



RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural
Experiment Station

2022

First Quarter Report



Cooperative Extension of Hunterdon County

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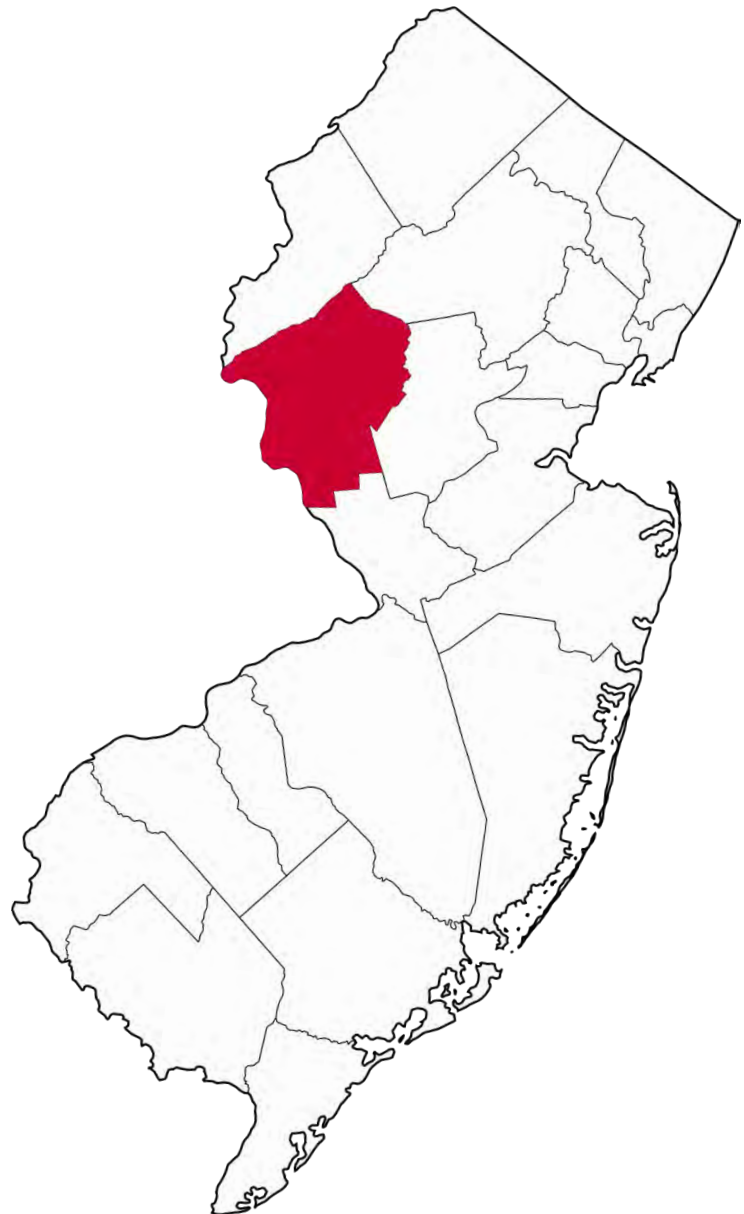
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2022 Family and Community Health Sciences

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.**

Virtual Groups/Classes:

NJ Empower to Prevent: the FCHS Diabetes Prevention Program

(Co-PI and Lifestyle Coach with Shailja Mathur, FCHS Educator from Middlesex County)

The 12-month program will be completed in April 2022. We have 100% retention of all 15 participants and are on track to obtain the next level of CDC Certification.

Teaching/Coaching Included:

- 3 Monthly Maintenance Classes Presented
- 3 "Office Hours" Enhancement Sessions Conducted
- 8 One-on-One Client Check-in Meetings Conducted

We have recruited and trained 2 new Lifestyle Coaches to lead the 2022 Cohort, scheduled to begin at the end of April. We are actively recruiting underserved/at risk participants.



Take Control of Your Health Chronic Disease Self-Management Program

(with Hunterdon County Senior Services)

This 6-week virtual series kicked off on 3/25/2022 with 9 participants who will learn skills and strategies to better manage their health.

Social Media Posts:

Encore posting of "Living Well with Sandra G" Lifestyle Change Facebook Video Series: Reach 1,351

Other posts: Reach 666

Webinars/Trainings:

FCHS Wellness Wednesdays Webinars:

- 2/23/2022 "Ask the Expert on Food Safety" (with Don Schaffner, Daryl Minch, and Joanne Kinsey): 123 attendees/views to date
- 3/2/2022 "Intermittent Fasting: Is it an effective weight loss strategy?" (with Shailja Mathur); 172 attendees/views to date



2022 4-H Youth Development

Sherrie Peterson, 4-H Program Assistant

4-H Public Presentations

4-H excels in preparing youth to be more confident when speaking in front of a group. Presentations are one of the “member in good standing” requirements in the **New Jersey 4-H Program**. Every member is required to present a topic in a club setting. **Two hundred and twenty** youth have prepared and presented topics for their club’s 2021-2022 4-H year. Topics may include animals, food, STEM, history, science, or anything else of the member’s choosing. There are four types of presentations taught. **Illustrated Talks** and **Demonstrations** are the two most popular types. **Performing Arts** and **Formal Speeches** can also be presented.



