Cornell University IPM Program Releases Nine New Organic Production Guides

(Ithaca) These new guides provide information for farmers on how to produce certified organic apples, blueberries, grapes, lettuce, potatoes, spinach, strawberries and cole crops, including cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli and Brussels sprouts. There is also a new guide to help control dairy cattle related pests using organic IPM methods.

“Farmers indicated to us that there was a lack of clear, research-based information available to help them transition from conventional to organic production,” New York State Agriculture Commissioner Patrick Hooker stated. “These free guides are in direct response to those pleas and we hope they serve the farmers interested in transitioning by providing practical and proven information to make the transition as smooth and possible.”

Donald A. Rutz, Ph.D., Director of the New York State IPM Program, said, “The fundamentals of organic and IPM production practices are so similar that coordinating the development of these guides is a natural extension of our New York State IPM Program activities. There is a lot of valuable information for organic growers at Cornell; assembling it in one place, identifying gaps, and searching for what's been developed in other states provides growers with the best information available now and also identifies areas where research is needed.”

Cornell University experts contributed to the manuals, and expert organic farmers and veterinarians acted as reviewers, which culminated in peer-reviewed documents containing all current, relevant information about growing the particular crops.

With limited pest control products available for use in organic production systems, these guides offer commercial vegetable producers organic integrated pest management (IPM) techniques for both fruit and vegetable crops. IPM techniques such as keeping accurate pest history records, selecting the proper site, and preventing pest outbreaks through use of crop rotation, resistant varieties and biological controls are all components of successful organic and IPM management techniques.

The guides may be downloaded for free at Cornell’s IPM website, [http://nysipm.cornell.edu/organic_guide/default.asp](http://nysipm.cornell.edu/organic_guide/default.asp).
Poinsettia Open House
Dec. 1 - Dec. 3, 2010 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.
School of Environment and Biological Science
Floriculture Greenhouses, Cook Campus
New Brunswick, New Jersey

Dr. George Wulster, Rutgers Cooperative Extension Specialist in Floriculture has announced his annual production and variety trial open house. More than 100 Poinsettia cultivars provided by the leading breeders/propagators such as; Ball, Dummen, Ecke, and Syngenta, will be on display for three days next month.

The Open House will take place from Dec. 1 - Dec. 3 between the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Floriculture Greenhouses that are located behind Blake Hall, directly off of Nichol Avenue on the Cook Campus of SEBS. Regardless of whether you sell them, buy them, or just enjoy a colorful display, it will be a chance to see what’s new, and learn more about growing, handling, and marketing this important crop.

“We are finishing the crop (over 100 cultivars) under ‘cold’ temperature regimes and provide water and inorganic nutrition thru a computer controlled trickle irrigation system” stated Dr. Wulster. “Anyone interested in energy conservation or moving to trickle irrigation management should find the open house of interest. The program is informal and free of charge. It is not a plant sale, but rather an educational opportunity open to anyone interested in learning more about this sometimes frustrating and still important floricultural crop.” For more information call Ms. Nickie Graf at 732-932-9301.

Directions: From the NJ Turnpike: Turn off at exit 9 and follow signs for Route 18 North- New Brunswick. Proceed along Route 18 North after the first traffic light the road raises over Route 1. Take the exit for Route 1 South. It is on the right.

From Route 1 South: proceed past the turn off for Route 18. After the Ryder's Lane exit look for "College Farm Road" on the right. Turn right on College farm road and proceed to the four way stop at Dudley Road. Turn left on Dudley Road, and follow to the end at Nichol Ave. Turn right on Nichol Ave. the Floriculture greenhouses are on the right at the second entrance.

From Route 1 North, proceed to the Squibb Drive/College Farm Road Exit. Turn left onto College Farm Road and proceed as above.

From 287: Take Exit 9 and follow river road east toward Highland Park. At the 5th light (approx. 3.7 miles), bear right onto the bridge and cross the Raritan River. This is Route 18 South. Stay on 18 south to route 1 south (Exit on right). Proceed as above.
Free Tire Drop-off Available to Somerset County Farmers, Residents Nov. 15-19 in Hillsborough

Hillsborough - Somerset County residents and farmers will have an opportunity to remove unwanted tires from their property before winter snow and ice cover the ground. The Somerset County Division of Solid Waste Management is partnering with the county Road Department to collect old scrap tires, with or without rims, Monday, Nov 15, through Friday, Nov. 19, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the South County Public Works Garage. The Garage is located at 410 Roycefield Rd.

