

# Monmouth County Cooperative Extension



## 2013 Annual Report

### 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 a diversity of outreach programs in Agriculture and Resource Management, Sea Grant Extension, 4-H Youth Development and Family and Community Health Sciences.

### 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

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. We aim to help the diverse population of Monmouth County adapt to a rapidly changing society and improve their lives by applying current science-based information. 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** - Department Head William Sciarappa, Horticulturist Diane Larson, Program Assistant Vivian Quinn and Horticultural Consultant John Neyhart served a diversity of clientele in 2013 through established programs, services and applied research activities. The Monmouth County clientele base includes commercial agriculture, horticulture, aquaculture, homeowners, governmental agencies and natural resource interests. Extension agents work cooperatively throughout the state and region to provide technical and educational programs in the fields of vegetable, agronomic, nursery and greenhouse production. Our external outreach programs prioritize agi-chemical education, integrated pest management, crop production and stormwater runoff.

**Outreach Partners** – Partners include USDA-NRCS, Farm Service Agency, Freehold Soil District and the Board of Agriculture; all internally within the Agricultural Building to more efficiently serve county clients. Also, Rutgers Cooperative Extension partners with the 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** – Nationally, our Garden State ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> in fruit production of cranberries, peaches and blueberries in 2012. For vegetable production, NJ ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in bell peppers and spinach, 6<sup>th</sup> in cucumber and squash, 8<sup>th</sup> in tomatoes and snap beans and 9<sup>th</sup> in sweet corn. The total value of agricultural production in 2012 for New Jersey was a record \$1.01 billion. Similarly the overall agricultural industry in Monmouth County remains very diverse and economically strong. Sales in 2012 were estimated at \$95 million (3rd in State) on 38,961 acres of land. Statewide the county ranks 1st in equine breeding and training facilities, although a sharp decline is developing due to sharp 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 hay, soybean, pepper and tomato production and 6th in hay and forage.

### Extension Outreach

Agribusiness is especially important in Monmouth County to provide food, forage, feed, ornamental plants and services.

RCE educational programs enhance the financial viability of these operations. Outreach topics include specialty crop production, pesticide use, pest management, soil health, equine pasture, animal waste training, sustainable farming and landscape, greenhouse and nursery production. To this end, our office developed the following educational programs and processes.

- 16 meetings held with 1,130 farmers, educators, horticulturists, environmentalists and general public
- 18 educational presentations to 860 participants
- Communication categories totaled 2,550 phone responses, 2,200 client emails and e-alert system
- 5 county wide/ agricultural interest newsletters and a standing website
- Program announcements with e-AG Advisor and Nursery News distributed to 300 subscribers
- 62 total farmers were documented as having farm site plans in animal waste management
- 8 commercial growers served from our free service for sterilizing tomato and pepper seeds from bacterial diseases continued for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in the Monmouth County office

### Equine Industry

Soil testing and animal waste projects were a key programmatic emphasis in 2013. Significant strides continue in improving environmental and soil health as well as pasture grass quality and weed management.

The equine industry is declining as adjacent states have thrived with their recent acceptance of racinos – racetracks with gaming that NJ has not approved. Without competitive purse funds, training farms, breeding farms and hay and grain farms are relocating to surrounding states with more to offer. To promote awareness of this important problem,



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the second annual outreach event was held at the Freehold Raceway - **The Open Space Pace and Festival of Horses**. The New Jersey Department of Agriculture approved the event as an official County Fair for 2013. This fair 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, 3,500 spectators were greeted with numerous equine and agricultural displays. There was 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.



## Resource Management

Natural resource projects had another productive year in Monmouth County. Over-development and climate change have 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. 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 61 public rain gardens stimulated the adoption of over 450 private rain gardens which helped recharge over 11 million gallons of stormwater runoff. In addition to our rain garden and rain barrel programs, we partnered in producing a pilot Maritime Forest along the Monmouth County coast. This innovative construction mimics mother nature's natural barriers to reduce flooding and sand surge which have greatly disrupted our seaside citizens and shoreline.



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## Master Gardeners

Thirty Monmouth County residents successfully completed the Rutgers Master Gardener program in 2013, 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 402 Master Gardeners since its inception in 1999, retaining 190 active Master Gardeners. Master Gardeners provided 21,540 hours of volunteer service in 2013, and responded to over 2207 gardening inquiries from the public on the office Helpline. Of the total hours of volunteer time, 3845 hours were spent performing consultation and diagnostic duties at Helpline events, 8916 hours were spent performing Community Outreach where the public was educated on horticulture on an informal basis, and 4450 hours were spent formally teaching the public through the Speakers Bureau. These volunteer areas alone, totaling 17,211 hours calculate, which, according to the Independent Sector's value of volunteer time for New Jersey, into a cost factor of \$437,159.

