

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

2007

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGIES

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

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PRODUCE INDUSTRY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

BACKGROUND

New Jersey's growers annually provide almost \$240 million worth of the healthiest and freshest fruits and vegetables available anywhere. In 2005, New Jersey's top 17 vegetable commodities were valued at \$124 million and New Jersey's fruit production of apple, blueberry, cranberry, peach and strawberry production was valued at \$114 million.

Local access to large affluent markets has long been an advantage for the marketing of those products. While our markets are still there, competition for those markets has become tougher. New Jersey's produce industry must continually work to rediscover its competitive advantages improving access to nearby markets and strengthening consumer loyalty.

In 2006 the department introduced a new *Jersey Fresh* marketing campaign that highlights the freshness of New Jersey's locally grown produce. The new campaign's message, "*Jersey Fresh, as Fresh as Fresh Gets*" was advertised in print, and through radio and television media buys. To reinforce the media buys over 2,500 retail supermarkets, community and farmer's markets received *Jersey Fresh* advertising materials to brand New Jersey produce at the point of sale. Through industry visits and involvement with the Eastern Produce Council the department continues to closely coordinate advertising program with our regions major buyers and retailers. In partnership with the New Jersey Restaurant Association 350 restaurants participated in the "Proud to Offer Jersey Fresh" signage program. Working closely with the Produce News, Produce Business and the Packer national industry publications the department continues to keep the Jersey Fresh program in the national spotlight Through active membership and participation in the United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association and the Produce Marketing Association trade shows the *Jersey Fresh* program's high profile is supported and maintained at the national level.

In the midst of the 2006 growing season an important of benefit of the *Jersey Fresh* marketing and public relations program was realized. The Department, working in close coordination with regional and national industry contacts, was able to move quickly to create and place *Jersey Fresh* spinach advertising specifically designed to mitigate the impact the year's major food safety issue to New Jersey growers.

In 2006 state food purchasing programs received \$3 million to support locally grown, nutrient dense foods consistent with good dietary guidelines. In 2007, working with the Department of Corrections, and the School Lunch Program, state government purchases of New Jersey produce are targeted to increase for the sixth straight year. The department will also continue to manage the Emergency Food Assistance Program that distributes over 10 million pounds of USDA commodities to 660 food pantries, soup kitchens and other feeding operations. Work will continue to open new community markets, providing growers greater direct access to consumers. As a cornerstone to quality assurance, the Department will continue to provide affordable third-party farm certifications.

1. PRODUCE STRATEGIES

1.00 Produce Safety Task Force

1) STRATEGY – The recently announced produce safety taskforce will examine the ways in which New Jersey’s fruit and vegetable growers can continue offering the high quality locally grown products enjoyed by our residents, and those of surrounding areas, while adapting their operations to new food-safety standards.

1.01 Jersey Fresh Hospitality Industry Program

2) STRATEGY – Continue to develop and strengthen the *Jersey Fresh* Hospitality Industry Program. The program will work closely with the industry and include many elements to strengthen the marketing of *Jersey Fresh* produce to hotel, restaurant and the institutional food service industries. The program will;

1. Continue to involve members of the NJ Restaurant Association, Slow Food of Central NJ and local chapters of the Professional Chef’s Association.
2. Continue to promote participating restaurants to the public via the internet and other means, including the NJDA website.
3. Continue to provide supplier directories and point of sale advertising to the industry.
4. Promote *Jersey Fresh* produce and menu themes to restaurants and culinary contests.

1.02 Increase Produce Branding

3) STRATEGY – Through the distribution of *Jersey Fresh* materials to growers, marketing cooperatives and retailers the department will continue to expand the branding of *Jersey Fresh* on packaging and at the point of sale

1.03 Promote Vertical Integration

4) STRATEGY - Encourage industry attendance at national produce industry trade shows, continue to work with representatives of nationally marketed produce brands and seek new methods to better integrate New Jersey’s produce industry into the year-round supply model.

5) STRATEGY - Promote improved communication and greater coordination between the Eastern Coast growing regions. Work with other state departments of agriculture to develop a database of East Coast growers and marketing cooperatives seeking improved communication and coordination.

1.04 Continue to Seek New Markets

6) STRATEGY - Continue working to build and strengthen the Department of Corrections purchases and the school breakfast and lunch programs and distribution to emergency feeding organizations to facilitate state purchases of New Jersey farm products. Promote the food bank and emergency feeding organizations as potential markets to New Jersey’s agricultural producers and processors.

7) STRATEGY - Continue supporting fresh exports of New Jersey agricultural products to the New England States and Canada. Through industry visits and participation in such shows as the New England Produce Council and the Canadian Produce Marketing Association trade shows keep key industry contacts current on New Jersey agriculture and the latest promotions of the *Jersey Fresh* brand.

1.05 Strengthen Existing and Seek New Community Markets

8) **STRATEGY** – Promote Community Market opportunities to growers. Through a USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant work to identify the best practices, costs and benefits of direct marketing to New Jersey agricultural producers. Maintain a current list of existing and new community farm markets that seek increased farmer participation.

9) **STRATEGY** - Promote the existence of community farm markets to the public. Maintain an interactive directory of community farmers markets on the department’s website and continue to offer community farmers market lists for publication in local papers. Distribute community farmers’ market lists to agencies responsible for distributing Farmers Market Nutrition coupons to seniors and participants in the Women, Infants & Children (WIC) nutritional program.

1.06 Expand Jersey Fresh Program

10) **STRATEGY** – Continue to strengthen the appeal of the *Jersey Fresh* brand to supermarket chains and all other retailers. Increase use of the *Jersey Fresh* brand name. Discourage the use of the “Locally Grown” product claim. Promote the third-party food certification program as part of the renewal of the *Jersey Fresh* brand.

11) **STRATEGY** – Increase the budget for the Jersey Fresh matching-funds grant program and continue to award grants to applicants with the best past performance and greatest potential industry impact.

12) **STRATEGY** – Continue to broaden the *Jersey Fresh* promotional program to be more inclusive of all New Jersey produced fruits and vegetables, especially herbs, hydroponics and greenhouse produced fruits and vegetables, ethnic produce items and seek to update *Jersey Fresh* Quality Grading standards to include non-traditional produce items if necessary.

1.07 Continue Third Party Food Safety Certifications

13) **STRATEGY** – Continue providing affordable third-party farm certifications. As Food Safety increases in importance, and consolidation continues in the retail produce industry, the importance of third-party farm certifications will continue to grow, as retailers require the improved trace-back ability third-party certifications offer. Use the *Jersey Fresh* brand to promote the food safety of New Jersey agricultural products to supermarket chains and all other retailers.

