
SOMERSET COUNTY 2000 ANNUAL REPORT

RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Investing in People for the Future

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NJ * NEW JERSEY AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION * COOK COLLEGE

Rutgers Cooperative Extension

Our mission is to help the diverse population of New Jersey adapt to a changing society and to improve their lives through an educational process that uses science-based knowledge focused on issues and needs related to family well-being, agriculture and the environment, and youth development.

This report highlights programs and outreach in Somerset County during 2000. You may also visit our new web site, <http://somerset.rce.rutgers.edu>, featuring programs, photos, volunteer activities and calendar.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension provides information and educational services to all people without regard to sex, race, color, national origin, age, or disability.

4-H Youth Development

Uses a "learn-by-doing" approach to enable youth to develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to become competent, caring, and contributing citizens of the world. This mission is accomplished by using the knowledge and resources of the land grant university along with the involvement of caring adults.

Family & Consumer Sciences

Seeks to improve the quality of life of people of all ages. FCS educates people to minimize or prevent family, work, and consumer problems. FCS focuses on making life better in the areas of nutrition, diet and health; food safety; family financial and resource management; human development at all ages; and leadership development. We provide unbiased, research-based information and strategies to help you enjoy life and strengthen your community.

Agriculture & Resource Management

Addresses agricultural, environmental, and ecological concerns, promoting the use of science-based knowledge, expertise and techniques within resource management decisions. They foster education, volunteerism, and horticultural awareness through several program initiatives. Focus areas also include agricultural viability and preservation, watershed management, community forestry, environmental resource management, and extending our commitment to form new partnerships to enhance local and regional environmental stewardship.

RCE of Somerset County

Committed to You & Your Environment!

PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

EMPOWERING YOUTH AND FAMILIES

STRENGTHENING FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS



Program Accomplishment

Thank You Volunteers!

In 2000, 651 trained volunteers contributed over 78,000 hours, or approximately \$1,166,528. These volunteers offer invaluable assistance in assisting all RCE program areas in achieving our goals.

Beat the Winter Blues Day Builds Family Strengths

A fun-filled January morning with crafts, games, clowns and a children's singer greeted 65 families with young children. Parents learned more about RCE through educational exhibits. This was the first RCE event for 22 families. All respondents to the evaluation said they would attend another RCE program.



Families at *Beat the Winter Blues Day* decide on their favorite foods. Photo by Daryl Minch

Family & Consumer Sciences

- ❖ *Visions* Newsletter – 1480 subscribers
- ❖ Taught 292 seminars reaching 3,969 people
- ❖ Money 2000 Program – 127 participants reported saving \$287,620 and reducing debt by \$20,450.00
- ❖ Connections, a newsletter for family day care providers, helped 47 subscribers strengthen skills and knowledge about young children

4-H Youth Development

- ❖ 72 4-H clubs led by 120 volunteer adult leaders serving 1250 youth
- ❖ 973 youth were involved in special interest programs
- ❖ 5324 students participated in 243 school enrichment programs
- ❖ 80,000 people attended the 51st Annual 4-H Fair
- ❖ 1100 subscribers to *Clover Tales* Newsletter
- ❖ 2000 youth were provided with experiences that develop science literacy such as 4-H clubs, NASA exhibits and 4-H Science-sational Day
- ❖ 134 youth learned job skills and decision-making activities in 4-H County and Government Careers Day

Agriculture & Resource Management

- ❖ Agriculture in Action - Open House & Tour at Dutch Hollow Farm with 560 attendees
- ❖ Consumer Horticulture - Distributed 166 Pesticide Training Manuals, 258 Soil Testing Kits, and performed 39 soil pH tests
- ❖ Master Gardener Volunteers - 14 members of the Class of 2000; 52 volunteers donated 6847 hours of service; Garden Help-Line - 1530 clients; Children's Horticultural Programming; County Fair Exhibits / Presentations
- ❖ Communication - Revised *How to Use Water Wisely in The Garden* RCE fact sheet, wrote 23 additional articles, 5800 mailings
- ❖ Recognition - National Epsilon Sigma Phi's Program of Excellence Silver Award for youth training program; National Association of County Agriculture Agents (NACAA) Regional Communication Award
- ❖ Research - Cultivar Study of Callery Pear; Deer Management and Repellent Study
- ❖ Teaching - Arboriculture Training & Internship with 18 New Jersey Youth Corps participants; 39 additional classes, 1900 attendees
- ❖ Media Outreach – Co-hosted and co-produced five episodes of “*If Plants Could Talk*”, aired on New Jersey Network throughout the year



