



RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural
Experiment Station

2022

Annual Report



Cooperative Extension of Hunterdon County

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Family and Community Health Sciences

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4-H Youth Development

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WHEN YOU NEED **US**



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

2022 Family and Community Health Sciences

Sandra Grenci, MS, RDN, LDN, CDCES

FCHS Educator, County Agent II



Staying healthy, eating right, being active, raising healthy families, and enjoying a good quality of life!
Family and Community Health Sciences helps people meet these goals.

Chronic Disease Prevention and Management:

NJ Empower to Prevent: the FCHS Diabetes Prevention Program

NJ Empower to Prevent, the FCHS local version of the CDC's Diabetes Prevention Program,



achieved the highest level of CDC program recognition. This 12-month virtual lifestyle change program empowers people with prediabetes to make lifestyle changes to reduce their risk of developing diabetes. In 2022, 3 cohorts were ongoing, enrolling a total of 45 individuals with pre-diabetes. For Cohort 1 which completed in April, more than half of participants achieved at least one CDC program health outcome, including reduction in bodyweight of



at least 5%, decrease in blood glucose levels, and/or increase in physical activity minutes/week to recommended levels. Plans are underway to enroll 2 new cohorts in 2023, beginning in May and September.

Select Topics Presented in Chronic Disease Prevention:

(491 total participants)

- Intermittent Fasting
- Myths and Facts about Senior Nutrition
- Healthy Eating Patterns for Chronic Disease Prevention
- DASH for Blood Pressure Control
- Introduction to Mindful Eating
- What to Eat with Diabetes



Select Topics Presented in Home Food Preservation & Safety:

(515 participants)

- Ask the Expert- All About Food Safety
- Introduction to Home Food Preservation

FCHS Master Food Preservers (FMFPs)

FCHS Master Food Preservers are trained volunteers who assist with outreach in food safety/home food preservation. In 2022 a second class of FCHS Master Food Preserver Volunteers completed training and assisted with table demonstrations at the RCE Annual Great Tomato Tasting Event, judging home preserved products at the Hunterdon County 4-H and Agricultural Fair, and with hands-on classes.

Hunterdon County consumers, community and professional groups may request FCHS programs by contacting Sandra Grenci, RCE's FCHS Educator at grenci@njaes.rutgers.edu

2022 4-H Youth Development

The fair is the most highlighted event within 4-H. It is not the fair itself that is so important to 4-H, but it is an important part of the 4-H program. It is a showcase of a year's worth of planning, preparing, and creating 4-H projects that make this a worthwhile program for our youth.

Through the years, the fair has given opportunities to local farmers to showcase agriculture, but it has expanded into much more for our 4-H youth. Youth have an opportunity to show livestock, stay the night and "campout" in the barns as Herdsmen, set up educational and promotional displays, perform on horseback, entertain the public with dog agility, give talks on the main stage, teach firearm safety, and showcase their projects which include robotics, art, crafts, horticulture, and foods.



The Hunterdon 4-H Program of **180 youth, 150 volunteers, and 20 clubs** participates in **35 4-H shows and events during the 5-day fair** which takes 365 days to plan. The fair helps develop many life skills in our youth. **Leadership, organization, time management, and public speaking are some of those skills.** 4-H members have the chance to educate fair-goers on a variety of topics as well as give back to the community with service projects held during the Fair. **4-H Youth provide 9,120 community service hours while 4-H Volunteers provide 4,500 service hours** during the 5-day fair.

Club leaders provide opportunities in **leadership, public speaking, and community service.** 4-H believes in a **"Learn by Doing"** approach which helps our youth grow as individuals and learn about life skills early on.

Since 1902, 4-H has brought families closer, shaped careers, and impacted communities. National 4-H week was celebrated October 2-6. The theme for this year's National 4-H Week, **Opportunities for All**, focused on creating fun, education, and social acceptance for all youth. 4-H helps youth feel a sense of belonging; and provides them with opportunities to help them rise above their potential.

Aside from newly formed clubs, Hunterdon welcomed **seventeen new volunteers** who will work with already formed clubs including sheep, dairy, rabbit, and shooting sports. For more information on how you can get your child in the 4-H Program, please contact Rutgers Cooperative Extension, 4-H Department, (908) 788-1341.



2022 Agriculture and Natural Resources

Megan Muehlbauer, PhD, County Agent III

Year in Review:

- Two talks at the **67th New Jersey Agricultural Convention and Trade Show** in Atlantic City, NJ.
- Two presentations at **New Jersey Commercial Tree Fruit Meetings**.
- **North Jersey Tree Fruit Twilight Meeting** at the **Rutgers University Snyder Research and Extension Farm** in Pittstown, NJ. There were 32 attendees. **NJDEP Pesticide Recertification credits were awarded to attendees of all meetings**.
- Megan attended the National Association of Agricultural Agents conference in July. She was part of a group who was a National Finalist for the Search for Excellence in Commercial and Consumer Horticulture for a project titled "Using Technology to Improve Extension Home Horticulture Programming".
- Megan also served as the Northeast Region Vice-Chair of the Professional Excellence Committee.