1.08 Improve Retailer and Processor Coordination

14) **STRATEGY** – Continue weekly dialogue, including weekly updates, involving Department representatives, growers, producers, wholesalers and retailers of New Jersey agricultural products. Conduct farmer and buyer meetings to bring retailers, processors and growers together.

15) **STRATEGY** - Improve coordination and communication with the USDA Market News that collects information on the current supply, demand and prices on nearly on fruits, vegetables, ornamental and specialty crops.

1.09 Identify Alternate Crops

16) STRATEGY – Implement the search for alternate crops that can be produced in New Jersey and identify channels of distribution for those crops.

1.10 Value-Added Produce

17) STRATEGY - Evaluate Co2 flash freeze applications for a Value-Added Products Grant to study a possible ethanol plant flash freeze facility and conduct marketing research to evaluate flash freeze applications for vegetable & fruit products. In particular, marketing research should be conducted to evaluate the implications of flash freezing products for the school, institutional and foodservice markets.

1.11 Vegetable Marketing Taskforce

18) STRATEGY – Utilize the efforts of the vegetable marketing taskforce to improve market access and distribution of New Jersey agricultural products. Work to expand the direct marketing of New Jersey produce, seek funding for the establishment of a *Jersey Fresh* year round farmers market and for value-added produce product development at Rutgers' Center for Food Innovations. Generate alternative marketing strategies and product packaging to broaden market opportunities. Consider alternative packing options such as cooperatives or central packing facilities. Continue outreach efforts to improve communication and coordination between the Eastern Coast growing regions.

ORNAMENTAL HORTICULTURE INDUSTRY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

BACKGROUND

Ornamental horticulture, including greenhouse, sod, nursery and floriculture operations, is New Jersey's leading agricultural sector, representing almost 40 percent of the state's agricultural production with \$367.9 million in cash receipts. In 2005 New Jersey had 18 million square feet of greenhouse. New Jersey's horticultural products offer esthetic value, providing shade and a cooling effect and re-charge the air with oxygen.

To increase demand for New Jersey nursery stock, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture is continuing to expand its marketing program to include more horticultural crops and is working to develop standards for greenhouse produced products.

Since 2004 the television advertising of New Jersey horticultural products has greatly expanded through the Department of Agriculture's marketing program. The year 2006 saw the expansion of the *Jersey Grown* quality-grading program to include the promotion of Christmas Trees. The upgraded retail nursery and garden center listing on the *Jersey Grown* website features an interactive search feature to assist consumers to locate garden centers and nurseries by county, town, business name or product.

The department continues to work with New Jersey's horticultural producers to produce our state's high quality of horticultural products. The Department will continue to inspect and certify nurseries, enabling growers to sell certified disease-free material in and out of state, and conduct seed certification and seed control testing programs to ensure high quality turf grass seed for New Jersey sod growers.

In 2007, the Department's ornamental horticulture economic development strategies will be focusing on expanding the promotion of the *Jersey Grown* brand. The *Jersey Grown* website will continue to expand, and inspections for harmful pests and certifying seed will be continued.

2. ORNAMENTAL HORTICULTURE STRATEGIES

2.1 Ensure Plant Health

19) STRATEGY – Work to have a comprehensive approach to ensuring plant health. The following methods to be employed include:

1. Continue inspections for harmful pests and disease.
2. Seek ways to increase use of new methods of pest control and beneficial insects
3. Inspect and certify nurseries, enabling growers to sell certified disease-free material in and out of state.
4. Conduct seed certification and seed control testing programs to ensure high quality turf grass seed for New Jersey sod growers.
5. Encourage the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station to continue its research in identifying new varieties of agricultural products resistant to pests, diseases and new plant introductions.

20) STRATEGY- Support legislation establishing a drought emergency protocol for implementation of predictable, effective and sound restrictions for future emergencies. Work with the Nursery and Landscape Industry, the NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection, and the Department's Agricultural Water Working Group prior to future drought emergencies.

2.2 Increase Consumer Awareness

21) STRATEGY - Continue work to strengthen the *Jersey Grown* brand name to enable the industry to benefit from a common trademark identifying locally produced horticultural products.

1. Work with growers and independent garden centers and nurseries to strengthen their efforts to promote *Jersey Grown* products with advertising such as point of sale materials.
2. Continue to include horticultural crops in the department's marketing program and communicate the benefits of buying *Jersey Grown* products.
3. Maintain the retail nurseries and garden center listings on the *Jersey Grown* website.
4. Publish the list of certified Jersey Grown growers on the departments Jersey Grown website.

2.3 Improve State and Public Contract Requirements

23) STRATEGY- Continue to work with government agencies including the National Resource Conservation Service, the Department of Transportation through its highway planting program, and the Department of Environmental Protection through its forestry program, to use New Jersey produced products whenever possible and ensure that all products meet the pest-free standards of the New Jersey Nursery Law and satisfy the quality standards set by the *Jersey Grown* Rule as established by the Department.

2.4 Develop an Industry Recognition Program

24) STRATEGY – Continue to sponsor the New *Jersey Grown* Community Award program. Open to all municipalities in the Garden State, the purpose of the program is to recognize exemplary plant design and maintenance projects while highlighting New Jersey Grown plants and creating awareness of the ornamental horticulture industry in the state.

2.5 Strengthen Communications with Industry Leaders

25) STRATEGY – Department staff will regularly meet with horticultural and floricultural producers to discuss items of mutual interest and address challenges in their industry.

2.6 Develop Sales Tax Guide

26) STRATEGY – Develop an informational guide to assist the nursery, landscaping service and retail garden centers to understand amendments to the New Jersey Sales and Use Tax Act. Work with the New Jersey Division of Taxation to provide a technical review and endorsement of the guide.

NEW JERSEY SEAFOOD INDUSTRY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

BACKGROUND

As the world's leading supplier of surf clams, ocean quahogs, and mackerel, New Jersey's commercial fishermen have been supplying the world's finest seafood for over 300 years. The variety of New Jersey seafood is impressive: clams, sea scallops, blue crabs, squid, monkfish, tuna, and flounder, and many others. In 2004, over 187 million pounds of seafood valued at \$145.7 million was landed in New Jersey's six thriving ports. In 2004, Cape May was the nation's fifth largest port landing \$68.1 million dollars of seafood. With annual retail, import and export sales in excess of \$2 billion, New Jersey Seafood is important to our state's economy

The state also has 182 aquatic farms including 106 hard clam farms, 43 oyster farms and 15 finfish farms producing trout, koi, hybrid striped bass, sport fish species, and tilapia. Four other aquatic farms produce a variety of aquatic plants destined for ornamental ponds and remediation projects. According to USDA 2005 Census of Aquaculture, the number of acres devoted to saltwater aquaculture in New Jersey has risen from 1,402 in 1998 to 4,466 in 2005.