The program is free and residents can drop off up to eight tires per household. The drop-off program is funded through a grant from the state Department of Environmental Protection. Tires also can be dropped off at the county Recycling Center, located at 40 Polhemus Lane in Bridgewater, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., as part of the First Saturday of the Month Drop-Off Program. The next drop-off date is December 4.

Proper disposal of tires benefits communities. Scrap tires can collect standing water and attract mosquitoes when the weather is warm, which may carry the West Nile virus, as well as cause tripping accidents when covered with snow. For more information, contact the Somerset County Road Division at 908-541-5021 or roaddiv@co.somerset.nj.us.

According to the most recent data from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Somerset County is falling behind other counties in recycling tonnage and citizen-participation rate.

“While recycling alone cannot solve New Jersey’s garbage problem, recycling programs have a significant effect on reducing the volume of waste going to landfills and preserving natural resources,” said Freeholder Deputy Director Robert Zaborowski, recycling liaison. “Every time residents recycle designated materials, they help raise the participation rate and help offset the costs of the recycling program. The more they recycle, the higher the recycling rate, and the less the program costs the taxpayer,” he said.

Always recycle valuable materials such as glass bottles, aluminum and metal cans, corrugated cardboard, chipboard, newspapers, junk mail and magazines, as well as acceptable plastic bottles and containers marked #1 through #7. For further information, call the Somerset County Recycling Center at 732-469-3363 or see their website http://www.co.somerset.nj.us/recycle/index.html.

NRCS Extends Sign-up Period for Conservation Stewardship Program

Applications accepted through January 7, 2011

Somerset, NJ – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced the ranking period cut-off date for producer applications in NRCS’s Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) has been extended to January 7, 2011.

“We’re extending the deadline for applications to CSP to provide agricultural and forestry producers more time to complete their applications,” said New Jersey State Conservationist Tom Drewes. “We also hope the extension will permit even more producers to participate in this program.”

CSP is offered in all 50 states, District of Columbia, and the Pacific and Caribbean areas through continuous sign-ups with announced cut-off dates for ranking periods. The program provides many conservation benefits including improvement of water and soil quality, wildlife habitat enhancement and adoption of conservation activities that address the effects of climate change.

All producers are encouraged to apply for CSP. The program, authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill, offers payments to producers who maintain a high level of conservation on their land and who agree to adopt higher levels of stewardship. Eligible lands include cropland, pastureland, and non-industrial forestland. New Jersey currently has contracts with nine producers covering 2,468 acres, the result of applications submitted in 2010.

A CSP self-screening checklist is available to help producers determine if CSP is suitable for their operation. The checklist highlights basic information about CSP eligibility requirements, contract obligations and potential payments. It is available from local NRCS offices or online at: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new_csp/csp.html.

NRCS is celebrating 75 years helping people help the land in 2010. Since 1935, the NRCS conservation delivery system has advanced a unique partnership with state and local governments and private landowners delivering conservation based on specific, local conservation needs, while accommodating state and national interests. President Franklin Roosevelt created the Soil Conservation Service, now known as NRCS, in 1935 to help farmers and ranchers overcome the devastating effects of drought, especially in the Midwest and Northern Plains regions.
On November 18th at 7 pm, the Raritan Valley Beekeepers Association will host

Andrew Cote

Andrew will speak on "Urban Agriculture & Urban Beekeeping" including such topics as Reversing the NYC Ban on Beekeeping, 'Best Practices' Accepted by NYC, Challenges & Rewards

This special event will be hosted at the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Somerset County
Ted Blum 4–H Center, 310 Milltown Road, Bridgewater, NJ

Coffee and cake will be served
Sign in at the door. Suggested donation is $5.

Directions can be found online at http://somerset.njaes.rutgers.edu/directions/default.asp

From the NYC Beekeepers Association web site: “Andrew has been keeping bees since he was a child, along with his father, Norm. He is the Founding Director of Bees Without Borders, a philanthropic endeavor to help alleviate poverty through beekeeping. A full-time college professor for the State of Connecticut, Andrew also manages a family business, Silvermine Apiary, which produces Andrew's Local Honey (sold in NYC at various Greenmarkets) and manages more colonies of honeybees in Connecticut and New York than he can remember. He divides his time between a space-challenged Lower East Side tenement apartment, and a tiny 130 year old house in Connecticut, and a few months each year in remote parts of the world like southern Uganda, the Niger Delta, Mayan villages, or Iraqi mountains, where he teaches beekeeping for Bees Without Borders. He never sleeps.”

