

RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) has served New Jersey residents since May, 1914. It has been a partnership of County, State, and Federal governments designed to bring the latest research based information to local residents. We have continually served the county in areas of agriculture, resource management, horticulture, nutrition, and 4-H Youth Development.



Master Gardener student volunteers ready to greet visitors and answer questions at the 2019 Fall Harvest Fair.

Joel Flagler, Bergen County Agricultural Agent, provides training and continuing education for professionals in farming, landscape contracting, tree and turf maintenance, pesticide application, and public health. This continuing education is a requirement for all professionals who handle pesticides. It helps them stay up to date with new technology and keep their state licenses current. IPM (Integrated Pest Management) tactics work to minimize the amounts of pesticides applied in Bergen County.

Agriculture is thriving in Bergen County. It has diversified to meet changing consumer needs. Growers produce a wide variety of ornamental plants, vegetables, orchard fruits, organic, and ethnic specialties. Landscape and nursery industries continue to beautify our suburban surroundings with high quality trees, shrubs, turf grass, and flowers.



**THE STATE UNIVERSITY
OF NEW JERSEY**



**County Board
Of Chosen
Freeholders**



Over 30,000 Inquiries

Over 12,000 Volunteer Hours

*Donated value exceeding
\$300,000 to Bergen County*

Over 1,650 Educational Classes

Over 3,800 Youth Reached

Over 2,200 Adults Trained

Over 9,000 Fact Sheets Distributed

AGRICULTURE and RESOURCE MANAGEMENT KEY CLIENTELE

- Farmers, nursery & greenhouse growers
- Landscape contractors
- Bergen County Parks Department
- Turf/sports field & golf course managers
- Homeowners and hobby gardeners
- Individuals with mental, physical, social, and emotional disabilities
- Pest control professionals
- County and municipal health officers
- Municipal Parks & Shade Tree Committee

FARMLAND PRESERVATION

The County Agricultural Development Board (CADB) has helped to preserve over 331 acres of farmland in Bergen County. That represents more than 42 percent of the 800 acres of our remaining farmland in the county. Bergen County is conducting a comprehensive study to identify farms to be protected in the future. Agent Flagler works with the CADB on Right-to-Farm as well as other issues involving agriculture.

The North Jersey Ornamental Horticulture Conference, now in its 59th year, annually trains over 700 professionals by providing the latest information and technology for solving problems and improving practices. Arborists, landscape contractors, turf managers, and golf course superintendents benefit from the training and updates presented by experts from Rutgers and the NJ Agricultural Experiment Station.

The 2019 Bergen County Fall Harvest Festival was a huge success with a great turnout and excellent weather. Van Saun County Park is a perfect setting for this event. From humble beginnings as the **4-H and Master Gardener Fair**, it has grown, attracting over 5,000 visitors. Many farms participated, selling their seasonal fruits, vegetables, pumpkins, donuts and cider, honey, nursery plants and more. All of **Bergen's Freshest** was featured. The Farm Market was expansive; it was both beautiful and delicious.



Master Gardener students Maria Bushman, Lisa Yoler and Keith Manzanec manning their "Horticulture Therapy" display at the 2019 Fair.

As always, the **Bergen County Board of Agriculture** helps plan, promote and deliver important agricultural events and Rutgers Cooperative Extension recognizes them for their huge support.

In June 2019, Agent Flagler coordinated a **Farmer's Twilight Meeting** training for farmers and growers. The topic was Diseases affecting Vegetables and the speaker was Dr. Andy Wyenandt from Rutgers Cooperative Extension, a recognized expert in the field. Over 35 participants were at the Abma Farm in Wyckoff and appreciated the tour of this beautiful farm, as well as the important informational updates. Evaluations indicate that the agricultural community gives highest ratings for these yearly twilight training events which Flagler has delivered since 1988.

The Rutgers Horticultural Therapy and Training Programs offered in 2019 include a series of sessions for developmentally disabled youth at Garfield Middle School, as well as **post-stroke seniors at the county centers** in Ridgewood and Englewood.