New Jersey is located in one of the nation's largest, and culturally diverse, upscale consumer seafood markets. But stiff competition from other states, and from around the world, is resulting in lower prices and lost markets. To combat this trend, the Department is working closely with industry to help consumers better understand the quality and availability of local seafood.

The Department has initiated programs to brand locally harvested seafood and to develop value-added seafood products to meet the needs of today's consumers. The *Jersey Seafood* branding program allows consumers to identify local seafood while also meeting new country of origin label requirements. Through promotional materials, point of sale advertising, an enhanced website, and work with strategic partners, awareness is expanding for the *Jersey Seafood* brand name. With 70 percent of seafood consumed in restaurants, the *Jersey Seafood* brand promotion is also heavily targeted at chefs and restaurateurs who are the opinion leaders in the industry.

Coastal tourism contributes \$15 billion annually to our state's economy. Restaurants play a key role in a successful tourism industry in New Jersey. Recognizing this, our program identified strategic partnerships and a comprehensive promotional plan to support the positive branding of the New Jersey Shore along with *Jersey Seafood*.

3. SEAFOOD STRATEGIES

3.1 Promote the "Jersey Seafood" Brand

27) STRATEGY-Help establish a more consistent year-round demand for *Jersey Seafood* products through the strategic scheduling of promotional activities.

28) STRATEGY- Continue to promote locally grown and harvested products as distinct from, and of higher value, than competing products by strengthening the *Jersey Seafood* brand.

29) STRATEGY – In order to develop a high quality brand image for New Jersey Seafood, as well as maintain a safe and high quality supply of *Jersey Seafood* products, develop standards for wild harvest seafood using the *Jersey Seafood* brand. The new standards will supplement the current standards for farm-raised seafood.

30) STRATEGY- The department’s seafood marketing programs will continue to promote locally grown and harvested fish and shellfish as an integral part of a healthier, more active lifestyle especially for young consumers.

31) STRATEGY - The department will continue to support the branding of *Jersey Seafood* through our *Jersey Seafood* Website as well as point of sale materials developed and distributed to *Jersey Seafood* retailers, community markets, restaurateurs, chefs, and directly to the general public at festivals and events.

3.2 Developing Restaurant Promotions & Branding

32) STRATEGY- The department will continue to establish promotional relationships with professional culinary organizations such as the New Jersey Restaurant Association, Professional Chefs’ Associations, and Slow Foods Organizations of New Jersey. The newly updated *Jersey Seafood* Suppliers Directory and promotion of the *Jersey Seafood* website electronic directory will help to link buyers and sellers.

33) STRATEGY –Continue to identify strategic partnerships to support the positive branding of the New Jersey Shore and *Jersey Seafood*. Work to align with Jersey Shore branding strategies and the promotional opportunities of the Casino Redevelopment Authority (CRDA), NJ Travel & Tourism/Department of Commerce and targeted seafood festivals and events.

3.3 Facilitating Retail Promotion & Sale of Jersey Seafood

34) STRATEGY- Increase consumer awareness and promotion of locally harvested and farmed seafood emphasizing sustainability and eco-friendliness through variety of channels including foodservice (chefs, restaurateurs, corporate feeding programs), media outlets, non-governmental organizations and retailers. Increased awareness and appreciation will increase demand for local seafood and drive sales.

35) STRATEGY- Roll out a coordinated *Jersey Seafood* marketing/promotion program directed at retail, foodservice and special events such as the Breeders’ Cup. To kick off the program, major retail buyers/media representatives will be invited to an industry tour, tasting and education program to help gain familiarity with the local harvest especially the efforts of the industry to develop sustainable and eco-friendly fisheries.

36) STRATEGY- As part of the promotional campaign a wholesale market report will be distributed to chefs, restaurateurs, retailers and other interested parties to provide current information about the availability of locally harvested and grown seafood.

3.4 Supporting Direct Marketing Opportunities

37) STRATEGY-Identify new market opportunities and expand existing markets for *Jersey Seafood* and value-added *Jersey Seafood* products through greater participation at community/farm markets and other new venues such as the internet. A database of farm markets has been helpful to identify the best venues for seafood sales. Initial efforts will be to expand seafood sales in those identified markets. USDA funding will be sought to help in the expansion of farm market sales.

3.5 Development of a Branded Value-Added Seafood Products

38) STRATEGY – Through the USDA Value Added Grant Program, a comprehensive business plan has been developed by the New Jersey Seafood Marketing Group (NJSMG). The focus of the plan is a premium, packaged, branded product for retail sale. The business plan will form the basis for a Phase II proposal that would allow the NJSMG to develop more effective and cost-efficient packing strategies. To more effectively meet consumer needs, the group also plans to seek funding to develop a microwaveable product. A similar prototype product was trial tested during the series of consumer focus groups convened to develop the branding specifications.

3.6 Export of New Jersey Seafood Products

39) STRATEGY – In partnership with USDA and Food Export USA Northeast programs for 2007, identify and promote the development of export marketing opportunities for New Jersey's seafood products.

3.7 Grow a New Generation of Seafood Consumers

40) STRATEGY-Studies by the scientific community continue to point to the importance of increasing the amount of seafood in the American diet. To educate future consumers about the importance of seafood and the production of sustainable and eco-friendly seafood, an exhibit on clam aquaculture is being developed in conjunction with the State Museum of Agriculture, a children's activity book has been developed, and participation at festivals and educational events is planned.

3.8 Provide Health Certification to Allow Interstate Transport of Live Fish

41) STRATEGY- Working closely with the Division of Animal Health, a testing/certification program will be developed to allow the transport and sale of New Jersey live farm-raised fish to markets in other states.

DAIRY INDUSTRY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

BACKGROUND

In 2005 New Jersey's commercial dairy producers marketed 179 million lbs of milk valued at \$27.6 million. New Jersey's estimated 11,000 cows produced on the average 16,300 pounds of milk per cow are primarily located in the counties of Salem, Sussex, Warren, Gloucester and Burlington. Those five counties represent 85 percent of New Jersey's milk production. Sustaining New Jersey's Dairy industry is imperative in order to provide a fresh and healthy source of dairy products to all New Jersey residents' young and old as well as maintaining open space and productive agricultural lands.

