

NEWS FROM THE NJDA

New Jersey
Department of
Agriculture

July 2013

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Important Dates for your Calendar:

July is Nat'l Blueberry month

July is the Nat'l Ice Cream month

July 1-6 - Cumberland County Cooperative Fair

July 4 - Independence Day

July 9-14 - Freedom Fest

July 9-14 - Ocean Cty. Fair

July 17-20 - Burlington County Farm Fair

July 18-20 - Cape May County 4-H Fair

July 24-28 - Monmouth County Fair

July 25-28 - Gloucester Cty. 4-H Fair & NJ Peach Festival

July 27-Aug. 3 - Warren County Farmers Fair

From the Secretary's Desk



NJ Secretary of Agriculture, Douglas H. Fisher

Welcome to the first edition of the e-newsletter from the New Jersey Department of Agriculture. It is our intention to inform about activities of our department, as well as some recent developments in agriculture. In addition, we will feature useful items that might not have been covered by the news media and are directly related to the operation of the state's 10,000 farms. Through this newsletter, we will showcase the multi-stratas of farming in our state that range from animal, plant and seafood, making up the agriculture of our Garden State. We welcome your comments and suggestions which will help guide us in providing you with the news you want to receive. Watch for the NJDA newsletter in your e-mail inbox monthly. Looking forward to Another Great Season.

From the State Board President



State Board of Agriculture President, Jim Giamarese

As my term as President of the N.J. State Board of Agriculture draws to a close, I'm pleased that the Department is introducing this newsletter and proud to reflect on my Board service. During my four years on the Board, Farmland Assessment enhancement was passed, wine sales via the Internet were permitted, the swine gestation crate bill was rejected, and the Department got expanded powers to address mislabeling and misbranding of agricultural products.

On the farm, I'm my own boss, and when something needs doing, I do it. Working within government processes was an eye-opener. They take longer, but ensure our efforts don't run afoul of State laws. I thank the agricultural delegation, Legislature and Governor for the opportunity to serve. Here's wishing all of you a great season.

Spotlight on the Food & Nutrition Division

The NJ Department of Agriculture's Division of Food & Nutrition, led by division director, Rose Tricario, administers the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, Special Milk Program, Afterschool Snack Program, Summer Food

Service Program, Child and Adult Day Care Food Program, Family Day Care Program, Commodity Food Distribution Program, The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and the State Food Purchase Program. The division was the first in the nation to ban the

sale of sugary soft drinks in school cafeterias.

Program responsibilities include developing, disseminating, evaluating, and approving all pertinent program documents required for participation;

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2013 Jersey Fresh Marketing Campaign

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) takes pride in the fact that our state's produce is as fresh as fresh gets. That has been our marketing slogan for the past several years and will continue to be an underlying theme in the Department's communications with consumers and retailers. But in 2013, our marketing message is that Jersey Fresh is consistently great, year after year. In 2013, Jersey Fresh is having "Another Great Season."

The co-stars of this campaign are the delicious and nutritious Jersey Fresh fruits and vegetables alongside the New Jersey farmer who painstakingly provides the finest produce to you and your customers.

For the first time, the NJDA will be reaching foodies and shoppers where they live and breathe...via social media. We will be making inroads into the blogosphere, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and more. These efforts will help extend the Jersey Fresh message beyond the reach of traditional media. We will be encouraging people to "tag" what Jersey Fresh produce they are buying and where they are buying it.

While Hurricane Sandy was devastating and did a lot of damage along the Jersey Shore, many of our beaches are open for business this summer which means there will be many people in their cars and on the road. Radio is a must in reaching these consumers and encouraging them to visit their nearest retail outlet for fresh produce. The New Jersey Department of Agriculture is utilizing NJ 101.5 and several shore stations to reach drivers when they are in their cars and likely to stop for some Jersey Fresh, either on their way to the shore or on their way home. Radio ads will begin in late June and continue through Labor Day.

In keeping with the "Another Great Season" theme, new television commercials have been produced. These spots feature a farmer preparing to work the fields, up-tempo music, quick cuts of the many products offered in New Jersey and people enjoying Jersey Fresh produce. TV ads will run in both the New York and Philadelphia markets to reach the largest concentrations of consumers. Spots will run during the height of the Jersey Fresh summer harvest season.



The Department has implemented a print ad campaign using a cornucopia of fresh fruit and vegetable photography exhorting retailers to "Turn Customers Into Fans" during our great growing season. The ads will appear in several regional and national trade publications, including *The Produce News*, and a modified version will appear in consumer publications in New Jersey throughout the year, as appropriate.

Consumer research shows that people are happy to buy Jersey Fresh at the supermarket, if they can easily find it. These studies have shown that people are more likely to buy and more likely

to pay more for produce identified as locally grown. And it doesn't get much more local than Jersey Fresh. Therefore, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture is producing several types of point-of-purchase (POP) materials for retailers that they may use to identify the great New Jersey agricultural products they offer. Some of the POP materials produced include Jersey Fresh price cards in two sizes, vinyl and polysatin banners featuring the same images as the print ads, aprons, hats and bin wraps featuring large Jersey Fresh logos and small Jersey Fresh logo labels.

Reaching retailers on a one-on-one level remains priority in the marketing process. To that end, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture will continue to attend industry trade shows and conventions to promote the State. Shows include the New Jersey State Agricultural Convention, Vegetable Growers Association of New Jersey Trade Show, PMA, CPMA, FMI, the New England Produce Show and the NY Produce Show. Be sure to look for the Jersey Fresh booth and stop by to say hello. NJDA staff also will conduct visits to retailers.

