

A REPORT FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DEAN
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
August 2019



Visit to the COOLroom (l-r): Brian Schilling; Frank Yesalavich; Grace Saba, assistant professor of marine and coastal sciences; Assemblyman Eric Houghtaling; Sam Coakley, doctoral candidate in marine and coastal sciences; and Dina Fonseca.

On July 18, New Jersey Assemblyman Eric Houghtaling was joined by NJAES executive director Robert Goodman, Rutgers Cooperative Extension director Brian Schilling, NJAES research director Brad Hillman, NJAES Board of Managers outgoing president Frank Yesalavich, and professor Dina Fonseca, who directs the Rutgers Center for Vector Biology, for an introduction to several important NJAES programs that have statewide impact. Assemblyman Houghtaling was provided with a thorough introduction to NJAES vector biology initiatives, including research and extension programs on mosquito and tick pests and the diseases they transmit, and insect surveillance using new environmental DNA (eDNA) detection methods. A visit to RU COOL – the Coastal Ocean Observation Lab in the

Department of Marine and Coastal Sciences followed the overview. The COOLroom tour included hands-on demonstrations with underwater Slocum gliders and discussions on hurricane intensity research, wind energy, search and rescue, water quality, and fisheries work. The Slocum Autonomous Underwater Vehicle is an integrated instrument platform designed to operate in the coastal oceans up to 1,000m in depth and communicate via satellite when surfacing, allowing scientists to acquire data from the gliders several times per day. These live data are integral to understanding the ocean in real-time.

On July 30, Senate President Steve Sweeney toured Rutgers' Food Innovation Center (South) – located in Bridgeton (Cumberland County) – which facilitates development and economic growth within the food industry. The Food Innovation Center is a food business incubation and international soft landings program with a second New Jersey location in the north (Piscataway). FIC and its network throughout the state provide a unique food industry resource, which supports domestic and international companies seeking to establish a presence in the U.S. Sweeney stated that "the [two] centers are an incredible asset to our state," noting that "the impact they've had on the economic development of our state's food industry is immeasurable."

On August 20, Senate President Steve Sweeney joined Senator Dawn Marie Addiego on a visit to the Rutgers NJAES EcoComplex in Bordentown (Mercer County). One of the leading environmental and energy centers in the U.S., the EcoComplex conducts research and outreach leading to the development and industrial application of innovative environmental/agricultural technologies, and focuses on ways to utilize biomass as a reliable energy source for New Jersey. "Looking to alternative energy sources is a top priority for New Jersey as we strive to transition our state to zero emissions by 2050. Institutionalizing the ability to harness energy from our waste would not only move us towards a healthier environment, but it would create economic development and jobs throughout the state as well," said Sweeney.

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Senator Addiego added that, “Technology has reached the point that allows us to look towards developing bio-based energy as a legitimate renewable energy industry in the state. We must take advantage of this valuable information to improve New Jersey environmentally and economically.”

Of Interest:

The following new and updated fact sheets are now available under NJAES Publications:

FS1306 Irrigating Your Orchard – Water Monitoring with a Tensiometer. Gohil, H. and Carleo, J. njaes.rutgers.edu/fs1306

FS1307 Stormwater Utilities in New Jersey – Frequently Asked Questions. Mangiafico, S., Rowe, A., and Yergeau, S. njaes.rutgers.edu/fs1307

FS1308 Crabgrass Control in Lawns for Homeowners in the Northern U.S. Elmore, M. and Tuck, D. njaes.rutgers.edu/fs1308

FS1309 Crabgrass and Goosegrass Identification and Control in Cool-Season Turfgrass for Professionals. Elmore, M. and Tuck, D. njaes.rutgers.edu/fs1309

FS1310 The Public and Their Animals: Regulations and Risks to Your Direct Market Farm. Melendez, M. and Kline, W. njaes.rutgers.edu/fs1310

Updated: FS619 Farm Machinery and Equipment Safety Part I: Recognizing and Understanding the Hazards. Margentino, M., Malinowski, K., and Malone, S. <https://njaes.rutgers.edu/fs619>

Events:

Food Business Basics Workshop & Training Session for Food Entrepreneurs

The Food Innovation Center is hosting a “Food Business Basics Workshop and Training Session” for early-stage entrepreneurs on September 9 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Rutgers EcoComplex, 1200 Florence-Columbus Road in Bordentown, NJ. The workshop is a unique opportunity for food entrepreneurs to learn critical aspects of entering or growing their business in the prepared food and beverage industry. Attendees will have access to important industry innovators who will give advice on how to create, commercialize, market, and sell in this competitive market.

\$249 per person registration fee. Lunch will be served.

To register: <http://bit.ly/FICFBB>. For more information, contact FIC@NJAES.rutgers.edu.

FSMA Produce Safety Rule Training

Training for food safety education certificate for the FSMA Produce Safety Rule or for a buyer-required third-party audit is available on September 11 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., at Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Mercer County, 1440 Parkside Avenue, Ewing, NJ.

\$50 covers the training, materials, certificate, and lunch.

To register: <https://tinyurl.com/y2zvf3yv>. For more information, contact Brandi or Katie at (856) 451-2800 x 1 or email BRANDIWI@co.cumberland.nj.us.

