

*NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE*

2004 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGIES

YEAR END PROGRESS REPORT

PROGRESS REPORT

In 2004 the department's economic development team identified 100 strategies that would have a positive impact the economic return to New Jersey producers. The Economic Development Work Team consisting of staff members from each of the department's five divisions and Rutgers staff from the Food Policy Institute, the Food Innovation Center and the Cooperative Extension identified the strategies. The strategies, both big and small, consisted of new programs, ideas, and projects. Progress of each idea or program was tracked throughout the year.

Fifty-two of the strategies were successfully completed in 2004. The "Jersey Fresh" brand was expanded to promote other agricultural industries through the establishment of the brand extensions of "Jersey Seafood," "Jersey Organic" and "Jersey Grown" for horticultural products. Additional inspection staff was added to the Jersey Fresh Quality Grading program and to provide third party food certifications. The department continued its successful meat goat program and the Agri-Tourism Council met for the first time. Through the Department of Corrections and the School Lunch program State purchases of New Jersey agricultural products were significantly increased in 2004.

Moving into 2005 many of the 2004 Strategies, like third party audits and organic certifications, will be continued and many new strategies will be introduced. Efforts to strengthen the Jersey Fresh brand extensions such as Jersey Grown, and Jersey Organic" will also be continued in 2005. The department's seafood and agri-tourism promotion programs will continue to develop and expand in the next year.

The Status of the 2004 Economic Development Strategies

52 of the Strategies Have Been Successfully Completed

42 of the Strategies Are Making Progress

6 of the Strategies Have Not Yet Been Initiated

Of the total number of 100 strategies....

52% Have Been Successfully Completed

42% Are Making Progress

6% Have Not Yet Been Initiated

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

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PRODUCE INDUSTRY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Jersey Fresh Hospitality Industry Program

Develop a “Jersey Fresh Hospitality Industry Program.” The program would work closely with the industry and include many elements to strengthen the marketing of “Jersey Fresh” produce to hotel, restaurant and institutional food service industries.

Department staff met with the NJ Restaurant Association, Slow Food of Central New Jersey and local chapters of the Professional Chef’s Association to discuss program development. The Jersey Fresh program exhibited at targeted hotel, restaurant and institutional food service industries trade shows in New Orleans and New York City.

Increase Produce Branding

The Department will promote the use of twist ties, rubber bands and other banding material that identifies Jersey Fresh produce at the point of sale. The department will coordinate the distribution of six million Jersey Fresh twist ties.

This is an ongoing project as sales of the twist ties to growers enrolled in the Jersey Fresh Quality Grading Program continued throughout 2004.

Promote Vertical Integration

Encourage New Jersey producers to become more involved in the distribution channels that serve the needs of consolidated buyers seeking full service, year round, suppliers.

Department staff attended national produce shows and met with strategic partners such as Wal-Mart and Ready-Pac to determine the needs of national produce distributors and look at ways for New Jersey growers to complement their existing suppliers. The department is working in conjunction with Rutgers University and Farm Bureau to facilitate the search for strategic alliances and new methods to better integrate New Jersey’s produce industry into the year-round supply model.

Promote centralized packing and marketing and increased participation in marketing cooperatives. This will provide better economies of scale to meet the packing, storing and regulatory requirements of big buyers, seeking quality standardization and better customer service.

In association with Rutgers’ Food Innovation Center, and county extension, the Department is working to assist Sussex County milk producers in implementing a business plan for a value-added and fluid milk product cooperative.

Division staff is currently working on developing a similar program to link milk producers to the school food service system.

Division staff is working to connect the South Woods correctional facility and the Co-Operative Marketing Association in New Jersey.

Efforts of the Jersey Fruit Co-op to expand it's list of commodities was supported.

To assist cooperative associations to better serve the industry the department is working with the Federal Market News Service to improve market transparency. An industry workshop is planned for the 2005 Vegetable Growers Convention.

Continue to Seek New Markets

Continue working with the Department of Corrections to facilitate state Treasury purchases of over-produced and under-valued New Jersey farm products.

To date the Department of Corrections has purchased one quarter million dollars of New Jersey produce through a special buying program for over-valued and under-produced produce. Work has begun to increase the buying program to \$ 500,000 in 2005.

In 2004 the Department's school lunch program purchased more than a million pounds of New Jersey produce; Romaine Lettuce 221,095 lbs., Peaches 110,825 lbs., Blueberries 71,008 lbs., Tomatoes 61,100 lbs., and Cucumbers 50,300 lbs.

Continue supporting New Jersey agriculture in Canada. Though a joint New York and New Jersey study of the Canadian marketplace, the Department will move forward to better understand the market opportunities for New Jersey agriculture in Canada.

The department marketing staff met with Canadian Provincial Agriculture officials and Canadian importers of New Jersey produces at national conferences and industry events.

Strengthen Existing and Seek New Community Markets

Maintain a list of existing and new community farm markets that are seeking increased farmer participation. Identify and promote the existence of community farm markets to the public and within the agricultural community.

The department conducted extensive outreach to both consumers and growers about the opportunities that community markets offer. In 2004 eight new community markets were opened in New Jersey and the number of farms selling at those markets continues to expand.

Expand Jersey Fresh Program

Develop a proposal to expand the NJDA's "Jersey Fresh" program funding based upon the results of the "Jersey Fresh Economic Impact Study."

