Rich Norz, Jr.
New Jersey’s Outstanding Young Farmer for 2010

(Trenton). New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Douglas H. Fisher announced that Rich Norz, owner of Norz-Hill Farm in Hillsborough, Somerset County, has been named the 2010 Outstanding Young Farmer by the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture.

Norz, who is 40, will be presented with his award at the 2010 New Jersey Agricultural Convention early next year. He also will compete for one of the top four National Outstanding Young Farmer (OYF) Awards.

Norz is a fourth-generation farmer who owns the family farm in partnership with his father, Richard Norz Sr. The Norz family started farming in Hillsborough in 1920. The farm consists of 1,500 acres, with about 80 acres of that in the Farmland Preservation Program. They grow a variety of crops, operate a produce stand and conduct many fall agritourism activities, including a corn maze, school tours and pick-your-own pumpkins.

The Norz family had been in the dairy business up until April 2009 when they decided to take a break from milking cows and had a cow dispersal sale where all of their milking cows were auctioned. They retained 200 heifers from their herd and anticipate milking cows again beginning in Spring 2010.

Rich Norz is a leader in his industry and community. He serves as the President of the Somerset County Board of Agriculture and Somerset County 4-H Association. He is a member of the Somerset County Agriculture Development Board and the Hillsborough Wildlife Commission and has served as President and various officers of the New Jersey Holstein Association; New Jersey Junior Holstein Association; Central Jersey Holstein Association; and New Jersey 4-H Dairy Advisory Council.

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Rich Norz, Jr.
Outstanding Young Farmer (cont.)

New Jersey annually recognizes the outstanding achievements of a young farmer, who is an upstanding leader, respected agriculturalist and is active in community or faith organizations. Nominees must be farm operators, deriving a minimum of two-thirds of their income from farming and must be between the ages of 21-40, not becoming 41 prior to January 1 of the year for which they are applying. Candidates who have a financial interest in the farm operation (a sole proprietor, partners, or a corporation) will receive higher ranking in the OYF judging process. However, nominees also may include salaried farm managers and employees who are actively involved in policy and management decisions. Submission of a financial statement is not required for state competition.

A panel of three judges reviews each nominee’s application based on the following criteria: progress in their agricultural career (50 percent of the total score); soil and water conservation practices (25 percent of the total score); and contribution to his/her community, state and nation (25 percent of the total score).

Any individual or organization can nominate deserving young farmers’ names. Persons who have been nominated in the past or previous state winners who did not make it to the National competition can be re-nominated. However, these candidates must still meet the eligibility criteria.


The OYF program is the oldest farmer recognition program in the United States, selecting its first group of national winners in 1955. The goals of the OYF program are to foster better urban-rural relations through the understanding of farmers’ challenges, as well as the appreciation of their contributions and achievements; to bring about a greater interest in farmers/ranchers; and to help build an urban awareness of the farmers’ importance and impact on America’s economy. The OYF program encourages a greater interest in agriculture through the appreciation of the farmers’ contributions and achievements and recognizes local citizens’ contributions and encourages better urban-rural relations.

For more information on the state’s Outstanding Young Farmer program, visit: [www.nj.gov/agriculture/about/sba/cover.html](http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/about/sba/cover.html).

The Outstanding Young Farmer (OYF) program is sponsored by Deere & Company, supported by the Outstanding Farmers of America (OFA) Fraternity and the National Association of County Agriculture Agents (NACAA), and administered by The United States Junior Chamber.

Today's farmer is an entrepreneur in a complex agribusiness. He or she must understand all aspects of farming, including technology, farm implements, and other equipment used in today’s operations. He or she must also comprehend the complexities of fertilizer and insecticide to raise the high volume and quality crops demanded by consumers worldwide, while not running afoul of expanding environmental regulations.

