

# Monmouth County Cooperative Extension



## 2012 Annual Report

### Our Vision

Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County helps individuals, groups and organizations to address their needs, problems and concerns. We identify emerging and established issues and can then provide the leadership, organizational skills and commitment to develop appropriate solutions through the educational process. We seek to build multi-disciplinary teams to assess complex problems in a more comprehensive and knowledgeable manner.

### Our Mission

Helping the diverse population of Monmouth County adapt to a rapidly changing society and improve their lives by applying current science-based information. Our mission focus is on issues and needs relating to Agriculture and the Environment, Management of Natural Resources, Food Safety, Quality, Nutrition & Health, Family Stability, Economic Security and Youth Development.

### Rutgers Cooperative Extension

Rutgers Cooperative Extension is an integral component of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) of Rutgers - the State University. This linkage provides a diverse range of research, extension and education programs that serve the people of New Jersey and their urban, suburban and rural communities. Through our Cooperative Extension offices in all 21 NJ counties, 4-H Agents, Extension Specialists, Family & Community Health Sciences Educators and Agricultural and Resource Management Agents work in serving NJ residents in every area of our state. This structure partners with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences and New Jersey county governments to provide practical education for all people. RCE faculty and staff provide outreach programs in Agriculture and Resource Management, Sea Grant Extension, 4-H Youth Development and Family and Community Health Sciences. The staff is strongly supported by groups of trained volunteers who serve on advisory boards and who increase our educational outreach and services to Monmouth County.

## Agriculture and Resource Management

**Overview** - The Monmouth County clientele base includes commercial agriculture, horticulture, aquaculture, homeowners, governmental agencies and natural resource interests. Department Head William Sciarappa, Horticulturist Diane Larson, Program Assistant Vivian Quinn and Horticultural Consultant John Neyhart served a diversity of clientele in 2012 through established programs, services and applied research activities. Extension agents work cooperatively to provide technical and educational programs on a regional basis in the fields of vegetable, agronomic nursery and greenhouse production. We work with USDA-NRCS, Farm Service Agency, Freehold Soil District, Shade Tree Commission and the Monmouth County Board of Agriculture all internally within the Agricultural Building to more efficiently serve county clients.

**Outreach Partners** - With our external outreach programs in ag-chemical education, integrated pest management and stormwater runoff, we partner with the Monmouth County Board of Agriculture, the Monmouth County Agricultural Development Board, New Jersey Department of Agriculture, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, NJ Farm Bureau and regional watershed committees.

**Agricultural Production** - Despite an economic turndown, rising prices and severe weather challenges, the overall agricultural industry in Monmouth County remains very diverse, and economically strong. Total farm sales (excluding equine) in 2009 was estimated at \$84 million (5th in State) on 54,966 acres of land. Statewide the county ranks 1st in equine breeding and training facilities, although a sharp decline is developing due to reductions in state support. Roadside and community farmers markets and pasture acreage remain as state leaders; 2nd in nursery and floriculture crop production horse farms, Asian vegetables and pumpkins; 3rd in sweet corn, sod production and Christmas tree farms; 5th in alfalfa, soybean, pepper and tomato production; 6th in hay and forage. In total, Monmouth County ranks first in the value of total annual agricultural production in North Jersey at \$105 million (2007) and 2<sup>nd</sup> to Southern counties.

Farms & Farmers had another difficult 2012 season due to extreme weather – i.e., hail, high winds, tornadoes and even an earthquake – Hurricane Sandy felled numerous trees, nursery crops and farm buildings and complicated late crop harvest. RCE assisted county emergency functions in the field and in the office followed by assistance to USDA-Farm Service Agency in documenting crop damage, infrastructure claims and assessing subsequent disease problems.



### Extension Outreach

Agribusiness in Monmouth County provides food, forage, fiber, feed, ornamental products and services. Our educational programs enhance the financial viability of these operations and helps preserve our environment. Outreach topics were landscape, greenhouse and nursery production, sustainable and organic farming practices, specialty crop production, equine pasture management, animal waste management, bio-energy and sustainable energy resources, pesticide use, pest management, farm viability, regulatory matters and agricultural methods.

