

FREEHOLD SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Serving Middlesex & Monmouth Counties Since 1938

2016 ANNUAL REPORT



**2016 Freehold SCD Photo Contest
First Place Winner
“Sailor’s Delight”
By Raymond Salani III, of Tinton Falls**

Freehold Soil Conservation District

is a special purpose subdivision of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture serving Middlesex and Monmouth Counties. Freehold SCD is one of 15 New Jersey soil conservation districts empowered to conserve and manage soil and water resources in cooperation with the State Soil Conservation Committee. We address stormwater, soil erosion and sedimentation problems that result from land disturbance activities. We also provide environmental education outreach programs within the two counties.

In response to growing concern for water quality, the District has become the primary local agency responsible for controlling nonpoint sources of pollution associated with construction, agriculture and mining. Technical services of the USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service are made available through the District.

With ongoing cooperation between residents, contractors, developers, educators, landowners, farmers, municipalities and engineers, Freehold Soil Conservation District personnel continue to work to help to ensure environmental resource quality for years to come.



Award Winning Shot



Second Place Winner “Seal”
By Robin Muller, of Freehold

Freehold Soil Conservation District Staff



Tim Thomas, Brian Governale, Paul Califano, Courtney Davidson, Stacy Brady, Michael Infanti, Holly Reynolds, Michael Hill, Steve Grosch, Ben Shotland



Donna Cramer, Andrea Farparan, Christina LaBianca, Michael Hill, Ines Zimmerman, Sharon Robertson

Manager's Message

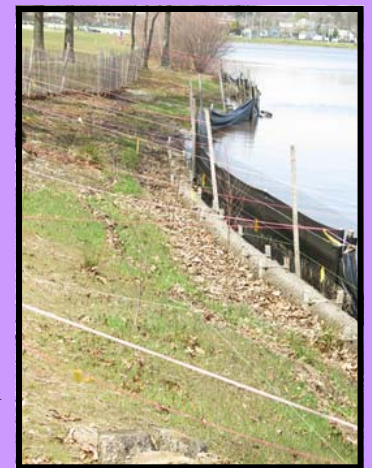
Ines Zimmerman— District Manager

2016 was an exciting year for the Freehold Soil Conservation District. The District has been hard at work on two conservation grants that will bring long lasting habitat benefits to Monmouth and Middlesex Counties. In 2013 we began work on a grant project to enhance the Manalapan River and Lake watershed. The Freehold District, in partnership with Middlesex and Monmouth Counties, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, the NJ Department of Agriculture and Princeton Hydro Engineering installed a lakeside planting buffer at Thompson Park in Monroe Township in the Fall of 2016.

This planting buffer addresses shoreline erosion and goose damage that has impacted the water quality in the lake. In time the planting will help improve the water quality in the lake which is used for recreational purposes from fishing to kayaking and boating. A video explaining the purpose of the grant project and the nature of the watershed was completed and is available on You Tube. <http://youtu.be/XaOlzRIGyXEg>. Also, in 2016 the District began offering conservation assistance to public open space landowners. The District, created the Open Space Conservation Cooperative to focus on the issues of managing public open space. The assistance will come in the form of a forestry plan, two pollinator habitat plans, two wildlife habitat plans and grasslands management.

As we are able, the Freehold Soil Conservation District looks to offer assistance wherever possible. We partnered with the Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership to provide plants for a pollinator garden in New Brunswick's 78-acre Buccleuch Park. The Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership has been working with several community groups to encourage planting of pollinator habitat within the City.

The goal for 2017 is to expand on these programs and to look for new partnerships. We hope to identify ways to meet conservation needs that may be overlooked. Sometimes it is the small project that offers the best return. We look forward to the challenges, large and small.



Shoreline stabilization project at Thompson Park, Jamesburg. New trees, goose exclusion, grasses and a coir log to buffer wave action along the waterline.

Chapter 251 Report

The Freehold Soil Conservation District marked its Ruby Anniversary (40th) of administering the New Jersey Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Act; N.J.S.A. 4: 24-39 et. Seq., Chapter 251, P.L. 1975 and as amended by C.264, P.L. 77 and C. 459, P.L. 79, in the year 2016. Under the Act, the District reviews and certifies Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plans and conducts inspections on projects under the jurisdiction of the District as mandated by Chapter 251.

The Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Act requires applicants proposing soil disturbance greater than 5000 square feet on commercial, residential, mining, landfill and utility sites to submit a complete application to the District for review and certification prior to beginning the project. Disturbance is defined as any activity involving clearing, excavating, storing, grading, filling or transporting of soil or any other activity which causes soil to be exposed to the danger of erosion. Once the application is certified, the District conducts inspections on the projects to monitor the success of the applicant. It is the applicant's responsibility to adhere to the requirements set forth under the Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Act, the New Jersey Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Standards (7th Edition) and first and foremost, the certified Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan.

Projects that will disturb one acre or greater require an Authorization To Discharge under the 5G 3 Construction Activity Storm Water General Permit from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. In 2016 the District issued 304 soil conservation district codes for the filing for the NJDEP (5G3) Authorization. In 2016, the District received 932 Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Applications and 852 Exemption requests. More than 9,700 hours were spent by District staff reviewing plans, conducting inspections and maintaining records.

The District received a variety of applications for review and certification. Below is a sample of Soil Erosion and Sediment Control applications certified in 2016.

Single Family Residential	481
Multi-Unit Residential	17
Commercial	321
Road Projects	62
Utility Projects	24

In 2016, The District issued the following:

Partial Report of Compliance	1.397
Complete Reports of Compliance	664
Certifications	925
Certifications of Revised Plans	133

Sandy Hook Coast Guard Station

As a result of Hurricane Sandy, The United States Coast Guard sustained flooding damages to their Station House at Small Boat Station Sandy Hook. Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plans were submitted to the District for the reconstruction of their Station and also to dredge the harbor of excess material and repair the cutter docks.

Rutgers Adelphia Research Farm Dam Replacement

The project calls for the replacement of two dams at their Research facility in Freehold Township to address structural problems that the original dams experienced. The upper dam was constructed and completed in 2016. The lower dam is currently under construction.

USACE Contract 2

The US Army Corps of Engineers Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction project for Port Monmouth section of Middletown was approved and is under construction. This project calls for a 2,661 foot long concrete floodwall along Port Monmouth Road. This is part of a larger project which includes 7,070 feet of levees, 3,585 feet of floodwalls and 2,640 feet of dune with an estimated total cost of around \$105 million.

The District continued its commitment to education by offering the technical staff the opportunity to partake in continuing education classes and training seminars. Brian Governale and Courtney Davidson attended a Practical Site Engineering: Science and Techniques class. The learning objectives were how to establish sustainability goals for projects while minimizing disturbance, and storm water management techniques to minimize erosion and control sedimentation.

In June of 2016 Courtney attended the National Resource Conservation Service Boot Camp training in Lincoln, Nebraska offered by the National Association of Conservation Districts. The training program was both field and classroom based. The field training consisted of farmland, pasture and woodland assessment. Courtney worked in teams creating conservation plans for farmers tailored to meet their specific needs. The skills applied were inventory resources, grass and weed identification, soil and water quality, erosion, pasture and paddock management.

In 2016, Steven Grosch celebrated his fifteenth year with the District while Holly Reynolds, Courtney Davidson and Brian Governale celebrated their ten year anniversary.

Paul Califano — Resource Conservationist II

FSCD 2016 Financial Report

Sources of Income (approximate)	Amount
Interest & previous fees	50%
Erosion control fees	49.5%
Monmouth County grant	.5%
Expenses (approximate)	
Salaries, taxes & benefits	74%
Rent, utilities & insurance	12%
Materials, supplies & postage	4%
Professional services	3%
Vehicles expenses	2%
Training & conferences	2%
Scholarships, awards & education	2%
Capital expenditure	1%

The Freehold SCD Board of Supervisors meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of the month at the District office.
 April — November at 7:30 pm
 December — March at 1:30 pm

Conservation Education

In our eleventh year in the Trout in the Classroom (TIC) program, we have 23 schools and one environmental center raising rainbow trout. In May, over 120 students and teachers attended Trout in the Classroom Field Day to release the trout they raised, from eggs to 3-4 inch fingerlings, into the Toms River at the Forest Resource Education Center. Students also participated in programs in soil, forestry, water and trout life. It is estimated that over 1000 trout have been released into NJDEP permitted waters this past year through the District's TIC tanks.

This year we have 29 returning schools and 4 new schools joining the Plants for Pollinators in the Classroom (PPIC) program for a total of 33 schools participating in this unique, hands-on learning experience where students discover the important role pollinators play in our food supply.