As the farmer’s business has changed, so has his or her involvement in the community. Today's farmer has become an active citizen, participating in everything from local and state government to civic groups and charitable organizations. It is not only fitting that farmers be honored for their contributions and achievements - it is essential. Today's farmer is an entrepreneur in a complex agribusiness. He or she must understand all aspects of farming, including technology, farm implements, and other equipment used in today's operations.

CONGRATULATIONS, RICH!
Genesis Farm runs one of the few winter Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) in the region, and they do so by offering root crops and fresh greens throughout the winter. Mike Baki, head grower, will show us production and storage methods and talk about their overall operation. Genesis Farm is located at 41A Silver Lake Road, Blairstown, NJ. Registration is $10 for members, $18 for non-members. Genesis Farm offers a variety of residential and non-residential programs, including an accredited masters-level course in Earth Literacy, on our 226-acre farm in northwest New Jersey. We invite you to come to Genesis Farm to take part in our work: http://www.genesisfarm.org

Please call (908)371-1111 to reserve your space, or send a check to 334 River Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844. Of course, we are always happy to welcome walk-ins.

**Tomato Grafting**

*Wednesday, September 2nd*

*5pm-7pm*

*The Muth Family Farm*

Through the years, Bob Muth has gained recognition as one of the leading regional farmers in areas of sustainable agriculture, soil development, community supported agriculture and organic farming. Muth Farm received the 2007 Mid-Atlantic Master Farmer Award for his work in these areas and more. In this meeting, Bob Muth will demonstrate how to graft tomato heirloom varieties onto disease resistant root stock. The Muth Family Farm is located at 1639 Pitman Downer Road in Williamstown, NJ: http://www.muthfamilyfarm.com. Registration is $10 for members, $15 for non-members.

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**September is National Preparedness Month**

September is right around the corner. Have you been thinking about National Preparedness Month? In its sixth annual campaign, the Department of Homeland Security is presenting September as National Preparedness Month. Once again, Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension, through EDEN, is a partner in this campaign. EDEN's role is to connect state and local Extension offices to expert materials in disaster mitigation, prevention, preparedness, recovery, and response. For this campaign, EDEN’s intent is to provide key resources that will allow each member institution to share preparedness information both efficiently and effectively. Here are just a few examples EDEN’s network is providing:

**Resources for Building a Emergency Supplies Kit:**

**Kits for Kids**

Excellent materials for back-to-school nights, libraries, after-school programs, club meetings, etc. http://www.ready.gov/kids/step1/index.html

**Emergency Financial Planning Kit**

This is appropriate information for families, small business owners, extension homemakers, and financial planners - http://www.operationhope.org/effak/

**bReady Emergency Kit Organizer**

http://www.breadysd.com/kit.cfm helps families analyze the amounts and types of supplies needed for a kit, as well as a budget for purchasing a kit over a period of time.

**American Red Cross Emergency Preparedness Kits**

The American Red Cross provides a wide variety of resources, including a list of supplies needed to sustain an adult for 3 days - http://www.redcross.org/

**Personal Workplace Disaster Supplies Kit**

This kit is great for employees that, in the case of an emergency, would be forced to stay in the office environment for several hours extra or even overnight http://www.redcross.org/ and click on the ‘Preparing and Getting Trained’ tab in the upper left corner.

**Ready America: Get a Kit**

DHS provides a resource checklist that is very easy to understand and ensures efficiency of a disaster preparedness kit - http://www.ready.gov/america/getakit/index.html

As always, additional materials are available on the EDEN National Preparedness Month web page.
USDA Announces First National Sign-up for Conservation Stewardship Program

Continuous Enrollment for Producers Begins Aug. 10

(Washington, D.C.) – Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan has announced that the USDA will begin continuous sign-up for the new Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) on August 10, with the first signup period cutoff scheduled for September 30.

CSP is a voluntary program that encourages agricultural and forestry producers to maintain existing conservation activities and adopt additional ones on their operations.

“This program will help New Jersey’s agricultural and forestry producers reach greater levels of conservation performance, which will help protect our land and water,” Merrigan said. “The conservation benefits derived from maintaining and enhancing natural resources will improve the quality of soil and water, assist in addressing global climate change, and encourage environmentally responsible energy production.”

