



State of New Jersey

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

MINUTES OF MEETING

March 25, 2026

(Wednesday)

Public meeting notice was certified by communication on March 19, 2026.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq. adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by giving written notice of the time, date, location and to the extent known the agenda of this meeting. At least 48 hours in advance this notice has been posted on the third floor, Riverview Plaza, Trenton, New Jersey; mailed to the Newark Star Ledger; the Camden Courier Post; the Trenton Times and filed with the Office of the Secretary of State.

President Bob Blew called the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture to order at 1:05 pm. Board members in attendance included President Bob Blew; Vice President Stephen V. Lee, IV, David DeFrango, John Hart, Joel Viereck, Rick Gardner, Hillary Barile and Holly Sytsema. The meeting was held at 200 Riverview Plaza, Trenton, NJ.

Also in attendance were Secretary Wengryn; Assistant Secretary Joe Atchison; Dr. Amar Patil, Director, Division of Animal Health; Rose Chamberlain, Director, Melissa Pajak, Division of Food & Nutrition; Sandra Howland, Division of Agricultural & Natural Resources; Joe Zoltowski, Director, Division of Plant Industry (TEAMS); Nancy Wood, Dan Wunderlich, Division of Marketing & Development; Chuck Roohr, Executive Director, SADC; Tameko Webster, Christopher LaRegina, Robert Vivian, Jeff Beach (TEAMS), Kaitlynn Dixon (TEAMS), Alyssa Pitt (TEAMS), Anthony Tarr, William Connors, Andrea Egizi (TEAMS), Isabella Waltz, Office of the Secretary. Also in attendance were Ashley Kerr, Al Murray, NJ Farm Bureau; Dr. Brian Schilling, Rutgers University; Robert Andrzejczak, State Executive Director; Farm Service Agency, Julie Hawkins, State Conservationist, NRCS; Jasmine Moreano, Organic & Regenerative Farming Board, Bruce Eklund, NASS, Tim Hionis, State Board member-elect (TEAMS), and Linda Walker, NJ Department of Agriculture.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

ON the MOTION of Holly Sytsema, seconded by Joel Viereck, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2026, meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

REPORT OF RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

Dr. Brian Schilling represented the College and reported on the following topics:

- We've been getting a lot of inquiries from growers about how drones can be used in operations. We're doing some work at our farms on cover cropping, aerial feeding when it's wet, but with a drone, you don't have to worry about getting bogged down in the field. Interspersing with standing props, things of this nature so that might be another offshoot. We're working right now with our new extension specialist, Sophie Lee and Kevin Sullivan, this morning and would welcome input from the board and other growers. We are trying to put some numbers down on how some of these new technologies are helping the bottom line, specifically precision ag tech. We're getting a lot of questions from growers, "is it worth it" so we're going to try to start bringing some numbers to New Jersey because a lot of the numbers that are out there are bigger grain states, for example, where the economies of scale are just different.
- We had an internal meeting, mostly within the Experiment Station and some land grant peers looking at extreme weather events, this was really an effort to try to bring some technical service providers together.
- Lastly, we held a Farm & Fisher Wellness Forum, this is something I think is a priority and I commend Farm Bureau for some of their leadership in this area. You might not like to talk about it, but farming is a stressful career. A lot of things beyond our control, a Wellness forum where we have people that can help manage work in the area of farm stress, mental well-being. The industry has a lot of challenges, we have some deep expertise in this area at the university, but they don't know agriculture. We have Extension agents that don't know mental health and wellness, so we wanted to bring these groups together, there was strong attendance, we hope that it was useful.
- A discussion of the drone data and what it would be used for and could the data be shared collectively with all the agents. He noted that Steve Komar, Sussex County has been working on this for some time and has trained several other operators and Peter Oudemans from the Marucci Center is working with training for drones in the southern part of the state. The information that the drones can provide is amazing.