Not yet initiated.

Work to strengthen the appeal of the “Jersey Fresh” brand to retail supermarket chains. Over the past five years, increased retail use of the “Locally Grown” product claim has been causing gradual erosion in the use of the “Jersey Fresh” advertising message at the point of sale. The NJDA will develop a re-education and public relations campaign targeting food retailers to reinvigorate interest in marketing “Jersey Fresh.” The value added to the “Jersey Fresh” program by the Department’s leading third party food certification program will be promoted to retailers as a part of the renewed brand promotion.

In 2004, the Jersey Fresh program adopted the new tagline, “Jersey Fresh, Locally Grown,” in it’s print, radio and television advertising.

Third Party Food Certification was added as a requirement for the “Jersey Fresh Premium” grade for peaches introduced last year.

Re-evaluate the awards criteria for the Jersey Fresh matched funds program to better reflect applicants past performance and better gauge the impact of new applications.

New standards were adhered to ensure that the impact of the Jersey Fresh matched funds would be maximized in 2004. Past results and the number of people reached plus the number of growers affected were heavily considered in the allocation process.

Continue to broaden the “Jersey Fresh” promotional program to be more inclusive of all New Jersey produced fruits and vegetables, especially herbs and hydroponically and greenhouse produced fruits and vegetables and update “Jersey Fresh” Quality Grading standards to include non-traditional produce items if necessary.

The Jersey Organic and Jersey Seafood brands have been introduced. The Jersey Grown brand is also now in use for ornamental, nursery and landscape products. The Jersey Fresh Quality Grading Program has been expanded to introduce a Jersey Fresh Premium Peach Grade requiring a US Fancy Grade, Third-Party Food Safety Accreditation and a freshness requirement

Continue Third Party Food Certifications

Seek to provide cost effective and affordable third party food certifications and seek improved methods to communicate the benefits of the Quality Grading Program and Third Party Food Certifications.

Two additional staff members were employed in 2004 to provide third party food certifications and also assist with the “Jersey Fresh Quality Grading Program.”

Improve Retailer Coordination

Continue weekly dialogue involving Department representatives, growers, producers, wholesalers and retailers of New Jersey agricultural products.

The “Jersey Fresh Availability & Forecast Report” was e-mailed weekly to area produce industry buyers, wholesalers and retailers. In 2004 the distribution of the Jersey Fresh e-mail forecast was expanded to include the restaurant industry. The department participated in several produce industry events to promote New Jersey agricultural products directly to local, regional and national buyers.

Explore Contract Growing

Continue working to identify the economics of contract growing to enable growers to establish a market price prior to production thereby reducing their exposure to market and price volatility.

Efforts are being made to identify both the national partners and regional entities that would best complement New Jersey’s agricultural production.

Assist growers in identifying local and regional fresh market processors and determining the needs of those processors. Create a list of area fresh produce processors and the products they need.

Grower and processor meetings are being planned for early 2005.

Identify Alternate Crops

Expand the search for alternate crops that can be produced in New Jersey and identify channels of distribution for those crops. Support the “Demographics and the Marketing of Ethnic Produce in the Mid-Atlantic States” research project that will identify new crops that can be grown in New Jersey and targeted at specific communities.

The department continued to work with Rutgers University to study the 2000 Census data to identify concentrations of New Jersey ethnic populations with a goal toward better meeting the unique needs of those communities with locally produced ethnic fruits and vegetables.

The department supported a grower’s joint venture to expand nutraceutical plant production.

Value-Added Produce

Evaluate Ethanol Plant Flash Freeze Co2 applications for Value-Added Products. As part of 2003 Value Added Grant to study a possible ethanol plant flash freeze facility, conduct marketing research to evaluate flash freeze applications for vegetable & fruit products grown in the Garden State. In particular, marketing research will be conducted to evaluate the implications of flash freezing products for the school, institutional and foodservice markets.

The department continued to support the efforts to identify potential future partners in the ethanol industry including current plant owners, suppliers of corn and buyers of the finished ethanol product.

Burlington County Eco-Complex and NJDA staff are examining the feasibility of using the ethanol production by-product of Co2 to flash freeze vegetable and fruit products.

Promote the availability of value-added grants and develop new proposals for the Value-Added Grant Program.

Department staff conducted meetings in Northern, Central and Southern New Jersey to promote the availability of the value-added grant program to growers. Eight New Jersey farms received value-added grants in 2004.

HORTICULTURE INDUSTRY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Ensure Plant Health

Work to have a comprehensive approach to ensuring plant health. The following methods to be employed include:

Pilot programs were begun to research the introduction of two new beneficial insects.

Inspections were continued for harmful pests and disease.

Nursery inspections and disease free certifications continued to assist shipping in and out of the state.

Research was continued into new varieties of agricultural products resistant to pests and diseases.

Seed certification and seed control testing programs were continued to ensure high quality turf grass seed for New Jersey sod growers.

Work with the Nursery and Landscape Industry, the NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection, and the Department's Agricultural Water Working Group prior to future drought emergencies, to develop drought emergency water use restrictions. Work toward establishing a drought emergency protocol for implementation of predictable, effective and sound restrictions for future emergencies.

A draft document is now under review by the department.

