Faculty and Staff Activities and Accomplishments

The following awards were presented at the 2007 National Association of Extension 4-H Agents Conference in Atlanta, GA on October 25, 2007: Laura Bovitz, Middlesex County 4-H agent, received a National Met Life Foundation Award of Excellence (along with a $1,000 award) and a Northeast Regional Excellence in Camping Award. Bovitz and Abigail Kesely, Middlesex County 4-H program assistant, received a Northeast Regional Communicators Award for Periodical Publication–Team. Debi Cole, Atlantic County 4-H agent, received the National Meritorious Service Award. Macy Compton, state 4-H program coordinator, and Bovitz received a National Beyond Youth Leadership Award Grant. Gloria Kraft, Burlington County 4-H agent, Rachel Everett Lyons, Morris County 4-H agent, and Curtis Myers received the Regional Power of Youth Award. Lyons, Kraft, and James Stanmore, received the Northeast Regional Communicators Award for Video Program. Ginny Powell, department chair, received the National 25-Year Service Award. Chad Ripberger, Mercer County 4-H agent; Debi Cole, Laura Bovitz, and Rachel Lyons received the National Excellence in Teen Programming (Team). Chad Ripberger also received the National Achievement in Service Award. Alayne Torretta, Warren County 4-H agent, received the National Distinguished Service Award. Jerome L. Frecon, Gloucester County agricultural agent, received the 2007 Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension Award of Excellence for Extension faculty presented at the 2007 Annual Extension Conference by Karyn Malinowski, director of Cooperative Extension. Recipients received a plaque and a $1,000 stipend for research and/or professional development.

The Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education awarded the eXtension Financial Security for All Leadership team the Outstanding Consumer Financial Information Award at its annual conference in Tampa, FL, last month. Barbara O’Neill, extension specialist, is a member of the winning team.

The Rutgers NJAES Food Innovation Center is piloting a program to serve food and beverage exporters, importers, packers, processors, and producers. This program will enable product design, development, analysis, commercialization, and ongoing manufacturing of products for sale to U.S. and worldwide retail and foodservice markets. New Jersey businesses seeking to export, enter the market, expand distribution, or license production will be provided with assistance and guidance in the areas of developing and implementing a marketing strategy, adapting products and packaging to local market and product design, development, and manufacturing.

Alan Robock (Environmental Sciences) has been informed that his talk at the October 24 Geological Society of Washington (GSW) meeting on “Nuclear Winter Revisited: Climatic Consequences of Nuclear Conflict Using Current Nuclear arsenals” was awarded first place for the Bradley Prize in the Best Paper category. The award consists of an inscribed silver bowl and a check for $200. The prize was presented in early December at the GSW Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C.
Rutgers NJAES Director Mark Robson and a delegation from IR-4 attended the Global Minor Use Summit earlier this month, the first meeting of its kind. Organized by the U.S. IR-4 Project, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Global Minor Use Summit aimed to improve the protection of specialty crops in industrialized and developing countries, facilitate the trade of agricultural commodities internationally, and educate others on the IR-4 specialty crop model. Among those who attended were regulatory officials, members of commodity groups, researchers, and representatives from agricultural consulting and agrochemical companies. Attending from Rutgers were Jerry Baron, IR-4 executive director; Dan Kunkel, IR-4 associate director; Tammy White, IR-4 project quality assurance manager; and Sherrilynn Novack, IR-4 publications and communications manager.

Nurgul Fitzgerald (Nutritional Sciences) was appointed to the New Jersey Diabetes Advisory Council by Department of Health and Senior Services Commissioner Fred M. Jacobs. The Council is being established as a part of the requirement of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Cooperative Agreement with state-based programs to incorporate multidisciplinary planning efforts to reduce the burden of diabetes.

Malcolm Watford (Nutritional Sciences) has been named an external reviewer for the Promotion Committee at United Arab Emirates University, College of Food & Agriculture in Al Ain, United Arab Emirates.

Judy Snow, associate director of the Biotechnology Center for Agriculture and the Environment, was honored November 29 at the Missouri Botanical Garden (MBG) on the completion of six years as secretary of the advisory board of the William L. Brown Center for Plant Genetic Resources and five years as secretary/treasurer of the journal Diversity. The journal’s activities were transferred to the MBG in 2001. The William L. Brown Center supports many activities related to the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources worldwide.

NJN News interviewed Lena Struwe and Jason Grabosky (both of Ecology, Evolution, and Natural Resources) about their Metasequoia work for the evening news program, which aired October 27.

