

March 2025

Rutgers NJAES at New Jersey Agricultural Convention



Laura Lawson, SEBS Executive Dean and NAES Executive Director, addressed delegates at the NJ Agricultural Convention and Trade Show, [underscoring the pivotal role of NJAES and its crucial statewide partnership in ensuring the viability and success of the agricultural industry in New Jersey](#). As the state's land-grant institution, Rutgers deploys its extensive research and outreach to address current and emerging needs of the agricultural community.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension Convenes Annual Conference



Rutgers Cooperative Extension's 2025 conference, "Cultivating Connection: Building a Culture of Communication," [attracted more than 230 attendees from all NJAES units](#). RCE Director Brian Schilling called 2024 a very strong year, noting the sustained advocacy and support for extension across the state. He noted the results of a 2024 assessment of RCE's reach in New Jersey, which encompassed the direct delivery of services, resources and educational programs to more than 258,000 individuals across New Jersey.

James Oehmke is New NJAES Director of Economic Development



James Oehmke, a distinguished policy economist, has been named NJAES Director of Economic Development and Chair of the Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics (DAFRE). Oehmke leads efforts to strengthen Rutgers' responsiveness to our state's needs for economic development in the area of agriculture, food, and environmental resources, and will connect this work to the research and teaching opportunities within DAFRE and the university.

Thomas Grothues Appointed Director of Rutgers University Marine Field Station



Thomas Grothues, associate research professor in the Department of Marine and Coastal Sciences and research coordinator of the Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve, was appointed Director of the Rutgers University Marine Field Station (RUMFS). Uniquely situated across from the Little Egg Inlet in the Mullica River-Great Bay estuary, RUMFS anchors the university's marine research, conservation and technology development being based at the edge of the mid-Atlantic Ocean.

Of Interest

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

[E376: Beech Leaf Disease & Experimental Management Options](#)

Epiphan, J., Buckley, R., Waller, T., and Dvorin, R.

[FS1057: Smart Food Choices: Healthy Meals and Snacks for Families](#)

Ensle, K., Zellers, C. and Paladines, N.

[FS1058: Smart Food Choices: Breakfast](#)

Ensle, K., Zellers, C. and Paladines, N.

[FS1104: Eating Together - Eating Well: Making it a Priority](#)

Cirignano, S.

[FS1118: Rain Barrels Part II: Installation and Use](#)

Bakacs, M. and Haberland, M.

[FS1126: Jersey Summer Shore Safety: Expired Marine Flares](#)

Yergeau, S.

[FS1216: Cyanobacteria \(Blue-Green Algae\) in Waterways](#)

Haberland, M.

[FS1361: Anthracnose Fruit Rot in Highbush Blueberry](#)

Sousa, R. and Oudemans, P.

[FS1363: Scald in Cranberry Fruit: Part 1 Understanding Causes](#)

Oudemans, P. and Mupambi, G.

Recent Retirements

Thomas Leustek, professor in the Department of Plant Biology, has retired [after 40 years at Rutgers](#).

Mike Westendorf, animal sciences extension specialist and professor, has retired [after 31 years at Rutgers](#).

Joel Flagler, RCE Agriculture and Natural Resources agent and extension department head of Bergen County and professor, has retired [after 38 years at Rutgers](#).

Recent Grants

Timothy Waller, RCE agriculture and natural resources agent of Cumberland County, is the principal investigator of the project, "Is Phytophthora Vexans Causing Disease in Christmas Trees?" funded at \$25,125 by the Real Christmas Tree Board.

Ming-Yi Chou, assistant extension specialist in the Department of Plant Biology, is the principal investigator of the project, "Development of a Disease Risk Evaluation Service Using a Pathogen Quantification Assay to Guide Precision Fungicide Application in Turfgrass Landscapes in New Jersey." This project is funded at \$39,994 by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture.

Anne Nielsen, associate extension specialist in the Department of Entomology, is the principal investigator of the project, "Refining Multi-Insect Management in Peach," funded at \$21,000 by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

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