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) authorizes CSP. Congress renamed and revamped the former Conservation Security Program completely to improve its availability and appeal to agricultural and forestry producers. USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers CSP. Eligible lands include cropland, grassland, prairie, improved pastureland, rangeland, non-industrial private forestland - a new land use for the program - and agricultural land under the jurisdiction of an Indian tribe.

Eligible applicants may include individual landowners, legal entities, and Indian tribes. The program will be offered to producers in all 50 states, District of Columbia and the Pacific and Caribbean areas through continuous sign-ups. Agricultural and forestry producers must submit applications by Sept. 30 to be considered for funding in the first ranking period. Congress capped the annual acreage enrollment at 12,769,000 acres for each fiscal year nationwide.

To apply for the newly revamped CSP, potential participants will be encouraged to use a self-screening checklist first to determine whether the new program is suitable for them or their operation. It will be available on NRCS Web sites and at NRCS field offices. After self-screening, the producer's current and proposed conservation practices are entered in the conservation measurement tool (CMT).

Rutgers NJAES Vegetable Crops Online Resources Center

Rutgers NJAES values New Jersey’s vegetable farmers, their family goals, their livelihood aspirations, and views each farmer as a vital farming resource, like land and water, which are also critical to farming viability. NJ’s $160 million vegetable production on 40,000 acres is fast-paced and vibrant. Family-owned and operated enterprises of all sizes are as diverse as the crops they grow and sell, ranging from asparagus to zucchini. Family vegetable farms are intense in their sustainable use of all resources, including labor, land, water, equipment, inputs, capital, and management.

The intensity of our vegetable industry is matched by growers’ fast-paced management decisions meeting business needs, while farming on the 4th highest farmland real estate in the US ($11,300 per acre, after RI, MA, and CT). Farmland Preservation and Conservation Cost-Share programs are necessary complements to farming profitably, but not sufficient replacements for profitability as the core of farm viability.

Vegetable farmers are as demanding of Cooperative Extension as they are of their own farms. Our Rutgers NJAES & Cooperative Extension Vegetable Crops Working Group members, research farms, and the web site, http://njveg.rutgers.edu are all meeting the challenge. The science, field research, and field demonstrations of the Working Group assist growers in reliably and cost effectively making it through harvest and sales.

Our farmers produce the highest quality produce through sustainable methods, pleasing wholesale and direct market customers and nourishing our residents. We hope you find this web site a valuable tool and look forward to future educational programs, research, extension practice, and service to the vegetable industry of New Jersey and beyond. Highlights of the website include:

- Cultural practices to improve pumpkin production
- ‘Webinars’ on diseases of tomatoes and other cucurbits grown in the home garden
- Rutgers Commercial Production Guides
- Information on soil health, fertility and cover crops
- Variety trial results
- Using high tunnels and greenhouses
- Water and irrigation
- Native pollinators
- Risk and Labor Management
- Business Plans and Farm Family Goals
- Plant and Pest Advisory issues and subscription
- Email sign-up for breaking news and updates
Two-thirds of crop varieties require animal pollination for production and many crops have higher quality after insect pollination. Bees are the most important pollinators in most ecosystems. They facilitate reproduction and improve seed set for half of Pennsylvania’s and New Jersey’s top fruit and vegetable commodities.

Why are native bees important?
Honeybee numbers in Pennsylvania and New Jersey have been declining over the past several years. Beekeepers recorded overwinter losses of 26-48% and 17-40% respectively in PA and NJ between 2006 and 2009. These losses are much higher than the typical 15% seen in previous years. Although many farmers rent managed honeybees to increase crop yield and quality, surveys of small to medium size PA and NJ farms have shown that native bees provide a substantial portion of pollination services. By increasing the number and diversity of native bees, PA and NJ farmers may be able to counter rising costs of rented bee colonies while supporting sustainable native plant and pollinator communities.