"We All Need Trees" was the theme for Stewardship Week and for the Conservation Poster Contest. District prizes were awarded in four grade divisions. All first place winning posters were submitted to the State level contest and we had all 1st place winners at the state level. Our 1st place state winners also placed at the national level.

The 2016 NJ Envirothon, was held at North Branch Park in Somerset County in May. The 23rd annual event tested 33 teams of high school students from throughout NJ in

aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife and the current environmental issue of "Invasive Species." West Windsor-Plainsboro HS North won the event. MATES Team #1 (Marine Academy of Technology and Environmental Science) won second place for the event and third place went to Cedar Creek High School Team #2.

The NJ Conservation Partnership display at the 2016 NJ Flower & Garden Show promoted the different ways we can protect our natural resources. "Happy Earthday! A Conservation Celebration" was very popular and was viewed by over 20,000 show visitors. The garden earned awards for "Most Educational," "Best Environmental Focus," "Most Colorful Display," "Best Plant Material," "Most Creative Water Feature" and third place Peoples Choice Award.

Our Board of Supervisors awarded three \$2,000 scholarships in 2016. Alexis Lizardi, Morganville received the Neal W. Munch Scholarship, Garrett Hess, Sayreville, received the Mac Clark Scholarship, and Kristie VonThun, Monmouth Junction, received the Bill Schauer Scholarship. This was the 37th consecutive year awards have been provided by the District. Students majoring in conservation related fields from Middlesex or Monmouth County are awarded these scholarships.

Holly Reynolds — Public Information Specialist



The 2016 NJ Envirothon at North Branch Park in Somerset County.



The NJ Conservation Partnership's "Happy Earthday! A Conservation Celebration" display at the Flower & Garden Show was viewed by over 25,000 attendees.



Soil Tunnel at the Birds, Bugs and Beyond event 2016



IMPACTS

The USDA Farm Service Agency delivered more than \$10.8 million in federal program payments and loans to New Jersey farmers and growers during fiscal year 2016. New Jersey agriculture benefits greatly from the tireless efforts of our dedicated employees and locally elected County Committees.

Commodity Program Payments: \$2.3 million

New Jersey producers received substantial monetary support during FY 2016 in the form of commodity and price support program payments.

\$1,227,444 - Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) Programs provide revenue and price loss payments to eligible producers for the 2014 through 2018 crop years.

\$893,526 - Commodity Loans are available to eligible producers who use crops as collateral. The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) makes loans for eligible commodities that are farm or warehouse stored.

\$7,933 - Margin Protection Program (MPP-Dairy) offers protection when the difference between the all milk price and the average feed cost (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer.

\$131,178 - Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL) The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), through FSA, makes loans to producers to build or upgrade farm storage and handles facilities for eligible commodities

Conservation: \$1.3 million

FSA made significant investments toward conserving and improving soil, water, and wildlife resources in New Jersey. Conservation investments in FY 2016 include:

\$497,746 - Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) provides financial incentives, cost-share and rental payments to producers who convert highly erodible cropland or environmentally sensitive acreage to long-term vegetative cover.

\$10,800 - Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) provides emergency funding for farmers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters, and to enact emergency water conservation measures during periods of severe drought.

\$831,145 - Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP) funds restored forestland damaged by Superstorm Sandy. Planted trees help reduce flood effects, protect water sources, decrease soil erosion and improve wildlife habitat

Disaster Assistance: \$1.2 million

From drought to flood, freeze and tornadoes - FSA was financially responsive to New Jersey producers following natural disasters.

\$995,155 - Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) provides financial assistance to producers of noninsurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occurs due to natural disasters.

\$125,133 - Tree Assistance Program for Orchardists and Nursery Tree Growers (TAP) provides financial assistance to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters.

\$6,188 - Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides partial reimbursements to eligible livestock owners for livestock losses suffered due to a natural disaster or other emergency.

\$39,387 - Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather or other conditions.

Farm Loans: \$6.0 million

FSA offers various loan options to New Jersey farmers and growers who manage family-sized operations and who were temporarily unable to obtain private or commercial credit.

\$624,000 - Guaranteed Loan Program FSA guarantees loans made by conventional agricultural lenders for up to 95 percent of any loss if the loan fails.

