

NEWS FROM THE NJDA

New Jersey
Department of
Agriculture

October 2013

Volume 1, Issue 4

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From the Secretary's Desk



NJ Secretary of Agriculture, Douglas H. Fisher

Agriculture is an integral part of New Jersey-an's lives and farmers have an important story to share with children on the impact of farming and the way in which the food they produce ends up on everyone's plate. Farmers sometimes take for granted that people know what it takes to be a farmer. We encourage the agriculture community to share their stories by inviting the public onto their farms, conducting programs at schools and working with schools to purchase local produce.

The NJDA celebrated Jersey Fresh Farm to School Week Sept. 25-29 and highlighted successful farm to school programs in Salem, Vernon, Mountainside and Long Branch during that week. In addition, October is Farm to School Month across the nation. These celebrations are opportunities to develop the synergy between farmers and the children who will become lifetime fruit and vegetable consumers. Teaching about nutrition is one thing, but exposing people to how our food is grown makes a dramatic impact.

Everyone benefits from farm-to-school programs: children increase their intake of nutritious local foods and gain a better understanding about where their food comes from; and, farmers grow a new crop of young produce-lovers to buy and consume their products.

From the State Board President



State Board of Agriculture President, Rob Swanekamp

At the State Board meeting on September 25, the Board voted to approve the idea to hold the North and South Caucus meetings during the annual Farm Bureau Convention. It was suggested that meetings be held at the end of the first day, when attendance is greatest. More information on the caucus meetings will be sent by the Chair of each caucus.

The Board also briefly discussed the proposed legislation on Microenterprise, Assembly Bill 4034. The Board's Legislative Committee was asked to further review the legislation.

The next State Board of Agriculture meeting will take place on October 23, 2013 in the Board Room on the first floor of the NJDA offices in Trenton. All are invited to attend these State Board meetings. Please contact Linda Walker at Linda.Walker@ag.state.nj.us for more details.

NJDA staff continued planning for the 99th annual State Agricultural Convention to be held February 5-6, 2014 at the Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City. The convention will again be held in conjunction with the 2014 New Jersey Agricultural Convention & Trade Show coordinated by the Vegetable Growers Association of NJ (VGA-NJ), New Jersey Blueberry Assoc., Garden State Wine Growers Assoc., and New Jersey Agriculture Experiment Station, Rutgers University. Several topics for listening sessions are being reviewed and we are expecting some engaging discussions will follow these sessions. Please plan to join us at the convention. You can contact convention coordinator, Nancy Wood for more information at Nancy.Wood@ag.state.nj.us.

Important Dates for your Calendar:

**October is National Pizza
Month and Seafood Month**

Oct. 22 - Food Safety Informational Meeting at Eco — Complex (See Page 4.)

Oct. 23 - State Board of Agriculture Meeting, NJDA, Trenton

Oct. 31 - Deadline for nominations for Distinguished Service to Agriculture Award. (see Page 3 for details.)

Nov. 5 - Election Day

Nov. 11 - Veterans Day

Nov. 18-19 - NJFB Convention

Spotlight on NJDA— Division of Animal Health

The Division of Animal Health, under the direction of Dr. Manoel Tamassia, maintains disease control programs to protect the health and well-being of livestock in New Jersey. The division tracks information about emerging diseases around the world that may impact the Garden State, conducts epidemiological investigations of livestock diseases, operates an animal health diagnostic laboratory, manages two contagious equine metritis quarantine facilities for imported horses and supports an aggressive Johne's disease control program. The New Jersey Department of Agriculture Division of Animal Health offers New Jersey producers several programs and services. All programs are voluntary and many of the programs and services are offered free of charge. There are services and programs that are tailored to all aspects of poultry, livestock and equine agriculture in New Jersey.

The Division of Animal Health is heavily involved in these programs/missions:

Emergency Preparedness

NJ County Animal Response Team (NJ CARTS)

Animal Diagnostic Laboratory

Animal Disease Traceability

Garden State Dairy Alliance

NJCHAP - NJ Cattle Health Assurance Program

NJSAGHAP - NJ Sheep and GOAT

Health Assurance Program

GlobalVet Link's Online EIA (Coggins) System BQA - Beef Quality Assurance

Swine Health Protection

Monitored Flock

NPIP - National Poultry Improvement Plan

To learn more about any of these programs/services, please visit the division's web pages at: <http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/ah/> or call the Division of Animal Health at **609-671-6400**.

New NJDA/Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory Website Launched

New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Douglas H. Fisher recently announced the launching of a new website geared toward veterinarians, as well as farmers, animal owners, animal organizations and universities.

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture's Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory website can be found at www.jerseyvetlab.nj.gov. The user-friendly website also includes a mobile site, which provides easy access to the laboratory's services while in the field.

"New Jersey has a state-of-the-art veterinary diagnostic laboratory, offering a wide variety of services," said Secretary Fisher. "Now, with its own website and mobile site, many more people can easily access those services."

The site gives people the ability to search for tests by keywords, animal species, discipline and cause of the

disease; they will find submission forms and complete instructions on how to submit samples; training and education information; contact information; and directions to the laboratory.

The laboratory opened at the New Jersey Public Health, Environmental and Agricultural Laboratories (NJPHEAL) building in Ewing in March 2012, enabling the laboratory to expand its services. Some new capabilities include a state-of-the-art necropsy laboratory, modern testing instruments, and specialized laboratory space to handle select agents, dangerous pathogens and highly toxic chemicals, increasing the laboratory's capacity to respond to high consequential and emerging animal diseases such as influenza viruses in birds and dogs, foot-and-mouth-disease and classical swine fever, among others.