REPORT OF FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA)

Robert Andrzejczak reported on behalf of the Farm Service Agency:

Farmer Bridge Assistance Program (FBA)

FSA has issued over \$7.7 billion nationwide and New Jersey has paid \$4.86 million thus far. Producers can access the public facing FBA dashboard to remain updated on the FBA payments. U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins announced the enrollment period for the Farmer Bridge Assistance (FBA) program, providing \$11 billion in one-time bridge payments to row crop producers in response to temporary trade market disruptions and increased production costs. The FBA enrollment period opens February 23 and closes April 17, 2026. Bridge payments are intended in part to aid farmers until historic investments from the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), including reference prices which are set to increase between 10-21% for major covered commodities and will reach eligible farmers after October 1, 2026.

Commodity-specific payment rates are:

- Barley: \$20.51
- Canola: \$23.57
- Chickpeas (Large): \$26.46
- Chickpeas (Small): \$33.36
- Corn: \$44.36
- Cotton: \$117.35
- Flax: \$8.05
- Lentils: \$23.98
- Mustard: \$23.21
- Oats: \$81.75
- Peanuts: \$55.65
- Peas: \$19.60
- Rice: \$132.89
- Safflower: \$24.86
- Sesame: \$13.68
- Sorghum: \$48.11
- Soybeans: \$30.88
- Sunflower: \$17.32
- Wheat: \$39.35

Specialty Crop Farmers (ASCF) Program

Late filing acreage reporting for ASCF has concluded as of March 13. On February 13, Secretary Rollins announced that USDA FSA is providing \$1 billion in the Assistance for Specialty Crop Farmers (ASCF) Program for specialty crops and sugar, commodities not covered through the previously announced Farmer Bridge Assistance (FBA) program. These one-time bridge payments will help address market disruptions, elevated input costs, persistent inflation, and market losses from foreign competitors engaging in unfair trade practices that impede exports. ASCF payments will be based on reported 2025 planted acres. Commodity-specific payment rates will be released by the end of March. More information on ASCF is available online at www.fsa.usda.gov/fba or producers can contact their local FSA county office.

ASCF – eligible specialty crops include: **(A)** Almond, Apple, Apricot, Aronia berry, Artichoke, Asparagus, Avocado; **(B)** Banana, Bean (Snap or green; Lima; Dry edible), Beet (Table), Blackberry, Blueberry, Breadfruit, Broccoli (including Broccoli Raab), Brussels Sprouts; **(C)** Cabbage (including Chinese), Cacao, Carrot, Cashew, Cauliflower, Celeriac, Celery, Cherimoya, Cherry, Chestnut (for Nuts), Chive, Citrus, Coconut, Coffee, Collards (including Kale), Cranberry, Cucumber, Currant; **(D)** Date, Dry Edible Beans and Peas*; **(E)** Eggplant, Endive; **(F)** Feijou, Fig, Filbert (Hazelnut); **(G)** Garlic, Gooseberry, Grape (including Raisin), Guava; **(H)** Horseradish; **(K)** Kiwi, Kohlrabi; **(L)** Leek, Lettuce, Litchi; **(M)** Macadamia, Mango, Melon (All Types), Mushroom (Cultivated), Mustard and Other Greens; **(N)** Nectarine; **(O)** Okra, Olive, Onion, Opuntia; **(P)** Papaya, Parsley, Parsnip, Passion Fruit, Pea (Garden; English or Edible Pod; Dry edible), Peach, Pear, Pecan, Pepper, Persimmon, Pineapple, Pistachio, Plum (including Prune), Pomegranate, Potato, Pumpkin; **(Q)** Quince; **(R)** Radish (All Types), Raspberry, Rhubarb, Rutabaga; **(S)** Salsify, Spinach, Squash (Summer and Winter), Strawberry, Suriname Cherry, Sweet Corn, Sweet Potato, Swiss Chard; **(T)** Taro, Tomato (including Tomatillo), Turnip; **(W)** Walnut, Watermelon.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the enrollment periods for agricultural producers and landowners to submit offers for the Continuous and General Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is accepting offers for Continuous CRP starting February 12, 2026, through March 20, 2026. Enrollment for General CRP will run from March 9, 2026, through April 17, 2026. FSA will announce dates for Grassland CRP signup in the near future. CRP is USDA's flagship conservation program, providing financial and technical support to agricultural producers and landowners who place unproductive or marginal cropland under contract for 10–15 years and who agree to voluntarily convert the land to beneficial vegetative cover to improve water quality, prevent soil erosion and support wildlife habitat. The Continuing Appropriations, Agriculture, Legislative Branch, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Extensions Act, 2026, extends FSA's authority to