Finally, all marketing campaigns need to be measured for effectiveness. Coming in late-September, the Department, with assistance from a marketing research firm, will be conducting a Consumer Tracking Study involving surveys of more than 800 consumers from across the New Jersey/New York/Pennsylvania region. Consumers will be asked questions on a variety of topics including advertising impressions and recall, locally grown, social media usage and food safety, to name a few. Based on the results of this study, marketing strategies will be adjusted, as needed, for even greater effectiveness in 2014.

Specialty Crop Block Grant Funding

In the May 9, 2013 Federal Register the USDA announced the current Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG) funding allocations. New Jersey's allocation is approximately \$770,000. This represents a 5.1% reduction from the 2012 allocation.

To be eligible for a grant, projects must "enhance the competitiveness" of specialty crops and might include, but are not limited to: research, promotion, marketing, nutrition, trade enhancement, food safety, food security, plant health programs, education, "buy local" programs, increased consumption, increased innovation, improved efficiency and reduced costs of distribution systems, environmental concerns and conservation, product development, and developing cooperatives. For the purpose of this grant program "specialty crops" are defined as; vegetables, fruits including grapes for wine, nuts, horticultural products including Christmas trees, honey, herbs, potatoes, sweet corn and other specialty crops. Agricultural commodities which are NOT eligible for these grant funds include, but are not limited to: feed crops, food grains, livestock, dairy and poultry products including eggs, range grasses and oilseed crops.

Twenty-two grant applications requesting a total of \$ 1,067,978 in SCBG funds were received as of the NJDA application deadline on April 30, 2013. The competitive allocation of available funds will be determined by the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture in accordance with merit based criteria established by the NJDA. The NJDA's application was submitted to the United States Department of Agriculture on July 10, 2013. For more information on this program, please contact Logan Brown at 609-292-8856.

Defining "Locally Grown"

The New Jersey State Board of Agriculture recently approved a rule proposal that, if adopted, will set regulations determining how New Jersey retailers, wholesalers, food service and other sellers can utilize the term "Locally Grown" in their merchandising. The Board has

been concerned that the term "Local" is being applied to produce grown well beyond New Jersey and our surrounding regions. Since "Locally Grown" has become such a huge national trend, the Board seeks to protect the interests of New Jersey's farmers. Essentially, the new

rule seeks to define "Locally Grown" as produce grown in New Jersey or within 30-miles of New Jersey's borders. Once the rule has been published in a future edition of the New Jersey register, you can send formal comments on the rule.



NJDA Plant Laboratory Offers Testing

The recent stretch of unusual rainy weather raises the potential of mycotoxin contamination in small grains, and other field or forage feed crops. Grain growers may be affected by price discounts and/or restricted markets. Mycotoxin contamination in animal feed and forage can lead to feed refusal, reduced productivity (reduced production of eggs, milk, and weight gain), reproduction problems (disrupted heat cycles, early embryonic death, abortion) impaired health, and in severe cases, death.

The Department of Agriculture's Plant Laboratory offers concerned growers and producers services to test for mycotoxins: Aflatoxin, DON/Vomitoxin, Fumonisin, Ochratoxin, T-2 Toxin, and Zearalenone.

Sample submission information can be found at: <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/pi/pdf/mycotoxinsubmissionform.pdf>

If you have any questions, please call (609) 406-6939 for more information.



PO Box 330
Trenton, NJ 08625-0330
www.nj.gov/agriculture

WE'RE HAVING ANOTHER GREAT SEASON!

Food and Nutrition (Cont. from page 1)

providing technical assistance in the areas of implementation, facilities improvement, and food service methods; on-site monitoring of programs for compliance with State and Federal regulations; and providing financial assistance.

Reimbursements are paid to school districts to offset the cost of school lunches and school breakfasts. In addition, school programs receive federally-donated foods, based on the level of children participating.

The Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) distributes federally-donated food commodities to needy citizens through our six contracted food banks and their networks of food pantries, soup kitchens and homeless shelters. The State Food Purchase Program provides state funding to the foodbanks for purchase of nutrient-dense foods with an emphasis on buying local agricultural products.

Currently, the division is working on a Farm-To-School initiative connecting New Jersey farms to state schools to provide more nutritious, local Jersey Fresh fruits and vegetables to student's school breakfasts and lunches.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Jackie Bricker at 609-984-0692 or at Jacqueline.bricker@ag.state.nj.us

Small Bites

*Agriculture is
the most useful
and most noble
employment of
man.*

- George
Washington

- The Air Pollution Control statute and regulations stipulate that if an air contaminant, which includes odors, is emitted that would unreasonably interfere with the enjoyment of life or property, a civil penalty up to \$10,000 can be imposed for the first offense. According to Right to Farm staff, even if a farmer is following best management or agricultural management practices, if the farmer is cited by NJDEP for odor violations under State law, the Right to Farm cannot preempt state or federal law.
- In accordance with new federal regulations, New Jersey CDL holders must submit a valid (non-expired) medical certificate to the NJ Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC). Failure to submit a valid Medical Certificate or Medical Variance may result in the CDL being disqualified. Every CDL holder licensed in NJ must submit a signed CDL Holder Self Certification. For further information, visit www.state.nj.us/mvc/Commercial/cdlmed.htm.
- Joe Atchison III has been promoted from Agricultural Marketing Specialist to Agricultural Marketing Coordinator. Mr. Atchison, a graduate of Rutgers School of Business, will use his 21 years of marketing experience to coordinate and shape the Jersey Fresh marketing campaign and will work with the State's various ag organizations. Joe is responsible for publishing this newsletter as well. He can be reached at joe.atchison@ag.state.nj.us or at 609-984-2223.