



THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OF SOMERSET COUNTY

2003

ANNUAL REPORT

Somerset County

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 2002. You can get additional information by visiting our website, <http://somerset.rce.rutgers.edu>, which features programs, photos, volunteer activities and a calendar of events.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension educational programs are offered to all without regard to race, religion, color, age, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability.



U.S.C. 707

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.

Food Safety Education

While the food system in the US is the safest in the world, the Center for Disease Control reports numerous cases of foodborne illness each year. Foodborne pathogens, improper food handling and environmental factors can result in foodborne illness and even death. Research shows that many consumers do not know appropriate food handling practices or do not follow them.

FCS addressed this issue through a variety of educational outreach techniques.

- 20 food safety classes for the public and agency groups reached 230 people.



Reaching New Heights in Educational Opportunities through 4-H

The sky's the limit when it comes to educational opportunities within 4-H. Youth can participate

in 4-H clubs, school enrichment programs, special weekend events and so much more. Youth have opportunities to develop life skills through topics and projects that interest them. These areas include communication and expressive arts, community service, history, mechanical science, animal science, astronomy, environmental science, horticulture, cultural education, citizenship and civic education, consumer and family science, healthy lifestyles, and personal development and leadership.

The culmination of the 4-H year is the annual Somerset County 4-H Fair. The Fair is a way for the 4-H members and volunteers to showcase their year-long work and efforts. About 70,000 people attend this three-day event.

Distance education and media efforts in Agriculture and Horticulture

Successful distance education needs to address the constraints modern lifestyles have placed on available time for people to participate in "traditional" Extension programs. An Internet site, www.recert.rutgers.edu, dedicated to training NJDEP licensed applicators on the proper use and storage of pesticides was launched in June of 2002. In 2002, 39 NJ licensed applicators completed the online course and registered with NJDEP for license credits. This site was funded through grants from the NJ Chapter of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents, Northeast IPM Coordinators, and the Department of Extension Specialists at Cook College. In addition, production continued for the television series *If Plants Could Talk*. Also, training efforts for garden center and nursery employees, RCE Master Gardeners, and at-risk youth continued or expanded from previous year's efforts





Special Events and Educational Programs:

reaching approximately **64,000** people

- These include: 4-H Fair, FCS Wellness Day, 4-H Open House, Family Astronomy Programs, 4-H Camps, 4-H Career Day, 4-H Food 'n Fun Luncheon, 4-H Livestock and Equine Seminar, 4-H Science-Sational Day, 4-H NASA Exhibit, 4-H Prep Rally, 4-H Public Presentations, 4-H County Fashion Review, 4-H State Dairy Clip Off, 4-H Adventures in Environmental Sciences Camp, Master Gardener Program, and Green Industry Vocational Training for At Risk Youth Program.

Educational classes & workshops for adults:

reaching approximately **5500** adults

- Sample topics include: Nutrition, budgeting, discipline, child development, food safety, environmental education, character education, animal husbandry, deer ticks and lyme disease.

Educational classes for youth:

reaching approximately **6,400** youth

- Sample topics include: character education, composting, diversity, magnetism, dinosaurs, food and nutrition, and general science.

Master Gardener Program:

1,500 calls on the Garden Helpline

- Speakers Bureau and 4-H Fair highlight the year's efforts.

Newsletters and fact sheets:

approximately **13,000** distributed

- Newsletter Examples: *Visions*, *LifeKeys*, *The Jersey Gardener*, *IPM Notes*, *Horticultural Engineering*, *Money Matters*, and *Clover Tales*.

RCE Volunteers: 868 volunteers providing approximately **205,551** hours of service

- The USDA has determined that a volunteer's hourly wage would be \$14.83/hour. That would equal **\$2,891,301.20** worth of support.

National Honors:

- *If Plants Could Talk* – TV show and website has been nationally recognized by the, National Association of County Agricultural Agents, and American Society for Horticultural Science.
- *4-H Science Discovery Series*, has received various awards and recognition.

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
- Joseph M. Gyurian, Horticulture Consultant
- Barbara Navatto, 4-H Program Coordinator
- Nancy Rosa-Mejias, FCS Program Coordinator
- Rachel Bijaczyk, 4-H Program Coordinator
- Valerie Kreutler, 4-H Program Coordinator
- 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

A Strong Partnership

- Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders
Peter S. Palmer, Director
Denise Coyle, Deputy Director
Rick Fontana
Ken Scherer
Robert Zaborowski
- 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
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4-H Youth Development

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Family & Consumer Sciences

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Websites:

Somerset County RCE

<http://somerset.rce.rutgers.edu>

Somerset County www.co.somerset.nj.us

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