administer CRP through September 30, 2026. “We’re still very close to the 27–million–acre statutory cap with 1.9 million acres available for all CRP enrollments this fiscal year so enrollment is likely to be competitive,” USDA’s Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation Richard Fordyce said. “This isn’t about the total number of acres enrolled, it’s about producers and landowners offering and USDA accepting the acres that can best deliver real, lasting benefits to soil, water and wildlife.”

REPORT OF NJ FARM BUREAU

Ashley Kerr represented the Farm Bureau and reported on the following topics:

- Continuing to work with the SBOA Legislative Committee, we will be providing our prime list which was approved by the NJFB Directors last night.
- Second AAN meeting a success with a hearing on urban agriculture and some bills on roadway safety, new farmers being exempt from realty transfer fee when buying preserved farms, and Sunday clamming. Right to repair bill was pulled because it’s no longer needed, as was done last session.
- Working on a legislative tour to highlight agritourism at Holland Ridge Tulip Farm as well as their wholesale greenhouse operation in April.
- Interesting meeting last week hosted by NJDA on urban agriculture. Looking forward to next steps. NJFB will be meeting with its Urban Ag Producers subcommittee in April, still finalizing membership, agenda and potential dates.
- NJFB testified at the Assembly budget hearing last week and Senate budget hearing yesterday. Requested \$1 million for Jersey Fresh, \$4.5 million for climate stewardship, \$6 million for LFS/LFPA and \$4 million for Rutgers Cooperative Extension. Also brought farmers to testify and have reached out to legislators in both houses to sponsor these budget resolutions.
- Hearing from members and CBOA on the issue of DEP cancelling pesticide licenses because the \$0 invoice is not being paid online. If the license is not renewed online, DEP will cancel after two years without renewal (cannot “pay” via mail, only online). Asking DEP to send out a cancellation notice before licenses are cancelled and reinstate farmers who have enough credits to keep their licenses active.
- The agricultural driver’s license information on the NJMVC website is incorrect, as it states that a 21–year–old driver must accompany an agricultural license holder. Years ago, there was confusion when the graduated license was implemented, and the statute mandated the same restriction to apply to both the permittee driver and the licensed driver. NJFB worked to update the statute and clarify that a 21–year–old licensed driver is not required when a 16–year–old receives their agricultural license. At some point after this law was passed, MVC found old information and posted it on its website. We respectfully request the Secretary to get this corrected.
- Successful meeting last week hosted by Rutgers on farm and fisher wellness. NJFB is committed to supporting this initiative, we provided our stickers and cards for the “farmer state of mind” and the #988 number to this event, NJFB president and Executive Director were both in attendance. We will continue the work started at this meeting.
- Looking forward to NJDA sponsored event “Rooted in Resilience” next week, featuring NJ female farmers during the Year of the Woman Farmer.
- Federal issues – AFBF very concerned about war in Iran and costs of diesel and fertilizer this year. Last Wednesday, President Trump announced a 60–day waiver on international shipping rules (Jones Act) to “help ease deliveries of fuel and fertilizer (urea) to the U.S.

- We agree with Senator Booker that floriculture should be added to the next round of the Farmer Bridge Assistance program. They have been greatly impacted by the tariffs, both for bulbs and cut flowers.
- National Affairs Director Ben Casella and President Allen Carter will be in DC later this week for an ag event at the Whitehouse with State Board member Joel Viereck.