- 24 meetings held with 1,325 farmers, educators, horticulturists, environmentalists and general public
- 33 educational presentations to 1,150 participants
- Communication categories totaled 1,425 phone responses, 1,870 client emails and new e-alert system
- 12 county wide/ agricultural interest newsletters and program announcements with a total circulation of over 1,100 farm readers each
- 53 farmers were documented as having farm site plans in animal waste management.
- A new free service for sterilizing tomato and pepper seeds from bacterial diseases was initiated in the Monmouth County office and served 6 growers.



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## Equine Industry

Pasture management studies, soil testing and the animal waste projects were 2012's key programmatic emphasis. Significant strides continue in improving environmental and soil health as well as pasture grass quality. Nonetheless, the equine industry is declining as adjacent states have thrived with their recent acceptance of racinos – racetracks with gaming that NJ has not accepted. Without competitive purse funds; training farms, breeding farms, hay and grain farms, are re-locating to surrounding states with more to offer.

To promote awareness of this growing problem, the first annual outreach event was created - **The Open Space Pace and Festival of Horses**. This event highlights the relationship between the horse and open space in New Jersey – especially Monmouth County and celebrates our state animal. A parade of horses, clubs, and organizations marched through the center of Freehold past the viewing stand of Freeholders and other dignitaries.



Arriving at Freehold Racetrack spectators were greeted with numerous equine and agricultural displays. There was an exciting Medieval Times demonstration, a petting zoo and numerous educational booths from the Equine Science Center, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, The Board of Agriculture, NJ Department of Agriculture, 4H Youth Development, and Farm Bureau among others.

Standard-bred and celebrity races were held; each with a \$1000 donation given to worthy ag-equine organizations. After seeing the successful inauguration, the NJDA approved the event as an official County Fair in 2012.



## Resource Management

Natural resource programs had another very productive year in Monmouth County. Rapid development and land-use changes put our water quality and quantity at risk from many sources of pollution. Stormwater runoff and flooding was especially evident in the wake of Superstorm Sandy. Extension programming with Monmouth County Watershed Partnership and local organizations have communicated to citizens effective ways to protect our infrastructure and water supplies. The photo above shows the award winning rain garden at St. Catherine School with their Principal and RU Ag Assistant, Vivian Quinn.



The photo above shows the The Child Advocacy Rain Garden in front of our Ag Building sponsored by Freehold Soil and constructed by RCE staff, Master Gardeners and the Eagle Scouts Team.

Other Highlights included rain garden construction for water recycling and assessing the financial value of environmental benefits of farmland and open space. Constructing a total of 44 public rain gardens stimulated the adoption of over 350 private rain gardens which helped recharge over 8 million gallons of stormwater runoff. We continue to progress towards our goal of 1,000 county rain gardens by 2015.

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## Master Gardeners

24 Monmouth County residents successfully completed the Master Gardener program in 2012, which entailed 60 hours of formal training, followed by at least 60 hours each of community volunteer service. Monmouth County has trained a total of 372 Master Gardeners since its inception in 1999, retaining 191 active Master Gardeners. Master Gardeners provided 22,975 hours of volunteer service in 2012, and responded to over 2100 gardening inquiries from the public on the Helpline. Of the total hours of volunteer time, 3241 hours were spent performing consultation and diagnostic duties at Helpline events, 8783 hours were spent performing Community Outreach where the public was educated on horticulture on an informal basis, and 3210 hours were spent formally teaching the public through the Speakers Bureau. These volunteer areas alone, totaling 15,234 hours, which, according to the Independent Sector's value of volunteer time for New Jersey, calculates into a cost factor of \$390,599.

## Community Projects

- Master Gardeners were involved in 24 different community gardens, from planning advice at the 5 new sites to continuing educational outreach at the 19 existing community gardens.
- The Horticultural Enrichment committee of Master Gardeners provided 20 programs in facilities in Monmouth County, in an effort to provide cognitive, emotional, and physical benefits through horticulture to residents.