\$4,508,570 - Direct Loan Program FSA provides assistance to those unable to obtain guaranteed loans. In FY 2016, FSA funded 66 farm operating loans, including 41 loans to beginning farmers and 20 loans to targeted underserved producers.

\$577,730 - Microloans are direct farm operating loans (maximum of \$50,000) with a shortened application process and reduced paperwork designed to meet the needs of smaller, non-traditional, and niche type operations. In FY 2016, 25 microloans were issued.



Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS's conservation programs and technical assistance help producers reduce soil erosion, conserve energy, enhance water supplies, improve water quality, increase wildlife habitat and make land management decisions that help the sustainability of working lands. NRCS provides funding opportunities for agricultural producers and other landowners through a variety of programs to achieve these goals. All land use categories are eligible for assistance, irrigated and non-irrigated cropland, pasture, forest and farmstead.

Activity Highlights of 2016:

Gleaning Project

In 2016 Carrie Lindig, the NRCS State Conservationist awarded the Group Platinum Hall of Fame Awards to Ines Zimmerman, Freehold CD Manager for her coordination of a gleaning project at a Colts Neck Farm. Freehold Conservation District and NRCS employees participate in the gleaning. Over 6,000 pounds of apples and squash were distributed to local food banks.



Equine Initiative

In partnership with Rutgers Extension and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, NRCS set aside dedicated funds for NJ Equine Operations, to assist with conservation planning and implementing practices through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The focus of the funding was on nutrient and pasture management as well as water quality protection. Matching funds were made available from New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA). Rutgers University hosted three "Wine and Equine" events throughout the State to get the word out and to educate horse owners on the best management practices they can implement to protect natural resources on their farms. This combined targeted outreach resulted in 6 Equine contracts in Middlesex and Monmouth counties.

Conservation on the Ground in Middlesex and Monmouth Counties 2016

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP):

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program offers conservation practices for producers with existing resource concerns to install permanent measures, adopt new management strategies, or develop activity plans for a wide range of resource concerns. Several targeted initiatives exist within the EQIP program include the Organic Initiative, Soil Health Initiative, and Energy Initiative.

- A total of 15 new contracts and conservation plans were developed with landowners on 371 acres for a total value of \$257,528.
- In 2016, \$233,873 worth of conservation for 29 projects was implemented on farmland enrolled in existing EQIP contracts.

These projects included cover crops, nutrient management, irrigation upgrades, fencing, roof runoff, agrichemical handling facility, energy upgrades, conservation activity plans, forest health and wildlife/pollinator practices.

Conservation Security Program (CSP):

The Conservation Stewardship Program rewards agricultural producers who have already adopted conservation strategies on their farms.

- One new contract and conservation plan was developed on 117 acres of land for a total annual value of \$3,128.
- In 2016, \$3,304 worth of conservation was implemented on existing CSP contracts.

Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA):

The Agriculture Management Assistance program focuses conservation to beginning and limited resource farmers and small farms.

- One new contract and conservation plan was developed on 6 acres of land for a total value of \$19,098.
- In 2016, \$24,091 worth of conservation for 7 projects were implemented on existing AMA contracts. These projects included seasonal high tunnels, conservation cover, and micro irrigation systems.

Grassland Reserve Program (GRP):

The Grassland Reserve Program, administered by the Farm Service Agency, offers landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance grasslands on their property. This results in the protection of water quality and provides wildlife habitat. There is currently one GRP contract in Monmouth County, covering 22 acres.



High Tunnels extend the growing season and help locally sourced produce, NRCS current cost share rate on high tunnels is \$3.13/sq ft up to a maximum of \$13,634.



Conservation District and NRCS staff participating in gleaning on a farm in Colts Neck.

NRCS Staff – Freehold Office

District Conservationist – Clare Flanagan

Soil Conservationist - Laura Coover

Program Assistant - Maria Iannuzzelli

United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Freehold Service Center

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Forest Resource Education Center

Interpretive Programs: The staff at the Forest Resource Education Center (FREC) hosted 78 interpretive programs with a total of 2,199 attendees in 2016.

The 22nd annual Fall Forestry Festival was impacted by rain for the third consecutive year. Even so, over 30 organizations (including the Freehold Conservation District) with over 100 staff and volunteers participated. The annual festival offers free exhibits, demonstrations and interpretive hikes showcasing forestry and forest resources.