Student Activities and Accomplishments

Jessica Ware (graduate program in Entomology) has been named by the Eastern Branch of the Entomological Society of America (ESA) as this year’s recipient of the John Henry Comstock Graduate Student award. The award aims to promote interest in entomology at the graduate level and to stimulate interest in attending the ESA Annual Meeting. Each award consists of an all-expenses-paid trip to the meeting, a $100 cash prize, and a certificate.

The research of Inga La Puma and Jason Turnure (both in the graduate program in Ecology and Evolution) was featured in the 10th anniversary publication of the program for Graduate Research Fellowships for the National Estuarine Research Reserve. La Puma’s three-year fellowship focus is to study the effects of fire and other disturbance in estuary watersheds. Turnure has a two-year fellowship to tag and track the movements of weakfish.
Patricia Alvarez (graduate program in Ecology and Evolution) was a participant in the Third Tropical Ecology, Assessment, and Monitoring (TEAM) Network Science Meeting in Panama City, Panama, November 4–7. The TEAM network, led by Conservation International, with long-term funding from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, develops a global network of sites and scientists to monitor quantitative trends in biodiversity using standardized methods, to make this data publicly available, and to forecast changes in biodiversity. The Network Science Meeting was co-hosted by the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute’s Center for Tropical Forest Science (CTFS). Alvarez represented Peru-Manu National Park-Cocha Cashu Biological Station, future site for TEAM and CTFS. Alvarez participated in the development of the plant phenology and functional traits protocols and was one of the judges for the poster session.

Grants and Fundraising Efforts

Carl Pray (Agriculture, Food, and Resource Economics) has been notified of a $562,400 grant in support of an assessment of the potential long-term impact in Asia of the Rockefeller Foundation’s investment from 1985 to 2000 in drought-tolerant rice research and technology transfer activities. The grant period begins January 2008 and extends through the end of the year 2010. Collaborators in India, China, and Thailand will assist with the assessment.

Gef Flimlin, Ocean County Marine Agent, and Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Ocean County received $10,000 for “Supplemental Funding for Barnegat Bay Shellfish Restoration Program” from Ocean County.

Jerome L. Frecon, Gloucester County Agricultural agent, received $4,900 for his research, “Testing and Evaluation of Peach and Nectarine Cultivars,” from The New Jersey Peach Council. He also received $3,000 for his project, “Testing and Evaluation of Peach and Nectarine Cultivars,” from The New Jersey State Horticultural Society.

Chad Ripberger, Mercer County 4-H agent, received $20,000 from the City of Trenton’s Department of Recreation, Natural Resources, and Culture for youth development programming in their after-school sites and summer day camps.

Ed Rhodes, Sandy Macfarlane, and Gef Flimlin, Ocean County marine agent, received $220,115 over two years for “The Development of a Code of Practice and Best Management Practices for East Coast Shellfish Growers” from the USDA Northeastern Regional Aquaculture Center to East Coast Shellfish Growers Association.

Publications and Editorships

Daniel Hoffman (Nutritional Sciences) was appointed as executive editor of the journal Appetite.

Steven Gray, Rebecca Jordan, and David Howe (all of Ecology, Evolution, and Natural Resources) had the following book chapters published:

“Atlantic Ocean” and “Oceanic Changes,” both in Encyclopedia of Climate Change and Global Warming.
Joan Ehrenfeld (Ecology, Evolution, and Natural Resources) has been invited to serve as an associate editor for the Journal of Hydrology.

Conferences, Seminars, and Other Events

On December 1, members of the New Jersey Arborists Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture (NJAISA) gathered on the G. H. Cook Campus for the 2007 NJAISA Work Day. Work days provide an opportunity for members to donate their time, equipment, and other resources to institutions each year, while learning about new techniques and technologies.

A Fruit Variety Showcase of 280 samples of peach, nectarine, plum, apple, and wine grape cultivars was coordinated and staged by Jerome Frecon, Gloucester County agricultural agent, on September 5 in Clayton, New Jersey. Sixty-five growers, nurserymen, and fruit breeders from Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York, Michigan, and New Jersey evaluated samples and attended presentations on development and performance. Joe Goffreda presented samples and information on Rutgers NJAES peach and nectarine cultivars, and Dan Ward presented samples and discussed a group of new Italian grape cultivars.

Jerome Frecon organized and chaired a twilight fruit research meeting, tour, and picnic at the Rutgers Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Upper Deerfield Township in late June. Specialists Norm Lalancette, Bradley Majek, Peter Shearer, and Dan Ward, as well as Rutgers NJAES Research Professor Joe Goffreda and Rutgers NJAES Director Mark Robson, led a team of speakers who shared educational information and demonstrated the latest fruit science research and technology with an emphasis on peaches and wine grapes at the center to 111 growers and allied industry members.

