

September 2023

Snyder Farm Annual Open House and Tomato Tasting



Peter Nitzsche, RCE agent for Morris County and director of Snyder Farm, Rutgers President Jonathan Holloway, and Laura Lawson, executive director, NJAES.

[Rutgers Snyder Research and Extension Farm](#) hosted its [Open House and Tomato Tasting](#) on August 30. Rutgers President Jonathan Holloway and NJAES Executive Director Laura Lawson were among the attendees at the 390-acre farm, which serves as the Rutgers University Center for Sustainable Agriculture. Visitors sampled more than 50 tomato varieties grown by Snyder Farm staff and Rutgers Master Gardener volunteers. A new tomato variety called “Two Tasty”—a flavorful large, red cherry tomato with purple shoulders, was a crowd favorite. The annual event offers new activities and experiences for visitors, including wagon tours of the farm and stunning

garden displays that are maintained by the Rutgers Master Gardeners, who are vital members of the research team and the farm community.

Rutgers Collaborates with NJDEP on Creation of Climate Change Learning Stations



Climate Change Learning Station at Cheesequake State Park.

Five Climate Change Learning Stations [were unveiled by NJDEP to mark NJ Climate Week 2023](#). The learning stations are located in state parks along shorelines and provide visitors with an overview about climate change, changing shorelines, and coastal resilience and defense. Each learning station features a [MyCoast](#) photo documentation station that encourages visitors to participate in a citizen science project to chronicle climate change impacts over time. The photo documentation stations are made possible through DEP’s partnership with [Rutgers Department of Marine and Coastal Sciences](#) and [Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve](#) (managed by NJAES), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the MyCoast New Jersey website. The photo documentation stations enable DEP and interested stakeholders to better understand long-term changes to the state’s shorelines and inform management decisions.

RCE Hosts Agri-Technology and Vegetable Research Twilight Meeting

On August 16, Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) conducted the Agri-Technology and Vegetable Research Twilight Meeting at the [Rutgers Agricultural Research and Extension Center](#) (RAREC), Upper Deerfield. **Wesley Kline**, agricultural agent, RCE of Cumberland County, facilitated the meeting that drew 50 growers and industry professionals to view the new agrivoltaics demonstration field and hear directly from **David Specca**, Rutgers Agrivoltaics Program lead, and **Dan Ward**, director of RAREC, who spoke about plans. New technologies are critical to the competitiveness of the ag industry. To this end,

Thierry Besancon, extension weed science specialist for specialty crops, demonstrated an autonomous seeder and weeder for limited acreage producers that will reduce the amount of hand labor. This technology fits with the increased use of drones in agricultural settings and **Peter Oudemans**, director of the P.E. Marucci Center for Blueberry and Cranberry Research and Extension, reviewed his drone research on crop health. **Raul Cabrera**, associate extension specialist in nursery production and management, reviewed the agricultural-industrial hemp project funded by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture to determine the viability of agronomic production and industrial end uses. Pest management continues to be an important aspect of research and **Andy Wyenandt**, extension specialist in vegetable pathology, discussed how to control bacterial leaf spot in peppers and tomatoes with resistant varieties since the main chemical control is copper-based fungicides that are becoming resistant to the disease. Wyenandt also reviewed genetic resistance, cultural practices, and fungicides for controlling Phytophthora blight, the most economically damaging vegetable disease in the state.

RCE Completes Multi-year Project to Improve Water Quality in the Metedeconk River

Steven Yergeau, RCE agent for Ocean and Atlantic counties, this summer wrapped up a multi-year, \$597,000 grant funded by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to improve the water quality of the Metedeconk River. The river is a source of drinking water for residents of Ocean and Monmouth counties and provides a significant amount of freshwater discharge to the Barnegat Bay estuary. The primary water quality impairments identified were stormwater runoff and associated nonpoint source pollution from developed areas. The project, which is located at the corner of Cook Road and Hyson Road in Jackson, consisted of removing the low flow channels and replacing them with rock check dams and naturalizing the detention basin with native plants and soil amendments to infiltrate water to treat any stormwater before discharge into the Metedeconk River. The detention basin retrofit was completed in collaboration with the Brick Township Municipal Utilities Authority, Jackson Township, and Bohler Engineering. The goal of the collaborative project was to slow down the flow of water through the basin and enable it to be infiltrated back into the soil.

Of Interest

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

[FS1353: Invasive Plants and Native Alternatives for Landscaping](#)

Bakacs, M. and Errickson, W.

[FS1354: Major Insect Pests of Cranberries in New Jersey](#)

Ben-Zvi, Y. and Rodriguez-Saona, C.

Recent Hires

Tess Stahl is a [new assistant extension specialist](#) in the Department of Animal Sciences, leading research and outreach programs to NJ livestock farms, with particular focus on ruminant animals.

James Shope is a new assistant extension specialist in climate services in the Department of Environmental Sciences whose work addresses climate change hazards and community impacts.

Recent Publications

Two recent publications by marine scientists underscore the importance of our marine ecosystems.

[Coastal Landscapes: South Jersey from the Air](#) captures the wide array of habitats of the New Jersey coast, from the Pine Barrens to beaches. [Climate Change and Estuaries](#) showcases the value of estuaries and the threats posed by climate change, and marked National Estuaries Week (Sept. 16-23).

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