Over the past 12 months, New Jersey dairy producers have experienced what has been defined as the perfect storm as input costs for feed, fuel, fertilizer and chemicals increased and milk prices falling to a 25 year low combined with weather related losses and a disaster designation.

Today, though challenged with the above items the number of commercial dairy farms statewide totals approximately 111 farms, this number has not changed much in recent months but the number of cows per farm has fallen with larger farms leaving and smaller farms entering the industry, this trend has created a loss of 20 cows per farm on the average with the current number of cows per farm at 80 cows.

In 2007 the Department, through the efforts of the Garden State Dairy Alliance, will continue to provide technical support in the further advancement of the milk production industry as well as the processing and distribution of milk and milk products in order to sustain a sufficient milk supply to New Jersey's estimated 8.9 million residents. The Department will continue to support value-added products through the "Jersey Fresh" Quality Grading Program and promote the nutritional benefits of milk and milk products through programs such as "Healthy Choices; Healthy Kids" Farm profitability, and infrastructure redevelopment will continue to be a priority and legislation and regulation that affects the industry will continue to be monitored. In 2007 educational programs for the general public and elected officials on the value of the industry will be continued as will animal health, bio-security and food safety programs.

4.0 DAIRY STRATEGIES

4.1 Evaluate Legislation and Regulation

42 STRATEGY – Continue tracking possible federal legislation to ensure more stable short-term on-farm milk prices. Work with the State's Ratification Committee to continue to seek alternatives that will update and improve the regulations that affect the dairy industry that encompasses, but is not limited to, the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program and establishing a Northeast compact..

43) STRATEGY – Continue to monitor options related to creating unified New Jersey Dairy Council to meet the needs of both North and South Jersey producers and allow for greater local control over advertising budgets.

44) STRATEGY - Create a new industry working group of distributors, processing and retail representatives which will be responsible for identifying and evaluating practices and

programs that will help to sustain New Jersey's dairy industry

4.2 Increase Demand for Milk

45) STRATEGY- Continue to support the distribution of milk as "*Jersey Fresh*," "Made with Premium *Jersey Fresh* Milk," "Made with Jersey Fresh Milk", "*Jersey Fresh* Flavored Milk" and "*Jersey Fresh* Milk." Integrate the sale and promotion of *Jersey Fresh* dairy product sales at community and retail markets throughout the State.

46) STRATEGY – In conjunction with the Healthy Choices, Healthy Kids initiative, continue to promote the nutritional benefits of drinking milk at a young age. The Department and producers will work with the Northeast Dairy Council to promote the initiative.

47) STRATEGY - Work with producer groups to market milk and milk products to co-packers and work to establish a processing facility to produce high-end soft cheeses and other products.

4.3 Ensure Quality Production and Food Safety

48) STRATEGY - Continue to work with the Garden State Dairy Alliance to support the dairy industry with technical assistance to coordinate a multi-disciplinary team of state and federal partners to cooperatively address issues related to animal health, milk quality, nutrient management, bio-security and dairy industry development.

1. The alliance will work to help sustain a viable and thriving dairy industry in New Jersey.
2. Continue to work with Pennsylvania and other states to develop relationships beneficial to New Jersey's dairy Continue working to protect the health of the dairy industry from the threat of devastating and economically damaging diseases.
3. Seek to secure funding for the Garden State Dairy Alliance Milk Quality Program to document the quality of raw and processed milk and milk products to assure the safety and wholesomeness of dairy products.
4. Continue working with Rutgers and NJ Farm Bureau to promote the FIN Pak Program, a software program for dairy farmers that promotes good business practices through financial management analyses.

The alliance benchmarks when implemented will help position dairy operations to compete and sustain a viable, thriving, highly productive and high quality dairy industry in New Jersey if mastered.

FIELD AND FORAGE CROPS INDUSTRY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

BACKGROUND

In 2004, New Jersey harvested more than 337,400 acres of field crops worth an estimated \$92 million. The leading field crops harvested were 120,000 acres of hay, 103,000 acres of soybeans, 85,000 acres of corn for grain and silage, 24,000 acres of winter wheat plus additional acreage of barley. Contributing to the State's agricultural economy, field crops provide animal feed and help to maintain New Jersey's working agricultural landscape.

Due to the state's high land values, property taxes and labor rates, production costs in New Jersey are higher than in most other production areas. With commodity prices based on national production costs, yields and demand, it can be less profitable to produce commodity items in New Jersey than elsewhere. However, in 2006 prices for New Jersey field and forage crops were strong.

One area that offers opportunity for field crops is the emerging prospects for renewable fuels as part of the Green Energy sector. New Jersey's corn and grain farmers may be positioned to capitalize on the growing national movement toward ethanol-blended and bio-diesel fuels. More than 3.4 billion gallons of ethanol were produced in the United States in 2004. Ethanol can stretch the current oil supply. Bio Diesel plants will need a readily available, local source of these feed stocks for their operations. Both corn, for ethanol production, and soybeans, for bio-diesel production, would be in higher demand should plans for an ethanol plant and a bio-diesel production facility come to fruition.

In 2006 market opportunities between organic growers and processors were supported and progress toward the construction of an ethanol plant has continued.

In 2007 efforts will be continued to support organic crop production, farm income diversification, the establishment of an ethanol plant and grower education about agri-tourism opportunities will be continued.

5.0 FIELD CROPS STRATEGIES

5.0 Ensure Plant Health

49) STRATEGY - Through the implementation of the Mexican Bean Beetle parasite program, soybean rust monitoring surveys and the release of beneficial insects to control tarnished plant bug and mile-a-minute weed, the department will continue working to protect the health of the field and forage crops from the immediate threat of devastating and economically damaging plant pests and diseases.

50) STRATEGY - Aid in the development of a state wide working group to define benchmarks and goals to improve New Jersey production and yield per acre for the crops of corn, soybeans, small grains, grass hay, alfalfa hay, pasture and other alternative forage & feed crops. Objectives of this working group include the improvement of pasture and crop productivity and utilization through application of improved management practices, increased economic and environmental sustainability of forage-livestock systems, and improved production and quality of conserved feeds, including alfalfa and other hays and silages.

Work with Rutgers Cooperative Extension and NRCS to:

1. Provide regional producer workshops that will emphasize the benefits of good pasture and cropland management and preservation of water quality.
2. Explore the use of demonstration plots that will emphasize renovation and intensive management systems to improve yield per acre.

5.1 Support Organic Field Crop Production

51) STRATEGY – Continue to encourage the production of certified organic soybeans, corn and wheat to increase the value of these crops.