The New Jersey Beekeepers Association (NJBA) is a state-wide organization of over 700 hobbyist, sideliner and commercial beekeepers. The purpose of the association is to foster and promote the art of apiculture in New Jersey and to educate residents of the Garden State about the state insect, the honey bee, and its vital role in agriculture. There are nine chapters in different regions of the state, and sponsor meetings both at the state and local level. If you would like to learn more about beekeeping, the state or local associations, please browse our website at http://njbeekeepers.org or call Bob Hughes at 609-585-4359. Do you have a swarm of honey bees on your property? Want to find a beekeeper to come and remove them? To find a NJ beekeeper interested in collecting swarms in your county, please visit http://cjba.njbeekeepers.org/swarms.htm.
Regular Testing of Private Wells Urged

For many people, testing their well water may not be a priority, especially in the absence of any obvious problem or known contamination. However, over time, residents of a home may develop a tolerance for certain bacteria that live in the water, but visitors, especially children, the elderly, and people with suppressed immune systems, can actually become ill from drinking the same water. For this reason, it is important to test the water quality of private wells regularly. The Somerset County Department of Health recommends that all homeowners test their private wells for total coliform bacteria every year.

The coliform test is one of the best tests for measuring the water quality of residential homes. This simple test measures the level of coliform bacteria in the drinking water. Coliform bacteria are found in the natural environment (soils and plants) and in the intestines of humans and other warm-blooded animals. Coliform bacteria enter the water or food chain through exposure to fecal material so any food or water sample that tests positive for coliform bacteria is suspected of having come in contact with domestic sewage, animal manure, or with soil or plant materials. The conclusion is that if coliform bacteria levels are found in the water supply, it could be contaminated with harmful bacteria and viruses, some of which can cause serious waterborne illnesses such as typhoid fever, dysentery, and hepatitis A.

From the Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension factsheet “Where to Get Your Drinking Water Tested in NJ” (FS343) the following Somerset County Labs are listed: International Hydronics Corp., Rocky Hill, NJ (609) 921-9216; Environmental Compliance Monit., Hillsborough, NJ, (908) 874-0990; and CSL Water Quality, Inc., Warren Twp., NJ, (908) 647-1400. However, laboratories gain or lose state certification on an almost daily basis. To ensure that a laboratory is currently certified for testing in a particular category, please call NJDEP, Office of Quality Assurance, at (609) 292-3950.

In addition, Rutgers publication E214 summarizes the information necessary for interpreting drinking water quality analyses performed by water testing labs. It focuses on testing results obtained from drinking water supplies from public water systems and non-public water systems (home wells). It is intended primarily for homeowners, but environmental organizations, health departments, and commercial water testing laboratories and others should find this material of interest and value. It can be found online at http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/publication.asp?pid=E214

What’s In Season from The Garden State

Seasonal Highlights (excerpts by J. Rabin)

Just as the tomato is the star of the summer venue, the pumpkin takes the spotlight in the fall. What used to be a large supply of round orange pumpkins has now diverged into an array of colors, sizes, shapes and textures, with growers providing a wider selection of pumpkins and squashes. What look like exotic pumpkins, according to Michelle Infante-Casella, Rutgers NJAES Agricultural Agent for Gloucester County, are actually ethnic winter squashes. While the decorative pumpkins are still edible, they tend to be more stringy, and Infante-Casella recommends for cooking ones such as the large neck squash (which looks like an overgrown butternut squash with a curved neck), Turk’s turban and blue hubbard squash, which have sweeter, denser flesh than traditional ornamental pumpkins. Another cooking favorite, especially for pies, is the tan colored cheese pumpkin, which is also a squash.

Rutgers NJAES researchers assist farmers by conducting pumpkin variety trials to help growers select pumpkin varieties that have the most disease resistance, yield and fruit quality grown under New Jersey conditions. One variety trial compared small varieties that are favored for pumpkin picking field trips for schools. Of the many varieties tested, Infante-Casella mentions some top variety performers were the ‘Fall Splendor’, ‘Orange Smoothie’, and ‘Field Trip’.