Cooperative Programming:

The monthly evening programs 'Backyard Forestry in 90 Minutes' continued to be a huge success in 2016. 414 people attended the twelve programs. The free series provides educational programs for adults with an interest in backyard forest management. The FREC is the host location and is co-sponsored with the Rutgers Cooperative Extension and the NJ Forestry Association.



In conjunction with the Jackson Pathfinders, FREC naturalists offered a Swamp Trail hike on National Trails Day, two hikes at the Forest Resource Education Center and the Pleasant Grove Bog during 2016. FREC naturalists also continue to work with girl and boy scouts on various projects.

Outreach Programs: FREC staff lent their expertise at several outreach events including the NJ Envirothon, the Division of Fish & Wildlife's Wild Outdoor Expo, Duke Farms Maple Sugaring Festival, Jackson Health Fair, Earth Day Celebration at Joint Base McGuire Dix Lakehurst, and the NJ State Arbor Day Event. These events were attended by approximately 10,000 people.

Meeting Room: The FREC provides a centrally located facility for governmental and non-profit organizations to hold meetings. In 2016, 66 meetings and programs were held by over 20 different organizations with over 1,000 attendees.



Trail Work: In 2016 FREC staff and volunteers continued to maintain over twelve miles on eight trails at the property. The refurbishment of the Barnegat Bay watershed deck and new barrier island display were completed. A new maritime forest display was initiated in the late Fall.

Barnegat Bay Themed Programs and Events:

FREC staff participated in the Barnegat Bay Environmental Educators Workshop at the Lighthouse Center. The FREC continued to support the work of the NJ AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassadors Program during the Rain Barrel *train the trainer* workshop and biological assessment training workshops hosted at FREC.



Trout in the Classroom: In cooperation with the Freehold and Ocean County Soil Conservation Districts, Jersey Shore Trout Unlimited, and NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife, FREC staff hosted the annual Trout in the Classroom Field Day. A total of 100 students and their teachers from 5 local schools participated in a day of interpretive programs and trout release into the Toms River with an additional 118 students and teachers from 5 schools releasing trout on separate occasions as part of FREC led interpretive programs.

New Projects in 2017: Completion of the Barnegat Bay Maritime Forest exhibit is expected by the end of 2017. Numerous native trees and shrubs commonly found along the coast of Monmouth and Ocean counties will be planted to compliment the barrier island dune exhibit.

Events in 2017: We will continue to host the popular Backyard Forestry in 90 Minutes series that are held every second Thursday starting at 7:00 p.m. and the Fall Forestry Festival on Saturday, October 6, 2017. In addition to the weekday programming available at FREC, we will continue to be open and offer guided hikes on the second Saturday of each month in 2017.

Rick Dutko – Facility Manager
495 Don Connor Boulevard
Jackson, NJ 08527

South Jersey RC&D

South Jersey Resource Conservation & Development

Council area includes:

Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean and Salem Counties.

The South Jersey RC&D mission is to accelerate the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, to improve the general level of economic activity, and to enhance the environment and standard of living in our designated RC&D areas is ongoing.

In 2016, the RC&D Council organized participation at various events that has broadened the audience of the information the group provides. SJRC&D continues to plan, develop and carry out many programs for resource conservation and development. As a member of the Mid Atlantic Regional Association, the council works with other RC&D councils to enhance our efforts throughout the region in projects, such as:

Wildlife Habitat: “Team Habitat” held a Partners meeting which brought together over twelve organizations to plan for the ongoing job of providing a valued resource to the area, conducting acres of wildlife habitat rehabilitation. The Team Habitat manager coordinated the completion of projects throughout the South Jersey RC&D area and beyond. New brochures for the work able to be done by the Team were published focusing on “Storm water”. Visit the website for further information.

Tour des Farms: The ninth annual Tour des Farms bike ride in Burlington County was another successful RC&D event. Over 250 riders cycled from farm to farm with “Farm Bucks” (coupons) redeemable at the local farm markets along the route. Tour des Farms educates residents on agricultural topics and practices. We intend to increase ridership and sponsors in 2016. The new farm Johnson’s on Rote 537 added to the route was well received.

Soil Health: The Council promotes soil health through the Soil Health website at www.njsoilhealth.org and the work of the Team Habitat seeding program. The Council also promotes soil health on farms by renting out a roller/crimper. This tool allows vegetable crops to be planted directly into crimped cover crops. This method reduces soil erosion, pesticide use, and creates a cleaner pumpkin crop. The roller/crimper is available to farmers and is located at the Burlington Soil Conservation District office, which houses the South Jersey RC&D.