52) STRATEGY – Continue to assist in linking growers with organic food processors to help identify new market opportunities and take advantage of the growing demand for processed food products made from organic ingredients.

5.2 Support Plans for a Green Energy Initiative

53) STRATEGY – Continue to facilitate and support efforts to construct an ethanol plant in New Jersey. The plant will create a major new local market for the state's grain growers, and has the potential to elevate the price paid for regionally produced corn.

54) STRATEGY – Continue to support and facilitate efforts to construct bio-diesel production facilities in New Jersey, and continue exploring the establishment of a soybean crusher in the state to provide a local source of soybean oil to bio-diesel production facilities. These efforts will create major new markets for the state's soybean growers, and have the potential to elevate the price paid for regionally produced soybeans.

5.4 Crop Insurance Education

55) STRATEGY – Plan and conduct two grain-marketing sessions to inform producers about the role of crop insurance in mitigating marketing risk in forward contracting.

LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY INDUSTRY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

BACKGROUND

With an estimated value of \$ 45.5 million, New Jersey's livestock and poultry sector is a significant contributor to the state's agricultural economy. The competitive pricing of the U.S. commodity market structure combined with New Jersey's higher than average feed and production costs can be disadvantages for our state's livestock industry. New Jersey's livestock industry is currently approaching a new marketing era with fewer commercial size operations and a trend toward alternative livestock and production methods. Direct or value-added marketing will be a driving factor for the livestock industry in New Jersey. The Department has worked to ensure that the existing structure of the industry is maintained and has facilitated growth in the emerging market structure.

The Department continues to work to protect livestock and poultry from disease. A healthy industry is also largely dependent upon well cared for animals. The New Jersey Department of Agriculture administers numerous disease control programs to ensure the health of livestock and poultry throughout the state. As a part of the Garden State Dairy Alliance, the Department offers voluntary animal health programs such as, "New Jersey Cattle Health Assurance Program" and the "New Jersey Sheep and Goat Health Assurance Program." These programs improve the management of livestock operations as well as assuring a safer food product for the consuming public.

Through education and inspections, the Department is active in avian influenza surveillance and eradication, periodically testing the live poultry markets, livestock auctions, and backyard flocks while helping owners to limit the risk of avian influenza in the markets.

The successful *Jersey Fresh* brand has been extended to the livestock industry with the promotion of the *Jersey Bred* brand in 2005. As a result of the Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program grant to study the economics of raising and marketing goats a new goat purchasing program will be established to support this significant new industry.

In 2007 the Department will continue working to ensure animal health, enhance industry marketing, and encourage production while examining new and non-traditional New Jersey livestock products and markets for those products.

6.0 LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY STRATEGIES

6.1 Ensure Animal Health

56) STRATEGY – Through the continued implementation of best management practices for bio-security, the department will continue working to protect the health of the livestock and poultry industry from the immediate threat of devastating and economically damaging diseases.

6.2 Enhance Marketing Efforts

57) STRATEGY- Work to strengthen the branding of meat products under the *Jersey Bred* program.

6.3 Encourage Production of Goat Products

58) STRATEGY - Work to match the farm management practices of new and beginning farmers to include the feed out of goats on a seasonal basis to maximize inputs and reduce costs associated with feeding these ruminant animals. This will also aid in maintaining the open space benefits of rougher grasslands.

59) STRATEGY - To assist in the expansion of New Jersey's goat production a goat purchasing program will be established through the New Jersey Junior Breeder's program.

6.4 Encourage Production of Grass-Fed Animals

60) STRATEGY – The marketing and distribution of fresh and frozen grass-fed and organic grass-fed livestock products throughout the state will be supported.

61) STRATEGY – Expand the number of farmers markets that currently offer fresh meat products.

6.5 Work with Markets

62) STRATEGY – Continue the progress being made with the state's livestock markets to upgrade their facilities and adapt their operations to better meet the particular needs of both traditional and ethnic markets. Initiate a dialogue with the auction markets to conduct graded sales.

63) STRATEGY – Support the marketing of locally produced poultry meat and eggs. Review the regulations that affect this industry to ensure that they address current industry models of production and distribution.

6.6 Promote an Annual Market for Sheep, Goats

64) STRATEGY – Continue to develop and promote livestock sales at several locations throughout the State and enhance support for the sale of market lambs and 4-H animals.

ORGANIC INDUSTRY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

BACKGROUND

Organic foods continue to be the fastest growing and a very profitable segment of agriculture in America, Europe and Japan. Preliminary findings from the Organic Trade Association's 2006 Manufacturer Survey show U.S. organic food sales totaled nearly \$14 billion in 2005, representing 2.5 percent of all retail sales of food. Annual growth of the organic industry has been 16-21 percent from 1997-2004, with yearly additional sales in the \$1 billion to \$1.7 billion range since 2000. The Nutritional Business Journal (NBJ) forecasts 10-15 percent growth from 2006-2010. Retail sales alone of National Organic Program (NOP) certified food and beverage products represented about \$3.75 billion in 2005, and NBJ predicts that should hit \$30-plus billion by 2025.

To make an organic claim, producers (farmers) and food processors (handlers) must follow regulations published by the USDA, and must be certified by a USDA accredited agent if making over \$5,000 in sales. Currently, there are 55 certifying agents throughout the country comprising various state and private entities and 40 foreign certifying agents.

For more than a decade, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture has worked with the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey to certify organic producers and handlers. In September 2003, the legislation passed New Jersey Statute 4:10-79 allowing the Department to establish rules and regulations for a New Jersey Organic Certification Program. The Notice of Adoption for the regulations defining the organic certification program, N.J.A.C.2:78, were published on December 4, 2006.

The Department's organic certification program incorporates all of the USDA's NOP regulations. Once accredited, these regulations become effective, and the Department will provide New Jersey farmers and processors access to a quality organic certification program located within the State. Farmers who are transitioning to organic production will also have the ability to market their products under the new Department "Transitional Sustainable" label, which is not available under the NOP program. In doing so, New Jersey farmers will not have to wait the required 36-month "free of prohibited materials" to realize increased prices this niche market supports.

Under the NOP, States also have the option to establish state organic programs separate from organic certification programs. State organic programs are required to conduct enforcement actions of the organic regulations at the State level. Once the Department's Organic Certification Program becomes accredited by the USDA consideration on development of a future state organic program will begin. Also planned for the Department's Organic Certification Program is ISO Accreditation. ISO Accreditation will not only help strengthen the certification program from within, it will allow the organic certification program to certify to international requirements, thereby opening additional markets to producers certified by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture.

