

A REPORT FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DEAN
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
October 2019



William Errickson

William Errickson has joined the Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Department as County Agent III for Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) of Monmouth County, with special emphasis in commercial nursery crop and general horticulture innovation and production. Errickson, who is completing his Ph.D. in horticulture and plant technology at Rutgers, began on October 1. He has 15 years of experience in the agricultural sector and has taught diverse audiences from industry groups to college students. He holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Stockton University and a master's degree in soil science from the University of New Hampshire. Errickson's contact information is 732-431-7260, ext. 7261 or wje10@njaes.rutgers.edu.



Jennifer Sawyer

Jennifer Sawyer will be serving temporarily as the part-time commercial agricultural program associate for RCE of Cape May County while she continues to assist the county with consumer horticulture programming and inquiries. She will be the first point-of-contact for commercial agricultural production questions in Cape May County. Sawyer has two bachelor's degrees – one in Animal Sciences, with a concentration in equine science, from Rutgers, and the second in business, with a concentration in marketing, from the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. Her previous RCE experience includes Annie's Project-NJ, consumer horticulture, and the Master Gardner program in Cape May County. She will be in this part-time position until the ANR County Agent III position in Cape May is filled. Sawyer's contact information is 609-465-5115, ext. 3615 or sawyer@njaes.rutgers.edu.

On September 24, the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to announce the partnership between the County's "Grown in Monmouth" program and Rutgers NJAES to develop a hazelnut farmer demonstration research orchard at the **Rutgers Fruit and Ornamental Research Extension Center** in Cream Ridge, NJ. After more than 20 years of extensive research and development, Rutgers NJAES hazelnut breeding program, currently led by associate professor **Tom Molnar**, Department of Plant Biology, has produced four cultivars that are resistant to Eastern Filbert Blight (EFB). EFB is a fungus that attacks and kills hazelnut trees and is the primary limiting factor of hazelnut culture in the eastern U.S.

County marine agent **Doug Zemeckis** (Monmouth, Ocean, and Atlantic) collaborated with staff from the Cooperative Research Branch of NOAA Northeast Fisheries Science Center, and **Eleanor Bochenek**, director of the Fisheries Cooperative Center at Rutgers Haskin Shellfish Research Laboratory, to conduct two workshops with stakeholders of New Jersey's commercial and recreational fisheries. Titled "The Fishing Industry Stakeholder Engagement Meetings - Building Collaboration for the Future of Fisheries," the workshop aims were to share updates on cooperative research projects in the northeast region,



build community for developing effective cooperative research partnerships and projects, and identify research needs related to New Jersey's fisheries. The workshops were held in September at Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Ocean County and Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Cape May County.

James A. Murphy, Department of Plant Biology, was recognized with the Fred V. Grau Turfgrass Science Award by the Crop Science Society of America. This award is presented in recognition of significant career contributions in turfgrass science for the past 15 years.

Gloucester County agricultural agent **Hemant Gohil** was one of three National Finalists under 'Search for Excellence in Young Beginning or Small Farmers' category at the National Association of County Agricultural Agents Annual Meeting in Fort Wayne, IN, on September 10. Gohil's recognition is for the "Beginning Wine Grape Growers Program in New Jersey," which he developed with colleagues, Atlantic County agent **Gary Pavlis**, and extension specialists **Dan Ward** and **Peter Oudemans**, Department of Plant Biology.

In the News:

Produce such as sticky corn, jujube, gongura, bitterball, and kittley are native to the home countries of some of New Jersey's expanding ethnic communities. A feature on ethnic crops in the September issue of *Edible Jersey* highlighted Rutgers research in an interview with Atlantic county agent **Rick VanVranken** who noticed the growing interest in ethnic crops years ago. He, along with NJAES colleagues, teamed up with the University of Massachusetts' Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment and other organizations to create a resource for information on the growing, marketing, and availability of crops popular among immigrant populations in the northeastern U.S. The team developed the worldcrops.org website to assist farmers in growing and marketing ethnic produce.

The Star Ledger interviewed extension specialist in pest management **George Hamilton**, chair of the Department of Entomology, on this year's high levels of stink bugs. Hamilton said due to the very warm and dry temperatures on the east coast late into the summer, stink bugs may have had time to breed an extra generation before going into hibernation. This year's number is comparable to 2010—the last time large populations were seen on the East Coast—and Hamilton is seeing more adult stink bugs on New Jersey farms this fall than in recent years.

Events:

The Rutgers Equine Science Center will host its 2019 "Evening of Science & Celebration" on November 14 from 6 - 9 p.m. at the Cook Student Center in New Brunswick, NJ. For additional information, contact the Equine Science Center at 848-932-9419 or Kyle Hartmann at kylehart@njaes.rutgers.edu.

Urban Annie's Project Farm Management and Business Training Course for New Jersey farm women and military veterans - December 3, 10, 17, 2019 and January 7, 14, 21, 2020, 6-9:00 p.m. For registration and more information go to: <https://ce-catalog.rutgers.edu/coursedisplay.cfm?schID=78024>

