” photo depicting snow covered plum blossoms, **Gohil, H.**
- Regional Finalist, Computer Generated Graphics Presentation – “Frost Protection in the Orchard – Methods, Updates and Costs,” **Gohil, H.**
- Regional Finalist, Feature Story - “High-Tunnel Winter Lettuce,” **Melendez, M.**
- Regional Finalist, Video Recordings - Ultra Niche Virtual Field Trip: Asparagus, **Carleo, J. et al**
- Regional Finalist, Website - Understanding Soil Compaction, **Yergeau, S.**

Poster Presentations:

- “Yield Assessments of a New Selection of Open-Pollinated Dent Corn,” **Carleo, J. et al**
- “Assessment of the Effect of Vineland and Geneva rootstocks on apple tree vigor and yield in three Honeycrisp and Fuji NC-140 rootstock trials” **Muehlbauer, M., et al**
- National Finalist, Extension Education Poster, “Development of Extension Programming to Support the Advancement of Agritourism in the Northeast” **Infante Casella, M., et al**
- State Winner, Research Poster “Delayed Harvest and Cold Storage Performance of ‘Gloria’ Peaches,” **Gohil, H.** and **Ward, D.**

Search for Excellence in Commercial/Consumer Horticulture: National Winner, Vineyard Best Management Practices Program, **Gohil, H.**

Search for Excellence in Young, Beginning, or Small Farmers / Ranchers: National Finalist - Rutgers Ultra Niche Crops Project, **Carleo, J., et al.**

Search for Excellence in Crop Production: National Finalist - The Rutgers University Brewing Research and Extension Work (RU-Brew) Program, **Bamka, W., et al**

Search for Excellence in Farm Safety and Health: National Finalist - Rutgers On-Farm Direct Marketing and Agritourism Health and Safety Program, **Infante Casella, M., et al**

Oral Presentations: “Educate Before You Regulate: Collaboration between the FDA, USDA, NASDA, Extension and State Partners” **Melendez, M.**