In support of the marketing of organic products, the Notice of Adoption for the Department's *Jersey Organic* rules was published December 4, 2006. Organic price cards are printed, and will eventually be distributed to help promote New Jersey's organic products directly to area retailers.

Over the last several years the Department received USDA funds to help offset the costs of organic certification. In 2007, the Department will continue to promote and administer cost sharing of organic certification fees for eligible operations, preparing informational brochures and fact sheets, and fully integrating organics into the Department's promotional programs.

7.0 ORGANIC STRATEGIES

7.1 Promote Cost-Sharing

65) STRATEGY – Continue outreach efforts to educate growers and handlers about federal funds available to help offset organic certification costs. Through a cost-sharing agreement with the Department and USDA, each operation is eligible for a reimbursement of up to 75 percent of its certification costs, not to exceed \$500.

7.2 Improve Marketing

66) STRATEGY - Seek out products that can benefit as organic (high-value / high demand products) and promote them to certified clients and in the marketplace. Assist the industry to supply the types of organic products that the marketplace demands.

67) STRATEGY – Continue to promote New Jersey grown organic products as distinct from, and of higher value, than competing products by establishing the *Jersey Organic* brand and integrating organic products into the Department's marketing program. The Department will continue to support the branding of *Jersey Organic* through our website as well as point-of-sale materials developed and distributed to *Jersey Organic* retailers, community markets and restaurateurs. Strengthen and coordinate existing efforts of the marketing program with the promotion of organic products to area restaurants.

7.3 Educate Growers and Food Handlers about Regulatory Requirements

68) STRATEGY – Following the USDA accreditation efficiently implement the Department's Organic Certification Program to offer quality organic certification services to growers and food handlers in New Jersey.

69) STRATEGY – Distribute fact sheets outlining the legal and regulatory requirements for production and sale of organic products, including livestock and livestock products. Make the fact sheets available on the Department's website and distribute to handlers and retailers of organic produce.

70) STRATEGY – Continue working toward USDA accreditation of a State Certified Organic program to guarantee consumers the highest quality organic agricultural products. The program also provides farmers who are transitioning to organic production and are in the process of completing the three-year qualifying period the ability to market their products as “transitional sustainable.”

EQUINE INDUSTRY **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

BACKGROUND

During the past 25 years, the region's horse racing industry has faced many challenges including the advent of casino gambling, an increasingly popular state lottery, the 2001 closure of Garden State Park, the loss of racing days at Atlantic City Racetrack and declining audiences at live races due to simulcasting and other reasons. To compensate, states neighboring New Jersey have combined different wagering technologies with horse racing. Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New York already have implemented either slot machines or video lottery terminals at tracks in their states. These efforts are attracting larger racetrack audiences and increasing purses for horses competing at those tracks.

Based on the most recent data, New Jersey's equine industry, composed predominately of pleasure breeds, accounts for an estimated 81,000 acres of farmland across the state. The state's breeding stock alone has an overall value in excess of \$600 million. Equine related assets including feed, bedding, fencing, equipment, transportation, insurance, blacksmith and veterinary services directly contributes \$698 million to the state's economy annually.

As part of its efforts to support the equine industry, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture administers numerous disease control programs to help keep horses healthy. The Department is a leader in the research on West Nile Virus and its work has been used throughout the world to develop programs that address the disease.

New breeder programs have been established for standardbreds and thoroughbreds. The Equine Science center continues its research, and the NJ Equine Advisory Board continues to bolster promotion and education efforts that stimulate interest, attract new owners, and create career opportunities in the equine industry.

As one of the most progressive equine states New Jersey offers racing as well as riding trails, rodeos, active 4-H and handicapped riding programs as well as many horse shows and competitions. In 2005 the FFA Horse Team received an individual silver medal at the National Level in the Career Development Event and one of the members.

The Horse Park of New Jersey continues to grow and has become one of the largest equestrian venues in the Eastern United States. In 2006 the Horse park hosted one hundred and two days of activities as well as the Garden State Standardbred sale and three international events highlighted by the *Jersey Fresh* Contours Complete International competing at levels CCI**/CCI***.

In addition to continuing the Department's programs to ensure horse health and promote the industry, in 2007 income from casinos will continue to increase, adding money to purses and supporting breeding programs. Major improvements are also being considered for Monmouth Park in preparation for the upcoming Breeder's Cup scheduled for October 27, 2007.

8.0 EQUINE STRATEGIES

8.1 Ensure Horse Health

71) **STRATEGY** - Work with horse owners to assure awareness of disease threats and animal safety. Continue working to protect the health of horses from the immediate threat of devastating and economically damaging diseases.

72) STRATEGY – Work with Rutgers University’s Cook College to continue development of a state-of-the-art research facility for its Equine Science Center. As an example the Center is developing cost-effective techniques for nutrient and waste management to ensure the compatible co-existence of horse farms in urban and suburban environments.

8.2 Promote the Industry

73) STRATEGY - Work to implement the recommendations of the Department’s “Focus on New Jersey’s Horse Racing Industry” report and seek to augment purse values, increase track attendance, and improve the industry’s supportive infrastructure.

74) STRATEGY – Continue to host Olympic caliber events and to promote the state’s many quality venues and prestige events.

75) STRATEGY – In 2007, in addition to training clinics, horse shows, festivals and industry meetings the Horse Park of New Jersey will continue to host auction sales.

76) STRATEGY – Continue to improve the New Jersey equine website highlighting the sectors of New Jersey’s Equine Industry activities. The website will improve coordination of all equine activities in the state and feature schedules of events, horseback riding trails and other industry related activities.

77) STRATEGY - Bolster promotion and education of the pleasure horse and racing industries to increase interest and work to stimulate new owners and create career opportunities.

78) STRATEGY Continue working with 4-H to establish new clubs that will expand the interest in standard bred racing.

79) STRATEGY - Work on developing and strengthening the promotion of the *Jersey Bred* brand and logo.

8.3 Improve Right to Farm Protection

80) STRATEGY - Develop, propose and adopt the Equine AMP (Agricultural Management Practices) to allow for increased right-to-farm protection for New Jersey’s equine industry.

WINE INDUSTRY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

BACKGROUND

With more than 20 wineries, occupying an estimated 500 acres, New Jersey wines are becoming increasingly sophisticated, and the results are showing in their award-winning wines. The state's wine industry has received countless awards locally, nationally and internationally. New Jersey's wine industry adds an important diversification to New Jersey agricultural sector offering agri-tourism opportunities while providing a value-added product.