"The new website makes it simple to find the tests available, whether it involves cows, horses, sheep, goats, poultry, pigs, dogs, cats, wild animals, zoo animals, and even fish," said Dr. Manoel Tamassia, New Jersey State Veterinarian. "All of the laboratory's services are competitively priced, as well."

"The goal of the website is to provide submitters all the information needed to submit specimens and animals to the laboratory," said Dr. Amar Patil, Diagnostic Laboratory Director. "Another goal is to provide information to all stakeholders about the availability of laboratory services to ensure health of their animals."

Applications Now Being Sought for 2015 Outstanding Young Farmer

New Jersey annually recognizes the outstanding achievements of a young farmer who is an upstanding leader, respected agriculturalist and is active in community or faith organizations. The Department of Agriculture is now accepting applications for the Year 2015 Outstanding Young Farmer Award. **The submission deadline for nominations is January 15, 2014.**

Nominees must be farm operators, deriving a minimum of two-thirds of their income from farming and must be between the ages of 21-40, not becoming 41 prior to January 1, 2015. Candidates who have a financial interest in the farm operation (a sole proprietor, partner, or a corporation) will receive higher ranking in the OYF judging process. However, nominees may also include salaried farm managers and employees who are actively involved in policy and management decisions. Submission of a financial statement is not required for state competition.

A panel of five judges reviews each nominee's application based on the following criteria: progress in their agricultural career (50 percent of the total score); soil and water conservation practices (25 percent of the total score); and contribution to his/her community, state and nation (25 percent of the total score). Any individual or organization can nominate deserving young farmers' names. Persons who have been nominated in the past or previous state winners who did not make it to the National competition can be re-nominated. However, these candidates must still meet the eligibility criteria.

Since the first award was presented, eight New Jersey farmers' names have been added to the National OYF Honor Roll. They include Abbott Lee (1985), James B. Giamarese (1989), Robert Von Thun, Jr. (2001), Jeffrey VanderGroef (2005), H. William Sytsema (2009), Richard Norz (2010), John Melick (2011) and Paul "Duce" Tallamy II (2012).

The OYF program is the oldest farmer recognition program in the United States, with the first group of national winners selected in 1955. The goals of the OYF program are to foster better urban-rural relations through the understanding of farmers' challenges, as well as the appreciation of their contributions and achievements; to bring about a greater interest in farmers/ranchers; and to help build an urban awareness of the farmers' importance and impact on America's economy. The OYF program encourages a greater interest in agriculture through the appreciation of the farmers' contributions and achievements and recognizes local citizens' contributions and encourages better urban-rural relations. The National OYF program is sponsored by Deere & Company, supported by the U.S. Junior Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of County Agriculture Agents (NACAA), and is administered by the Outstanding Farmers of America (OFA) Fraternity.

For more information on the state's Outstanding Young Farmer program, visit: www.nj.gov/agriculture/about/sba/cover.html or call Karen Kritz, OYF Program Manager at (609) 984-2506 or email Karen.Kritz@ag.state.nj.us.



REMINDER: Nominations for Distinguished Service Award

The New Jersey State Board of Agriculture is now accepting nominations for the Distinguished Service Citation. The award will be presented to the recipient at the 2014 State Agricultural Convention. You at the county level are best equipped to recommend farmers, agricultural leaders and allies of the industry who have made outstanding contributions to agriculture and to enhancing the quality of rural life in New Jersey.

Please submit nominations for deserving citizens through the County Board of Agriculture in which the individual is a resident.

The deadline for receipt of nominations is October 31, 2013, so please send your candidate's name and biography to the appropriate County Board of Agriculture as soon as possible.



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www.nj.gov/agriculture

WE'RE HAVING ANOTHER GREAT SEASON!

Food Safety Informational Meeting on October 22 - Register Now!

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture, New Jersey Farm Bureau and Rutgers University's New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station are co-sponsoring an informational meeting on the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) for farmers in New Jersey, Delaware and Eastern Pennsylvania on Tuesday, October 22, beginning at 8 a.m.

The meeting, to be held at the Rutgers EcoComplex in Columbus, New Jersey, will include presentations on FSMA from key personnel on the topic for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the agricultural community, followed by a nearly two-hour Panel Discussion and Q&A Session dedicated to the topic of what FSMA means in practical terms for New Jersey's farmers.

FSMA, which was passed and signed into law in 2011, requires the FDA to propose and adopt food-safety rules and regulations for all levels of the food system in the United States and will, for the first time, see FDA inspecting farms as well as processing facilities. Questions have been raised by national agricultural groups on many points in the rules that have been proposed so far, especially regarding when farms might be determined to move from solely a farm to a "mixed use" facility or even to the level of a processor, depending on what activities occur there.

The event is free, but pre-registration is required, as space is limited. To pre-register, please call the New Jersey Department of Agriculture at **609-292-8896**, or e-mail the Department at: jeffrey.beach@ag.state.nj.us.

My grandfather used to say
that once in your life,
you need a doctor,
a lawyer,
a policeman . . .
but three times a day,
you need a
farmer.

~ Brenda Schoepp

Community Farmers

Markets

NJDA staff continues to receive and respond to a number of requests from local governmental organizations and municipal groups 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. If you are a grower of produce or nursery stock, or a fisherman that would be interested in offering your products for sale each week during the farmers market season, please contact Bill Walker at the NJDA Division of Market Development at William.walker@ag.state.nj.us or at **609-292-8854**.

Comments?

Joe Atchison, Agricultural Marketing Coordinator for the NJDA, is the editor of this newsletter. If you have comments, concerns or an item that you would like considered for the next issue of the newsletter, please contact him at: joe.atchison@ag.state.nj.us or at **609-984-2223**.