

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

**August 28, 2019**

**Jersey Fresh Marketing** – The Jersey Fresh marketing campaign continues to create significant value for growers across the state. We remain in market with our comprehensive outdoor, radio and print efforts, and have likewise amplified our social media presence with the substantial increase of video, thanks in large part to summer intern, Chrissy Obell, whose last day was August 16. We will continue to leverage the brand over the coming months and will shift our focus more heavily to agritourism and on-farm marketing as we move into the fall.

**Spotted Lanternfly Program** – Work continues by Plant Industry Division field crews on the Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) Program. Survey crews are working from Salem County to Warren County to identify woodlots with infestations of these insects and assess properties for treatment by USDA contracted applicators. Initial property surveys involve finding any stage of SLF. Once found, permission to conduct treatments and conduct more intensive surveys on the property must be obtained from the property owner. Once permission is granted, all Tree of Heaven on the property are identified, mapped and measured. All trees less than six inches are marked with blue spray paint to indicate that they will be treated with herbicide while trees that are larger are marked with red spray paint to indicate that they will be treated with a systemic insecticide to kill any SLF that feed on it. Pesticide applications have been ongoing since May 1, 2019. There is over 53,348 acres of forested woodlands in the program that must be assessed by field crews. To date, a total of 2,319 acres have been treated on 88 parcels and 7,183 acres have been assessed for treatment on 301 properties.

**Ag Educators Selected For National Awards** – Matt DiTizio, the agricultural mechanics teacher at Salem County Technical School was selected for the National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE) “Teacher Turn the Key” program, which supports new teachers’ attendance to professional development workshops. Dr. Robin McLean, the agriculture teacher at Northern Burlington County Regional Middle School was recognized as the Region VI NAAE Teacher Mentor. This award recognizes experienced teachers who have influenced and motivated beginning teachers to enter and stay in the teaching profession. Jenny Allen, the agriculture teacher at Newton High School was selected as the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) Region I (16 states) New Teacher of the Year representing all of career and technical education. This is the third consecutive year that New Jersey has had the Region I ACTE New Teacher of the Year. Jenny will be recognized by ACTE during the annual VISION conference in Anaheim, Calif.

**School Nutrition** – On August 8<sup>th</sup>, the Food and Nutrition Division presented the first live Application Eligibility webinar with an outstanding turnout of about 250 viewers. The webinar was recorded and will be made available to all participants in the Resources section of the newly launched School Nutrition Electronic Application and Reimbursement System (SNEARS) 2.0 application. Live trainings for this topic were offered August 20 and 22.

**Animal Health Diagnostic Lab Pathology Testing** – The Pathology Laboratory Section for the month of July 2019 completed a total of 183 tests and/or procedures. Tests and/or procedures involved gross necropsy examination, histopathologic (microscopic), and parasitological preparation and evaluation. Species submitted for testing in the month of July 2019 included bovine, equine, ovine, caprine, canine, feline, domestic poultry/backyard birds, fish, marine mammals, zoo/exotic and wildlife 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.

**Canadian Blueberry Program** – New Jersey blueberry growers continued exporting their fresh blueberry fruit into Canada throughout July. The Plant Industry Division’s Canadian Blueberry Fruit Certification Program (BCP) is designed to facilitate export of fresh blueberry fruit into Canada while protecting against the introduction of blueberry maggot; *Rhagoletis mendax* – a native to northeastern United States. Nursery inspection program staff continued to audit participants’ recordkeeping (including their fruit testing records and pesticide applications) and oversee the grower’s compliance with the necessary phytosanitary requirements. Throughout July, 302,999 crates and 91 pallets of fresh blueberries were certified for export into Canadian markets. Most of the 30 approved blueberry growers have finished shipping to Canada. To date, a total of 434,318 crates and 118 pallets have been certified under the BCP, down slightly from last year.

**Legislation Supports Dairy/Wine Industries** – This month, bills were signed into law to establish an agricultural small business loan program within Economic Development Authority (EDA), including a program specific to dairy, and a bill to create a comprehensive new statewide wine promotion signage program. Both should have a positive impact in further enhancing the viability of these industries.

**Direct Delivery Department of Defense (DOD) Fresh Produce Program** – A total of 357 school districts will be participating in the Food and Nutrition Division’s direct delivery DOD Fresh Produce Program during the 2019-2020 school year with \$9,545,869 entitlement dollars. The DOD Direct Delivery Pilot Program began in the 2014-2015 school year, when \$2,500,000 was set aside for DOD produce.

**Emergency Planning and Preparedness** – On July 24, the animal emergency preparedness coordinator attended the Annual Emergency Support Function (ESF) 6 Mass Care Meeting. There were focused discussions on mass care topics such as sheltering, feeding, and sheltering for populations with disabilities and access and functional needs (DAFN). This was an opportunity for agencies involved with ESF 6 to appreciate how their function interacts with ESF 11. During the meeting, representatives from the New Jersey Occupational Health and Safety Program announced they have recently acquired three cargo animal trailers that will be available for state emergency situations.

**New Jersey Envirothon Team** – The New Jersey Envirothon team from Marine Academy of Technology & Environmental Science Team #1 (Ocean County) placed first out 27 teams in the state level competition held in early May. These teams represented some of the brightest environmental high school student in grades 9-12 from around the state. The team represented New Jersey at the National Conservation Foundation (NCF) Envirothon, which is the North America’s Largest Environmental Education Competition, which was held in North Carolina July 28- August 6 and finished 15<sup>th</sup> out of 53 teams.