Increase Consumer Awareness

Continue work to establish a "Jersey Grown" brand name to enable the industry to benefit from a common trademark identifying locally produced products.

Horticultural crops were included in the "Jersey Fresh" program through the "Jersey Grown" brand. New Jersey growers and producers using point of sale advertising such as product stickers, labels, tags and signage promoted "Jersey Grown".

Listings of retail nurseries and garden center were posted on the "Jersey Grown" website along with links to area horticultural display gardens.

The department's seasonal horticultural advertising campaign featured both radio and television advertising.

The Jersey Grown web site was established at: www.jerseygrown.nj.gov

The horticultural industry was supported with point of sale advertising and targeted press releases.

Develop fact sheets and/or articles of interest to educate and inform consumers about the availability, variety and use of “Jersey Grown” horticultural products. Work with the New Jersey Nursery and Landscape Association to distribute fact sheets and horticultural articles of interest.

Articles promoting the “Jersey Grown” brand were published in the NJ Farmer, The Gardener and other trade publications. Work on consumer fact sheets is continuing.

Work with the State Board of Agriculture to seek adoption of “Jersey Grown” quality standards for horticultural crops other than nursery. The proposed Administrative Law 2:7 1-7 is scheduled to be published for comments in February 2004.

The “Jersey Grown” rule was adopted and is being implemented by no fewer than two dozen growers.

Improve State and Public Contract Requirements

Encourage state agencies, including the Department of Transportation, through its highway planting program, and the Department of Environmental Protection, through its forestry program, to use New Jersey produced products whenever possible and ensure that all products meet the pest free standards of the New Jersey Nursery Law and satisfy the quality standards set by the Jersey Grown Rule as established by the Department.

The Department of Transportation has adopted a program to use only locally grown plant materials that can meet stringent quality and state of origin standards.

Lead in the use of Jersey produced plant material in bioengineering and cost share projects supported by the Soil Conservation Service.

New Jersey leads the mid-Atlantic region in research and development of the use of plant material to address natural resource concerns (i.e. erosion control) through bioengineering and cost-share programs supported by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The vegetative species selected through this research will become the recommended plant materials on farm conservation plans.

Develop an Industry Recognition Program

Explore the feasibility of creating a program to recognize outstanding uses of “Jersey Grown” nursery material grown and used in the state. A comprehensive award program that promotes both growers and end users of “Jersey Grown” nursery products will create increased awareness of the ornamental horticulture industry in the state.

The department evaluated existing out of state programs to explore the feasibility and logistics of implementing similar programs in New Jersey. Preliminary discussions with Rutgers University and industry associations have been initiated.

SEAFOOD INDUSTRY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Promote “Jersey Seafood” Brand Awareness

Promote locally grown products as distinct from, and of higher value, than competing products by establishing the “Jersey Seafood” brand. Continue to promote locally grown and harvested fish and seafood as an integral part of a healthier, more active lifestyle.

Chefs were targeted as opinion leaders in the food industry to promote higher brand value New Jersey seafood. The chefs were targeted to carry the premium brand image to consumers and retail buyers through their endorsement of New Jersey seafood and agricultural products.

Promotion of locally harvested farm and seafood products on restaurant menus was also initiated in partnership with the New Jersey Restaurant Association and Slow Foods Organizations.

In order to position the premium “Jersey Seafood brand” as an integral part of a healthier lifestyle to consumers, NJDA staff developed a comprehensive website and promotional materials to showcase NJ products and to provide information as to the health benefits and preparation of New Jersey Seafood. In partnership with New Jersey’s Office of Information Technology, this state of the art website offers video culinary demonstrations, consumer health information, newsletters and headlines.

Create point of sale advertising materials for “Jersey Seafood.” Distribute seafood supplier directories and point of sale materials to restaurateurs, retailers and community markets.

Point of sale materials including recipe cards, retail case cards, banners and posters were developed to promote the Jersey Seafood Brand image to consumers in retail stores and community markets as well as at summer festivals. These markets have begun to distribute and display these items. A comprehensive distribution program will be implemented in 2005 targeting upscale supermarkets and community farm markets.

In order to establish the premium brand image for Jersey Seafood among restaurant buyers, NJDA staff distributed seafood supplier directories and Jersey Fresh promotional materials through a variety of trade shows and meetings. In conjunction with the staff of the New Jersey Restaurant Association, the development of materials to promote New Jersey’s agricultural products to restaurant patrons and restaurateurs is underway.

Establish ongoing partnerships to create web based promotional opportunities with NJ Travel & Tourism/Department of Commerce, the NJ Marine Science Consortium and with the New Jersey Sea Grants program.

Ongoing partnerships with the New Jersey Restaurant Association and Slow Foods Organizations as well as NJ Travel and Tourism and the NJ Marine Science Consortium have assisted in successful launching and promotion of the Jersey Seafood Brand. Ongoing partnerships planned for 2005 will continue to create promotional opportunities and events.

Incorporate a “Jersey Seafood” page on the NJDA website to promote the availability of Jersey Seafood at restaurants, retailers and community markets. The website will also promote consumers preparation techniques of “Jersey Seafood.”

The New Jersey Seafood website www.jerseyseafood.nj.gov was launched in August of 2004. The site provides information and links consumers, industry buyers and industry members. Continued development of the website is planned for 2005, along with promotional items to drive consumers to the site.

