**Secretary’s Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture**

**January 25, 2017**

**New Jersey’s Live Bird Marketing System** - During the month of December, animal health technicians (AHTs) conducted unannounced inspections at (36) registered NJ live bird markets and sampled (5) markets for avian influenza by sampling poultry. One market is closed for renovations. Additional activity during the month of December included: The quarterly closure of eight live bird markets. Quarterly closures consist of cleaning and disinfecting the entire market followed by a minimum 24 hours of “down-time”. Following the “down-time”, environmental samples are taken at the market for testing.

**Direct Delivery DOD Fresh Produce Program for the 2016-2017 School Year** - There were 201 of the 262 DoD direct delivery program schools participating during the month of December 2016. A total of 19,252 cases at 426,550 pounds with a value of $451,828 were ordered during the month of December. Approximately 80 various items of fresh fruits and vegetables were delivered directly to the participating recipient agencies.

**Potato Growers Insurance** -On January 12, representatives from the Division joined the Secretary and representatives from the Division of Plant Industry for a meeting at Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Salem County on the impacts of the dickeya enterobacteriaceae on New Jersey potato growers. The Division participated in this meeting because of its role as part of the Garden State Risk Management and Crop Insurance Program, and engaged with a representative from USDA-RMA to begin a dialogue about potential crop insurance coverage for NJ potato growers.

**Nursery/Greenhouse Inspections** - Horticultural staff conducted trace forward inspections on Hosta at nine Nursery/Greenhouse locations which received plant material from an out of state source. These inspections were triggered by notification from the USDA APHIS PPQ that infestations of the Japanese flower thrips, Thrips setosus, were discovered at this out of state greenhouse/nursery location.

**Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Program -** Staff made a presentation of the NJDA Hydrologic Stormwater Basin Database to the NJ Clean Water Council to raise awareness of this new resource available to the public. The Council expressed much interest in the possibilities of using the data and database to work in concert with the NJ Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit program, which will require Stormwater basin inventory and maintenance.

**Agricultural Education** - Twenty-two (22) students from eleven (11) schools attended the first Teach Agriculture Recruitment Event on December 10 at the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences, Rutgers University. This event was the result of a grant through the State Teach Agriculture Results (STAR) Program.

**Animal Emergency Working Group (AEWG)** - A DAH representative has been working with a representative from the Division of Markets & Development and representatives from the Garden State Animal Resource Team (GSART) to begin planning for the AEWG conference in 2017. The conference is scheduled for April 22, 2017, at the Middlesex County Fire Academy.