



Press Release

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Chinese Delegation of Agricultural Educators Visit CCM as Part of New Jersey Tour *Highlighting Agricultural Education and Strengths in the Garden State*

RANDOLPH, NJ – One of the major challenges facing the world today is how to feed a growing population that is expected to rise from almost seven billion to more than nine billion by 2050. As part of an international exchange, the Landscape and Horticultural Technology (LHT) program at County College of Morris (CCM) on Tuesday, December 4, hosted a Chinese delegation of educators to share information about agricultural education in the U.S.

The delegation, which is visiting educational facilities across New Jersey, explored CCM's new LHT facility with its state-of-the-art teaching labs and classrooms, spoke with CCM agricultural professors and toured the campus. The visitors also were provided with information about the LHT building's numerous sustainability features, which are expected to earn the facility LEED Gold certification.

"The United States, as well as the entire globe, is facing a critical need for highly skilled agriculturists," noted Jan-Marie Traynor, recently retired chair of the LHT program who arranged for the delegation to visit CCM. "We need to have programs in place that are able to prepare students to meet the challenges of feeding an ever-increasing population with, in many areas, decreasing resources. This kind of sharing of information and knowledge is a great way to begin to meet these needs."

"It is our hope that the LHT department with its new facility can continue to provide opportunities like this for others to learn about agricultural education and environmentally sustainable design and construction," added Brian Oleksak, current program chair.

"We were delighted to be part of this exchange and to share insights into how to successfully prepare students for careers in agriculture," said Dr. Edward J. Yaw, president of CCM. "Many of our

LHT graduates and professors have gone on to assume leadership roles in professional associations at the state, regional and national levels and many have played an important role in the development of curriculum to meet current needs and challenges.”

The delegation’s tour across the Garden State, including visits at Rutgers University, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture and several other colleges and high schools, was initiated by the Sino U.S. Education Service which reached out to the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) last spring. As part of that invitation, Nancy Trivette, State Agricultural Education program leader and state Future Farmers of America advisor, toured agriculture schools in China and spoke to educators about agricultural education in the U.S. Following her presentations in China, a month-long tour to New Jersey was arranged. The tour, which began in mid-November, will conclude this month.

Along with touring schools, the delegation has heard several presentations including one from Dr. Steve Brown of the U.S. Department of Education in Washington, D.C. and one from Traynor, who spoke about the Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education (CASE).

Prior to her retirement, Traynor was involved with the New Jersey Office of Agricultural Education, represented post-secondary institutions on the New Jersey Agricultural Education Advisory Council, and served as coordinator for several career development events for high school students through the Future Farmers of America. She also received 80 hours of training on CASE, a new curriculum system being developed under the management of the National Association for Agriculture Educators (NAAE), of which she is a member. CASE focuses on hands-on, inquiry based, student-centered rigorous education with an emphasis on science and technology.

Because of the reputation of the LHT program at CCM, including its recognition from NAAE in 2008 as one of the top six outstanding post-secondary agriculture programs in the country, the college’s program was included in the tour.

“The LHT program at CCM is a great example of a program that had a very humble beginning and has grown to serve the community and the profession in an exemplary fashion,” said Traynor.

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Photo: A delegation of agricultural educators from China visit the Landscape and Horticulture Technology building at County College of Morris as part of a New Jersey tour on agricultural education in the U.S.

Credit: Amy Sciuto