2007 Economic Development Strategies New Jersey Department of Agriculture

Year End Summary

STATEGIES COMPLETED: SRATEGIES MAKING PROGRESS:	86 27
Total Strategies	121

Eighty-six of the Department's Economic Development strategies were successfully completed in 2007. A total of 113 of the Department's strategies were completed or at year's end were making progress toward completion.

For the year 2007, the Economic Development Work Team identified a total of 121 separate strategies that could have a positive impact upon the economic return to New Jersey producers. These strategies were pursued by the Economic Development Work Team, which consists of staff members from each of the Department's six divisions and Rutgers staff from the Food Policy Institute, the Food Innovation Center and the Cooperative Extension. The strategies, both big and small, consisted of new programs, ideas, and projects. Progress of each idea or program was tracked throughout the year.

In 2007 the Jersey Fresh program's message continued to be strengthened with the "Born On" campaign that emphasizes the freshness and unique local origins of Jersey Fresh produce. In addition to a strengthened marketing message the Department continued to expand its quality control and food safety programs to meet the growing industry demands for the freshest, healthiest and highest quality produce available. Working with horticultural growers, independent garden centers and nurseries the Department continued to promote "Jersey Grown" products.

Throughout 2007 the Department's Produce Safety Taskforce worked to assist New Jersey's fruit and vegetable growers to offer the high quality locally grown products while adapting their operations to new food safety standards. The Department continued it's USDA approved third party food safety certification program and received a USDA grant for grower training to expand those certifications.

The Department's Agricultural Economic Development team also actively assisted the agricultural community and related entities on a one-on-one basis with issues related to regulations, taxation, economic development, agricultural production, value-added opportunities and other matters that impact the long-term viability of New Jersey agriculture.

A full list of the 2007 Economic Development Strategy Year End Summaries is available from the NJDA for eleven of the State's agricultural industry sectors. For more information contact Logan Brown at 609 292-8856 or https://www.doga.state.nj.us.

<u>The Produce Industry</u> 2007 Economic Development Strategies Year End Summary

In 2007 the Jersey Fresh program continued to strengthen the "Born On" campaign. The campaign emphasizes the freshness and unique local origins of Jersey Fresh produce. The message reflects the results of the Department's recently completed strategic evaluation of the Jersey Fresh program. The campaign strengthens the local appeal of the brand to consumers and differentiates Jersey Fresh produce as fresher than out of state items marketed using generic "Locally Grown" product claims.

In addition to strengthening the marketing message the Department continued to expand its quality control and food safety programs to meet the growing industry demands for the freshest, healthiest and highest quality produce available. In 2007 more than two-hundred and fifty growers participated in the Department's "Jersey Fresh Quality Grading Program." That program ensures the quality and freshness of all produce shipped in Jersey Fresh boxes. As a further quality control the Department also continued to provide affordable third-party farm certifications. In 2007, over two hundred nineteen growers and packers successfully completed the Good Agricultural Practices/Good Handling Practices training.

Additionally, the produce Safety Task Force formed in response to the September 2006 E. coli cases in West Coast spinach teamed with Rutgers University to train more than 800 farmers in basic food safety. Using federal funding, the Task Force also developed a system of "mock audits" to prepare farmers to go through the Third Party Audit process. The Task Force is composed of staff from the Departments of Agriculture and Health & Senior Services, as well as representatives from all segments of the produce marketing chain.

To maintain close ties to buyers and retailers of New Jersey produce the Department's marketing staff participates in national industry trade shows, sponsors well attended industry events, sends out weekly e-mail availability reports and communicates directly with wholesalers, retailers and the produce industry media on an almost daily basis. Through regular attendance at grower meetings, the re-establishment of the Market News reports and regularly scheduled radio broadcasts, and through the Departments Vegetable Marketing Taskforce, the Jersey Fresh staff also maintains close daily communication with the growers and marketers of New Jersey produce. It is this close coordination and communication throughout the production, distribution and sales chain that continued to be the cornerstone of the Jersey Fresh program's success in 2007.

The Department recruited numerous growers to attend the eight new Community Markets which the Department helped to establish in 2007. Information about New Jersey's Community Markets was promoted on the Department's website and distributed to over 95,000 WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition program participants. Lastly, to address the growing foodservice industry the Department began working with the New Jersey Restaurant Association to implement a "Proud to Serve Jersey Fresh" sign program.

The Ornamental Horticulture Industry

2007 Economic Development Strategies Year End Summary

The Department continued to ensure plant health for New Jersey's horticultural industry. Inspections for harmful pests and disease were continued and pest control measures and beneficial insect use was increased in 2007. Nurseries were inspected and certified enabling growers to sell certified disease-free material both in and out of state. Seed certification and seed control testing was performed ensuring high quality turf grass seed for New Jersey sod growers. Research continued to identify new varieties of agricultural products resistant to pests, diseases and new plant varieties.

In 2007, the "Jersey Grown" branding program was expanded and strengthened enabling growers to benefit from a common trademark to identify all New Jersey produced horticultural products. Working with growers, independent garden centers and nurseries the Department helped to promote "Jersey Grown" products through the use of point of sale advertising such as price cards, product stickers, labels, tags, and signage. The distribution of Jersey Grown Christmas tree tags was continued in 2007. The tags ensure area consumers that they are buying cut trees that are New Jersey grown and meet our industry's standards.

The Department of Agriculture continued its work with the Departments of Transportation and Environmental Protection to promote use of New Jersey produced nursery products whenever possible in their highway planting and forestry programs. The "Jersey Grown Rule" established by the Department ensures that all products meet the pest-free and quality standards of the New Jersey Nursery Law. Following the deforestation caused by the Asian Long-Horned Beetle the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection is replacing those trees according to the locally grown standards.

In 2007, the Department continued to expand the "Jersey Grown" website for the horticultural industry. The website includes an interactive map and an updated online searchable database which can be cross-referenced by a name, town, and county cross referenced by the different horticultural product types. The website also has information and links for gardeners, retailers, arboretums and a list of certified "Jersey Grown" suppliers.

To ensure that the Department's programs continue to address the challenges that face the ornamental horticultural industry in New Jersey, the Department regularly communicates and meets with horticultural producers. To educate and inform consumers about the availability, variety and use of "Jersey Grown" horticultural products, the Department is continuing to work with the New Jersey Nursery and Landscape Association to create and distribute fact sheets and horticultural articles of interest.

<u>Seafood Industry</u> 2007 Economic Development Strategies Year End Summary

In 2007 the Department continued to expand and promote the "Jersey Seafood" brand to identify local seafood products as distinct from, of higher value, and healthier, than competing products. "Jersey Seafood" recipe cards and other point of sale advertising materials are now being used by nearly one hundred chain stores and independent retailers. The distribution of the Department's updated New Jersey Seafood Suppliers Directory has also been completed throughout the region.

The Department is continuing its work to support and assist the expansion of aquaculture sales at community farm markets. Seafood products are now being sold at select community markets and strategies for accessing additional community markets are in place.

Department staff has begun work with other state regulatory agencies to establish new guidelines for the safe handling of seafood products. A rule, quality control logo and standards for farm raised seafood is nearing completion and should be ready for the 2008 Spring season. Draft standards are already in place for wild harvest. The new logo will be featured on a suite of promotional materials that will kick off next summer's season.

The Department's seafood website has become an integral part of the promotional program. In addition to constantly updated recipes, the website features cooking videos of local chefs preparing their favorite New Jersey seafood dishes and other videos such as a cooking demonstration on the correct method to sauté New Jersey sea scallops. Important storing, handling and nutrition information is provided on the website along with seasonal availability information and an interactive calendar of New Jersey seafood related events plus a bi-weekly market report. The detailed supplier database also provides product availability information and a list of online publications plus a profile of New Jersey's aquaculture industry.

The Department continued its work with the New Jersey Restaurant Association in 2007 to place plaques promoting the use of local seafood and produce in 350 restaurants. A children's activity book and other generic promotional materials featuring New Jersey seafood were distributed at festivals and events across the state in 2007 with an expanded list of partners who will assist in promotion and placement.

The NJDA worked with several partners coordinating the Jersey Seafood Challenge, a professional chef's competition featuring seafood harvested and grown in the Garden State. A cookbook will be developed to include information about the chefs, their winning recipes and their businesses. The cookbook will be distributed at a number of venues throughout the year including local chambers of commerce, seafood festivals, and other events. Plans are already underway to make this an annual event.

To support seafood product exports to Asia, Europe, and Latin America the *New Jersey Seafood Suppliers Directory* has been distributed to 104 overseas USDA Foreign Agricultural Service Offices and U.S. Embassies throughout the world. The Department assists New Jersey seafood exporters through Food Export USA-Northeast that provides trade show booth subsidies and encourages the participation of seafood companies in international trade shows.

<u>Dairy Industry</u> 2007 Economic Development Strategies Year End Summary

In 2007, the Department continued to work for increased demand for New Jersey milk, expanded value-added dairy products, while evaluating new legislation and looking at new ways to ensure quality milk production and food safety

The Department supported the branding and distribution of milk as "Jersey Fresh," "Made with Premium Jersey Fresh Milk," "Made with Jersey Fresh Milk," "Jersey Fresh Flavored Milk" and "Jersey Fresh Milk." One "Jersey Fresh" fortified skim milk product reached store shelves in 2007, and another five projects are in various stages of development. At least one processor is selling cheese and yogurt made from "New Jersey Fresh Milk" under the Jersey Fresh brand. Sales of "Jersey Fresh Milk" products continue to grow at community farmers markets and some producers are expanding their offerings at community markets to include the sale of cheeses.

The Department held hearings in late-2007 to determine whether the "Fuel Adjustment Add-on" payment it mandated in 2006 should continue. That payment, which rises or falls with the price of diesel fuel, helps farmers combat the skyrocketing cost of fuel in their operations. A decision based on those hearings is expected in early-2008.

The Department continued tracking any possible legislation that could encompass the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) to possibly achieve more stable short and long-term on-farm milk pricing. The Department has been working with the State's Ratification Committee to continue moving that process forward while also considering other new options.

The nutritional benefits of drinking milk were promoted to young school children through the Eat Right, Move More Initiative. This initiative is jointly sponsored and coordinated by the Department and the North Dairy Council. The pricing, packaging, distribution and market potential of value-added flavored milk continues to be evaluated, as was the concept of low-fat flavored milk for New Jersey's schools. The New Jersey Dairy Council is continuing its work to develop and fund educational and promotional programs through its check-off dollars.

The Department continued its work to protect the health of the dairy industry from the threat of devastating and economically damaging diseases. The Department worked with the Garden State Dairy Alliance to support the dairy industry with technical assistance and coordinates a multi-disciplinary team of state and federal partners to cooperatively address issues related to animal health, milk quality, nutrient management, bio-security and dairy industry development. The objective of the alliance is to sustain a viable and thriving dairy industry in New Jersey. The Alliance has concluded its second year with major focus on Milk Quality Bio-Security and Animal Health.

<u>The Field Crop Industry</u> 2007 Economic Development Strategy Year End Summary

The Department is working in several ways to encourage increased production of certified organic soybeans, corn and wheat. In 2007, organic growers and organic food processors continued to be linked together and progress continued toward the establishment of ethanol and bio-diesel plants.

Due to the state's high land values, property taxes and labor rates, production costs in New Jersey are higher than in most other production areas. With commodity prices based on national production costs, yields and demand, it is less profitable to produce commodity items in New Jersey than elsewhere. Through organic production, growers can increase the value of those crops as they meet the growing demand for processed foods made from organic ingredients. To address the economic challenges of producing field crops, the Department continued its support of the organic research project at the Rutgers Agricultural Experiment Station in Bridgeton. Conventional and certified organic production methods are being utilized side by side in the same fields. This ongoing project will conduct and compare best management practices for organic soybean and corn crops.

To help connect growers with the demand for New Jersey's organic grain production the Department continues working to link growers of certified organic soybeans, corn and wheat to regional food processors of organic foods. To facilitate this link, a list of regional organic producers has been created for growers. Through this list growers can find out more about the organic food industry and which organic grain crops are in demand. A list of organic hay producers is also available from the Department.

One area that offers opportunity for field crops is the emerging prospects of the Green Energy sector's interest in renewable fuels. Both corn, for ethanol production, and soybeans, for bio-diesel production, have been in higher demand nationwide due to ethanol and bio-diesel production. Prices for grains have reflected that growing demand, even in states where biofuels production has not yet significantly emerged. The Department continues to support and facilitate efforts by private entities to construct ethanol-production facilities throughout New Jersey and is working cooperatively as part of the team formulating the State Energy Master Plan to ensure that biofuels like ethanol are a major component of that plan. Those facilities will need a readily available, local source of these feedstocks for their operations.

The Livestock and Poultry Industry

2007 Economic Development Strategies Year End Summary

In 2007, the Department continued its work to ensure animal health while enhancing industry marketing, encouraging production and examining new and non-traditional New Jersey livestock animals and products and the markets for those products. For several years a trend in New Jersey's livestock and poultry industry has been a transition from a commodity-based industry to one increasingly involved in higher value direct sales.

Through the implementation of best management practices for bio-security, the Department continued its work to protect the health of New Jersey's livestock and poultry industry from the immediate threat of devastating and economically damaging diseases. The Department's work with owners of livestock assures awareness of disease threats and general animal safety measures. Best Management Practices have been distributed to the community. More importantly, every interaction between Division of Animal Health staff and producers, owners and veterinarians includes strategies to minimize the impact of diseases to their animals and the spread throughout their herd or flock.

Several producers have taken the lead with the emergence of the direct marketing of meat and poultry items. The Department is working to organize, support and expand their efforts and increase direct sales. The "Jersey Bred" logo continues to be promoted to the livestock industry to extend the successful Jersey Fresh brand. Regulations are currently under review to expand the Jersey Fresh brand for meat products raised or finished in New Jersey.

The Department continues to assist farmers to develop and promote the quality of meat goats. The primary markets for meat goats have already been identified and now the Department is focusing on grower education, commodity marketing and distributor development. A "Meat Goat Production School and Pilot Management Program" was initiated in 2006 to teach the best farm management practices for the raising of meat goats. This educational effort helps producers to maximize inputs while reducing the costs associated with feeding the ruminant animals. To further support this project, the Department is working to identify potential producers to apply for USDA value-added producer grants. The primary focus of this project has been on new and beginning farmers to feed out the goats on a seasonal basis.

Laws and regulations that affect this industry are constantly monitored to ensure that they address current industry models of production and distribution and support the marketing of locally produced poultry meat and eggs. In 2007 the Department worked with the livestock and poultry industry to study ways that their operations can better meet the particular needs of both traditional and ethnic markets. The rules and regulations for the sale of meat products at community markets are also under review. A new recommendation is being considered to improve the marketing of beef, sheep, goat and pork products and promote livestock sales at several locations throughout the State. The Department continues to support the sale of 4-H animals and to work with existing New Jersey auction markets to coordinate and conduct graded livestock sales.

<u>The Organic Industry</u> 2007 Economic Development Strategies Year End Summary

In addition to be being very profitable, organic foods represent the fastest growing segment of agriculture in America, Europe and Japan. The U.S. market for organic agricultural products was projected to reach a value of \$30.7 billion in 2007.

To support the continued development of organic agriculture in New Jersey, a certification cost reimbursement program has been established between the Department and the USDA. Through this cost-sharing program, New Jersey organic growers and handlers are eligible for reimbursements of up to 75 percent, up to a maximum of \$500, of their organic certification costs. In 2007 the Department continued to work aggressively with its outreach efforts to educate growers and handlers about these available federal funds. In 2007, working directly with our Department, 15 handlers and 28 growers of organic products were approved and processed for reimbursement of organic certification costs.

In 2007, the Department gained USDA accreditation as a State Certified Organic program. This accreditation gives the Department the authority to approve and certify growers as organic producers. This program helps to guarantee consumers of New Jersey organic products that they are receiving only the highest quality organic agricultural products. The Department's organic program also provides farmers who are transitioning to organic production a three-year qualifying period that allows them to market their products as "transitional sustainable" agricultural products.

In 2007, the *Jersey Organic* brand regulations were finalized and published. The full integration of organic products into the Department's *Jersey Fresh* marketing program is now complete. With the Department receiving USDA accreditation as a State Certified Organic program, New Jersey grown organic products are now eligible to be promoted as distinct from, and of higher value, than competing products through the *Jersey Organic* brand.

To support growers and handlers, fact sheets outlining the legal and regulatory requirements for production and sale of organic products, including livestock and livestock products continued to be distributed. In 2007, new fact sheets with information about buffer zone guidance and the use of treated lumber were made available.

<u>The Equine Industry</u> 2007 Economic Development Strategies Year End Summary

New Jersey is one of the nation's most progressive equine states, offering racing as well as riding trails, rodeos, an active 4-H horse program and handicapped riding programs as well as many horse shows and competitions. The New Jersey Department of Agriculture and the New Jersey Equine Advisory Board continue to develop new and innovative programs for the industry as well as offering many promotional opportunities

The New Jersey equine website is used to focus attention on horse-related activities, information pertaining to the Sire Stakes, the Horse Park of New Jersey, state racetracks, breeding and development programs and equine rescue groups. The Department's website also offers detailed information about the facilities and services available at each equine operation. The site also features schedules of events, lists of horseback riding trails, and other industry related activities.

To ensure a bright future for New Jersey's equine industry, the Department is continuing its work with horse owners to raise awareness of disease threats and animal safety in an ongoing effort to protect the health of horses from the immediate threat of devastating and economically damaging diseases. Working with constituents directly and through veterinarians and Cook College and extension, horse owners continue to be advised of infectious diseases that pose a risk to or within NJ and recommendations to minimize the impact of diseases to their animals. Best Management Practices (BMPs) have been distributed to all equine constituents. These guidelines allow for increased right-to-farm protection for New Jersey's equine industry.

The Department has continued the development of the "Jersey Bred-Born to Win" marketing and promotional brand program for the state equine industry. In 2007 large all weather full color "Jersey Bred-Born to Win" banners have been produced and distributed to the industry. To bolster promotion and education efforts to stimulate interest, attract new owners and create career opportunities one of the newest 4-H programs will feature the students raising Standardbred yearlings and preparing them for sales.

Racetracks have received approval for the first three off track betting facilities. In 2007 the Vineland and Woodbridge off track betting locations opened and a location in Toms Rivers is expected to open in 2008. The racetrack licensees continue to seek and identify additional locations for off-track betting facilities.

<u>The Wine Industry</u> 2007 Economic Development Strategies Year End Summary

To assist New Jersey's wine industry, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture administers a promotion and research fund supported by a per-gallon tax refund collected by the New Jersey Wine Industry Advisory Council. With those funds, the Council prints promotional materials, conducts publicity programs, funds promotional festivals and conducts varietals and production-oriented research.

In 2007 the Department established a brand for use on wine labels and packaging to improve the marketing, promotion and branding of New Jersey wines as a product produced from locally grown fruits. Through the Department's Jersey Fresh Quality Grading Program standards the "Made from Jersey Fresh Grapes" logo is now available for use in wine labeling.

To identify the highest quality of wines produced in New Jersey vintners continue to have the opportunity to put the New Jersey Quality Wine Alliance (QWA) guarantee on select bottles of wine. The voluntary only apply to wine products which score at least a13 out of 20 in the Quality Wine Alliance Program. This evaluation scale gives points for appearance, color, aroma and bouquet, acesence, total acid, sugar, body, flavor, astringency and general quality. Only wines that meet or exceed the rigorous review are awarded the QWA designation.

Working directly with the industry the Department continues to support increases in the state's grape production and other efforts to expand the locally grown content of New Jersey wines. Several New Jersey growers have expressed an interest in expanding their current production to include grapes for New Jersey's wine industry. The Department continues to support an increase in the minimum acreage required to establish a new plenary winery from three to five acres. To quantify and qualify the size and importance of New Jersey's grape industry a state wide assessment was begun in 2006.

In 2007 the Department continued to support legislation that will expand the number and scope of eligible individual retail outlets, shared outlets and sales at community farmers markets. The same legislation also supports the wine industry's effort to obtain licenses to distill fruit based spirits such as brandies. The issuance of the distiller's license will be limited to farm wineries growing a minimum of eighteen acres of grapes.

Working in conjunction with Food Export USA New Jersey and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture New Jersey wines continued to receive access to support for promotional support through the Market Access Program's matched funds reimbursement program for overseas promotional activities that might include sample shipments, in-store tastings, foreign language label development and print advertising in magazines and newspapers.

The Agricultural Tourism Industry

2007 Economic Development Strategies Year End Summary

Agricultural Tourism draws upon two of the great strengths of the Garden State, a rich agricultural heritage and a large population of affluent consumers. Agricultural tourism offers family-oriented recreational and educational activities plus opportunities to learn about agricultural products and the states rich farming heritage while encouraging the preservation of agricultural lands.

In 2007 the New Jersey Department of Agriculture continued its support for the Agricultural Tourism Council. The Council is charged with researching current and potential agri-tourism opportunities and making recommendations on ways to expand and promote agritourism in New Jersey. It consists of five at-large agri-tourism operators; five designated members from the New Jersey Wine Industry, New Jersey Agricultural Fairs Association, New Jersey Equine Industry Advisory Council, New Jersey Direct Marketing Association, and New Jersey agricultural museums/living history farms; and four ex-officio members: the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, New Jersey Farm Bureau, Rutgers University, and the New Jersey Commerce and Economic Development Commission.

One of the cornerstones of the Agricultural Tourism Council is the Department's comprehensive website that brings together New Jersey's diverse agri-tourism opportunities. The agri-tourism listing on the Jersey Fresh agricultural tourism website includes 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 online agri-tourism map. The site includes seasonal items such as Christmas trees and cornstalks plus a total of forty-four different produce items can be located. The website is located at: www.jerseyfresh.nj.gov/agritourismhome.htm.

In 2007 the innovative GIS-based *visitnjfarms.org* website introduced by Rutgers Food Policy Institute continued to allow farmers to easily announce and update all on-farm products and activities available to the public. It also provides existing, and potential, customers with a user-friendly search engine to locate their favorite Jersey Fresh products or plan and map out a day trip that will conveniently incorporate any number stops to include several farms, wineries or other agricultural attractions. Farmers are encouraged to register at that site. The Departments and the Rutgers agritourism websites provide complimentary information and resources and both sides are cross-linked to one another.

In 2007 the Department publicized the National Agricultural Statistics Survey (NASS) study that assessed the economic impact of agri-tourism upon New Jersey's economy. The recommendations of that study addressed grower's perceptions of the opportunities and challenges associated with agri-tourism.

An inexpensive agri-tourism brochure listing industry websites and other contact information was produced and distributed in 2007. The brochure promoted seasonal events, special attractions, and direct farm marketing opportunities.

<u>General Strategies</u> 2006 Economic Development Strategies Year End Summary

In 2007 the Department continued to support improved policy analysis and information on farmland assessment to the Farmland Evaluation Advisory Committee, the Director of Taxation's Farmland Assessment Committee, agricultural organizations, municipal tax assessors and to landowners. The Department's Agricultural Economic Development team actively assisted the agricultural community and related entities on a one-on-one basis with issues related to regulations, taxation, economic development, agricultural production, value-added opportunities and other matters that impact the long-term viability of New Jersey agriculture.

Throughout 2007, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture provided direct assistance to farmland owners, tax administrators and the public on farmland assessment questions and issues. The updated "Informational Guide on Basic Requirements for Farmland Assessment" continues to be used extensively as an educational tool. The State Farmland Evaluation Advisory Committee range of values for cropland, pasture, and woodland for tax year 2007 was based on productive capabilities devoted to agricultural or horticultural uses.

Crop insurance continues to be a valuable risk management tool that allows farmers to insure against losses due to adverse weather conditions. In New Jersey close to 150,000 acres have liability coverage through crop insurance. The New Jersey Department of Agriculture, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, and USDA's Risk Management Agency have partnered together in delivering an educational program on crop insurance to New Jersey producers.

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture continued to provide direct assistance to producers interested in USDA's Value-Added grant program that is competitive on a national basis. One hundred percent of producers assisted were successful in receiving USDA grants.

With support from the USDA's Rural Business Opportunity Grant program a research project was begun to determine the average costs and benefits associated with direct marketing in New Jersey. The study, scheduled to be completed in 2008 is designed to assist in the training of growers interested in learning about the economics and best practices of direct marketing and to assist them to evaluate the opportunities available through participation in community markets.

In accordance with the Department's Agricultural Development Initiatives the development of entrepreneurial and executive level training programs continued with the support of the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grants. Some of the following areas of training being developed include the study of new markets and consumer trends, identifying and serving specialty crop markets and the implementation of supply chain management. The Department continues to support other programs for worker training, worker health and safety, and farms labor housing.