Arborist Trainee takes his first climb. *Photo by Nick Polanin*

Tomorrow's Skilled Workforce

The State of New Jersey, in its recent assessment of community tree health and maintenance needs, pointed out the need for qualified managers, an infusion of labor, and a renewed desire for preserving, maintaining and enhancing our natural tree resource. In addressing this need, the Arboriculture Training & Internship Program was established. Aimed at serving at-risk youth, this program was a workforce preparation component for NJ's Children, Youth, and Families at Risk Grant. NJ Youth Corps participants 18 years and older received one-week of training, followed by a two-week paid internship with participating commercial and utility tree care firms. Career choices and employability were expanded.

Family & Consumer Science

Food and Health

Eating well can help people maintain good health. Family and Consumer Sciences taught a variety of adult classes to encourage healthful eating. Topics included soy and other functional foods, safety of herbs for health, and cooking for one or two people. Participants report trying new foods and including variety of foods in their diet.

Germ Alert – Safe Food Begins with You!

Preventing food borne illness is an important goal of Family and Consumer Sciences. Exhibits, fact sheets, and classes taught consumers, professionals and youth the steps needed to prevent illness.

Character Education

Due to increased school violence around the country, New Jersey schools have initiated character education programs. The Somerset County 4-H Staff have trained over 600 teachers and teens to implement CHARACTER COUNTS!sm curricula in their classrooms. Ten schools in the county have participated in school-wide in-services; and eight other districts participated in educator workshops. These educators have worked with over 5000 county youth. As a result, some schools have:

- Built “pillars” of character in the school. Youth learn the value of respect, caring, trustworthiness, fairness, responsibility, and citizenship.
- Made and displayed posters entitled “Doing What is Right”. Teachers also conduct monthly activities, and send letters to families encouraging home activities.
- Call themselves “a community of HEART... Helping Everyone Act and Respond Thoughtfully”. They publish a newsletter to parents with a calendar of character education development activities.
- The Somerset County Youth Development Program has also incorporated character education into all their club or school enrichment programs.



Within a 4-H club, older youth and adult volunteers, model good character to younger participants.

Photo by Lisa Rothenburger

Faculty & Staff

- Daryl L. Minch, FCS Educator & Division Head
- Nicholas Polanin, Agriculture & Resource Management Agent
- Lisa Rothenburger, 4-H Agent
- Carol K. Ward, 4-H Agent
- Joe Gyurian, Horticulture Consultant
- Barbara Navatto, 4-H Program Assistant
- Nancy Rosa-Meijas, FCS Program Coordinator
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- Lucille Razzano, 4-H Program Coordinator
- Lillian DeLazzari, Business Manager
- Jean Gibson, Office Manager
- Terry Bohach, Administrative Assistant
- RoseMary Fleming, Administrative Assistant
- Marian Kaufman, Administrative Assistant
- Carolyn Morella, Administrative Assistant
- Betty Ann Toth, Administrative Assistant

Key Volunteer Groups

- RCE Advisory Board
- 4-H Association
- Family & Consumer Sciences Advisory Council
- Board of Agriculture
- Master Gardeners of Somerset – Hunterdon
- 4-H Expansion & Review Committee

A Strong Partnership

- Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders
Ken Scherer, Director
Bob Zaborowski, Deputy Director
Denise Coyle
Rick Fontana
Peter Palmer
- Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
- Cook College
- New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station
- United States Department of Agriculture

How to Reach Us



Phone Numbers:

Agriculture & Resource Management

908-231-7000x7520 / 908-526-6293

4-H Youth Development

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RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
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RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY, NEW BRUNSWICK

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* 4-H Clover Protected under 18 U.S.C. 707