Delaware Estuary Levee Organization: The inventory of 70 aging levees along the Delaware Bay shoreline was completed in 2010 and potential partnerships are being pursued for restoration work on the identified levees, with submittals to the DEP and Army Corp for action.

Water Conservation: The Council wants area people to visit the lawn watering program at Rutgers University climatology program. Newspapers are alerted by email and a website is updated each day during the summer to provide homeowners with accurate information on how much irrigation their lawn needs that day. This is based on an area’s soils; evapotranspiration and rainfall measured at local weather stations. The Council, through its partnership with the State Climatologist from Rutgers, has promoted this program to all New Jersey municipalities.

Council

Jack Sworaski— Chairperson
Dan Pace —1st Vice Chairperson
Robert Reitmeyer —Secretary
Craig McGee — 2nd Vice Chairperson
Michael Hill — Treasurer

South Jersey RC&D

Columbus USDA Service Center
1971 Jacksonville-Jobstown Road
Columbus, NJ 08022
609-267-1639 www.sjrcd.org
Email: Coordinator <coordinator@sjrcd.org>

NJ Conservation Poster Contest



This 1st Place Poster Contest entry earned a \$100 prize for Alice Fang, of Edison, in the Grades 10-12 Division.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Middlesex County

Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Middlesex County can be found at the EARTH Center, in Davidson's Mill Pond Park, 42 Riva Avenue, South Brunswick.

Agricultural & Natural Resource Management

The Middlesex County Cooperative Extension Agricultural Department works with University specialists and professors on research and educational programs for a diverse clientele group. There is emphasis on Integrated Pest Management and organic production techniques, monitoring for pests through timely *Plant and Pest Advisories*, Direct Marketing and expanding into new markets and certification programs for pesticide and fertilizer applicators.

Our Agriculture Agent conducted 124 field visits to resolve pest, disease and management issues on farms, nurseries, and local landscapes. Our accomplishments include:

- Presented School Integrated Pest Management (IPM) training to over 300 attendees (superintendents, maintenance staff, teachers, principals) from schools in Piscataway, Woodbridge Perth Amboy, Spotswood, Metuchen, Sayreville, Carteret, Edison and Middlesex.
- Conducted educational training/crop diagnostics for over 250 constituents, including safe soil practices for reducing lead exposure while gardening.
- Conducted a "RU ready to Farm" program for over 80 participants looking to start their own small farm, at the Rutgers Eco-Complex in Bordentown, NJ.
- Ag Agent Bill Hlubik and the strawberry breeding team received a patent for the new Rutgers Scarlet™ strawberry which is now growing in 22 states across the nation.
- Donated over 750 lbs. of vegetables and fruits to Elijah's Promise and Farmers Against Hunger.
- In 2016, 21 workshops for the public were offered at the EARTH Center averaging 20 attendees/workshop. Topics included composting, organic gardening, herb gardening, beekeeping, attracting birds and butterflies, and invasive species.

Digging Into Youth Gardens

The Extension Service hosted a new program in 2016 for those looking to successfully use gardens as a teaching tool for youth. "Digging Into Youth Gardens: A Conference for Educators and Community Leaders" took place on Saturday, March 5, at the East Jersey Olde Towne in Piscataway.

The conference aimed to assist schools, community youth groups, churches, YMCAs, etc. in starting and maintaining a youth garden. Professional development credits were available for educators who attended the program.



Manalapan Watershed Restoration Project:

In October of 2016, the Manalapan Lake Shoreline Restoration project in Thompson Park was documented for an additional educational video in the Manalapan Brook Watershed Restoration video series. The project done in partnership with Freehold Soil Conservation District, Middlesex County's Office of Parks and Recreation, and Princeton Hydro. A draft script was created, and supporting footage was shot. The new video should be ready for public consumption by the fall of 2017. RCE will continue to develop education and training videos highlighting best management practices being installed as part of the project. The videos will be used to train municipal staff on long term maintenance.

2016 Organic Land Care Certificate Program

RCE of Middlesex again coordinated the statewide Organic Land Care Certificate program offering landscape professionals the tools to transition away from synthetic pesticides and fertilizers to a natural approach, focusing on healthy soil, enhancing biodiversity, and reducing runoff from managed landscapes.