### Community Projects

- A new committee was formed to assist schools with programs for their students, including the start-up of school gardens. Master Gardeners were on hand at 16 schools to give advice on vegetable gardening, composting, rain gardens, garden restoration, fruit orchard planting and management, as well as providing programs for both students and staff.
- The Horticultural Enrichment committee of Master Gardeners provided 21 programs in healthcare facilities in Monmouth County, providing cognitive, emotional, and physical benefits through horticulture to over 315 residents.
- Over 5,000 pounds of produce were 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 2013's 'Plant a Row for the Hungry' garden, and the Junior Master Gardener garden, both gardens on site at the Freehold Agriculture Building.

### Educational Outreach

- Speakers Bureau library contains 32 different Power-Point presentations developed by MGs.
- Master Gardeners presented 81 lectures to over 800 residents at 66 different speaking events.

- 12 educational programs were planned and conducted for youth, with over 1000 youth attending.
- 124 RCE MG programs were planned and conducted for adults with over 1900 in attendance.

### 2013 Highlights

- Five \$1000 scholarships were awarded to five high school seniors who were planning on studying a field in plant science in college.
- 2013 was a year of recovery for Monmouth County after the devastation of our shores from Superstorm Sandy. The Master Gardeners were instrumental in educating the public on what to do when the landscape has been flooded with salt water, reaching over 300 people through lectures and thousands of people through their display at the Monmouth County Fair, titled 'Master Gardeners Re-Plant the Shore'. As a result of this, they were featured in a front page, four page article of Coastal Monmouth magazine, with the title 'Master Gardeners Take on Tough Task of Sandy Cleanup'. Additionally, Master Gardeners partnered with other agencies to plant the first 'Maritime Forest' in Bradley Beach, buffering the environmentally sensitive Lake Fletcher half-acre site so it will be resilient to future storms.

**Master Gardeners Re-Plant the Shore**

Trees and shrubs surged by Hurricane Sandy?  
Turn this problem into an Opportunity!

Choose plants that are	These plants will
Salt Tolerant Native Plants Wildlife Pollinators Global Warming Tolerant	Avoid re-occurring plant loss Use less fertilizer, pesticides, water Secure our food supply Ensure future survivability

Forward-thinking choices can result in a reliable and exciting re-planting of your gardens

Chastetree, American Holly, Viburnum, Bayberry, Shasta Daisy, Oakleaf Hydrangea, Blackhaw Viburnum, Pitch Pine, Rosa Rugosa, Atlantic White Cedar, River Birch

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Master Gardeners 24/7

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## Marine

Professor and Marine Extension Agent Gef Flimlin has taken the very successful “**Seafood into the CSA**” project and transferred it to another successful program. Over the past two years, Gef has worked with a cooperative developer to form Heritage Shellfish Cooperative. This group of five hard clam and oyster growers have a combined experience of over 160 years in the shellfish industry. The group is working to bring their clams and seafood from other commercial fishing enterprises in NJ to food cooperatives and other **Community Supported Agriculture farms** or CSAs. The seafood shareholders have been 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, a storyline was developed based on information about the species, which also contained background on the fishery, the gear and some great recipes.

CSA participants truly enjoyed getting fresh seafood along with their produce at Sea Salt CSA. (see photo). 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 will be working with the Cooperative to solve this problem and find a distributor to accommodate more CSAs.

The agent has also been working with the Borough of Highlands as the scientific source for information for the Highlands Depuration Committee. This marine project focuses on examining the inner workings of the depuration process and how clammers are incorporated into the profits of the plant. 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.

## Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County

Agriculture Building  
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Freehold, NJ 07728

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Monday - Friday

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



## Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders

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

*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

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## Family & Community Health Sciences

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



The Department of Family and Community Health Sciences (FCHS) offers educational programs that aim to increase knowledge about food, health and wellness, promote more active lifestyles, encourage the consumption of more fruits and vegetables as well as a plant based diet, while decreasing the intake of foods and beverages high in saturated fat, sodium and sugar. FCHS continues to deliver research-based nutrition education classes, participate in health fairs, hold seminars and workshops and distribute other outreach materials to thousands of county individuals and their families.



The **Get Moving Get Healthy** - New Jersey initiative is a primary focus in Monmouth County. It incorporates a multitude of programming to encourage healthy lifestyles. Many of our adult and senior populations continue to have a vested interest in the programs that encourage healthy eating and physical activity. There is a growing awareness of the benefits of family meals, not only nutritionally but to the advantages to the family unit as well.

FCHS continues to provide an ongoing series of programs to all audiences. Our educators are often called on for nutritional classes to enhance the culinary program with students at the local FoodBank in order for them to graduate and become cooks in local restaurants.

**Grow Healthy** assists schools with sustaining an overall healthier school environment, teaching students and their families to be more active and eat more nutritiously. This is made possible through grant funding to FCHS from the USDA and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture.

Through collaborations with the Health Awareness Center at CentraState Hospital and the Shaping NJ Grant, FCHS has enhanced the classroom experience to multiple local

elementary schools with resources for bringing the garden into the classroom. This has provided opportunities for students to be engaged in hands-on activities as these components were incorporated through classroom teachings and building a garden for their school.

