

A REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DEAN OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
April 2013

NJDA has received a \$62,713 USDA Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program grant to continue work with Rutgers Food Innovation Center (FIC) - South to bring *Made with Jersey Fresh* items to NJ schools. A previous \$51,000 grant developed several menu items using *Jersey Fresh* produce that meet National School Lunch Program nutrition requirements. The new grant will be used to launch these processed items and pave the way for distribution to schools. FIC has been commissioned through this grant to:

- Establish a “*value-added farm to fork*” process that will serve as a model for the state and other regions, by identifying a means to integrate locally grown and processed foods into the commodity school food service program
- Conduct commercial scale runs of developed products with identified processors
- Identify distribution systems for commercialized products to enable purchasing throughout the state
- Formulate and execute a marketing plan for products
- Communicate this program throughout the state to agricultural producers

IR-4 celebrated its 50th anniversary in a seminar on April 16. Since 1963, the IR-4 Project has been the major resource for supplying pest management tools for specialty crop growers by developing research data to support new EPA tolerances and labeled product uses. In a time of financial austerity the IR-4 Project is a government program that provides tangible results for stakeholders with a proven track record that spans 50 years. In 1963, the IR-4 Project was established by the Directors of the State Agricultural Experiment Stations to assist growers of fruits, vegetables, herbs and other specialty crops with their critical pest management needs. What began as a two -person operation at Rutgers has grown to a multi-million dollar research organization with over 120 employees and a presence in nearly every state. Since its start, the research performed through the IR-4 Project has facilitated 26,000 registrations of conventional pesticides and biopesticides for food and ornamental crops. The majority of these registrations were approved in the last 10 years. Many of these recent approvals were with lower risk technology.

Win Cowgill, area fruit agent has collaborated for many years with colleague Jon Clements, extension educator in tree fruit at University of Massachusetts Amherst. Their work has been jointly recognized by the International Tree Fruit Association, which presented them with the 2013 International Fruit Tree Association "Extension Award" in Boston, MA.

Soil fertility specialist Joseph Heckman spoke on “Tree Crops and Pasture in Organic Farming” in an invited presentation on April 8 at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station in Hamden, CT. Hosted by the Torrey Botanical Society and the New York Nut Growers Association, 40 participants attended the presentation.



Events

On April 21, the Somerset and Middlesex county boards of agriculture in collaboration with Rutgers Cooperative Extension and other ag agencies, presents Ag in Action Day, a free farm tour and open house hosted at Suydam Farms in Somerset, NJ. Participants can experience planting Christmas trees, shearing sheep, milking dairy goats, installing drip irrigation systems, starting seeds in the greenhouse, tractor plowing and planting as well as draft horse plowing. Contact: Somerset County Extension office of at 908-526-6293, ext. 4.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Middlesex County is conducting a new seminar series, Beginner Farmer Workshop. Part I, "Getting Started Farming - Basics of Traditional and Organic Styles", takes place on April 17. Led by agricultural agent Bill Hlubik, the seminar explores small farm enterprises and the concepts of healthy soil and water quality as the foundation of healthy crops. Part II of the Beginner Farmer Workshop will take place on Wednesday, May 1. Attending Part I is not required for this workshop. "Small Scale Organic Farming and Homesteading" takes place on a local "Micro-Farm" which produces organic eggs, tree nuts and produces lumber on site with a small sawmill. Contact: Middlesex County Extension office at 732-398-5262.

Two Blueberry Twilight Meetings will be held Wednesday, April 24, 2013, 5:30 p.m. at Variety Farms, 548 Pleasant Mills Rd. in Hammonton, NJ and Thursday, May 30, 2013, 5:30 p.m. at Atlantic Blueberry Co., 7201 Weymouth Rd., Hammonton, NJ. Contact: Atlantic County Extension office at 609-625-0056.

Visit our Rutgers NJAES online resources:

Vegetable Crops Online Resource Center: <http://njveg.rutgers.edu>

Jersey Vegetable Crops Ag Updates: <http://jerseyvegupdates.blogspot.com>

Fruit Ag Updates: <http://jerseyfruitupdates.blogspot.com>

Field & Forage Crops Nutrient Management Ag Updates:
<http://fieldforagecropsnutrientmanagement.blogspot.com>

Sustaining Farming on the Urban Fringe: <http://njsustainingfarms.rutgers.edu>

What's in Season from the Garden State: <http://www.njfarmfresh.rutgers.edu/archive.html>