The fourth annual class was completed in January with 15 professionals in attendance. Residents can search for landscapers who have met the requirements of this program on the website- www.njaes.rutgers.edu/organiclandcare.

Rutgers Trained Master Gardener Volunteers Accomplishments

Through the guidance and oversight of Rutgers Agricultural and Natural Resource Management Agents and Program Associates, Extension staff and Master Gardener volunteers have been presenting environmental stewardship knowledge and educational content to Central Jersey residents for over 20 years.

In 2016 there were over 200 active Master Gardeners who contributed over 12,000 hours of volunteer service.

Some of their efforts included:

- Speakers Bureau
 - 37 presentations on a variety of horticultural and environmental topics reached 1,782 individuals.
- Horticultural Therapy Programs
 - Over 250 people were reached through programs at locations such as the VA Home in Edison and St. Peter's Adult Day Care in Monroe.
- Our Master Gardener "Garden Helpline" responded to 676 calls. Most inquiries addressed, pertained to trees (planting, care and problem solving).

Rutgers Cooperative Extension

of Middlesex County

Main office:	732 398 5260
Ag & Resource Mgmt:	732 398 5262
4-H Youth Development:	732 398 5261
Master Gardener Helpline	732-398-5220
EFNEP & SNAP-Ed	732 398-5269

Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County

Agriculture & Natural Resource—Department Head Bill Sciarappa, Horticulturalist Diane Larson, Program Associate Vivian Quinn and Ag Assistant Dennis McNamara provided technical and educational programs on a local and state basis for vegetable, agronomic, fruit, nursery and greenhouse production. Primary projects focused on soil health of 32 county farms, specialty vegetables and new crops including hazelnuts. The soil health programs in soybean-corn rotations was supported by the NJ Soybean Board. In addition to our longstanding county fair, the fourth year of our newest county fair was another success – The Open Space Pace. A Festival of Horses parade was again held through downtown Freehold and attracted over 6000 people to the Raceway.

We continue to collaborate with the Monmouth County Board of Agriculture, the Monmouth County Agricultural Development Board, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, the Freehold Soil District, USDA-NRCS, USDA Farm Service Agency, New Jersey of Environmental Protection and New Jersey Farm Bureau. The Grown in Monmouth grant, led by Freeholders Tom Arnone and Lillian Burry, formed marketing strategies to increase economic development for local agribusiness. GIM team Coordinators John Ciufu and Susan Folta held meetings at our Extension office and introduced the new website. At RU Cream Ridge Research Farms new crop demonstrations included commercial field plantings of the Rutgers Scarlet Strawberry, Rutgers Scarlet Leaf Lettuces, and the Rutgers 250 Tomato in celebration of the 250th anniversary of Rutgers University .

Our outreach programs in crop science, agrichemical education, water allocation and stormwater runoff continue to expand. Our watershed outreach made progress in several areas such as Wreck Pond, which had a fish weir constructed to the ocean while the main channels in Shark River were dredged. Our total number of public rain garden demonstrations increased to 73 and over 600 private rain gardens. Work continues with the Maritime Forest restoration to enhance shoreline protection, promote public awareness, stress conservation measures and improve water quality.

Rutgers Master Gardeners - 30 Monmouth County residents successfully completed the Rutgers Master Gardener program in 2016, which entailed 60 hours of formal training, followed by at least 60 hours each of community volunteer service. Monmouth County has trained a total of 511 Master Gardeners since its inception in 1999, retaining 247 active Master Gardeners. Master Gardeners provided 24,990 hours of volunteer service in 2016, and responded to over 2,774 gardening inquiries from the public on the Helpline. Of the total hours of volunteer time, 3,085 hours were spent performing consultation and diagnostic duties at Helpline events, 14,320 hours were spent performing Community Outreach where the public was educated on horticulture on an informal basis, and 4,281 hours were spent formally teaching the public through the Speakers Bureau.

Community Projects & Educational Outreach

- School Program Committee helped 45 schools in Monmouth County to create or support their garden
- Over 17,000 pounds of produce were grown and donated by Master Gardeners to food pantries throughout the county. This food was grown in the Plant a Row for the Hungry and Junior Master Gardener Garden as well as the other 30 Community Gardens supported throughout the county
- A Helpline Table was set up on select weekends at the Eastern Branch of the Monmouth County Library, resulting in over 150 garden questions from the public
- 10th Class of the Junior Master Gardener program was held, 172 Youth trained to date
- Two \$1000 scholarships were awarded to high school seniors planning to study a plant science field in college.
- 21 Horticultural Enrichment programs provided at 4 different county facilities, impacting 400 residents.
- Master Gardeners presented 107 lectures to over 1800 residents of Monmouth County.