- Over 3,000 pounds of produce grown and donated to local food pantries (Open Door in Freehold, Lunch Break in Red Bank, and the Monmouth Ocean Food Bank) by the Master Gardener class of 2012's 'Plant a Row for the Hungry' garden, and over 1400 lbs produced from the Junior Master Gardener garden, both gardens on site at the Freehold Agriculture Building.

## Educational Outreach

- Educational displays at 20 public venues.
- Outreach displays focused on rain barrels, rain gardens, composting, and integrated pest management.
- Master Gardeners created 31 educational programs that were presented to over 800 residents at 66 different speaking events. 12 educational programs were planned and conducted for youth, with over 500 youth attending.

## 2012 Highlights

- The children's festival, Bugs Birds & Beyond was a tremendous success with a record 400+ residents in attendance. Cooperatively held with 4H, it featured a 'Rabbits and Raptures' theme.
- One \$1000 scholarship was awarded to a high school senior who was planning on studying a field in plant science in college.
- The Monmouth County Fair educational display focused on herbs to highlight the new herb garden that was installed at the Agriculture Building last fall.



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## Marine

Professor and Marine Extension Agent Gef Flimlin continues the project started in 2011 to infuse seafood into Community Supported Agriculture farms or CSA. The seafood shareholders were extremely pleased with the variety and quality of the cultured and wild harvested seafood that they received every other week. Whenever there was a seafood week, the NJ Marine Sciences Sea Grant Program helped to develop a storyline based on information about the species from the Marine Agent, which also contained background on the fishery, the gear, and some great recipes for the people to try.

The new concept was to have a separate share of seafood (cultured clams or oysters, lobsters, scallops, squid, or finfish) that the shareholders can purchase and have with their produce share. The expansion of the project to other CSAs was not as simple as had been hoped. Because of the variation in fish or shellfish species, the geographic distance between the CSAs and the different days on which shareholders come for their produce, and thus seafood, it has been harder to coordinate appropriate distribution of the fish and shellfish. RCE and the Consortium will be working to solve this problem and hopefully find a distributor who will accommodate more CSAs next year.

The agent has also been appointed by the Borough of Highlands to serve as the scientific source for information for the Highlands Depuration Committee. He brought information about the stock survey and natural mortality study done by Rutgers and NJDEP Bureau of Shellfisheries, the workings of depuration (cleaning shellfish that come from special restricted waters so they can be marketed), the potential for using High Hydrostatic Pressure processing for a valued added pre-shucked clam, and serving as a liaison to the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Program which oversees all aspects of shellfish production and marketing to maintain a high level of safety for shellfish consumers. Photo below: Gef Flimlin, right, takes part in the judging panel for the Jersey Seafood Challenge.



## Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County

Agriculture Building  
4000 Kozloski Road, PO Box 5033  
Freehold, NJ 07728

Office Hours: 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM  
Monday - Friday

Phone: 732-431-7260  
FAX: 732-409-4813  
Website: [www.njaes.rutgers.edu](http://www.njaes.rutgers.edu)

## Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders



*Director, Thomas A. Arnone*  
*Deputy Director, Serena DiMaso*  
*Lillian G. Burry*  
*John P. Curley*  
*Gary J. Rich*

*Teri O'Connor, County Administrator*

## Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey The NJ Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES)

*Dr. Robert M. Goodman*  
Executive Dean of Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Executive Director of NJAES

*Dr. Larry S. Katz*  
Senior Associate Director, NJAES  
Director Cooperative Extension

## Family & Community Health Sciences

*FCHS... Promoting Healthy Families,  
Schools and Communities*



Through education and outreach focusing on food, nutrition, wellness and healthy lifestyles, the Family and Community Health Sciences department (FCHS) promotes healthy families, schools and communities.

The dietary awareness of the residents in Monmouth county is increasing. However, the obesity epidemic remains on the rise. FCHS programming provides nutrition education to adults and youth throughout the community aimed at achieving the following desired outcomes: improve diets and nutritional welfare for the total family; increase knowledge of nutrition essentials; increase practices to promote more active lifestyles; and improve practices in food production, preparation, storage and safety.

### Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education

Through a series of classes conducted at local collaborating agencies, the NJ SNAP-Ed program helped participants acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for making healthy food choices. During the 2012 Program Fiscal Year: 68% of participants showed improvement by planning meals, comparing prices, using grocery lists and not running out of food by the end of the month. 78% of participants showed improvement by planning meals, making healthy food choices, reading nutrition labels and feeding their children breakfast. 51% of participants showed improvement by thawing and storing foods properly. There were 483 family members who had benefited from the local NJ SNAP-Ed project this past year, while 1,213 youth were reached through 394 special hands-on workshops on how to make nutritious food choices.

### Get Moving – Get Healthy NJ Wellness Initiative

Under the Get Moving Get Healthy with FCHS banner of programs, two related programs that targeted two different age groups were implemented. The over-arching goals of the programs were to expose students and families to practical knowledge and skills related to nutrition, meal preparation, and develop an appreciation for local food sources. Program objectives were to: increase knowledge about and decrease the consumption of sugar sweetened beverages, increase awareness about the importance of getting recommended amounts of physical activity daily, increase knowl-

edge and consumption of fruits and vegetables, increase knowledge and skills about choosing and preparing healthier snack options. For more information visit [www.getmovinggethealthynj.rutgers.edu](http://www.getmovinggethealthynj.rutgers.edu)

### Keansburg Afterschool Programs

Students and their families, who participated in Keansburg Afterschool Program (KAP) at Bolger Middle School in Keansburg, were involved in several educational activities during the course of the year. A series of interactive programs, led by FCHS educators, instructed students on the health benefits of including a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables to their daily diet. Taste testing and preparation of various familiar and less commonly known foods were introduced as healthy snacks. A culminating event, "Jersey Fresh Day" was created in a joint effort between the Cooperative Extension Departments to pull together the knowledge gathered throughout the year and foster family involvement during the educational process. As apples were the featured topic for this year, families were invited to learn about some of the most popular New Jersey varieties and sample homemade applesauce prepared by FCHS staff. At the conclusion of the day, families were given a host of Jersey Fresh vegetables to take home graciously donated by local farmers.

The High School summer cooking program was implemented in partnership with the Keansburg School Based Youth Services Program. The focus was to provide a population of youth in need of supplemental social support with the opportunity to learn cooking skills, use their creativity in developing quick, low cost, nutritious, and good tasting meals. Students were provided with guidelines for kitchen etiquette while preparing, cooking, serving, and clean-up. Strategy sessions were conducted to review the menu, take assessment of ingredients, and determine team assignments. There were also discussions on alternative methods of cooking, such as baking, that promotes lower fat and lower sodium intake. The proper storage and reheating of leftovers along with food preparation allowed students tolerate food safety tips.



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## 4-H Youth Development Program

### Educational Programming



The Monmouth County 4-H Program offers youth a hands-on, informal educational environment – a place where they feel both connected and valued. In 2012, over 507 youth, grades K-13 in Monmouth County participated in a variety of 4-H opportunities including community and project-based clubs, school enrichment programs, after school programs, special interest events, and local, state and national events. Participation in the 4-H Program helps youth master life skills and gain a deeper understanding of generosity by becoming active, engaged citizens. In addition, there are various opportunities for teens to improve leadership skills, while achieving a great deal of personal growth and independence.

### Service

The 4-H Program engages young people, both individually and collectively, in making a difference in their own communities, and beyond, through skills development in problem solving, leadership and teambuilding. Monmouth County members are actively involved in the planning and implementation of various community service projects, such as food and clothing collections and environmental cleanups. Service learning takes community service one step further with an educational focus on specific community issues that deepens the service experience and multiplies the community benefits.

### Volunteers

Caring adult volunteers are the core of the 4-H Youth Development Program. Adult volunteers contribute by leading community and project-based clubs, directing advisory groups, and instructing special interest programs, like community service events and camping weekends. This year, 154 adult volunteers donated, on average 220 hours, preparing for club meetings and guiding youth in the program, which translates to a donation of more than \$738,000. in service to our Monmouth County 4-H Program. Youth volunteers are also significant contributors to our program. This year, 15 teen volunteers shared their skills with younger 4-H'ers and with other local youth; a major asset of the 4-H Program.



