

Secretary's Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture

April 25, 2018

Exotic Tick Survives Winter in NJ – The Longhorned tick (*Haemaphysalis longicornis*) was confirmed to have overwintered in New Jersey at two locations. The exotic East Asian tick was first confirmed in November after being found at a Hunterdon County farm. The tick was then confirmed to have overwintered at the Hunterdon County farm on April 17. The Longhorned tick was also confirmed on April 23 to be found at Watchung Reservation in Union County. The confirmations were made by the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa. The NJDA is working with officials at Rutgers University, the USDA and New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife and local officials on these cases. Before these confirmations, this tick was not known to exist in the U.S. How it arrived in New Jersey remains a mystery. Tests on the exotic tick in November failed to reveal any tickborne diseases.

Jersey Fresh Marketing – Website development is nearing completion and regular marketing work is picking up. Our first pre-season ad appeared in this week's edition of the *Produce News*, and will be followed by our regular portfolio of consumer and trade print advertising. We are also making plans for our outdoor and radio campaigns, and are expecting shipment of our completely redesigned point-of-purchase material any day now. As mentioned in the past, we are also working to assist several commodity councils with their marketing efforts.

Spotted Lanternfly Outreach – Plant Industry Division staff gave a presentation to members of the New Jersey Nursery and Landscape Association (NJNLA), Master gardeners, County Parks Commission representatives and members of the public at a NJNLA sponsored Spotted Lanternfly Workshop in Pittstown, N.J., about the importance of continued vigilance for this invasive agricultural insect and implications of an accidental introduction into New Jersey. The Division is in the process of expanding its current outreach activities about this insect to inform members of various agricultural commodity groups, the New Jersey Department of Transportation, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and overall public to “see and report” any stages of this insect to the Department for further investigation.



Woodstown Ag/CASE Teacher Wins Regional Award – Woodstown High School Agriculture/CASE teacher Deanna Miller will be recognized as ACTE Region I New Teacher of the Year during the awards banquet at the regional conference. Deanna represents all Career and Technical Education teachers in our region (16 northeast states), not just agriculture teachers. She will compete with winners from four other regions and be recognized at the national ACTE conference in November. Also, Ted Szczawinski, from Passaic County Technical Institute, and a former Bergen County Agriculture teacher, will be recognized as Region I Administrator of the Year.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) – At the time of this report, a total of 14,165 cases and 508,530 pounds of TEFAP foods were scheduled for direct shipment to New Jersey for several Emergency Feeding Organizations (EFOs) from USDA vendors during the month of April. Foods included: Frozen Chicken Whole, Fresh Shell Eggs, Rice, Dry Beans Pinto, Canned Spaghetti Sauce (Meatless), Tomato Sauce Canned, and Grape Concord Juice.

Pathology Examinations and Testing – The Pathology Laboratory Section for the months of February and March 2018 completed a total of 326 and 369 tests and/or procedures, respectively. Tests and/or procedures involved gross necropsy examination, histopathologic (microscopic), cytologic and parasitologic preparation and evaluation. Species submitted for testing in the month of March 2018 included dog, cat, cow, goat, sheep, pig, chicken, pigeon, zoo and exotic species (rabbit, parrot, parakeet, conure, and rhea) and wildlife (sea turtle, harbor porpoise, harp and grey seal and starlings).

Shellfish Aquaculture Workgroup (SAWG) Reconvenes – The Shellfish Aquaculture Workgroup (SAWG), originally organized several years ago, has reconvened. Due to time constraints, the group ceased to meet during red knot consultation development and drafting of regulations for the new aquaculture permits (initiated due to FDA infractions). On March 27, the group reconvened with attendance from multiple DEP groups (Division of Fish and Wildlife - Bureau of Shellfisheries and Endangered and Nongame Species Program; Division of Land Use Regulation; Division of Enforcement), the NJDA, the Department of Health and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The group intends to have quarterly meetings to ensure greater dialog amongst state and federal partners for more proactive development of aquaculture-related policies and programs.

Lab Inspection – The Public Health Environmental and Agricultural Laboratory (PHEAL) underwent an inspection from the National Plant Protection Laboratory Accreditation Program (NPPLAP) to become accredited in qPCR disciplines related to plant disease. Three auditors with various disciplines arrived to conduct the audit. They were a laboratory diagnostician, plant pathologist and a quality management expert. We are still waiting on approval or denial of accreditation. If successful the plant laboratory will request proficiency testing panels with the intention of NPPLAP certification and USDA recognition of sample results and diagnostic determinations for regulatory purposes.

Towns Interested in New Markets – Marketing and Development Division staff have responded to a handful of requests from local governmental and municipal organizations that are working on developing community farmers markets, advising them on the process and assisting them in informing the farm community of these new marketing opportunities. The towns of Rochelle Park, Garfield, Berkeley Heights, Passaic and Military Park in Newark are all considering the opportunity to host a community farmers market.

Live Bird Marketing System – During the month of March, animal health technicians (AHTs) conducted unannounced inspections at 37 registered NJ live bird markets and sampled nine markets for avian influenza by sampling poultry. Additional activity during the month of March included the quarterly closure of 11 live bird markets. Quarterly closures consist of cleaning and disinfecting the entire market followed by a minimum 24 hours of “down-time”. Following the “down-time”, environmental samples are taken at the market for testing; Additional activity also included inspection of 15 poultry distributors. Records were reviewed as well as insuring compliance with 2:9-4.2(c), reviewing vehicle cleaning and disinfection logbooks; and avian influenza testing of 13 poultry distributors. This includes any poultry being delivered to live bird markets at the time of inspection. Also, there was avian influenza testing of approximately 38 backyard flocks.

Summer Food Service Program – The 2018 reapplication was due April 2nd. To date, 114 applications have been received; 16 have been approved by Specialists and the Coordinator. In addition, all 23 vendor applications have also been approved. The 2018 approved vendor list has been sent to all vendors and vended sponsors.