Abigail Drake, SAVE 4-H Club

After the skill is mastered on a club level, members are encouraged to present a topic on a County Level in front of a team of judges. Participants are judged on poise, appearance, their knowledge of the topic, the references they used, and their ability to present and summarize their topic. **Fifty Hunterdon County Youth** prepared a topic and presented at the county contest in March. Those members who are in grade eight and above, can qualify for the State Contest. In order to qualify, members need to earn an excellent rating on the county level. **Eighteen Hunterdon youth** have been invited to attend the State contest in June.

The **State Presentations** will be a Hybrid model. Youth can send in a video of the presentation, present the topic on Zoom, or they can attend in person at the Rutgers Campus.

Public speaking not only builds confidence, it prepares youth with better communication skills. Through researching topics, **4-H members** can motivate change and become better listeners while others present their topics. Public speaking prepares youth for college as well as preparing them for job interviews. Without communication skills, the ability to progress in the working world and in life itself, would be nearly impossible.

2022 Agriculture and Natural Resources

Megan Muehlbauer, PhD, County Agent III

Early Accomplishments Include:

Two talks at the 67th New Jersey Agricultural Convention and Trade Show in Atlantic City, NJ. One of the presentations was on Organic Production, and the other was at the Beginner Farmers Training Session.

Two presentations at New Jersey Commercial Tree Fruit Meetings. The virtual meetings on March 2nd and 9th were on the subjects of Utilizing Soil and Leaf Tissue Analysis to Determine Fertilizer Needs and the Rutgers University Apple Maturity Website respectively, and a culminative 76 people were in attendance.

Hosting the first North Jersey Tree Fruit Twilight Meeting of 2022 on March 29th at the Rutgers University Snyder Research and Extension Farm in Pittstown, NJ. The meeting featured talks about Pesticide Safety, Mating Disruption and Management for Internal Fruit Worms, and Management of Early Season Disease on Apple and Peach, as well as Tree Fruit Pest Updates and Observations from members of the Rutgers NJAES. There were 32 attendees. NJDEP Pesticide Recertification credits were awarded to attendees of all meetings.

Also:

6 talks to 178 Master Gardeners.

82 soil tests.



Rutgers Beach Plum, bp1-1, grafted onto a peach tree at the Snyder Farm, Rutgers

Outreach Information / Presentations:

Apple Variety and Rootstock Selection

Apple Tree Anatomy: Apples are nearly always clonally propagated by grafting, which helps with disease resistance and dwarfing.

Rootstocks: Most newly bred rootstocks have some degree of resistance to a number of different diseases. When choosing a rootstock, it is important to consider the type of growing system in which they will be planted. Trees grown in high density systems tend to be grown on rootstocks with highly dwarfing characteristics, and vice versa.

Orchard Specific Site Selection, Preparation, and Nutrient Management

Site Selection: The Web Soil Survey developed by the USDA-NRCS provides an interactive map that includes information about soil pH, textural properties, and slopes. This will aid in air drainage which will help prevent frost damage. It will also help with water drainage and allow fruit crops to receive full sun.

Site Preparation: This should begin two years before planting. Soil tests should be done to determine the pH and other major nutrient levels, and adjustments made accordingly. Herbicides should be sprayed in the spring, and cover crops planted in the summer to improve soil structure.

Nutrient Management: Ensure that the pH has been adjusted to reach 6-6.5 prior to planting. Monitor potassium, phosphorus, sulfur, and boron levels. Long term management involves consistent leaf tissue analysis. This, along with previous seasons' shoot growth, will help determine nitrogen levels.

2022 Home Horticulture

Rebecca Magron, Horticulture Consultant

While the Covid-19 pandemic has brought about unprecedented times and difficult challenges to overcome, the home horticulture department began phasing in in-person programming with volunteers for the first time since March 2020. Out of a concern for safety, and to increase accessibility, programs continued in a hybrid in-person and virtual setting.

With a new graduating class of Rutgers Master Gardener Class of 2022, we are looking forward to reengaging with volunteers and our community.

Some Early Results Include:

44 Unique educational posts with photographs on timely horticultural information for Hunterdon County were distributed through Social Media.

86,333 individuals were reached with custom posts, and there were 2,721 reactions, comments, and shares.

17 Hunterdon County residents graduated initial Rutgers Master Gardener training on April 12, and will begin their internships in our community.

Two school programs have kicked off, one after a two-year hiatus due to Covid shutdowns. 24 Students that have special needs at **Hunterdon Central Regional High School**, and all 3-5th grade students at **Whitehouse Station Elementary school** participate in weekly horticultural programming with Rutgers Master Gardener volunteers.

61 unique horticultural questions answered and problems solved for County residents on Helpline.



The Master Gardeners

Began Rutgers Environmental Steward program co-coordinating for Region 3 with 17 local residents.

13 3-hour (39 hours) Rutgers Environmental Steward Programs, including 1-hour breakout sessions with 17 local residents.

15 3-hour (45 hours) long Rutgers Master Gardener classes hosted in-person and virtual, including hands-on diagnostics.

6 Custom presentations to various audiences on compost, soil, pruning totaling **458 individuals**.

Restarting and retooling a County Rutgers Master Gardener volunteer program.