

A REPORT FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DEAN
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
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(L to R) Timothy Bourgeois, Wesley Bouchelle, Joe Florentine, John Bombardiere

Among NJAES' eight farms that are used to support plant research activities and deliver critical programs to the agricultural community is Horticultural Farm III (Hort Farm 3), located about a mile from the George H. Cook campus in New Brunswick. After two years of intensive renovation, Hort Farm 3 will re-open for field trials and other programs this Spring 2021. Faculty director for Hort Farm 3, associate professor **Tom Molnar**, Department of Plant Biology, acknowledged the vision of former NJAES director of research **Brad Hillman** in making the needed investments, which continue under NJAES senior associate director **Peggy Brennan**, director of administration and strategic development.

Thanks to the efforts of **Joe Florentine**, associate director of farm and greenhouse operations, and the Hort Farm 3 crew, which includes research farm supervisor **John Bombardiere**, and head soils and plants technicians **Timothy Bourgeois**, and **Wesley Bouchelle** the farm will operate as a state-of-the-art facility. Notable improvements include:

- Removal of unsound/obsolete greenhouses and buildings.
- Construction of a new pole barn.
- Field reclamation/soil improvement involving pH correction and cover-crop planting.
- Installation of more than 5,500 feet of new irrigation pipe across the farm.
- Installation of electrical upgrades to increase energy efficiency and eliminate the need for a diesel irrigation pump.
- Repairs and installation of deer fencing.
- Installation of a swale to better manage water flow and provide erosion control.
- The purchase of new equipment such as tractors and other implements.
- New signage and installation of an automatic entry gate.

A new nursery educational track was added to the virtual educational component of the New Jersey Agricultural Convention and Tradeshow. Agriculture agents for nursery crops, **Timothy Waller** (Cumberland) and **Bill Errickson** (Monmouth), chaired two sessions, providing information on emerging and persistent green industry problems.

James Murphy, specialist in the Department of Plant Biology and director of the Center for Turfgrass Science, is the principal investigator on the project, "Bentgrass cultivar and autumn-applied fungicide timing effects on spring suppression of dollar spot." Co-principal investigators include **Bruce Clarke**, extension specialist in turfgrass pathology, and **Ning Zhang**, professor,



both in the Department of Plant Biology, and doctoral students **Pingyuan Zhang** and **Glen Groben**. The two-year project is funded by the U.S. Golf Association at \$60,000.

Serpil Guran, director of the Rutgers EcoComplex, is the principal investigator on several recent grants. Two of these include “Providing Technical Assistance to New Jersey Wineries: Achieving Pollution Prevention through Energy Efficiency and Discharge Reduction from Winery Operations,” which started on December 1, 2020, and “Economic Analysis of the use of Anaerobic Digestion for Processing Food Waste in Bergen County,” which will assess the economic feasibility of potential innovative waste reutilization approaches for underprivileged areas in Northern Jersey.

Of Interest:

The following new bulletins are available on [NJAES Publications](#):

[E365: Sulfur Nutrition and Soil Fertility Management for New Jersey Crops](#). **Heckman, J.**

[E367: Coyotes in New Jersey: History, Ecology, and Management](#). **Kerwin, K., Shu, K., Crosby, C., and Maslo, B.**

In the News:

Robin Brumfield, extension specialist in farm management, Department of Agriculture, Food, and Resource Economics, was featured in the article, “[International Floricultural Expert Teaches Women to Manage Business Risks](#),” in *Lancaster Farming*.

County agent **Hemant Gohil** (Gloucester) was interviewed by *Fruit Growers News* in the article, “[Low-tech strategies for fighting frost shouldn’t be ignored](#).”

Tap Into quoted agricultural agent **Gary Pavis** (Atlantic) in [Cheers! Celebrate National Drink Wine Day New Jersey Style](#).

Events:

Pepper Weevil Management and Research Priorities: Online Zoom Meeting, March 3, 2021, 1-3 pm. Pepper growers, agribusiness professionals, and extension personnel are invited to attend a virtual meeting to discuss current pepper weevil management tactics and to set research priorities. Since 2006, at least one farm every growing season has been infested with pepper weevil. So far, timely spraying has occasionally been successful in eliminating weevils while insecticide applications have only suppressed weevil populations. Pheromone traps are useful in detecting weevils, but often fields are infested before the weevils are trapped. What else can be done? What are the priorities in attempting to manage weevils? To learn more, register at go.rutgers.edu/3bm2r3xl.