Grape production continues to expand in New Jersey, but it is not keeping pace with increased wine production. New Jersey's wine industry ranks fifth in production behind California, Oregon, Washington and New York. This means the industry is becoming less dependent on New Jersey grapes and more dependent on out-of-state grapes, and risks losing its legitimate claim as an agricultural concern in the state.

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture administers a promotion and research fund for the wine industry supported by per-gallon tax refunds collected by the New Jersey Wine Industry Advisory Council. The Council prints promotional materials, conducts publicity programs, funds promotional festivals and conducts varietal and production oriented research with the funds.

In 2006 the New Jersey Department of Agriculture supported a *Jersey Fresh* quality guarantee for wines. Wines must pass a rigorous quality test and be produced from grapes grown in New Jersey can now put a *Jersey Fresh* quality guarantee on their wines. In order to be considered a wine is tested for appearance, color, aroma and bouquet, acesence, total acid, sugar, body, flavor, astringency and general quality.

In 2007, efforts will be made to increase New Jersey grape production and expand the *Jersey Fresh* Wine Festival to include more restaurants and farmers offering fresh produce. The industry will be supported as it seeks additional retail outlets and licenses to produce fruit based spirits. Opportunities will be created to support New Jersey wines at domestic and international trade shows. Support for federal export development funding of New Jersey fruit wines will be continued.

9.0 WINE STRATEGIES

9.1 Increase New Jersey Grape Production

81) STRATEGY – Encourage support for new production research to increase the state's grape production and expand the locally grown content of New Jersey wines.

82) STRATEGY – In an effort to increase the local agricultural input of New Jersey's wine industry an increase in the minimum acres required to establish a plenary or farm winery will be supported.

9.2 Support the Wine Industry at Trade Shows

83) STRATEGY – Seek opportunities at domestic and international trade shows for New Jersey’s wine industry to expand the marketing and promotion of its wines. Support these efforts with any available state, regional or national cost sharing programs such as the USDA Market Access Program.

9.3 Expand the Jersey Fresh Wine Festival

84) STRATEGY - Support the expansion of the *Jersey Fresh* Wine Festival to include producers of *Jersey Fresh* and *Jersey Seafood* products and the offerings of area restaurants that feature *Jersey Fresh* items.

9.4 Promote Product Categories

85) STRATEGY - Consider the development of a joint marketing opportunity for New Jersey fruit wines such as raspberry, blueberry and cranberry. Promote them as a product category unique to local New Jersey fruit production.

86) STRATEGY – Continue to support the wine industry’s effort to obtain licenses to distill fruit based spirits such as fruit brandies and grappa.

9.5 Expand Retail Outlets

87) STRATEGY – Support the wine industry’s effort to expand its number of eligible retail outlets and also the ability to sell their wines at farmer’s markets.

AGRI-TOURISM INDUSTRY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

BACKGROUND

With New Jersey farmers facing rising costs and stagnant commodity prices, agri-tourism offers an important opportunity to generate additional farm income and keep farms economically viable. Agri-tourism presents opportunities for New Jersey growers seeking to add value to their crops and/or capture more of the market price of their products by directly accessing consumers. Many residents consider agriculture a novelty and something to be explored and enjoyed. They desire to share the agricultural experience while increasing farm income at the same time. New Jersey's agri-tourism industry provides for a great introduction to the agriculture of the Garden State. The educational and economic contributions of agri-tourism to the state's agricultural economy are many.

Other states have comprehensive agri-tourism programs that will be studied as work moves forward to more closely cooperate with the various agencies that share a common interest in promoting tourism in New Jersey. An example of another state success is Vermont, where \$19.5 million of farm income was created by agri-tourism in 2002.

To assist in the development of the agri-tourism industry, the Department will be focusing on three major objectives: developing strategic partnerships, consumer promotion and industry education.

10. AGRI-TOURISM STRATEGIES

10.1 Develop Strategic Partners

88) STRATEGY – Continue to support the New Jersey Agri-Tourism Industry Advisory Council in their charge to develop, support, and market this sector of the agricultural community.

89) STRATEGY – Continue working with the N.J. Office of Travel & Tourism to develop and market agri-tourism. Encourage Travel and Tourism to incorporate agri-tourism research into their established travel industry research program. Market agri-tourism to the travel and tourism trade through participation in the annual Governor's Conference on Tourism, cooperative advertising, and other industry opportunities.

90) STRATEGY - Coordinate an agri-tourism press familiarization tour to acquaint the regional travel and tourism media with New Jersey agri-tourism. This is a standard tourism practice and it should result in trade and consumer press.

10.2 Consumer Promotion

91) STRATEGY – Produce and distribute an inexpensive agri-tourism brochure with industry websites and contact information. This brochure would promote seasonal events, special attractions, and direct farm marketing opportunities. Coordinate an industry cooperative advertising program.

92) STRATEGY- Continue to develop a current events list of agri-tourism activities highlighting various events and attractions throughout New Jersey. Create and disseminate regular press releases promoting the agri-tourism industry and the Department's websites. The agri-tourism listing on the Jersey Fresh website will continue to promote direct marketing, agricultural festivals, and special attractions.

93) STRATEGY – Continue to develop the Department’s new interactive, GIS-based, agri-tourism industry website; “visitnjfarms.org” allowing for easy consumer mapping based on products, services and location, within a specified town or county, or within a specified driving radius of a user-defined beginning point. Promote to growers the website’s feature that allows password access to provide updates to their listing.

94) STRATEGY – Develop and market three agri-tourism based travel tours for each of the state’s six tourism regions. Market these tours to consumers and the travel trade.

10.3 Industry Education

95) STRATEGY - Coordinate an Agri-Tourism symposium to address common opportunities and challenges and to provide some basic tourism and hospitality industry training. Work with Rutgers Cooperative Extension to develop and implement this training.

96) STRATEGY - Conduct tourism industry outreach activities for agri-tourism operators. Promote listings in the N.J. Office of Travel & Tourism’s “Calendar of Events”. Promote participation in “The 2007 New Jersey Governor’s Conference on Tourism”. Promote the use of the “Tourism Cooperative Grant Program” to organizations representing various facets of the New Jersey’s agri-tourism industry.

97) STRATEGY – Publicize and implement the recommendations of the recent Rutgers University study that examined farmers’ and farm leaders’ perceptions of the opportunities and challenges associated with agri-tourism. Support the upcoming National Agricultural Statistics Survey (NASS) study that will assess the variety of activities, the size of industry to determine the economic impact of agri-tourism upon the New Jersey economy.