Include seafood in a new “Taste of Jersey Fresh Food & Wine Festival”

In 2004, the Taste of Jersey Fresh Food & Wine Festival emphasized our state’s agricultural products. Partnering with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture to promote locally harvested ingredients were a variety of organizations including the New Jersey Restaurant Association, the Slow Food Organization as well as the Garden State Seafood and Wine Associations. Promotional materials and press releases created for the event promoted our state’s agricultural products and the Jersey Fresh website. Approximately forty NJ restaurants showcased New Jersey’s products, including organically grown produce and value added products. A farmers market offering a variety of items was also created allowing local farmers to sell and promote their products to area restaurateurs and consumers.

Restaurant Promotions

Establish promotional relationships with professional culinary organizations such as the New Jersey Restaurant Association, Professional Chefs’ Associations, and Slow Foods Organizations of New Jersey. Through these relationships “Jersey Seafood” suppliers directory, information about a “Jersey Seafood” website and other materials designed to connect buyers with sellers can more efficiently be distributed.

Strategic partnerships with New Jersey Restaurant Association, the Slow Foods Organization and Professional Chefs Associations were established. This collaboration on a number of events, also allowed for production of the culinary videos and unique local recipes on the Jersey Seafood Website.

Sponsor a “Jersey Seafood Recipe Contest” for Chefs. One possible contest theme to consider is “Nature’s Fast Food...Jersey Seafood.” Winning recipes would be posted to the “Jersey Seafood” web site and considered for inclusion in future cookbooks.

In July of 2004, New Jersey joined other coastal states to compete in a national seafood cook off. This event was sponsored by the Food Network and National Fisheries Institute to promote US seafood to American consumers. Another goal of this national competition was to promote the health benefits and convenience of seafood.

Retail Promotion

Provide consumer friendly “Jersey Seafood” point-of-sale materials to retail supermarkets. These materials could include; product tags, brochures and cook booklets, and in-store newsletters. Partner with regional grocery chains to develop, print and distribute point of sale materials to supermarkets.

A variety of point of sale materials and have been developed for distribution to retail and farm markets. Distribution of these materials has begun. Implementation of newsletters for consumers has begun on the NJDA website but plans are to partner with local retailers to develop in store materials including newsletters to promote New Jersey seafood.

Farm and Community Market Opportunities

Work to expand the availability of aquaculture products at community farm markets, roadside markets and in ethnic communities and foodservice markets. Provide outreach to identify community farm market opportunities.

The opening of a new market in Collingswood for shellfish occurred in 2004. At the present time, plans are under way to develop new direct marketing opportunities for members of the New Jersey Seafood Marketing Group. The identification of strategic markets in Southern and Central New Jersey is planned under the USDA Value Added Grant.

Food Safety

Provide “Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point” (HACCP) training for industry members to ensure food safety protocols are met.

HAACP training has been provided to the industry to ensure that food safety protocols are met.

Value-Added Seafood

Inform agricultural & seafood industry members about the availability of grants to promote value added product development and product innovation. Work with the industry to develop new proposals for the Value-Added Grant Program

In order to promote the development of Value Added products, staff of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture partnered with New Jersey's USDA Rural Development and Rutgers Food Innovation Center. Four regional workshops were offered to members of the agricultural and seafood industry to discuss marketing opportunities for Value Added products. These workshops also addressed key trends to facilitate product development and innovation as well as market entry. Another important goal of these informational seminars was to inform members about funding available through the USDA Value Added Grant program and to assist in the submission of successful proposals. This year Division of Markets staff assisted New Jersey's aquaculture industry to obtain \$47, 600 in federal funding to bring a branded Jersey Seafood clam product to market.

DAIRY INDUSTRY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Evaluate Legislation

Evaluate possible legislation that encompasses the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program to ensure more stable on-farm milk prices. Work with the State's Ratification Committee to continue moving that process forward.

Legislative options have been developed and a ratification meeting could be scheduled in early 2005.

Explore options related to creating unified New Jersey Dairy Council to meet the needs of both North and South Jersey producers and allow for greater local control over advertising budgets.

The opportunities and challenges presented by the creation of a unified New Jersey Dairy Council are under consideration by the industry.

Work with the New Jersey Legislature to update bonding laws.

Bonding laws were updated.

Increase Demand for Milk

Develop a strategy to promote dairy product sales at community and retail markets throughout the State.

The value-added feasibility study includes a strategy to market dairy products at farmers markets. The department is also working with the American Dairy Association to expand sales at traditional retail supermarket outlets.

Explore value-added product and market potential for flavored milk, yogurt and other dairy products. Evaluate the concept of marketing low-fat flavored milk in New Jersey's schools. Pursue a value-added grant for this project.

By April of 2005 producers may be marketing fluid product packages through a co-packer with plans by one group to have a processing facility in place within the following 12 – 15 months to process high-end soft cheeses. The Department of Agriculture assisted in the development of the business plan.

Support the branding of “Jersey Fresh” milk through the establishment of the following grade certifications; “Made with Premium Jersey Fresh Milk,” “Made with Quality Jersey Fresh Milk”, “Jersey Fresh Flavored Milk” and “Jersey Fresh Milk.”