4-H Youth Development - In 2016, the 4-H Department of Monmouth County gained two new staff members. The first to come on board was 4-H Agent Matthew Newman. Matthew came to us from Michigan State University Extension where, for five years, he was a 4-H Program Coordinator, and brings with him a wealth of experience. The second new addition to the 4-H Department is Monmouth County 4-H alum Amelia Valente as the new 4-H Program Assistant. Amelia was an active member in 4-H before serving as the interim 4-H PA this summer.

In Monmouth County alone, there are over twenty clubs with 100 plus certified 4-H adult volunteers serving over 600 4-H youth members. Monmouth County 4-H clubs cover a wide range of topics, including but not limited to: yoga, robotics, cooking, shooting sports, and of course small animals, livestock, and horses. Through work with Open Space Pace County Fair, the 4-H program demonstrated its continued dedication to horses and equine science

Programs fall in three mission mandates – Science, Engineering, and Technology (STEM), Citizenship, and Healthy Living. Through clubs and educational offerings in afterschool programs and libraries, in school programs and public outreach, staff and volunteers worked with over 1500 youth in grades K – 13 and 700 adults in 2016. In the past year, over 100 adults volunteered their time with Monmouth County 4-H. Volunteers in Monmouth County averaged 220 hours of time over the course of the year, with an estimated value of nearly half a million dollars in volunteer hours going to the community.

The longest and most successful partnership is with the Monmouth County Parks System. The Monmouth County Fair is the culminating event and gives 4-H members the opportunity to showcase their achievements to the community. With over 60,000 visitors, the annual county fair is our premier event to educate the public about 4-H, all the while recruiting new members and volunteers.

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Freehold Soil Conservation District

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Editor: Holly Reynolds &
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Primary Photographer: Paul Califano

New Jersey Soil Conservation Districts consist of paid staff plus a volunteer Board of Supervisors. The operation of the Freehold Soil Conservation District is supported by the collection of plan review and project inspection fees paid by developers for construction projects.

FREEHOLD SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Charles Buscaglia	Chairman
Robert Dreyer	Vice Chairman
Donald Patterson	Treasurer
Roger Gravatt	Member
Wayne Van Hise	Member

DISTRICT STAFF

Ines Zimmerman	District Manager
Michael Hill	Assistant District Manager
Stacy Brady	Senior Resource Specialist
Timothy Thomas	Resource Conservationist
Ben Shotland	Resource Conservationist II
Paul Califano	Resource Conservationist II
Michael Infanti	Resource Conservationist II
Steve Grosch	Resource Conservationist II
Mark Alliston	Resource Conservationist II
Courtney Davidson	Resource Conservationist II
Brian Governale	Resource Conservationist II
Holly Reynolds	Public Information Specialist
Christina LaBianca	Administrative Services Mgr.
Sharon Robertson	Receptionist — Secretary
Donna Cramer	Application Processor
Andrea Farparan	Secretary

Douglas Widman, Esq.	District Attorney
Suplee, Clooney & Co.	District Accountant

NJ DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Douglas Fisher	Secretary of Agriculture
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STATE SOIL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Clare Flanagan	District Conservationist
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MIDDLESEX COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

Ronald Rios	Freeholder Director
Deepak Matadha PhD	Mosquito Commission Supt.
Richard Wallner	County Engineer, P.E.
George Ververides	Planning Board Office Director
Rick Lear	Parks Department Head

MONMOUTH COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

Lillian Burry	Freeholder Director
Victoria Thompson	Mosquito Commission Supt.
Joseph Ettore, P.E.	County Engineer, P.E.
Edward Sampson	Planning Director
James Truncer	Parks Department Secretary-Director

COOPERATING AGENCIES

USDA Farm Service Agency

Gabor Grunstein	County Executive Director
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Rutgers Cooperative Extension Monmouth

William Sciarappa	County Agent
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Rutgers Cooperative Extension Middlesex

William Hlubik	County Agent
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NJ Division Parks & Forestry

Forest Resource Education Center

NJ Department of Environmental Protection