

A REPORT FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DEAN
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
September 2018

The Rutgers Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) recently welcomed four new members:



Hank Bignell

Henry (Hank) Bignell, Jr. has joined the department as senior program coordinator for Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Warren County. Bignell provides leadership and support to the county's educational program in the area of commercial agriculture, with specific emphasis on livestock and animal husbandry; pasture management; nutrient management; and small and beginning farms. Bignell comes to Rutgers with extension program delivery experience from Florida and Cornell. He received his master's degree in animal sciences from Rutgers. He can be reached at 908-475-6505 or by email at hdbignell@njaes.rutgers.edu.

Chelsea Abegg begins her career as Soils & Plants Technician with the Fruit IPM Program, working out of the Rutgers Agriculture Research and Extension Center in Upper Deerfield. Abegg's focus is on the blueberry IPM program and she is responsible for data collection, grant-related IPM scouting duties, beekeeping, and helping with client education on honey bee health. She can be reached 856-455-3133 or by email at cka35@njaes.rutgers.edu.

Lisa Chiariello is an ANR program associate II in Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Sussex County. In addition to her duties in home horticulture and the Master Gardener program, she provides administrative support to the Clearing Corporation Charitable Foundation Agribusiness Scholars Program with Rutgers Cooperative Extension director Brian Schilling, and Sussex County agricultural agent Steven Komar. Chiariello can be reached at 973-948-3040 or by email at lisa.chiariello@rutgers.edu.

Cecilia Diaz begins her career this month as ANR program associate II at Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Passaic County. Her duties include managing the Master Gardener program and focusing on home horticulture. In addition, her focus is on commercial horticulture and agriculture programming. Diaz can be reached at 973-305-5748 or by email at cd765@njaes.rutgers.edu.

Inside Science reports that researchers recently discovered that symbiotic microbes enter plant root tissues and cells by sliding into the space between cell membrane and walls. Plants extract nutrients from microbes by covering them with reactive oxygen to break down the cells. By staining the plant's reactive oxygen molecules brown, professor of plant pathology **Jim White**, Department of Plant Biology, and his research team made microbes visible under a microscope as they are digested. In addition to identifying the process called the rhizophagy cycle, they found that microbes that are beneficial for one plant may be bad for another. Introducing microbes to plants that weren't their normal hosts sometimes lead to stunted seedlings, inhibiting their survival. A trial on Japanese knotweed caused growth inhibition, indicating a potential development for weed control.

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Gloucester County agricultural agent **Michelle Infante-Casella** was appointed to lead Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension Farm Safety Program as a director to the Northeast Agricultural Safety and Health Coalition. She will cooperate with county agricultural agents **William Bamka** (Burlington) and **Stephen Komar** (Sussex) to coordinate the program with the coalition. The Rutgers team continues to provide extension programming for farm safety throughout New Jersey. National Farm Safety and Health Week, which was celebrated from September 16-22, featured a series of webinars, in cooperation with the AgriSafe Network, that focused on farm safety and health related to farm workers; children and tractor safety; respiratory health and personal protective equipment; confined space-grain bin entry; and optimizing health of the female agricultural producer.

Several Rutgers NJAES faculty and staff were recognized with awards at the American Society for Horticultural Science (ASHS) Annual Conference in Washington, DC, July 31-August 3. ASHS is a professional society for horticultural scientists committed to promoting and encouraging national and international interest in scientific research and education in all branches of horticulture. It represents a broad cross-section of the horticultural community - scientists, educators, students, landscape and turf managers, government, extension agents, and industry professionals.

Extension Division 2018 Award Winners:

- Outstanding Education Materials Award, Video Category – National Winner: Rutgers Ultra Niche Virtual Field Trip: Asparagus, **Carleo, J. et al.**
- Outstanding Educational Materials Award, Factsheet Category - National Winner: Red Leaves in the Vineyard - Biotic and Abiotic Causes, **Gohil, H., Ward, D., and Pavlis, G.**
- Outstanding Educational Materials Award, Bulletin Category - National Winner: On-farm Vineyard Trials - A Growers Guide, **Hemant Gohil et al.**

Poster Presentations:

- “On-Farm Readiness Review a Collaboration between the FDA, National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, USDA, State Extension Services and State Regulators,” **Kline, W., and Melendez, M., et al.**
- “Effects of Environment, Bine Age, and Cultivar on Chemical Quality Metrics of Hops Grown throughout New Jersey,” **Muehlbauer, M., Hlubik, D., Infante-Casella, M., Zorde, M., Pyne, R., and Simon, J.**
- “Evaluation of Fruit Quality of Five Novel Peach Cultivars and Advanced Selections, ‘Evelynn’, ‘Selena’, ‘Tiana’, ‘Brigantine’ and ‘Silverglo’,” **Ward, D. and Gohil, H.**

Of Interest:

Now available on NJAES Publications:

FS1295 Soil Fertility Recommendations for Producing Grass Hay. **Heckman, J.**

njaes.rutgers.edu/fs1295



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