98) STRATEGY – Continue to review, comment, and support work towards the adoption of agri-tourism Agricultural Management Practices (AMP’s) as proposed by the State Agriculture Development Committee. Compliance with the agri-tourism AMP’s will aid grower protection under the Right to Farm Act.

GENERAL STRATEGIES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

BACKGROUND

Many different agencies, councils, and organizations working through a variety of programs, have the common goal of assisting New Jersey's agricultural community. Strengthened communication and coordination between agencies and programs can result in multiple benefits for the agricultural community.

In 2007 the Department will continue working on broad strategies and reaching out to better coordinate efforts with other agencies. In keeping with the goals outlined in its strategic plan; the Department continues to identify strategies to ensure the economic viability of the state's agricultural industry.

11. GENERAL STRATEGIES

11.01 Inter-Agency Coordination

99) STRATEGY – Strengthen communication between the department, Rutgers' School of Environmental & Biological Sciences, County Agricultural Agents, 4-H staff, USDA personnel to improve program coordination.

11.02 New Market Opportunities List

100) STRATEGY – Maintain a current list of “New Market Opportunities.” The list could be drawn from projects within the Economic Development Work Group and disseminated directly to growers through Rutgers' plant and pest advisory.

11.03 Assist in Addressing Labor Issues

101) STRATEGY - Continue the commitment to programs that support worker training, worker health and safety, and farm labor housing. Support reform of policies and procedures addressing temporary agricultural worker visas at the federal and state level.

11.04 Worker Training

102) STRATEGY – In conjunction with the department's Agricultural Development Initiative establish an entrepreneurial and executive training and development for producer management and entry level training. To increase the success rate of agricultural businesses training will assist in the utilization of personal computers, proper maintenance of power machinery used in agricultural operations, business marketing and communications and bi-lingual technical language training.

103) STRATEGY - Through various programs such as the Agricultural Leadership Development Program promote the development of new agricultural businesses through training in areas such as business plan development and coordinate with the Farm Services Agency and the Small Business Association.

104) STRATEGY - Create a listing of all training, agricultural and business development resources on the department's website.

11.05 Farmland Assessment and Crop Insurance and Technical Assistance

105) STRATEGY – Provide support, policy analysis, and information on farmland assessment to the Farmland Evaluation Advisory Committee, the Director of Taxation’s Farmland Assessment Committee, agricultural organizations, municipal tax assessors and to landowners. Update the document – New Jersey’s Farmland Assessment Act – A Primer on Basic Requirements.

106) STRATEGY - Implement the New Jersey Crop Insurance Education Initiative in partnership with the Risk Management Agency USDA and Rutgers Cooperative Extension to improve the financial health of all farmers, increase their skill and knowledge in using crop insurance, and to increase crop insurance participation as additional products and programs become available.

107) STRATEGY- Actively assist farmers as an advocate with issues related to agricultural production, taxation, regulations, economic development, value-added opportunities as well as a variety of other matters that impact the long-term viability of New Jersey agriculture.

108) STRATEGY – Provide technical assistance to farmers, architects, engineers, farm building consultants and agricultural contractors concerning the New Jersey Uniform Construction Code administered by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs as it relates to farm buildings.

109) STRATEGY - Assist farmers with interpreting the Real Property Appraisal Manual, Farm Building Section with changes in construction techniques and building materials as well as building specifications and cost schedules. Provide information on calculating replacement costs and accrued depreciation.

110) STRATEGY – Increase participation in New Jersey’s agricultural plastics recycling programs and assess the feasibility of expanding the program to include other materials generated by farmers and aqua culturists. Assist the State’s food processing industry in finding markets or utilization for soon-to-expire and expired food products and work closely with other agencies in matters that require creative recycling solutions for non-traditional materials.

111) STRATEGY – Provide farmers and agribusinesses with information about the requirements concerning motor vehicle regulations and license plates for farm vehicles, requirements for the International Registration Plan, the International Fuel Tax Agreement, and commercial drivers license provisions. The Department will identify federal and state motor vehicle laws and regulations that impact interstate and intrastate of agricultural commodities and distribute information to continue the orderly transportation of New Jersey farm products.

112) STRATEGY – Disseminate information and respond to inquiries on the availability of financing from federal, state, and commercial lending institutions for agricultural loans. Advise individuals on the importance of developing business plans, maintaining financial records, and asset requirements in obtaining financing.

113) STRATEGY – Coordinate the administration of agricultural disaster declarations to assure that all USDA Farm Service Agency procedural requirements are met.

11.06 Improve Roadside Signage

114) STRATEGY – Continue to advocate a statewide standard for directional signage on New Jersey’s roadways to heighten consumer awareness and provide a more visible marketing profile for the industry. Seek industry specific exemptions and changes in existing signage regulations to increase signage opportunities.

11.07 Intra-Agency Cooperation

115) STRATEGY - Link together the internal plans and initiatives of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture. Strive to consistently implement the Economic Development Strategies with the Smart Growth, Green Energy and the Agricultural Development Initiative.

11.08 Processed Foods

116) STRATEGY - Work in conjunction with Rutgers’s Food Innovation Center to develop a proposal for a *Jersey Foods* brand extension of the *Jersey Fresh* brand. The *Jersey Foods* brand will be available for use for processed food products that meet the yet to be developed criteria.

117) STRATEGY – Support agriculture and economic development by providing technical support services to existing as well as new agribusinesses including food manufacturers that add value to agricultural commodities.

118) STRATEGY – Continue to support New Jersey’s small and medium sized food processors. Help processors to find local sources of food and agricultural products, provide outreach and education about government grants and services, organize and support New Jersey State pavilions at regional and national trade shows such as the Fancy Food Show in New York City.

11.09 Export Development

119) STRATEGY – Target the Caribbean Basin and South and Central American markets for New Jersey fresh and processed through participation in a exhibit at the 9th Americas Food & Beverage Show in Miami. Seek to recruit New Jersey companies to attend and establish a pavilion of New Jersey exhibitors at future Americas Food and Beverage shows.

120) STRATEGY - Provide export education and promote the federally funded export market research and development programs of Food Export USA – Northeast to New Jersey’s fresh and processed food industries. Secure federal grant funding for an export development intern position responsible for programs of export education and export program promotion.

11.10 Outstanding Young Farmer Award

121) STRATEGY – Administer New Jersey’s Outstanding Young Farmer Award program to recognize the contributions and achievements of the New Jersey recipient. Coordinate the nomination and awards process with the National Outstanding Young Farmer Program administered by the US Junior Chamber of Commerce.