

Secretary's Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
January 23, 2019

Erin Noble Named New Ag Education Leader/State FFA Advisor – Erin Noble has been named the new State Program Leader for Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education/State FFA Advisor in New Jersey. Noble has been the State FFA Specialist for the last 11 years for the Department. As the State FFA Specialist, Noble planned and conducted statewide FFA events, mentored and coached state FFA officers and provided technical assistance to FFA advisors. At the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis in November, Noble won the Outstanding Executive Secretary Award.

Livestock Summit – More than 75 livestock producers attended the January 15 summit at the EcoComplex to explore additional in-state livestock processing options for producers seeking to sell custom cuts in retail settings. The meeting featured presentations from livestock processors including the owner/operator of Vermont's largest packinghouse and a New Jersey producer who has an on-farm abattoir, as well as external support entities with experience in the development of co-ops and the facilitation of USDA funding for small-scale value-added projects. Chief among the next steps identified was a comprehensive feasibility study to assess the viability of various processing options in New Jersey.

Spotted Lanternfly Surveys – The Plant Industry Division's Spotted Lanternfly survey crews continue performing property assessments from Mercer through Warren Counties. Treatment areas continue to expand within the quarantine areas. A total of 41,018 acres on 13,185 properties will need to be assessed and prepared for treatment prior to the spring of 2019. To date, A total of 3,445 properties have been assessed for treatment and of those 214 have been sent to the contractor for treatments in the spring.

CACFP Award – The Food and Nutrition Division's Child and Adult Care Food Program staff is in the process of selecting institutions for the CACFP Achievement Award. They are selecting CACFP institutions based on their success in promoting the CACFP through effective advocacy, partnerships, and collaboration to increase program participation and ensuring access for every participant. Nominations are then sent to the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office (MARO) for consideration. Last year, Alphabets Preschool Center in Asbury Park represented New Jersey as one of the CACFP Achievement Award recipients.

Pathology Laboratory Testing – The Animal Health Division's Pathology Laboratory Section for the months of November and December 2018 completed a total of 254 and 168 tests and procedures, respectively. Tests and procedures involved gross necropsy examination, histopathologic (microscopic), cytologic and parasitologic preparation and evaluation. Species submitted for testing in the month of December 2018 included caprine, camelid, canine, feline, domestic poultry/backyard birds (duck, chicken) and wildlife (seal, dolphin) species. Cases for these months generated additional diagnostic tests for other laboratory sections (e.g., bacteriology, virology and molecular). Results from these case submissions help to support practicing veterinarians (large, mixed and small animal), private food and companion animal owners, NJ State Agencies, racetrack, wildlife, zoo, and nonprofit animal facilities.

Romaine Recalls Follow-Up – On Friday, February 15, Division of Marketing staff will join Secretary Fisher and Cumberland County Agricultural Agent Wes Kline for a meeting with fresh-market vegetable growers to evaluate the impact of last year's romaine lettuce recalls on New Jersey producers and identify additional strategies to address such situations going forward. The meeting will be held at the Cumberland County Extension Office from 9 a.m. to noon. Last year, the Department implemented a comprehensive response plan to both recalls, including radio advertisements, press releases and corresponding news

coverage and direct interaction with retailers throughout the Tri-State area and into New England encouraging the promotion of Jersey Fresh romaine. Nevertheless, there is a need to better align these efforts with growers across the state to ensure consistency of messaging.

Northeast Aquaculture Conference – Agricultural and Natural Resources staff attended and presented at the 2019 Northeast Aquaculture Conference and Expo (NACE) in Boston, Mass., on January 10-11. The two-day meeting covered all topics in aquaculture from regulations to on-farm practices.

Online CARES Payments – The Food and Nutrition Division's CARES reimbursements have been online since October 1, 2018. Since that date, 1,139 October and November Child and Adult Care claims have been processed for a total of \$14.8 million dollars. Roughly 85 percent of the CACFP sponsors have certified claims and received reimbursement.

Nursery Inspection Program – A total of 108 Plant Dealer locations were inspected by horticultural staff to verify their nursery stock remains free from insect and disease pests. Over 15 Nursery/Greenhouse locations were also inspected by horticultural staff members during the month. All nursery and greenhouse area inspections were completed for the year, including nurseries which had been re-inspected for continuing pest problems. In 2018, a total of 1,038 nursery and greenhouse locations were inspected by horticultural staff.

Live Bird Marketing Inspections – During the month of December, the Division of Animal Health's animal health technicians (AHTs) conducted unannounced inspections at 27 registered NJ live bird markets and sampled 10 markets for avian influenza by sampling poultry. Additional activity during the month of December included: The quarterly closure of nine live bird markets. Quarterly closures consist of cleaning and disinfecting the entire market followed by a minimum of 24 hours of "downtime". Following the "down-time," environmental samples are taken at the market for testing; the inspection of eight poultry distributors. Records were reviewed as well as ensuring compliance with 2:9-4.2(c), reviewing vehicle cleaning and disinfection logbooks; Avian influenza testing of seven poultry distributors. This includes any poultry being delivered to live bird markets at the time of inspection; Avian influenza testing of 20 backyard flocks throughout New Jersey.