Horticulture Therapy Programming for Veterans has become a major focus for Rutgers Cooperative Extension. Agent Flagler is a Registered Horticultural Therapist. Along with interns from Rutgers University, they have created six new grant-funded programs

for **Veterans at the VA Medical Centers** in Lyons and East Orange.

Flagler also supports the new horticulture program at the **Paramus Veterans Nursing Home**. There, Veterans enjoy a therapy and learning garden with flowering trees, shrubs, and container plantings. The Rutgers Master Gardeners of Bergen County, headed up by Carolyn and Dennis Gretchen, coordinate the gardening and landscape projects, and deliver structured activity sessions for Veterans; to keep them in touch with Nature and help them to enjoy the many benefits of working with plants.

The Master Gardener Program, which started in Bergen County in 1984, is still actively training volunteers to work in our County Parks and provide unique services throughout the county. Agent Flagler has trained nearly 1,000 since he started in 1987. These skilled volunteers are recognized as some of the most important ambassadors for Rutgers and the NJ Agricultural Experiment Station.

New Projects for 2019 included outreach delivery and interactive informational displays at a number of county and municipal workshops. Master Gardeners also participated in Earth Day events and Environmental Fairs including Party for the Planet at Van Saun County Park and Wellness Fairs in towns around the County.

The Master Gardener Helpline is busy answering calls and helping people improve their gardens and landscapes. The lines are staffed Monday-Thursday from 10 am-12 noon during the months of April through September (**201-336-6783 or 6784**).

By helping Bergen County residents make wise decisions about pest management and soil fertility, the Rutgers Master Gardeners have helped to bring about a significant reduction in the amounts of nitrogen & phosphorous fertilizers, and chemical pesticides being applied in Bergen County. This has a huge and important impact for soil and water quality and other quality of life issues.

2019 AG Fast Facts

- 2,270 Calls to Garden Helpline
- 1,650 Plant/Insect specimens diagnosed
- 1,240 Licensed Pesticide Applicators trained & recertified
- 100 lbs. of produce donated
- 202 Soil samples tested
- 8,400 Extension Fact Sheets distributed
- 21 New Master Gardeners trained
- 10,200 Hours of volunteer service
(value of \$293,964 to Bergen County)





4-H in Bergen County...

The **4-H Youth Development Program** is a free, inclusive, co-ed program for youth in grades K-13 (1 year post high school). 4-H 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 is accomplished by using the knowledge and resources of Rutgers University in coordination with caring adult volunteers and the support of the Board of Chosen Freeholders.



Jeanne Pietrowicz of Nature Nuts and Judy Mars of Ther-Happy Pets, two of our dedicated 4-H Leaders share a moment at the 2019 Fall Harvest Fair.

4-H clubs are the backbone of the program and are led by appointed volunteers. Our clubs cover a variety of both traditional and modern project areas, including cooking, gardening, horse science, outdoor education, environmental science, engineering and robotics, leadership, teambuilding, and service learning. Through club work members experience four essential elements for positive youth development:

Mastery of Skills, Belonging, Generosity, Independence.

In addition to 4-H clubs, the County 4-H office provides youth the opportunity to participate in various activities over the course of the 4-H year including skill-building and educational workshops, the Annual 4-H Awards Night, Winter and Fall Camp week-ends, Favorite Foods Show, public speaking workshops, and our most important skill-building event, Annual 4-H Public Presentations.



Paramus sisters Anushka and Mihika display their food entries at the annual Bergen County 4-H Food Show.

Teen 4-H members also attended the North Jersey Teen Conference, a week-end long event that builds leadership skills. Older youth are eligible to participate in State and National 4-H events.

In 2019, four of our teen 4-H members were chosen to represent Bergen County at Citizenship Washington Focus, a week long symposium focusing on government, citizenship and civic education held in Chevy Chase, Maryland.



Teen 4-H members Kailey of Park Ridge, sisters Kailey and Ashley also of Park Ridge, and Brett of Wallington about to board the bus for the 2019 CWF trip.