The Keansburg School District remains a strong partner, with high school and middle school students as well as their families, benefiting from afterschool and summer programming. A series of interactive nutritional and cooking programs led by FCHS educators instructed students on the health benefits of including delicious recipes with low cost foods along with keeping a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables in their diet. Cooking clubs were formed to provide taste testing and preparation of various foods as part of classes on healthy meals and cooking on a budget. In addition, as part of our "**Jersey Fresh Day**", educational workshops were conducted on locally-produced honey and honey beekeeping. The taste testing of various types of locally farmed honey with interactive programs was very well received and give high praise.

The **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed)** USDA grant, in Monmouth County, continues to be a priority; focusing on nutritional education reaching our culturally diverse and SNAP eligible residents. During FY'13 our SNAP-Ed staff was able to reach over 1820 youth and adults to enhance their knowledge and skills necessary to encourage proper diets, while contributing to food security along with the ability to improve family nutritional welfare.

In addition to the numerous impactful programs and activities that FCHS provides, there are also many publications distributed that address how to eat a variety of foods for health, keeping focused on the benefits of a healthier lifestyle. Influences like these positively impact the family nutritionally but also socially as they try new things.



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## 4-H Youth Development Program



The 4-H program is built around positive youth development, preparing today's youth to make positive impacts in their communities. The program centers on learning by doing through participation in clubs. 4-H is growing and changing as it begins its second century, yet remains true to its core values – clearer thinking, greater loyalty, larger service, and better living.

### Clubs

There were 35 active clubs in 2013, with a total enrollment of over 500 youth in grades K-13 (the first year of college). Clubs meet throughout the county in suburban and urban settings, in homes, in schools and at the county Agricultural Building. The goal of 4-H clubs is to engage youth in “learning by doing” – building skills and knowledge by participating in projects related to their area of interest, with an adult leader guiding their way. In addition to projects, members make public presentations and engage in community service during the year, developing valuable life skills. There are clubs in all three of the 4-H mission mandate groups. Our **Science, Engineering and Technology** clubs included not only the traditional animal science clubs but also robotics, rocketry, and environmental science; **Healthy Living** included several food clubs; several clubs focused on community service are under the **Citizenship** umbrella. Citizenship work is also available through participation in several state and national 4-H programs. We had members participate in both Citizenship Washington Focus and 4-H National Congress, as well as apply to the highly competitive 4-H National Conference. Teen members also become young leaders as ambassadors of their project areas. Monmouth County's eight active teen ambassadors lead community service projects and educational programs.

### Volunteers & Alumni

The great success of our clubs was possible with the help of 175 volunteers who served as club leaders, mentors, judges, advisory group members and



## RCE 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*  
*Joanne Bujalski, Secretary*  
*Madgeline Quince, Secretary*

### 4-H Department

*Macy Compton - Interim Supervisor,*  
*4-H Agent*  
*Virginia Krzyzanowski, Program Associate*  
*Sabrina Brown, Program Assistant*  
*Claudia Lammers, 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:**

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in a variety of other roles. With an average volunteer commitment of 200 hours over the course of the year, this is equivalent to an \$805,000 donation to the Monmouth County 4-H program. The Volunteer Association continues to fund member scholarships to leadership opportunities within New Jersey and nationally, travel to competitions, and higher education scholarships. Monmouth County has an exceptionally active Alumni Association. It met regularly throughout the year, and successfully raised money through a quilt raffle at the Monmouth County Fair that funded scholarships for 4-H members.

## Service

Service to club, community, country, and world is a key 4-H value. Monmouth County members were very active in community service efforts in 2013. In addition to work with animal rescues and shelters, 4-H members, leaders, and staff worked with **Rutgers Against Hunger** to collect 300 pounds of food, hygiene products, and cleaning supplies for Sandy victims.

## Grants and Collaborations

For nearly 40 years, Monmouth County 4-H has collaborated closely with the Monmouth County Park System to present the Monmouth County Fair. The Fair is one of the highlights of the 4-H year, as most members present a project at the fair, from cooking to art to performances, as well as showing their animals. In 2013 over 300 members and adults participated. 2013 also found Monmouth 4-H working with the **Open Space Pace**, the county's second recognized

agricultural fair at the Freehold Raceway in September. We participated in the **Master Gardeners' Bugs, Birds, and Beyond** day in August. Club members brought animals and staff and volunteers helped with children's activities. Partnering with community organizations is an example of the 4-H focus on improving our clubs, community, country, and world.

Clubs and the fair are not the end of 4-H. The program worked with Bolger Middle School in Keansburg as part of their **21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center** afterschool program, bringing live animals and science lessons to Bolger throughout the year. In the spring and fall, 4-H staff participated in a Jersey Fresh family event as well as a Celebrate Afterschool event. Monmouth County 4-H also continued its work with youth and staff on the Earle Naval Weapons Base.

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