

NEWS FROM THE NJDA

New Jersey
Department of
Agriculture

December 2014

Volume 2, Issue 7

Inside this issue:

- From the Secretary's Desk 1
- From the State Board 1
- Message from NJDA Division of Ag and Natural Resources 2
- Special Notice from the USDA 3
- USDA Food Show 4
- Gypsy Moth Spray Program Info Session 4

Important Dates for your Calendar:

January is National Soup Month

Jan. 1 - New Years Day

Jan 5 - National Bird Day

Jan. 10 - Houseplant Appreciation Day

Jan. 13 - International Sceptics Day
(If you can believe that.)

Jan. 23 - National Pie Day

Jan. 28 - State Board of Agriculture Meeting, Edison, NJ

From the Secretary's Desk



NJ Secretary of Agriculture, Douglas H. Fisher

We are just over a month away from our 100th State Agricultural Convention, which will take place February 3-5, 2015 at the Tropicana Resort in Atlantic City. We are very excited to be celebrating this milestone. It was 1916 when the first convention was held, shortly after the New Jersey Department of Agriculture was created. During that gathering, which included delegates from the county boards of agriculture, the state agricultural college and experimentation station and various commodity associations and granges, eight members were elected to a new State Board of Agriculture which was part of the new Department.

Agriculture was a major part of our Garden State's landscape at that time. Now, 99 years later, agriculture remains strong with more than a billion dollars in annual sales and ranking in the top 10 in the nation for many fruits, vegetables and nursery and floriculture production.

There is still time to book your hotel room and make meal reservations for the convention. You can look forward to several learning sessions, including how to get involved with the Farm to School initiative, many interesting speakers as well as presentations of awards and honors. The convention will culminate with election of two new State Board of Agriculture members.

As we enter this 100th year of the State Department of Agriculture, I wish you and yours good health and an innovative and productive New Year.

From the State Board President



State Board of Agriculture President, Rich Norz

The State Board of Agriculture will be holding their North Jersey Open Public meeting on Wednesday, January 28, 2015 at the New Jersey Convention Center, Edison, New Jersey. The purpose of the open public meeting is to give the public an opportunity to bring the Board suggestions, problems, or other input about New Jersey agriculture. Please look for more information on the NJDA website: <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/about/sba/sboadate.html> for more detailed information as the date gets closer. We hope to see you there!

With that, the members of the State Board and I would like to wish you and your families all the joys of the season and happiness throughout the coming year!

A Message from the NJDA Division of Ag and Natural Resources

What do you need to know about Livestock Manure Management?

If you are a Livestock Farmer in New Jersey, chances are you have heard about the Animal Waste Management Rules. The NJDA adopted these rules (NJAC 2:91) in March 2009. The rules require all livestock farms with 8 or more AUs (1AU = 1,000 lbs of live animal weight) or that receive 142 tons or more of animal manure annually, to develop an Animal Waste Management Plan (AWMP) and implement it by March 2012. That date has come and gone. As of December 2014, less than half of the operations impacted are in compliance with the rules. We are urging the remaining farms to comply with the rules as soon as possible.

What will happen if you don't comply?

The rules include enforcement and penalty provisions with fines of up to \$1,000 per day for non-compliance. Non-compliant farms may also lose Right-To-Farm (RTF) protections for failing to be in compliance with all relevant federal and state statutes and regulations. The Department routinely receives neighbor complaints related to animal waste issues. A follow-up protocol is in place and carried out on every complaint.

How do you develop an AWMP?

The Department's website (www://nj.gov/ag) and the Rutgers NJAES website (www://njaes.edu/animal_waste_management) contain the information you need to develop an AWMP. Rutgers Extension Agents are also available for consultation and assistance in preparing and filing your Plan.

The following regional offices are available for technical assistance: Burlington County Extension Office (609-265-5050), Hunterdon County Extension Office (908-788-1338), Salem County Extension Office (856-769-0090), and Sussex County Extension Office (973-948-3040).

If you know of other livestock farms that have not developed a Plan, please pass the word.



Special Notice from the USDA

USDA Releases APH Yield Exclusion Resources to Help Farmers Manage Risk *Eligible Counties and Exclusion Years for New Crop Insurance Option Announced*

WASHINGTON, Dec. 18, 2014 – The U. S. Department of Agriculture’s Risk Management Agency (RMA) announced program details related to a new Farm Bill initiative that will provide relief to farmers affected by severe weather, including drought. Information made available today includes eligible crops, crop years, and counties where producers are eligible to exclude certain yields under the Actual Production History (APH) Yield Exclusion, a fact sheet, and a list of frequently asked questions.