Regulations establishing the following milk brands, “Made with Premium Jersey Fresh Milk,” “Made with Jersey Fresh Milk”, “Jersey Fresh Flavored Milk” and “Jersey Fresh Milk,” were developed and approved. The Garden State Dairy Alliance is being structured to coordinate a multi-disciplinary team with State and Federal partners to cooperatively address issues related to animal health, milk quality, nutrient management, bio-security, economic stability, marketing and dairy industry development. The alliance will work to help sustain a viable and thriving dairy industry in New Jersey.

In conjunction with the Healthy Choices, Healthy Kids initiative will continue to promote the nutritional benefits of drinking milk at a young age.

The North Jersey Dairy Council is working to utilizing approximately \$125,000 of ADA/DC check-off funds to promote the healthy kids initiative.

Continue to support the American Dairy Association in repositioning milk in retail markets, making it more attractive to consumers. Continue to work closely with the Departments of Agriculture in the Northeast states to collaborate on mutual marketing efforts.

In more than 600 major retail food outlets the dairy sections have been reset to allow for a larger allocation of shelf space for milk designed to increase milk sales. After the initial resetting representatives have continued to visit the stores to review shelf space allocations and monitor the success of the program.

Ensure Quality Production and Food Safety

Seek to secure funding to enable Rutgers to reinstate the Milk Quality Program to document the quality of raw and processed milk and milk products to assure the safety and wholesomeness of dairy products. Continue working with Rutgers and NJ Farm Bureau in helping New Jersey Dairy farmers utilize the FIN Pak Program, a software program that promotes good business practices through financial management analyses.

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture has initiated the Garden State Dairy Alliance. The Alliance will coordinate a multi-disciplinary team with State and Federal partners to cooperatively address the issues related to the animal health, milk quality, nutrient management, bio-security, economic stability, marketing and dairy industry development. The alliance will work to help sustain a viable and thriving dairy industry in New Jersey.

Continue working to protect the health of the dairy industry from the threat of devastating and economically damaging diseases. This includes quarterly monitoring for Brucellosis, monitoring for tuberculosis on all suspect cows, providing dairy farmers with bio-security disease control as requested, participating fully in USDA trace ability protocols, and providing free whole herd blood testing for Johne's Disease.

The Department's best management practices for security and biosecurity have been equally effective at preventing or minimizing the emergence and spread of infectious agents on farms and protecting against acts of terrorism.

FIELD CROP INDUSTRY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Support Organic Field Crop Production

Encourage the production of certified organic soybeans, corn and wheat to increase the value of these crops.

Field crop producers are encouraged to consider qualifying for organic certification. NOFA-NJ is certifying organic soybeans, corn and wheat. Organic certification of these field crops greatly increases their value.

Assist in linking growers with organic food processors to help identify new market opportunities and take advantage of the growing demand for processed food products made from organic ingredients.

The Department encourages processors to receive an “Organic Handling Certification.” The department continues to forward appropriate inquiries between organic growers and certified processors of ice cream, bakery products, syrups, produce and also certified organic storage and freezer facilities.

Explore Opportunities to Diversify Farm Income

Encourage growers to divert a small fraction of acreage now used for field crops to other seasonal products, such as pumpkins, to help buffer against dips in commodity market prices.

Not yet initiated.

Support Plans for Ethanol and Bio-Diesel Plants

Facilitate and support efforts to construct an ethanol plant in South Jersey. The plant will be the first in the Mid-Atlantic region and will create a major new market for the state’s grain growers, and has the potential to elevate the price paid for regionally produced corn.

The department continued support of the efforts to identify potential future partners in the ethanol industry including current plant owners, suppliers of corn and buyers of the finished ethanol product. Burlington County Eco-Complex and NJDA staff are examining the feasibility of using the ethanol production by-product of Co2 to flash freeze vegetable and fruit products.

Research the feasibility of constructing a bio-diesel plant in New Jersey.

The Burlington County Eco-Complex is considering further research into plant based oil products.

Investigate Market Opportunities for Edamame –Vegetable Soybeans

Support New Jersey production research into this variety of vegetable soybean. Edamame does not require processing to be ready for human consumption can be consumed fresh or frozen and is high in protein and low in cholesterol and fat. Continue to investigate marketing opportunities and channels of distribution to capitalize on edamame's increasing popularity among all ethnic groups.

Research into the production of edamame, a vegetable variety of soybean, is ongoing at Rutgers Cooperative Extension. Varietal tests have been conducted and research into the marketing and packaging of edamame has also begun.

LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY INDUSTRY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Ensure Animal Health

Continue working to protect the health of the livestock and poultry industry from the immediate threat of devastating and economically damaging diseases. Work with owners of livestock to assure awareness of disease threats and general animal safety measures.

Building upon the Animal Health programs already in place the department's best management practices for security and biosecurity have been equally effective at preventing or minimizing the emergence and spread of infectious agents on farms and protecting against acts of terrorism.

Enhance Marketing Efforts

Work to promote the new "Jersey Bred" logo to the livestock industry in the state. Expand the "Jersey Bred" logo program to include meat goats.

The department is in the process of drafting the Sire Stake's "Jersey Bred" rule for submission to the State Board of Agriculture.

Assist farmers in identifying markets for their meat products. Develop a strategy to promote the potential for livestock product sales at community markets and other sales venues.

Although some markets, like the Trenton Farmers Market, do have the infrastructure to for meat vendors, no formal strategy has been yet initiated to promote the potential for livestock product sales at community markets and other sales venues.

Encourage Production of Goat Products

Evaluate the possibility of assembling a Halal Fact Sheet to address some of the major ethnic variations of Halal compliance. Explore the possibility of Halal Certification for New Jersey meat goats.

A Haleb compliance requirement is under consideration as one of the components to a special Jersey Fresh grade for goat meat.

A Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP) grant awarded in 2003 will study the economics of breeding and marketing meat goats.

Research results have been very promising. The strategy has been to grow out and finishing the goats to meet market demand. This approach matches the life style of the new and beginning farmer in New Jersey to feed out goats on a seasonal basis to maximize inputs and reduce costs associated with feeding these ruminant animals. This will also aid in maintaining the open space of rougher grasslands as well as maintaining water quality.

Encourage Production of Grass-Fed Animals – Beef, Sheep, Meat Goats

Apply for a second FSMIP grant to help develop marketing programs for the distribution of fresh and frozen grass-fed products throughout the state. Support efforts toward offering grass-fed New Jersey meat products to farm markets throughout the northwestern part of the state.

Following the success of the meat goat project a similar project is being considered for fresh and frozen grass-fed meat products. A FSMIP grant application is being planned in 2005.

Research the feasibility of conducting an economic impact study to determine the benefits of offering fresh meat products to farmers markets statewide by Summer 2005.

The study has not yet been initiated.

Work With Markets

Encourage the state's livestock markets to upgrade their facilities and adapt their operations to better meet the particular needs of both traditional and ethnic markets.

We have initiated talks with the auction markets to conduct graded sales or group sales programs. Progress is being made and the markets are very positive that they can work with us on this

Promote an Annual Market for Sheep, Goats

Consider establishing a seasonal market for live sheep and goats at the Sussex County fairgrounds.

This strategy has not yet been initiated.

ORGANIC INDUSTRY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Promote Cost-Sharing

Continue outreach efforts to educate growers about federal funds availability to help offset organic inspection and certification costs. Through a cost-sharing agreement with the Department and USDA, each operation is eligible for a reimbursement of up to 75 percent of its certification costs, not to exceed \$500.

Substantial outreach efforts were conducted by the NJDA through direct mailings to organic growers and postings on the department website. NOFA-NJ also conducted mailings and promoted the certification cost-sharing in their newsletter.

Improve Marketing

Integrate organic products into the Department's "Jersey Fresh" Marketing Program using a "Jersey Fresh" organic logo.

Regulations, and a marketing logo, for a "Jersey Organic" logo have been approved. Full color 7"x 11" point of sale price cards have been printed and will be distributed to growers and retailers of organic products.

Educate Growers About Regulatory Requirements

Prepare and distribute a series of fact sheets outlining the legal and regulatory requirements for production and sale of organic products, including on-farm processed products, eggs, poultry and meat, milk and cheese.

Fact sheets about the regulatory requirements for the production and sale of various organic products have been received from NOFA-NJ. The fact sheets have been duplicated and are being distributed by the department.

Continue working toward a State Certified Organic program to enforce rules and regulations certifying farms and guaranteeing consumers the highest quality organic agricultural products. The program will also provide farmers who are transitioning to organic production and are in the process of completing the three-year qualifying period the ability to market their products as transitional.

The State Certified Organic program has been submitted for review and the department is working toward its approval. The rule was established by the State Board of Agriculture and will be considered for public comment in early 2005.

EQUINE INDUSTRY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Ensure Horse Health

Work with horse owners to assure awareness of disease threats and animal safety.

The Division of Animal Health as well as the Horse Breeding and Development section continues to keep the horse owners and breeders in New Jersey completely updated with information on disease outbreaks and situations nationwide that could cause any problems.

Work with Rutgers University's Cook College to continue development of a state-of-the-art research facility to develop cost-effective techniques for nutrient and waste management to ensure the compatible co-existence of horse farms in urban and suburban environments.

A full-scale fund raising campaign is underway to raise the necessary funds to support the continued development of the facility.

Strengthen Breeder Reward Programs

Amend legislation to allow "Thoroughbred Jersey Breeder Awards" to be paid to owners and breeders racing in neighboring states. Horses would be able to race in states contiguous to New Jersey 30 days after live racing ends here, and up to 30 days before live racing resumes. Continue to work toward a thoroughbred breeding program, mirroring the Maryland Million, which would provide a full day of "Jersey Bred" racing with purses totaling \$1 million.

In 2004 the Governor signed legislation that allows for awards to horses racing out of state for limited periods before and after the seasonal racing calendar in New Jersey.

Encourage participation in existing new breeder programs and work to create new breeder programs that will strengthen the industry.

The second NJ Thoroughbred Festival was presented in the fall of 2004 and the attendance almost doubled for the event. The NJDA continues to support and assist in the promotion of the event.

The department has supported several promotional programs for the racing industry designed to encourage participation by new owners.

Encourage Development of New Training Facility

Facilitate and encourage development of a training facility for thoroughbreds. The closing of Garden State Park resulted in the loss of the only thoroughbred training facility in the state, forcing trainers to leave New Jersey at the end of racing season because they have no place to train or lodge for the winter.

With the new out-of-state breeder award program many horses are moving to neighboring states to race and train for the winter. The thoroughbreds have not been as concerned as they were in the past about a training facility.

