



NOVEMBER 2022

Cranberry Bog Visit by Rutgers President and Rutgers-NB Chancellor-Provost



L-R: Francine Conway, Bill Haynes, Pres. Jonathan Holloway and Laura Lawson.

Rutgers President Jonathan Holloway and his family, along with Rutgers New Brunswick Chancellor-Provost Francine Conway, NJAES Executive Director and Executive Dean of the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences **Laura Lawson**, and several NJAES leaders visited the New Jersey Pinelands in late October. They participated in this year's cranberry harvest and experienced, first-hand, the process of moving the berries into a conveyor for cleaning and loading into a truck. The tour was organized by **Peter Oudemans**, director of the [Philip E. Marucci Center for Blueberry and Cranberry Research and Extension](#), and hosted by Bill Haines, owner of [Pine Island Cranberry Company, Inc.](#) Rutgers cranberry breeding program at the Marucci Center has released seven patented cranberry varieties with increased productivity and fruit quality. The cultivars have received wide acceptance and are being

extensively planted and grown in all U.S. cranberry growing states and Canadian provinces, as well as in Chile. [New Jersey is annually among the top three producers of cranberries in the U.S.](#), according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

FIC Hosts Food Business Basics Workshop for Food Entrepreneurs



John Lawson of Whole Foods Market makes his presentation to workshop attendees at FIC on Nov. 3.

[Rutgers Food Innovation Center](#) (FIC) hosted the *Food Business Basics Workshop* for early-stage entrepreneurs on Nov. 3. The workshop, which attracted more than 50 attendees, provided a unique opportunity for food entrepreneurs to learn the critical aspects of entering or growing their business in the prepared food and beverage industry. Joe Atchison III, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, who also serves as director of the Division of Marketing and Development, NJDA, provided the welcome, while John Lawson, Senior

Local Forager for the Northeast region of Whole Foods Market, offered the industry perspective in a presentation and Q&A. Attendees benefited from a wide range of expertise focused on how to create, commercialize, market, and sell in a competitive market. Topics included consumer trends, brand strategy, packaging trends, accounting basics, business structure, protecting intellectual property, co-manufacturing, sales strategy, and food safety. FIC, which was launched in 2000 as a unique food business incubation and economic development program, provides business and technology expertise to startup and established food and value-added agricultural businesses, locally and globally.

On-Farm Readiness Review Tool and Training Curriculum to Help Farmers

Wesley Kline, agricultural agent, RCE of Cumberland County, and **Meredith Melendez**, agricultural agent, RCE of Mercer County, are part of a team of extension professionals and state and national regulatory staff convened by the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture. This team developed the On-Farm Readiness Review (OFRR) to support farm operations regarding compliance with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule (PSR). The OFRR tool was created to align the FSMA product safety rule provisions with relevant farming practices. It also linked recommendations for implementation of produce safety rules requirements and offered evaluation criteria to assess PSR compliance before inspection. The tool was used to create a training curriculum for those who would provide an OFRR to farms nationally. The tool and curriculum served as a pilot for participants to evaluate their effectiveness. Feedback from the pilot will inform additional development of a final product. Between 2017 and 2019, 34 in-person trainings were held in 20 states, with 498 regulators and educators trained. Trainees were taught how to use the tool to conduct a confidential on-farm assessment of a farm's readiness for a FSMA PSR inspection. The tools and training have had a beneficial impact on participants understanding of the FSMA PSR, have increased the assessors' ability to apply the PSR to the farm, and have developed trained assessor teams that are able to evaluate inspectional readiness in their home state.

Of Interest

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

[FS1349: Marine Plants & Insights Into Global Seagrass Issues with a New Jersey Focus](#)

Elizabeth "Z" Lacey (Stockton University) and **Zemeckis, D**

[FS1351: Introduction to Aquaponics Systems](#) **Yergeau, S., Zemeckis, D. and VanVranken, R.**

[FS1326sp: Prevención y Control de Chinchas de Cama para Personal Sanitario](#) (Spanish-language version) (Bed Bug Prevention and Control for Health Workers) **Abbar, S.; Wang, C.; Cooper, R.; and Toledo, A.**

Delma Yorimoto is the [new Family and Community Health Sciences Senior Program Coordinator in Hudson County](#) and will lead produce prescription, nutrition security, and food policy efforts in the county in her new role. Delma has more than eight years of experience working with the SNAP-Education program in New York and New Jersey.

Grants

James Simon, Distinguished Professor of Plant Biology and director of the New Use Agriculture and Natural Plant Products Program, and **Andrew Wyenandt**, vegetable crops extension specialist in plant pathology, were awarded a five-year, \$3,210,244 grant from USDA-NIFA for the project, "Investigating the genetic basis of downy mildew and bacterial leaf spot resistance in basil (*ocimum spp.*) using advanced genomic techniques."

Events

Food Safety Modernization Act Grower Training and Third Party Audit Training on Dec. 7, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Rutgers Agricultural Research and Extension Center (RAREC), 121 Northville Rd., Bridgeton, NJ. This training meets the FDA requirements for FSMA Produce Rule Training. For more information and to register online, visit rutgersonfarmfoodafety.eventbrite.com.

Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.