A short course and field training “Equine Farm and Land Management” was held October 5–6 in Freehold and Allentown, NJ. The sessions were organized by Equine Science Specialist Carey Williams and Monmouth County Agricultural Agent Bill Sciarappa. Approximately 80 participants attended these Equine Science Center sponsored/USDA-SARE grant-supported sessions. Presentations were made by Karyn Malinowski, director of Cooperative Extension; Daniel Kluchinski, ARMA department chair; William Bamka, Burlington County agricultural agent; Stephen Komar, Sussex County agricultural agent; Chris Obropta, water quality specialist; Sciarappa; Williams; and USDA-NRCS representatives.

The 2007 Master Gardener Fall Conference was held on October 13 at the Cook Campus Center. Over 200 Master Gardener volunteers attended, and individual and team accomplishment awards were presented. The Master Gardener Program trains volunteers, who then donate their time to local outreach programs and communication efforts across the state as part of their annual certification process. In 2006, 18 county-based programs trained 328 new Master Gardener interns. A total of 1,760 certified Master Gardeners volunteered 122,946 hours during the year, valued at nearly $2.7 million. Since its founding in 1984, the program has trained 4,381 residents who have provided 1.08 million volunteer hours valued at $19.8 million.
Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County hosted the Coastal Watershed Seminar Series in collaboration with the Urban Coast Institute of Monmouth University on October 20. An EPA Region 2 sponsored seminar titled “Streamside Living in Monmouth County” was moderated by Monmouth County Agricultural Agent Bill Sciarappa and Monmouth University Dean John Tiedemann. Designed to educate homeowners about impacts on local streams and coastal water bodies, the agenda featured “Taking Action” presentations on “Sound Landscaping” by Middlesex County Agricultural Agent Bill Hlubik, “Sound Gardening” by Monmouth County Master Gardener Carol Smith, and “Rain Garden Construction” by Sciarappa and Monmouth County Program Assistant Vivian Quinn. The sessions ended with an on-site tour of the demonstration projects around the county agriculture building, including the rain garden, butterfly garden, youth garden, and sustainable gardening sites created by the Monmouth County Extension team. Approximately 40 people attended.

Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension personnel collaborated with the N.J. Environmental Federation, N.J. Department of Environmental Protection, and others to develop and conduct training focusing on landscape and turf components for school district IPM programs. Five sessions have been held:

• October 4, Montclair: 96 attended with 11 attending break-out sessions. Madeline Flahive DiNardo, Union County agricultural agent, presented.
• October 25, Colts Neck: 93 attended with about 20 attending break-out sessions. Bill Hlubik, Middlesex County agricultural agent, presented.
• October 29, Edison: 36 school staff attended, including 20 principals and 16 facility managers. Bill Hlubik presented.
• November 1, Bridgewater: 99 principals and facility managers/maintenance staff attended the school at Somerset VoTech. Madeline Flahive DiNardo presented.
• November 7, Camden: 37 head custodian/facilities staff attended at the Catto School. Mary Cummings, Gloucester County program associate, presented.

New Jersey Agricultural Society President Jim Giamarese and Vice President Brian Schilling (Food Policy Institute) presented awards to more than 30 winners of the Agriculture in the Classroom, Learning through Gardening Program’s 2007 Poster and Essay Contest. The focus of this year’s contest, part of the national Farm-City Week, was “Where Does Your Pizza Come From?” Children in kindergarten through third grade created posters, while students in the fourth and fifth grades wrote essays exploring the role of agriculture in their lives. The event was held at the State Auditorium on November 21, 2007.

Tony Broccoli (Environmental Sciences) was a keynote speaker at the statewide Environmental Congress of the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions at Mercer County Community College in West Windsor, NJ, on October 12. His talk was entitled “The Climate Ahead: Global Changes and Local Impacts.”

Please send contributions, photos, and questions to Amanda Kolling, kolling@aesop.rutgers.edu. Photos must be of high resolution and should add to the editorial value of a submission. Issues of the Dean’s Monthly Message are published on the last Monday of each month. Deadline for submissions is one week prior to publication.
Dear Colleagues:

The Middle States Reaccreditation process is moving along nicely. This huge project has reached an important milestone with the completion in the next week of the final Self-Study Report and other documentation supporting reaccreditation (see middlestates.rutgers.edu for details, as well as the report and other documentation). The Self-Study Report will be sent to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education in January, and a site visit team, led by Dr. James Maher, provost at the University of Pittsburgh, will come to Rutgers March 9–12, 2008. I invite you to read the materials posted on our website and to offer your feedback.

Best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season!

Best regards,

Robert M. Goodman  
Executive Dean of Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Executive Director of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station  
Executive Dean of the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences