

Secretary's Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
November 16, 2022

Processing Expansion – Goffle Road Poultry Farm in Bergen County received a USDA Rural Development \$4.2 million investment as part of the Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program to increase and expand meat and poultry processing capacity. The New Jersey funding was part of more than \$223 million in grants and loans nationwide to support 32 independent processing projects to build capacity. NJDA Marketing and Development Division staff helped guide Goffle Road Poultry Farm through the application process that led to USDA Rural Development's investment. Goffle Road Poultry will use the investment to purchase state-of-the-art equipment associated with expanding its existing USDA processing facility and retail operation. The processing facility expansion will include renovation of the current 15,000 square foot building to construct an evisceration room, offices for USDA and Goffle staff, lunchroom, lockers, and a training facility and will also include building a 15,000 square foot refrigerated extension for further product processing, refrigeration, and freezer storage. In addition, the company will create a satellite pickup and drop-off area for over 10 area farms within and tangential to New Jersey, currently unavailable and highly desired by producers.

New HPAI Case Confirmed – The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) confirmed a new Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) case in a Bergen County backyard flock (non-poultry) as classified by the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) on November 2. The disease response was coordinated between state and federal partners. Test samples from domestic poultry at the Bergen County premises were submitted and tested at the New Jersey Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory. Some birds experienced mortality, and some displayed neurologic signs before succumbing to the disease. Congruent testing was completed at the National Veterinary Services Laboratory, which confirmed detection of the disease. State and federal personnel followed the appropriate response plan, including implementing site quarantine, proper biosecurity measures, and depopulation of poultry on the premises.

Spotted Lanternfly Outreach – Plant Industry Division and USDA staff organized a spotted lanternfly golden pest spray oil training session for staff of the Camden Mosquito Control Commission and County Parks in early October. The training consisted of an onsite application of the pesticide at Timber Creek County Park in Blackwood. During this training, staff demonstrated proper mixing and spray procedures for using the pesticide on egg masses. Program staff also manned a display table at the New Jersey Shade Tree Federation's Annual Conference in Cherry Hill on Oct. 13-14. The meeting was well attended with over 300 people from the tree and green industries.

Farm Conservation Plan – Agricultural and Natural Resources Division staff completed a Farm Conservation Plan for the land application of winery rinse water for a vineyard in Atlantic County. This plan was reviewed and approved by NRCS and the Soil Conservation District. A copy of the approved plan was mailed to the producer. In lieu of installing a costly septic tank to accommodate winery rinse water, a by-product of washing out the wine processing tanks, the producer can land-apply their winery rinse water to vegetated areas around their farm in accordance with their approved Farm Conservation Plan.

Farm To School Month – National Farm to School month took place in October and the Food and Nutrition Division's Farm to School Program personnel took the opportunity to host workshops for teachers, farmers, and food service professionals. Workshops were held in Sussex County, Essex County, and Cumberland County. Those in attendance implemented what they learned into their schools' Farm to School educational activities and tastings. In addition to hosting a number of

workshops, the Food Distribution Program along with the Farm to School Program has rolled out the initial application for Local Food for Schools funding. Schools have received their allotment and will have an opportunity to accept the grant funding to purchase minimally processed local food in their school district.

Necropsy Examinations and Pathology Testing – In the month of October, the Division of Animal Health's Pathology Laboratory Section completed a total of 334 tests and/or procedures. Tests and/or procedures involved gross necropsy examination, histopathologic (microscopic), immunohistochemical and parasitological preparation and evaluation and these cases generated additional diagnostic tests for other laboratory sections (e.g., bacteriology, virology, and molecular). Results from these case submissions help to support practicing veterinarians (large, mixed, and small animals, private food and companion animal owners, NJ State Agencies, racetracks, wildlife, zoo, and nonprofit animal facilities. Cases involved diagnostic testing for disease and/or cause of death diagnosis and routine and/or sporadic disease surveillance for large and small ruminants, companion animals, exotic/zoo species; sudden death with no clinical symptoms; assessment of backyard and small flock health issues; large scale flock disease; law enforcement forensic investigation and animals.

Nursery Inspections – Plant Industry Division staff are completing their seasonal annual nursery inspections. Regular nursery inspections were conducted at 136 nursery locations to ensure that regulated ornamental plant material are free from injurious pest, insects, and diseases. Some of these inspections included compliance agreement inspections for nurseries who participate in the Boxwood Blight Cleanliness Compliance Program. A total of six federal inspections were conducted certifying the re-export and export of 14,750 bulbs, 165 plants, 750 roots, six bar root plants to Canada and the Netherlands. There were 27 domestic shipments that included 15,720 plants, 87 plug plants, 201,360 bulbs and 32 trees to California, Oregon, North Carolina, Texas, New York State and Arkansas.

Agricultural Best Management Practices Grants – The Division of Agricultural and Natural Resources coordinated two Soils 101 Training sessions, one in North Jersey on October 25, and one in South Jersey on October 27. The training sessions were taught by USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Resource Soil Scientist, Fred C. Schoenagel III. Topics covered included an overview of New Jersey soils, acid-producing soil, soil erosion and vegetation, soil hydrology basics, soil horizons, and topsoil importance and how to preserve it. These sessions provided hands-on training open to all New Jersey Soil Conservation District (SCD) employees. Staff from nine SCDs attended these sessions.

New Jersey School Nutrition Association Conference – The Food and Nutrition Division's School Nutrition Program staff participated in the New Jersey School Nutrition Association Conference on November 10-11 at Harrah's in Atlantic City. Designated unit staff distributed information about the NJDA programs at the conference, as well as conducted a break-out session about preparing for an Administrative Review.

Jersey Raised – Marketing and Development Division staff is receiving and processing "Jersey Raised" livestock marketing pilot program applications and has approved the first Jersey Raised label for a turkey operation. Point of Purchase materials have been sent to vendors and should begin arriving in the coming weeks.