REPORT OF NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE (NASS)

Bruce Eklund reported the following:

- NASS released the Census of Horticulture and New Jersey jumped up to over \$700 million in sales and that's every five years. But part of that was also floriculture and New Jersey's nationally ranked in those. We were able to publish the data and show how rich New Jersey is in that respect. Another thing that came out, this is every 10 years, is farmland ownership and tenure and it shows things like the percentage of farmland that's rented out by farmers versus non-farm owners. He suggested that they could go onto the NASS website and search for the information they are looking for.
- Ongoing surveys that we are working on and seeking support are the organic census every five years, local foods every five years, looking at farmers who sell directly and what they sell and how much and how they sell.
- ARMS, which is all about farm viability, Agricultural Resource Management survey, it shows effective ag policy on your bottom line and it's kind of like a farm balance sheet and used to show the ag contribution to GDP, farm net income, countless studies by ag economists, so it's really a backbone of what ERS and our Extension Service economists do.

REPORT OF NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Julie Hawkins, State Conservationist, reported the following:

- Provided the Board members with information on their brand-new customer satisfaction survey on their conservation practices. This is a new national initiative, coming out of the Office of the Chief and the idea here is to get producer feedback on our practices. Each state is assigned a certain number of practices and then we are to have a roundtable with farmers. So, we just had a roundtable on March 18 in Southampton, Burlington County and had 11 growers participate. We have to have a minimum of 10, it went very well – it was scheduled for two hours, and it ended up being three hours. So, there was a lot of great conversation on the assigned practice as well as other practices. There will be three rounds, about 130 roundtables across the country. We know the timing; we've already reported back that the timing is terrible for farmers right now because everyone is so busy. But we have some great farmers working with us, but we have reported that back. But we wanted to make sure growers are aware of the survey, so she thanked Farm Bureau for putting it in the newsletter. We want to make sure that people know this is out there, and it's going to be open for a while, as there is no plan to close the survey. She noted that NRCS gets a lot of criticism I've heard that the farming community is oftentimes way ahead of us in technology adoption, precision ag being a perfect example of where NRCS needs to do a better job of keeping up with the farming community. So, we really do need feedback because when we adopt these standards, we want to make them useful for our farming community.

- A second handout is on their new local working groups and local LED conservation. In January 2026, our national leadership republished policy for local LED conservation, emphasizing the local LED process, right. Our historic process since the 30s where conservation districts are the lead in conservation. NRCS as a federal agency is in a supporting role to help local conservation districts address resource concerns and other issues in that community. So, if you look at this, it's the district leads, you identify key topics and issues, then you determine who can act on that, whether it's NRCS or other federal, state or local entities revise what we're doing and then report back to the local working. So, one of the things I've asked our team to do is do a better job of not just reporting to the state tech committee but reporting back to the local working groups and how we're addressing the recommendations that come forward. Oftentimes we hear the same things over and over, for example, in our rankings, can you please add points for farms that are preserved? Well, we've been here six years now and it's always in the ranking that we give extra points to farms that are all already preserved. So, we're taking comments now from local work groups through April 30 and then we'll spend about two to three months going through those recommendations, reporting back to state technical committee and where we can adapt them into our programs and technical assistance for FY27. She reported that all the information is available on their website.

ORGANIC & REGENERATIVE FARMING BOARD

Jasmine Moreano reported the following:

- A letter from the ORFB was sent to Governor Sherrill introducing their Board to her and asked the Department if there was someone specific that they should reach out to.
- Recruitment assistance from the Department of Agriculture's social media helped to get seven resumes and applications for their last member needed for the Committee. It is hoped that we can get the final member through the Senate approval process in the near future.
- Next meeting of the Organic & Regenerative Farming Board will be on Tuesday, April 21 from 4:00–6:00 pm at the Greater Newark Conservancy. There will be an opportunity for self-guided tours prior to the meeting so people can see what we've got going on.
- For the Organic or Regenerative farming community, I wanted to make note that NOFA NJ in partnership with Fair Grove Farms is hosting a farm equipment training session once a month, it's free and that's on-site for beginner farmers. North Jersey RC&D is also having some pasture management and raising pasture birds webinar and then in person educational opportunities for growers looking into learning how to grow all sorts of chickens, layers, broilers and then also the NOFA NJ as well for farmers who want to learn more about organic farming practices. They also have their monthly technical assistance, which is on April 1, the next one coming up and that's a virtual meeting.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary Wengryn reported that Rutgers University has kept him busy this month from the AI Conference, the Mental Health & Wellness Forum and the Climate Change Discussions. He noted that Office of the Secretary staff presented him with a cake to celebrate two years as Agriculture Secretary and his recent birthday. He noted that he was excited to continue as Secretary and work with the new Administration. He reported that he, along with Joe Atchison and Frank Minch would be attending the TCNJ Program later this week where they get into their community food system as they start looking at

