

EXECUTIVE DEAN OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
June 2021



Kathleen Morgan

Professor and interim chair of the Family & Community Health Sciences Department (FCHS) **Kathleen Morgan** has retired, effective June 1. Morgan was the FCHS educator for Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) of Hunterdon County before serving as department chair for 12 years prior to stepping down in 2018, and again served as interim chair from Fall 2019 until her retirement. She joined RCE in 1993 and built a national reputation around her expertise in individual and community health promotion, nutrition, worksite wellness, and healthy aging. Throughout her career, she brought an unwavering commitment to improve the health and well-being of individuals, reduce the incidence and impacts of chronic disease, and advance health equity. FCHS educators **Luanne Hughes** (Gloucester) and **Daryl Minch** (Somerset) will serve as interim co-chairs for the department during an external search to fill the position.



Rosebell Red pepper

A certificate of plant variety protection will be issued for the Rutgers "Rosebell Red" pepper, a unique habanero developed from a field cross between African and Mexican habanero peppers. It was evaluated at Rutgers research farms in south and central Jersey between 2010 and 2019, and was developed by **Albert Ayeni**, ethnic crop specialist, **Tom Orton**, specialist in vegetable breeding, and **Jim Simon**, distinguished professor of natural plant products, who have been evaluating the agricultural attributes of more than 40 exotic hot peppers at the research farms. "Rosebell Red" is distinct in large fruit size, wall firmness, and attractive rosebell-like fruit shape and has a bright, glossy red color. A sauce produced from the pepper was found to have excellent flavor and consistency, with moderate heat. It was selectively developed over years of breeding and is ready for release into the market. Solicitations will be made for licensee or seed companies, with a demonstration plot for viewing at Hort Farm III in New Brunswick this summer along with Rutgers Pumpkin Habanero. These fields are being grown to connect with seed companies and others and will be open for visitation in August/early September.

The National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA) is an organization of professional extension educators that furthers the professional improvement of its members. Each year NACAA recognizes professional excellence in Cooperative Extension nationwide through its annual conference. Rutgers Cooperative Extension agents have been selected as state, regional, and national winners for the 2021 NACAA annual award program. National winners include **Joel Flagler** (Distinguished Service Award) and **Megan Muehlbauer** (Achievement Award). The awards will be presented at the NACAA virtual annual conference July 6-9. All the award recipients from New Jersey are listed at [NACAA Award Winners](#).



Of Interest

Farm market customers can find free information on safe home food preservation of farm fresh produce thanks to a new [website](#) designed to preserve the harvest and launched by the RCE Department of Family and Community Health Sciences (FCHS). The website provides free access to a bounty of preservation resources, including techniques such as freezing, dehydrating, and canning in glass jars. Users will also be able to find reliable recordings, classes, links, and tested recipes for some of their favorite produce. The new website also serves farm market operators who can download and print a full-color mini-poster designed for display.

FCHS has also just launched its redesigned website with a new look, new links, and information. For one-stop shopping for worksite wellness, nutrition, health information, and more, there are fact sheets, newsletters, recipes, webinars, and videos: [Family & Community Health Sciences \(Rutgers NJAES\)](#).

Black Locust is a fast-growing tree with attributes that make it a valuable crop to grow. This species is well adapted to New Jersey and is often found growing where soils were once disturbed. Locust wood is very hard, durable, and decay-resistant, and there is little swelling or shrinkage with changes in humidity, making it a good alternative to treated lumber. Demand is increasing for fence posts and lumber from black locust trees because certified organic farms are prohibited from using pressure-treated lumber for fence posts or other structures in contact with soil, feed, or animals. Other agricultural uses spurring demand for locust posts are trellises for wine grapes, garden stakes, and tall structures for growing hops. Soil fertility specialist **Joe Heckman** provides a comprehensive review of growing and using black locust in [The Soil Profile, Vol. 26](#).

The following new bulletin is now available on [NJAES Publications](#):
[E369 Climate Change Impacts on New Jersey's Marine Fisheries](#). **Kitchel, Z.** and **Zemeckis, D.**

Governor Murphy issued recent executive orders that lift many of the public health and safety protocols implemented to slow community transmission of COVID-19. The most sweeping changes are embodied in [Executive Order 242](#), which addresses the rescinding or easing of previous orders governing requirements for gathering and capacity limits, mask use, and social distancing. In alignment with Governor Murphy's executive actions, Rutgers Cooperative Extension faculty, staff, and volunteer leaders now have increased flexibility to organize and host off-campus, in-person extension programs, meetings, and related activities. RCE can develop and deliver outdoor programs with no group size limits, social distancing or mask requirements. For the comfort of faculty, staff, volunteers, and participants, it is nevertheless advisable to maintain distancing, when feasible. Masks will not be required in outdoor program settings, however, RCE strongly encourages their use. Please visit your county Extension website for current programming information: [Cooperative Extension County Offices \(Rutgers NJAES\)](#).

