

Secretary's Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
September 22, 2021

National Teach Ag Ambassador from NJ – Each year the National Teach Ag Campaign selects an elite group of agricultural education majors to represent the profession and encourage others to teach agriculture. Kaitlyn Tallamy, a graduate of Phillipsburg High School, is one of 18 individuals selected to serve as a National Teach Ag Ambassador this year. Kaitlyn is currently a senior at the University of Minnesota - Crookston and will student teach in the spring semester in New Jersey. Kaitlyn is also a past New Jersey State FFA Officer.

Emergency Preparedness CARTs Activated During Ida – With the remnants of Hurricane Ida affecting much of the state on Sept. 1-3, the NJ Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) was activated at Level 3 to monitor this event. Two County Animal Response Teams (CARTs), Gloucester and Somerset, were activated during the event. The Gloucester CART was operational for less than 24 hours, and Somerset was operational for five days. The NJDA Division of Animal Health conducted frequent phone and electronic communication with counties involved in emergency pet sheltering. A CART coordination call was conducted on 09/03/2021, allowing CART leaders to connect and evaluate any potential future needs. No state-level resources requests were received by ESF#11. The severe weather impacted multiple crops and livestock farms. The NJDA has provided outreach informational resources for crop and livestock farmers regarding federal and state disaster assistance available.

Spotted Lanternfly Program – NJDA and USDA crews are working together on treatments to kill the spotted lanternfly (SLF) at priority locations throughout the state. This month SLF crews completed bark spray (systemic insecticide) treatments using dinotefuran at 40 properties. Teams are continuing to designate new priority areas and secure permissions for treatment. This month SLF staff collected 28 signed treatment agreements. In addition, spotted lanternfly staff received 2,272 phone reports and 7,186 email reports of spotted lanternfly by the public.

Dairy Program – August reports from dairy processors and major packaged milk dealers in the state reveal that fluid milk sales may have rebounded slightly again this past month. At the time of submission, the Market Administrators usage reports had not been published for July. Continued research into the deductions of production over base continues. June statistical uniform price was \$17.59 for the NY zone and \$17.49 for the Philadelphia zone for milk not assessed the over base negative assessment. Additional producers have been establishing secondary markets to utilize milk produced over the base production. The NJ Department of Health has been also working to set up BTU's for each of these processors and producers involved.

School Nutrition Program – The Food and Nutrition Division's School Nutrition Programs Unit released its 'Back to School Memo' outlining the programs and the required procedures on September 13. Division staff is providing webinars and guidance throughout the month to address 'Back to School' requirements and inquiries.

The NJ Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Program – Agricultural and Natural Resources Division staff continues to meet with two rule making groups at the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Staff is coordinating with the Division of Marking and Development to map out regulatory pathways for food waste to be used on farms. The Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) maintains a definition for Recovered Retail Food which includes many valuable concepts in food waste contents and handling. Staff is working to better understand the needs of the agricultural community pertaining to food waste feeding as well as with surrounding states' regulations or working groups on this topic.

Mile-A-Minute Program – The Phillip Alampi Beneficial Insect Laboratory production of the Mile-a-minute defoliator is at peak levels as shipments continue. Plant propagation was reduced during this report period to prepare for fall rearing levels. Shipments throughout the northeast reached 33,500 adults this year and were distributed throughout seven northeastern states. Adult weevils will continue to be released in New Jersey until Mile-a-minute plants begin to senesce. A total of 5,000 weevils have been released or shipped throughout New Jersey this season. Field Staff surveyed a combined 14 sites in Hunterdon, Monmouth, Middlesex, and Salem counties and weevils were found at all the locations. One releases of 1,000 weevils was done in Morris County.

Jersey Fresh – The Marketing and Development Division continues to revise the FindJerseyFresh website. The weekly Jersey Fresh Availability Report will continue to be published each Monday into mid-October depending on crop availability. Division staff will be attending the New England Produce Council show in Boston the last week of September with a display of Jersey Fresh produce.

Food Distribution – The Food and Nutrition Division Food Distribution Program’s warehouse allocations for both the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) are being delivered at this time. Additional items were offered to the Emergency Feeding Organizations for the month of September. Fulfill, which serves Monmouth and Ocean counties, accepted an additional 3,799 cases and Mercer Street Friends in Mercer County an additional 1,609 cases. October monthly warehouse allocations have been sent to the NSLP participants.

Live Bird Marketing System – During August, the Division of Animal Health’s animal health technicians (AHTs) conducted unannounced inspections at 32 registered NJ live bird markets and sampled poultry from 21 markets for avian influenza. One live bird market was quarantined due to the detection of H2 (Avian Influenza). State and/or Federal AHTs and Veterinary Medical Officers disinfected the market and conducted an additional two inspections for 24 and 48 hours post disinfection sampling and quarantine release.