## Department & Staff

*William Sciarappa, Ph.D.*  
*County Extension Department Head*

### Agriculture Department

*William Sciarappa, County Agricultural  
& Resource Management Agent*

*Gef Flimlin - Marine Extension Agent*  
*732-349-1152*

*Diane Larson, Home Horticulturist*  
*Vivian Quinn, Program Assistant*  
*Theresa Hansen, Secretary*  
*Madgeline Quince, Secretary*

### 4-H Department

*Kaitlin Everett - Supervisor, 4-H Agent*  
*Virginia Krzyzanowski, Program Associate*  
*Sabrina Brown, Program Assistant*  
*Gladys Tarantino, Secretary*

### Family & Community Health Sciences

*Rachel J. Tansey, Supervisor*  
*FCHS/SNAP-Ed Program Associate*  
*Sharese Porter, FCHS Senior*  
*Program Coordinator*  
*Sandie Merritt, FCHS/SNAP-Ed Secretary*  
*Shakkie Clark, SNAP-Ed Community Asst.*  
*Jennifer Garcia, SNAP-Ed Community Asst.*  
*Amanda Nail, SNAP-Ed*  
*Community Coordinator*

### Rutgers Master Gardeners

Helpline – 732-303-7614  
Monday - Friday - 9 AM – 4 PM  
E-mail questions  
[mgarden@co.monmouth.nj.us](mailto:mgarden@co.monmouth.nj.us)

**For more info visit our website:**

**[www.monmouth.njaes.rutgers.edu/](http://www.monmouth.njaes.rutgers.edu/)**

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# Monmouth County Cooperative Extension



## Clubs

4-H clubs meet throughout the county, in suburban and urban settings. Trained 4-H club leaders worked with 42 4-H clubs in 2012, teaching, guiding and mentoring our youth. The 4-H mission is to implement the youth development program using a hands-on learning approach that meets the needs of young people in a positive way – we call it “*learn by doing*”. Youth develop many life skills participating in specific project areas of their choice, such as leadership and citizenship, knowledge of animals, science, expressive and performing arts and healthy living.

## Collaborations

- Parent’s Academy – Howell School: Building Life Skills
- 4-H Bugs, Birds and Beyond Day – over 400 people in attendance - Ag Building in Freehold
- Insane Insect Art Show – 27 4-H entries Sponsors: Insectropolis, Around the Corner Art Center and VW Ocean
- RAH – Rutgers Against Hunger Program at the Brielle Elementary School – 4 classes

For over 38 years, the Monmouth County 4-H Youth Development Program has partnered with the **Monmouth County Park System** to present the Monmouth County Fair. This collaboration has been a positive, productive effort, benefiting both Monmouth County and the thousands of fairgoers who visit and enjoy the event each year. The Park System also works with 4-H to provide camping facilities; so many of our 4-H youth and families can enjoy outdoor, educational opportunities in Monmouth County.

Other community agencies that are valued partners include the Monmouth County United Way and Workforce Investment Board, county school districts, Tractor Supply, the YMCA of Western Monmouth, the Monmouth County Library and National 4-H Council.

## Grants and Youth Programs

- Wal-Mart Grant \$35,000 - NJ GMGH Statewide Healthy Living Teams of Food & Fitness Ambassadors
- Joseph Bolger Middle School, KAP Keansburg After school Program): Taught Character Counts (Fall) and SET – CSI (Spring) and includes the following special events: February – Family Night Program, May - Celebrate After School – GMGH, October - Jersey Fresh Day – “How about them Apples” and Lights On After School Event – “Character Counts”

In 2012, Monmouth County 4-H continued a National 4-H Mentoring Grant from National 4-H Council (\$82,000) with a focus on delinquency prevention in at-risk communities. High school youth were screened and trained as small group mentors for at-risk middle school peers. These mentors assisted in the implementation of weekly after school clubs. In addition, Monmouth County 4-H Youth Development collaborated with after school sites within the county on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Programs and School-Based Youth Services Grants. 4-H programming at these sites included instruction on nutrition and physical activity, environmental sciences, engineering and technology.

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