- Assisted in the coordination of the **Rutgers University Snyder Farm Open House and Tomato Tasting**. 516 attendees including the president of Rutgers University, Jonathan Holloway.
- Megan was appointed to be the editor of the Rutgers University Tree Fruit Production guide. It is the 302-page statewide production manual for tree fruit. She manages the content of 11 authors.
- Concluded the second season of data collection for the Rutgers Apple Maturity Website. This website houses weekly reports on apple maturity progression throughout New Jersey. In 2023 the website was viewed 516

Awards:

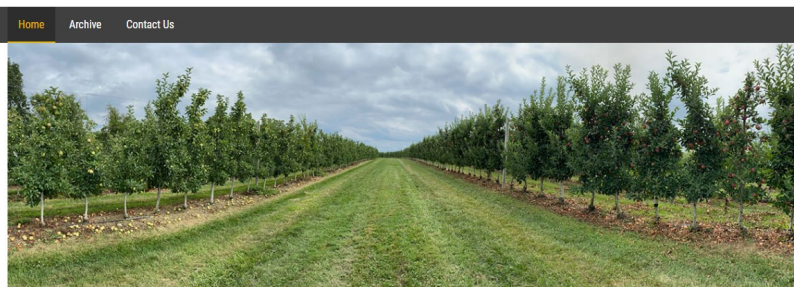
- **Muehlbauer, M.** Fruit Growers News Fruit and Vegetable 40 under Forty Award
- **Muehlbauer, M., T. Molnar, and J. Capik.** Outstanding Education Materials (Bulletin) Award. The American Society for Horticultural Science Extension Division. Choosing Plants for a Hazelnut Orchard in New Jersey. E.368.
- **Muehlbauer, M.** Outstanding Education Materials (Website) Award. The American Society for Horticultural Science Extension Division. New Jersey Weekly Maturity Review.
- Komar, S., L. Chiariello, B. Bamka, S. Mangiafico, B. Chester, **M. Muehlbauer**, W. Errickson, T. Waller, R. Magron, P. Nitzsche, D. Los, R. VanVranken, M. Infante-Casella, G. Pavlis, M. Bakacs, M. Melendez, S. Servidio. Search for Excellence in Consumer or Commercial Horticulture. National Finalist. National Association of County Agricultural Agents. Using Technology to Improve Extension Home Horticultural Programming.
- **Muehlbauer, M., and R. Magron.** Communication Award for Website/Online Content. State Winner. National Association of County Agricultural Agents. New Jersey Weekly Apple Maturity Review.
- Hlubik, W., W. Errickson, B. Pearsall, **M. Muehlbauer**, N. Polanin, P. Nitzsche, H. Bignell, L. Errickson. Communication Award for Publication. State Winner. National Association of County Agricultural Agents. Important Links for Beginner Farmers-RU Ready 2 Farm Toolshed.



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New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

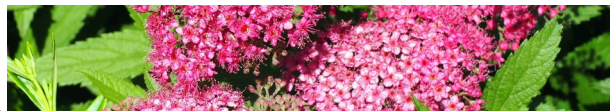
New Jersey Weekly Apple Maturity Review



2022 Home Horticulture

Rebecca Magron, Horticulture Consultant & Research Associate

Master Gardeners of Hunterdon County enhancing outreach services, benefitting our community



4,912

hours serving community residents in Hunterdon County during 2022

\$32.23

hourly rate defined by IndependentSector.org

\$159,100

dollar value of 2022 volunteer hours

10,064 contacts in 2022

3,562 contacts with formal education

6,502 service contacts in populations with special needs and youth programs

1,303 special event contacts

287,931 Helpline & social media contacts

"The women work together in the garden every week and learn to be a team with a common goal, to bring food to their table and beauty to their house as we also grow flowers. And slowly from April to October the women heal and the garden grows and in the fall we harvest vegetables and self esteem and self worth and resiliency and self sufficiency. The garden has come to mean so much more than a way to cut our grocery bill. It has blossomed into a therapy more healing than we could have imagined when we started out. You only need to look outside and see a woman just sitting in the garden with the butterflies and the flowers to understand that. And we could not have done this without the Master Gardeners who patiently guide, explain and nurture the women they are working with, filling them with confidence and knowledge and in the end turning them into gardeners". - Helen McIntosh, Clinical Director, Anderson House

The Home Horticulture office at Rutgers Cooperative Extension began the Master Gardener program to extend its reach into the community with its first graduating class 31 years ago. Now a thriving volunteer outreach service, the Master Gardener program maintains 95 trained and active volunteers who readily strengthen outreach, improve residents' lives and strive to deepen our reach to vulnerable populations and populations with special needs. **Since its inception 31 years ago, 301,842 volunteer hours have contributed \$7,033,048 of service in our communities.**

Introducing new programming for Hunterdon County residents, the Rutgers Environmental Stewards and the online Rutgers Garden Education Series is available to Hunterdon County residents. Together with Master Gardener Programming, our Home Horticulturalist participation reached 4,808 contacts; of that, she led or instructed 3,469 contacts with over 85 hours of formal instruction during 2022.

Master Gardeners are available at community events, providing individualized information to over 1,000 people. Additionally, Master Gardeners published research-based articles reaching over 285,000 people.



"For almost ten years, students who are part of the EKWIPs program at Hunterdon Central Regional High School have partnered with the Master Gardeners of Hunterdon County. ...This process has provided ample opportunities for social engagement, problem-solving, confidence-building, therapeutic tactile engagement, and successful teamwork. Our students now have the talent, ability, and sureness to successfully apply the lessons learned through gardening with the Master Gardeners to their home gardens and, in some cases, work in garden centers and in our community at large."

-Suzanne Vrancken, Teacher Hunterdon Central High School, Hunterdon County Teacher of the Year