Mercer County as a region with everything from the hydroponic and organic program they have at the College about improving the school's food system and then how does that tie into the local food system. In addition, he reported that he would be visiting the County Boards and had already visited Salem and Sussex Counties, noting that it's always good to get out there and hear what the farmers are concerned about. He stated that the concern about the drought watch continues to be a concern, but that the recent rains have lessened some of the pressures. He noted we are still in a drought shortage in the State. He attended the NJ Agricultural Society's Annual Dinner on March 7, where Gary Mount was awarded the Gold Medallion posthumously, and Melick Farms was presented the Century Farm Award, and a lot of money was raised. He reported that the NJALDP Class was in Washington DC this week and they will be participating with the US Secretary of Agriculture with her National Farm Day program. He reported that the Leadership Class will travel to the Netherlands in June for their international trip and would be holding a Barbecue Fundraiser at the Burlington County Fairgrounds. He reported that he and Chuck Roohr would be attending the Monmouth County Board of Ag meeting where they would be holding a Farm Summit.

Chuck Roohr, Executive Director, SADC, reported that information about the Woodland Easement Purchase Program has been attracting a lot of attention. The law specifically calls for easement values to be established the same way as Farmland Preservation values, including the use of a Statewide Formula. He noted that they are aware that most of our partners are already stretched thin due to the increase in applications and stewardship issues. To that end, the SADC envisions, at least initially, administering this Woodland Easement Purchase Program much like SADC Direct applications for Farmland Preservation Applications. There is much that we do not yet know, but the following is a list of some basic points:

- The legislation is geared towards preserving predominantly wooded properties that do not meet the eligibility criteria of the Farmland Preservation Program.
- We will not have regulations adopted, nor be able to accept applications for at least one year.
- The law contains some very specific language, including the following: ***'...promote the preservation and stewardship...'*** of private woodlands; woodlands be ***'... managed... in accordance with a forest stewardship plan... a woodland management plan... or a plan approved by the federal Forest Stewardship Program...'***; woodlands ***'...be devoted to ... the production for sale of tree or forest products...'***

Finally, he reported that there would be a presentation on the difference between special occasional events and on-farm direct marketing and there would be a panel to go over Right to Farm issues with Dr. Brian Schilling as the moderator.

Joe Zoltowski, Director, Division of Plant Industry, appeared on TEAMS before the Board and reported that the 2026 LDD aerial suppression and defoliation sketch mapping RFP was awarded to Downtown Airport out of Vineland. The sole municipality in Sussex County dropped out of participation in the 2026 program leaving only 338 acres of state land blocks, totaling to be treated.

Program staff continues developing Environmental Assessments and Biological Assessment reports for submission to the USDA Forest Service for the upcoming treatment season. In addition, even though we do not receive federal money from the Forest Service as of last year. I did commit to them that we would still do the same amount of work, so we developed and submitted our work plan, safety plan, security

plan, environmental assessments and biological evaluations of all the treatment blocks and submitted that to the USDA Forest Service for their records on behalf of New Jersey. Finally, he reported that the *Phytophthora ramorum* that came in from an infected nursery in Oregon to a nursery in Monmouth County has taken a couple of years of cleaning up. Infected material that was shipped and future shipments were coming in with infected material. They finally got their last round of material. They destroyed all plants from this site, the site is clean and we have removed the site quarantine. In addition, between APHIS personnel and Department personnel, we also included a Rutgers County Cooperative Extension agent so that we could introduce him to the business owner so that Extension could give the owner best management practices to keep his property disease free.