Promote the Industry

Work with the Horse Park to explore the possibility of hosting future Olympic equestrian events and other prestige events.

In 2005 the Horse Park of NJ will host four International events.

Seek increased funding of the Equine Advisory Board through the legislative process.

The staff continues to monitor legislation to ensure that the Equine Advisory Board is included in changes to the wagering guidelines.

Consider permitting the sale of pleasure horse breeds at the Horse Park of New Jersey.

The Professional Auction Service of Leesburg, Virginia presented a pleasure horse sale in May 2004 at the Park and they have already reserved dates for 2005.

Use the racetracks to highlight pleasure breeds with demonstrations and parades.

We have worked with Monmouth Park, the Meadowlands, and Freehold raceway with on-track demonstrations.

Bolster promotion and education efforts to stimulate interest, attract new owners and create career opportunities. Seek additional industry and governmental support to augment purse values, increase racetrack attendance and diversify the public support base for horse racing.

The State 4-H equine program has tripled in size in the past 16 years. New educational programs support smaller scale owner and assists in the best management practices for house animals on smaller farms.

An agreement has been reached to allow the Sire Stakes Program and the Thoroughbred Breeders Association to receive funding from the Casino Industry.

Work to develop an Economic Growth Plan focusing on the racing sector.

The NJDA will join with the American Horse Council to take part in an economic impact study for the equine industry.

Improve Facilities

Seek to complete an addition to the covered work area at the Horse Park of New Jersey allowing for public seating at sales and agricultural education programs at the Horse Park of NJ. Support efforts of the Horse Park to expand its acreage.

The addition to the covered work area is waiting for funding. The Park has worked with the adjacent Wildlife Management area to gain use of an additional 50 acres for the international events.

WINE INDUSTRY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Increase New Jersey Grape Production

Support new research into the potential for increasing the state's grape production, which would likely lead to an increase in the locally grown content of New Jersey wines.

A proposal has been developed by the New Jersey Wine Industry Advisory Council, a unit of the Department of Agriculture, to increase the legal definition of a winery from a minimum of three acres to a minimum of five. The Council is also advocating the establishment and support of a Vinticulturalist position with Rutgers Cooperative Extension

Improve Roadside Signage

Support increased directional signage on New Jersey's roadways to heighten consumer awareness and provide a more visible marketing profile for the industry.

Department staff coordinated meetings with members of the New Jersey Industry Advisory Council and the NJDOT to discuss roadside signage issues. The NJDOT agreed to put up roadside signage, at their cost, in any locations ineligible for a sign under the Tourist Oriented Destinations program.

If necessary, seek industry specific exemptions and changes in existing signage regulations to increase signage opportunities.

Opportunities for industry exemption to the Tourist Oriented Destinations (TODS) Program were researched. The creation of standardized wine industry signage for state-wide use is now under consideration.

Support the Wine Industry at Trade Shows

Seek opportunities at domestic and international trade shows for New Jersey's wine industry to expand the marketing and promotion of its wines. Support these efforts with any available state, regional or national cost sharing programs such as the USDA Market Access Program.

The wine industry was represented at the New York Fancy Food show, the NJ restaurant show and individual wineries participated in the USDA Market Access program in support of the international sales of New Jersey wines.

Expand the Jersey Fresh Wine Festival

Support the expansion of the Taste of Jersey Fresh Food & Wine Festival to include the wine industry, restaurant industry and farmers markets.

In 2004, the Taste of Jersey Fresh Food & Wine Festival emphasized our state's agricultural products. Partnering with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture to promote locally harvested ingredients were a variety of organizations including the New Jersey Restaurant Association, the Slow Food Organization as well as the Garden State Seafood and Wine Associations. Promotional materials and press releases created for the event promoted our state's agricultural products and the Jersey Fresh website. Approximately forty NJ restaurants showcased New Jersey's products, including organically grown produce and value added products. A farmers market offering a variety of items was also created allowing local farmers to sell and promote their products to area restaurateurs and consumers.

AGRI-TOURISM INDUSTRY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Develop Strategic Partners

Work to establish an Agri-Tourism Advisory Council. The Council will consist of members of the agricultural tourism industry and interested governmental agencies. The Council will develop and implement a marketing program to promote New Jersey agri-tourism.

The Council held it's first meeting in 2005 and has begun evaluating changes in the industry and developing a promotional strategies for the industry. The membership of the Agri-Tourism Council was chosen to represent various sectors of the agricultural tourism industry, the Office of Travel and Tourism and the Department of Agriculture.

Submit a request to the Office of Travel & Tourism to incorporate agri-tourism research into their established travel industry research program. The study could identify existing agri-tourism and the current impediments and opportunities for future growth.

The Agri-Tourism Council has assisted in the development of a similar study to be conducted by Rutgers University.

Coordinate an Agri-Tourism symposium to address common opportunities and challenges and to provide some basic tourism and hospitality training.

The Agri-Tourism Council has begun consideration of the agenda, format and possible funding sources for the proposed Agri-Tourism symposium to focusing on the common opportunities and challenges facing the industry.

Promote agri-tourism to the travel and tourism trade through participation in the annual Governor's Conference on Tourism.

Staff attended the '04 Governor's Conference and participated in numerous educational sessions as well as networking with established and new contacts.