In 2019 the Bergen County 4-H Junior Council, youth in grades 6-8 grades, and our Teen Council, youth in grades 9-13, focused on building leadership and team-building skills through workshops, activities, and service projects, many of which they propose and coordinate themselves.



Teen Council members plan and facilitate the annual 4-H Halloween Party for our younger members. Pictured above are Council members with their Leader Caroline Glynn at the 2019 festivities.

4-H Clubs Give Back to Their Communities...

All of our 4-H clubs participate in community service opportunities throughout the year. Some of our projects for the 2019 year included...

- Monthly Pet Therapy visits to nursing homes
- Cards and letters for Wounded Vets
- Food drives for community food banks
- Two community gardens maintained
- A seed library maintained at Garfield Public Library
- STEM projects displayed and demonstrated at various events in Bergen County
- Centerpieces for Garfield VFW Vet's Day Dinner
- Mother's Day gift bags with personal care items donated to residents at the Center for Hope and Safety

Each year 4-H partners with Master Gardeners of Bergen County to help facilitate the Bergen County 4-H and Master Gardener Fall Harvest Festival. The fair is a showcase of our 4-H members' many accomplishments, as well as highlighting all that our clubs and Master Gardeners have to offer county residents. The 2019 event took place September 21st and 22nd at Van Saun County Park. Over 5,000 County residents enjoyed two FREE, fun-filled days of hands-on exhibits, games, science, entertainment, interactive displays, farm vendors, and arts and crafts.



Mahwah Community Club member Victoria visits the animal tent at the 2019 Fair.

4-H FAST FACTS FOR 2019

There are currently...

- 11** active clubs
- 50** adult volunteers
- 250** 4-H members in Bergen County
- 400** youth reached through various programs
- 6** digital 4-H newsletters published
- 2** newspaper articles promoting 4-H
- 2** Facebook groups created to promote 4-H
- 1** Instagram account highlighting 4-H activities



RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station
Cooperative Extension of Bergen County
One Bergen County Plaza 3rd Floor
Hackensack NJ 07601



4-H Nature Nuts Club celebrated the Holiday Season in a funny way!



We gratefully acknowledge the support of the

**Bergen County Executive
James J. Tedesco, III
Board of Chosen Freeholders
Department of Parks & Recreation**



Web Sites:

bergen.njaes.rutgers.edu - Main site
bergen.njaes.rutgers.edu/4h - 4-H site
mgofbc.org - Master Gardeners site

Rutgers Master Gardener Help Line
201-336-6784 or 201-336-6783

Faculty and Staff

Joel Flagler, County Agricultural Agent,
County Extension Department Head

Abbie Kesely, 4-H Program Associate

Karen Riede, Horticultural Consultant

Monique Bliss, 4-H Program Assistant
201-336-6780/6785



The 2019 Master Gardener graduates pose with their Professor Agriculture Agent Joel Flagler and Horticulture Consultant Karen Riede at their graduation ceremony.



Cooperating Agencies: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, U.S. Dept of Agriculture, and County Boards of Chosen Freeholders. Rutgers Cooperative Extension, a unit of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.

RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

RCE of Bergen County is a valuable partner to other county agencies and organizations in developing, implementing, and evaluating programs that address the needs and issues of County residents. Key partners include:

Bergen County Agriculture Development Board
Bergen County Board of Agriculture
Bergen County Department of Health
Bergen County Department of Human Services
Bergen County Department of Parks
Bergen County Office of Disability Services
Bergen County/Open Space Trust Fund Advisory
Bergen Family Center
Bergen Regional Medical Center
Center for Food Action
Department of Health and Human Services
Department of Senior Services
Englewood Recreation Department
Garfield Health Department
Garfield Middle School
Garfield Housing Authority
N.J. Landscape Contractors Association
One Stop Career Center
Paramus Veterans Home
Skylands, NJ State Botanical Garden
Soil Conservation District
Team Management 2000

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