The APH Yield Exclusion will be available in the actuarial documents beginning in the 2015 crop year for spring planted corn, soybeans, wheat, cotton, grain sorghum, rice, barley, canola, sunflowers, peanuts, and popcorn. It will allow eligible producers who have been hit with severe weather to receive a higher approved yield on their insurance policies through the federal crop insurance program.

“APH Yield Exclusion will provide additional options to producers who have suffered from devastating natural disasters,” said RMA Administrator Brandon Willis. “The resources made available today will help eligible producers get the most benefit out of the new protections created in the 2014 Farm Bill.”

Under the new Farm Bill program, yields can be excluded from farm actual production history when the actuarial documents provide that the county average yield for that crop year is at least 50 percent below the 10 previous consecutive crop years’ average yield.

The APH Yield Exclusion allows farmers to exclude yields in exceptionally bad years (such as a year in which a natural disaster or other extreme weather occur) from their production history when calculating yields used to establish their crop insurance coverage. The amount of insurance available to a farmer is based on the farmer’s average historical yields. In the past, a year of particularly low yields that occurred due to severe weather beyond the farmer’s control would reduce the amount of insurance available to the farmer in future years. By excluding unusually bad years, farmers will not have to worry that a natural disaster will reduce their amount of insurance for years to come.

Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. Producers should contact a local crop insurance agent for more information about the program or visit www.rma.usda.gov/news/currentissues/farmbill/index.html. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers or on the RMA website at www.rma.usda.gov/tools/agents/.

Today’s announcement was made possible by the 2014 Farm Bill. The 2014 Farm Bill builds on historic economic gains in rural America over the past five years, while achieving meaningful reform and billions of dollars in savings for taxpayers. Since enactment, USDA has made significant progress to implement each provision of this critical legislation, including providing disaster relief to farmers and ranchers; strengthening risk management tools; expanding access to rural credit; funding critical research; establishing innovative public-private conservation partnerships; developing new markets for rural-made products; and investing in infrastructure, housing and community facilities to help improve quality of life in rural America. For more information, visit www.usda.gov/farmbill.

Happenings in January 2015

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOOD SHOW TO HIGHLIGHT NEW FOODS AVAILABLE FOR SCHOOL MEALS

Schools Preview New Menu Items for 2015-16 School Year

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) will present the Third Annual USDA Foods Conference from 12 to 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 15 at the Hyatt Regency in New Brunswick.

More than 300 school food service directors, superintendents and business administrators from all over the state will be able to sample the nutritious, tasty and interesting foods they can order for the 2015-2016 school year that meet nutritional requirements of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act school breakfast and lunch regulations. The Act requires more fruits and vegetables, whole grains, fat-free or low-fat milk, fat-free flavored milk and limits on saturated fat and portion size.

The NJDA administers the U.S. Department of Agriculture Foods Distribution program, which takes USDA foods and distributes them to food processors, which make nutrient-dense reduced fat products, such as whole wheat crust pizza or whole grain breaded chicken nuggets that are provided at a reduced cost to school districts.

The conference also features a number of valuable training sessions, including how schools can best utilize USDA foods to lower food costs.

In addition, attendees will learn how they can participate in the Department's new program to increase the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables schools receive and how to obtain more locally grown produce.

The Second Annual USDA Foods Conference will take place 12 p.m.. Thursday, January 15 at the Hyatt Regency, 2 Albany Street, New Brunswick, NJ.

2015 GYPSY MOTH SPRAY PROGRAM INFORMATION SESSION PLANNED

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, will hold a public meeting from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Wednesday, January 7, 2015 at the Health and Agriculture Building in Trenton to allow members of the public to raise issues and concerns relating to the gypsy moth aerial spray program proposed for spring of 2015.

The purpose of the spray program is to suppress the populations of the gypsy moth and reduce defoliation and subsequent tree loss caused by the caterpillars. Recently completed egg mass surveys, conducted by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, show that 498 acres in Morris, Passaic and Hunterdon counties qualify for the spray program. There has been no spray program in New Jersey since 2011 when 274 acres in two Camden County towns were treated.

The public meeting is an integral part of an environmental analysis of the proposed project. The session will include a presentation outlining the scope of the proposed 2015 treatment. The public will be given the opportunity to present oral comments pertaining to new issues and information regarding the proposed aerial suppression program. Written comments also will be accepted.

The gypsy moth informational session will be held 9 a.m. to 12 noon Wednesday, January 7, 2015 at the Health and Agriculture Building, John Fitch Plaza, 369 South Warren Street, First Floor Board Room Trenton, NJ.