Dr. Joseph Heckman, Extension Specialist in soil fertility, compared pumpkin plantings on soil mulched with municipal leaves vs. bare soil. Leaf mulching plots result in a win-win situation. Farmers can use a municipal waste product – leaves from shade trees - and can benefit by improved soil quality, less weed growth and cleaner pumpkins. An added benefit in the pick-your-own leaf mulched pumpkin patch is less mud on customers’ shoes!

To receive full reports by e-mail, please contact njfarmfresh@njaes.rutgers.edu or visit the website, http://www.njfarmfresh.rutgers.edu
ATTENTION LIVESTOCK OWNERS

As required by law, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture adopted regulations in March 2009 that require all livestock farm owners to responsibly manage the manure generated on their operations – including those with horses, dairy cows, cattle, swine, goats, sheep, poultry and all other domesticated species defined as livestock.

The regulations require:

- All farms with any livestock to comply with the General Requirements of the rule.
- All operations with 8 to 299 “Animal Units” (one Animal Unit = 1,000 pounds) to develop an Animal Waste Management Plan by September 2010.
- Operations with 8 to 299 “Animal Units” with animal densities greater than 1 AU per acre are required to have their Animal Waste Management Plan reviewed to ensure conformance with the NJ-FOTG, while those with densities less than 1 AU per acre only need to submit their Declaration page to their local RCE office.
- Operations with 300 or more AUs, regardless of animal density, are required to develop and implement a CNMP and be certified by the NJDA.
- Farms that receive or apply 142 or more tons of animal waste per year must develop an Animal Waste Management Plan.

Key Deadlines:

March 2010
All farms must comply with the General Requirements of the rule.

Sept. 2010
Animal Waste Management Plans must be developed

March 2012
Animal Waste Management Plans must be implemented

Rutgers Cooperative Extension has provided training for livestock farmers during the spring and fall of 2009 and the winter of 2010 to assist them in developing Animal Waste Management Plans. Please contact the following offices or visit the Animal Waste Management website, http://njaes.rutgers.edu/animal-waste-management/ for additional information:

Hunterdon County Extension Office: (908) 788-1338
Salem County Extension Office: (856) 769-0090
Sussex County Extension Office: (973) 948-3040
Burlington County Extension Office: (609) 265-5050

A list of Extension offices and contact information may be found at http://njaes.rutgers.edu.

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NJ Participants in Conservation Programs to Receive Payments

SOMERSET - New Jersey farmers participating in two Conservation Programs will soon receive their annual program payments. On November 5, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that USDA will begin issuing Conservation Stewardship and Conservation Security Program payments this month to thousands of farmers and ranchers in all fifty states to help maintain and improve the natural resources on their land.

State Conservationist Tom Drewes commended the New Jersey participants for their commitment to environmental stewardship. “These New Jersey farmers are taking steps to enhance the quality of their land, and are helping to preserve their land and their way of life for generations to come,” he said. A total of $71,000 in payments to New Jersey farmers associated with 19 new Conservation Stewardship Program contracts initiated in fiscal year 2010 will be paid. In addition to the Stewardship program payments, a total of $91,000 in payments will also be issued to honor the 19 older Conservation Security Program contracts for payments due in FY 2011. The majority of farmers will receive their payments by mid-December, Drewes said.

The 2008 Farm Bill replaced the Conservation Security Program with the Conservation Stewardship Program. The Conservation Stewardship Program is a voluntary program that encourages agricultural and forestry producers to address resource concerns by undertaking additional conservation activities and improving and maintaining existing conservation systems. Eligible lands include crop-land, pastureland, and non-industrial forestland. More than 25 million acres across the country have been enrolled in this innovative program that links conservation payments to environmental performance. USDA is accepting new applications from interested farmers and non industrial private forest landowners.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers both programs and provides technical assistance to landowners.

NRCS Service Center Locations serve the following counties

Mercer, Middlesex & Monmouth - (732) 462-0075 X3
Hunterdon, Somerset & Union - (908) 782-4614 X3
Bergen, Hudson, Essex, Passaic,
Morris, Sussex and Warren - (908) 852-2576 x 3
Burlington, Camden, & Ocean - (609) 267-1639 x 3
Atlantic, Cape May, & Cumberland - (856) 205-1225 x 3
Gloucester & Salem - (856) 769-1126 X3

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Planting the Seeds for our Future – Scholarships Now Available

Some seeds we’ve planted years ago are just starting to mature and may need some help attaining their full bloom. Many students throughout the state have selected agriculture or the natural resource sciences as their career choice, and may need that extra bit of fertilizer to assist them on their way. For seniors in high school to sophomores already in college, here’s just a sampling of what’s available out there.