Sustainable Farming Website
Rachel Winfree, Assistant Professor in the Department of Entomology at Rutgers University has co-produced a pamphlet “Native Bee Benefits” with Bryn Mawr College. This 8-page full color publication is now available on the Native Pollinators page of the Small Scale Farming section of the Sustaining Farming on the Urban Fringe website (still under construction): http://njsustainingfarms.rutgers.edu/html/1.ssf-pollinators.html. Included in this publication are photos and descriptions of native bees, tips on attracting pollinators to your farm, the pollination efficiency of native bees, their nesting and foraging needs, and creating native pollinator habitats.

Bee-ginner’s Beekeeping
There has been great interest in beekeeping since the Department of Agriculture offered an incentive program in 2006 and again in 2008. A requirement of receiving startup beekeeping equipment was completion of the Bee-ginners Beekeeping course through Rutgers Office of Continuing Education. Since 2006, 750 people have taken the course, with 100 of those receiving the free equipment.

“We have seen a great deal of enthusiasm from the public in beekeeping in New Jersey, with hundreds of people being trained to be beekeepers in the last several years through Rutgers Continuing Education courses,” said NJ Secretary of Agriculture Douglas H. Fisher.
Both the beginner’s and more advanced classes are taught by State Apiarist Tim Schuler and Bob Hughes of the New Jersey Beekeepers Association.

“The idea behind offering an incentive was to develop sideline beekeepers, who could provide pollination services for farmers while generating income for themselves,” said Schuler. “It is our hope that we can provide enough educational opportunities that these beekeepers may some day go on to the Eastern Apicultural Society Master Beekeeper Program.”

Last year, membership in the New Jersey Beekeepers Association increased by 45 percent. There are currently 1,100 registered beekeepers in New Jersey.

Fall Beekeeper Course Offered
On October 22, 23 & 24, 2009, in Bordentown, NJ, Rutgers Office of Continuing Professional Education will be offering another session of this very popular training program. This 2.5 day course is designed to provide the necessary information needed for new beekeepers to start and care for a honey bee colony.

The first two days will cover the basics of: bee biology, hive management, purchasing queen bees, honey extraction, candle-making and more. People with little or no experience in beekeeping, as well as veterans, will gain valuable information on disease and mite prevention, hive management, and honey production.

The third half-day will have hands-on sessions, including assembling hives, opening and examining colonies, as well as plenty of honey tasting (weather permitting).

Registration is $150 per person and is by phone (732-932-9271) through a downloadable form for mailing or faxing, or directly through the online registration portal: www.cpe.rutgers.edu/courses/current/ae0401ca.html.
CSP Announced (cont)

This tool estimates the level of environmental performance to be achieved by a producer implementing and maintaining conservation activity. The conservation performance estimated by the CMT will be used to rank applications. States will determine their own priority resource concerns, one of the criteria that will be used to rank applications. States will establish ranking pools to rank applications with similar resource concerns.

NRCS field staff also will conduct on-site field verifications of applicants’ information obtained from the CMT. Once the potential participant has been field verified and approved for funding, he or she must develop a conservation stewardship plan.

For information about CSP, including eligibility requirements, producers can visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/new_csp or visit their local NRCS field office.

Other Programs Through NRCS

Applications for Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA), the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) received by August 28, 2009, will be considered for 2010 funding. New Jersey State Conservationist Tom Drewes said that farmers whose applications are selected and who want to implement practices early in the 2010 season can expect contracts to be signed by April, 2010:

- Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) reduces the economic risk of adopting new conservation measures for limited resource, beginning, or full-time farmers.
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides assistance to install permanent measures or adopt new management strategies that address existing resource concerns on farms.
- Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) encourages the creation of high quality wildlife habitats that support targeted wildlife populations of National, State, and local significance.

The agency accepts applications for conservation assistance year round and sets cut off dates to facilitate review of applications and contract awards. Interested applicants should contact their local USDA Service Center for more information and an application.