Coordinate an agri-tourism press familiarization tour to acquaint the regional travel and tourism media with New Jersey agri-tourism. This is a standard tourism practice and it should result in trade and consumer press.

A proposal from the Agri-Tourism Council to the New Jersey Office of Travel and Tourism to secure the appropriate contact information and logistical support required is under consideration.

Consumer Promotion

Promote agri-tourism through the New Jersey Office of Travel and Tourism, an enhanced agri-tourism component on the Jersey Fresh website, and through consumer oriented printed materials, press releases and cooperative advertising. Produce an inexpensive Agri-Tourism brochure with website and contact information to be distributed at “Tourist Welcome Centers” and through other special events such as festivals. The brochure would promote seasonal events and special attractions.

Department staff continued to work closely with staff from the N.J. Office of Travel and Tourism. The Department and Jersey Fresh websites have both been upgraded with additional agri-tourism information. A prototype for an agri-tourism brochure has been developed listing the websites of all related industries.

Develop a list of agri-tourism activities highlighting the various events throughout New Jersey. An agri-tourism listing on the Jersey Fresh website would include farm markets, agricultural festivals and special attractions like the New Jersey Museum of Agriculture. The locations, dates and a short description of the activities and events could be cross-referenced on an agri-tourism map.

The Department and Jersey Fresh websites have both been upgraded with additional agri-tourism information. A prototype for an agri-tourism brochure has been developed listing the websites of all related industries.

Industry Education

Conduct outreach activities for agri-tourism operators to promote listings on the Travel & Tourism Calendar of Events. Promote the “Tourism Cooperative Grant Program” to New Jersey’s agri-tourism industry. This program could attract private funds to promote agri-tourism opportunities to key out-of-state target markets.

Department staff continues to promote the availability of the Travel and Tourism Calendar of Events and make progress toward attracting private funds to promote agri-tourism opportunities.

Apply for a FSMIP Grant to study agri-tourism in New Jersey, pursue the development of a course on hospitality management for the Agri-Tourism Industry, research and develop a database of agri-tourism operators to facilitate information exchange, and develop promotional and informational materials

Funding for the FSMIP study was not approved for the 2004 funding cycle.

In late 2004 the department approved funding for a detailed study of the status and nature of the agri-tourism operations in New Jersey, including the types of activities being offered, farmer’s perceptions of the impact of agritourism on farm viability and key opportunities and challenges that will impact future agritourism industry growth.

Conduct a survey of farmers to gather information on what farmers are doing in regards to agri-tourism. Seek funding for a farmer survey to be implemented by NJASS to assess the variety of activities, the size of industry, and the current challenges and opportunities.

The expertise of the New Jersey Office of Travel and Tourism has been sought to develop a course on hospitality management. A consumer printed piece has been developed to highlight agri-tourism industries and their associated websites for consumers seeking more information. These brochures can be printed this winter and be distributed through the state's ten manned Travel & Tourism Welcome Centers and Cooperative Extension offices throughout the state.

GENERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Inter-Agency Coordination

Strengthen communication between the NJDA and County Agricultural Agents to improve program coordination.

Department and Extension staff worked on many joint programs, projects, councils and task forces together. Some of examples include the peach marketing taskforce, commodity promotion councils, ethnic produce research, and the meat goat education and marketing project.

Work to strengthen the marketing and promotional coordination of the State Agricultural Commodity Councils. Evaluate the benefits of shared resources, such as cooperative advertising or other shared resources.

To strengthen the secondary market for their products the New Jersey Sweet Potato Industry Commission and the New Jersey Apple Industry Advisory Council coordinated a joint purchase of advertising space to promote the availability of deer feed in the New Jersey Fish Game and Wildlife magazine issued with hunting licenses.

Invite representatives from other agencies to Economic Development Work Group meetings. Guest representatives could be invited from such agencies as Rutgers, Division of Travel & Tourism, Economic Development Authorities, the Commerce and Economic Growth Commission, state agency web masters etc.

Representatives of the Economic Development Work group met with the foodservice buyers for Rutgers University, Department of Defense Personal Support Center buyers, administrators of New Jersey's school lunch program, representatives of the Department of Corrections, the Juvenile Justice Commission, the Division of Travel and Tourism and the Economic Growth Commission.

New Market Opportunities List

Develop a "New Market Opportunities" list. The list could be drawn from projects within the Economic Development Work Group and disseminated directly to growers through Rutgers' plant and pest advisory.

The list of ten "Market Opportunities for New Jersey Farmers" has been created and was introduced at September 28 grower meeting at Pryslak Farm.

Assist in Addressing Labor Issues

Continue the commitment to programs that support worker training, worker health and safe farm labor housing.

Department staff continued programs in support of worker training, worker health and safe farm labor practices.

Support reform of policies and procedures addressing temporary agricultural worker visas at the federal and state level.

The department continues to support reform of policies and procedures addressing temporary agricultural worker visas even though AgJobs2003 was not enacted during the 108th Congress. The coalition supporting this bill will continue to push for passage of legislation addressing these issues next session.

Encourage farmers to take a pro-active approach to learning about their responsibilities at both the federal and state levels to ensure worker safety.

Working with Rutgers the department continues to encourage farmers to take a pro-active approach to learning about their responsibilities at both the federal and state levels to ensure worker safety.