High School Opportunity

New Jersey residents who are entering their senior year in high school this fall and are planning a career in agriculture or science may apply for the New Jersey Agricultural Achievement Award. One person will be selected for the $500 scholarship. Contestants must be a current, active member of an organization either on the New Jersey Equine Advisory Board and/or represented at the Youth Reception portion of the annual New Jersey State Agricultural Convention. Details are available from Ms. Debra Moscatiello by calling (609) 984-4389 or debra.moscatiello@ag.state.nj.us. The application deadline is December 15.

College Opportunities

The New Jersey Agribusiness Association annually administers the Edward A. Platz Memorial Scholarship. Two $1,500 awards are offered to students in NJ who have a rank of sophomore or above in an accredited 4 year college or university in the US, majoring in an agricultural subject or related field, with intent to pursue a career with an emphasis on production agriculture. Applications are available for download at http://www.njagribusiness.org/scholarships.html, with a Friday November 19, 2010 deadline.

For those college students with 4 full semesters already completed, The New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts (NJACD) has announced their annual Memorial Conservation Scholarship. One or two $1,500 awards for 2010. Also due by Friday, November 19, applications may be obtained from any Soil Conservation District in New Jersey, from the New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts, the State Soil Conservation Committee, PO Box 330, Trenton, New Jersey 08625, or online at http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/anr/nrc/ and clicking on “Conservation Education” in the right side column.

These and many other scholarship opportunities for tomorrow’s agricultural and natural resource leaders can be found online at http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/ag_ed/ffa/scholarships/.

ANNUAL WINTER CONFERENCE
January 29-30, 2011
Princeton University, Princeton NJ

The Annual NOFA-New Jersey Winter Conference is expanding to accommodate the increasing interest in sustainable food and agriculture in New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania. An exciting new partnership for the 2011 conference is with the Princeton Environmental Institute. Founded in 1994, the Princeton Environmental Institute (PEI) is the interdisciplinary center of environmental research, education and outreach at Princeton University. Their mission is to advance knowledge and to develop the next generation of leadership by providing outstanding academic programs and opportunities for advanced scholarship, research and civic engagement.

The Keynote address will be by Dr. Michael W. Hamm of Michigan State University, C.S. Mott Professor of Sustainable Agriculture (formerly of Rutgers University). In addition, over 40 workshops for farmers, gardeners, and consumers will be available throughout the conference. Also new to the conference in 2011 will be the ‘Kids Conference,’ presented in collaboration with NJ’s Farm-to-School Network. This partnership will showcase the “Growing Gardens, Feeding Minds” mission of the NJ Farm-to-School Network, which seeks to Improving school food, promote locally grown produce, and educate through school gardens by providing assistance with training and resources for planning for a school garden with direct curriculum ties to the classroom and nutrition education.

The 2011NOFA-NJ Winter Conference will also feature a special session just for Beginning Farmers. According to the USDA, a beginning farmer is someone who has been farming less than 10 years. If you think you might qualify? Submit an application today by visiting their website at http://nofanj.org/wc_scholarship.htm.
The 2010 Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders

Jack M. Ciattarelli, Director
Robert Zaborowski, Deputy Director
Peter S. Palmer
Patricia L. Walsh
Patrick Scaglione

The 2010 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 2010 Somerset County Agriculture Development Board

Mark W. Kirby, Chairperson
W. Peter Staats, Vice Chairperson

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

Peter S. Palmer, Freeholder Liaison

Celebrating 27 Years of Preserving farmland and enhancing the industry of agriculture in Somerset County

Ex-officio Members
Jules Lobai, County Planning Board
Nicholas Polanin, Rutgers Cooperative Extension
Dr. Ernest Thurlow, Soil Conservation District

Planning Board Staff
Anthony McCracken, Assistant Director
Tara Kenyon, Senior Planner
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Watch for the Next Issue of
Green and Growing
polanin@njaes.rutgers.edu