Program information is available online at http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/. The NRCS Service Center for Hunterdon, Somerset and Union Counties is located in Frenchtown (908-782-4614 ext. 3).

19th Annual Great Tomato Tasting
Rutgers NJAES Snyder Farm

Snyder Research and Extension Farm, 140 Locust Grove Road, Pittstown, NJ

Wednesday, August 26
3pm - dusk (RAIN OR SHINE)

(Pittstown) Back by popular demand, the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension proudly announce the Annual Snyder Farm Open House and Great Tomato Tasting, to be held on Wednesday August 26, 2009 from 3 pm - dusk.

This year’s event will commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Research Farm, and includes the very popular tasting of both heirloom and hybrid tomatoes and wagon tours of the farm’s research plots. Previous events have also highlighted variety samplings of basil, peppers, melons, salad greens, and apples – with basil and peaches included again in year’s offerings.

The Melda C. Snyder Teaching Garden will showcase “chef” gardens of heirloom vegetables and herbs, a children’s garden, deer tolerant landscape plants, plants that can attract beneficial insects to your garden, the Rutgers holly and blueberry breeding programs, columnar varieties of fruit trees for the home landscape, and award-winning Jersey Grown™ daylilies.

Wagon tours led by faculty and farm staff will be available throughout the evening, highlighting Rutgers NJAES agricultural research. Visit with our Master Gardener volunteers, or take a tour of an inflatable soil tunnel courtesy of the NJ Department of Agriculture and the Hunterdon County Soil Conservation District.

Visitors are requested to bring some canned or boxed non-perishable foods in support of the Rutgers Against Hunger (RAH) program, http://rah.rutgers.edu/.

Rutgers NJAES faculty, staff, and Master Gardener volunteers will be available throughout the event to answer your gardening questions and to make your visit to our research farm a pleasurable and memorable one. A nominal registration fee of $5.00 per person is requested, while children under 10 are free.

Please RSVP to 908-713-8980, or visit our website to download our variety list, seed sources, and garden / farm information. You can even register your group online at www.snyderfarm.rutgers.edu.
The Snyder Research and Extension Farm and The Melda C. Snyder Teaching Garden present the 19th Annual

Great Tomato Tasting

Save the Date!

August 26, 2009
3:00 pm – Dusk

Details are available at www.snyderfarm.rutgers.edu

RUTGERS
New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station
The 2009 Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders

Rick Fontana, Director, Bridgewater
Jack M. Ciattarelli, Deputy Director, Hillsborough
Peter S. Palmer, Bernardsville
Robert Zaborowski, Franklin
Patricia L. Walsh, Green Brook

The 2009 Somerset County Board of Agriculture

Richard Norz, President, Hillsborough
Edward Seidel, Vice President, Belle Mead
Edward Pierce, Recording Secretary, Neshanic Station
Paul M. Smith, II, Treasurer, Hillsborough
Kenneth Osterman, County Director, NJ Farm Bureau, Neshanic Station
Joanne Powell, County Director (alt.), NJ Farm Bureau, Somerville

Promoting all forms of sustainable agriculture; assisting, enhancing and furthering agriculture as it relates to the economics, environment, aesthetics, and the high quality of life here in Somerset County.

The 2009 Somerset County Agriculture Development Board

Mark W. Kirby, Chairperson
W. Peter Staats, Vice Chairperson
Steve Selody, Secretary/Treasurer

Voting Members
Gail W. McKane
Richard A. Norz
John A. Johnson
Catherine Sorge

Peter S. Palmer, Freeholder Liaison

Celebrating 26 Years of Preserving farmland and enhancing the industry of agriculture in Somerset County

Ex-officio Members
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Nicholas Polanin, Rutgers Cooperative Extension
Dr. Ernest Thurlow, Soil Conservation District

Planning Board Staff
Anthony McCracken, Assistant Director
Tara Kenyon, Senior Planner
Catherine Bunting, Administrative Assistant

Watch for the Next Issue of
Green and Growing
polanin@njaes.rutgers.edu