Dr. Amar Patil, Director, Division of Animal Health, reported that two new cases of H5 (HPAI) cases in small backyard poultry flocks have been detected. In an Ocean County flock, multiple bird types had experienced unusual mortality over several days. After calling the NJDA to report on Friday, 2/20/2026, a DAH veterinarian visited the premises to collect samples for Avian Influenza testing and necropsy. The AHDL pathology section received the two chickens from this avian influenza suspect flock. Gross necropsy revealed lesions suggestive of HPAI. Later that day, the flock was determined to be non-negative (positive) for AI through molecular diagnostics. The flock will be managed with an extended 120-day quarantine. In a Monmouth County flock, layer hens were reported to have a sudden death. The flock experienced high mortality over a few days. After calling the NJDA to report on 2/25/26, all nine of the layer birds had died. An NJDA DAH Technician collected submissions for necropsy and Avian Influenza testing, which revealed non-negative (positive) for AI. The premises will be managed with a 120-day fallow period and official quarantine to ensure no new domestic poultry are added to the premises during that time. He added that he wanted to praise all the live bird market owners for understanding the importance of working with us.

HPAI outbreaks continue nationwide in poultry, and HPAI is still detected in wild migratory birds in NJ. The Division of Animal Health has been notified of multiple highly pathogenic avian influenza detections at Pennsylvania and New York City live bird markets. There have been several highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) detections reported to the Division of Animal Health by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture at poultry facilities; most of which are in Lancaster County, with one outlier in Dauphin County. These detections initiate active control zones due to their production type (commercial facilities), and control-area permitting through EMRS has been steady on a daily basis for the movement of poultry from PA into NJ. These continuing detections in our neighboring states have the DAH on notice for the risk in New Jersey, particularly as reports of sick and dead wild birds within the state rise. All New Jersey live bird markets continue to perform, at a minimum, monthly sell-downs, complete cleaning and disinfection, followed by a 24-hour period of downtime. Inspectors have been conducting early-morning inspections of these facilities, collecting environmental and surveillance samples on poultry from various distribution companies.

Rose Chamberlain, Director, Division of Food & Nutrition, reported that the Summer EBT Unit has been actively preparing for the third year of program implementation. In collaboration with Department leadership, the team submitted the finalized 2026 Plan for Operations and Management (POM), along with all the supporting documentation, to USDA on February 13. She stated that initial feedback from the USDA Mid-Atlantic Regional Office was highly positive, with no additional questions or comments. The POM is now under review by the National Office, and we anticipate a formal response by the end of

the month. In addition, she reported that we have finalized our MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with the Office of Innovation, they will be working on the deduplication process, which is critical to the integrity of the program because it prevents the duplication of benefits. Finally, she announced that the new, New Jersey Farm to Procurement Initiative was posted as of Friday, March 20 and as of today, they already have 120 attestations received, so the schools are very excited about participating in the program. They hope to have allocation amount turned around to no later than April 10. They have set up office hours to support the schools through this to encourage their spending. The information on the program has been made available to all partnering agencies and well as social media.

Assistant Secretary Joe Atchison reported that yesterday many of the staff attended an event at Somerset Patriots Stadium, to celebrate Horticultural Therapy Week. President Blew had a display, as well as several other nurseries. The event was coordinated by Laura DePrado, with a little over 100 in attendance, and given the weather and the 30-degree wind chills up there, I think that was a better than expected turn out. Two days before was 70 degrees, two days after 70 degrees, we were standing outside in the 30 degrees there. There was a brief discussion on grant programs and how the Department be a resource to the industry with grant writing. It was suggested that a session on grant writing be included in the Ag Convention for 2027. He reported that the Jersey Fresh campaign kicks off in mid-April with asparagus, then goes quiet for a few weeks with the outdoor campaign, and then towards the end of June or so, we launch for the full season going through into September. He announced that the Department was provided with an interesting opportunity to partner with the Jersey Shore Blue Claws Minor League Baseball team which petitioned to Minor League Baseball and Major League Baseball, to have their name changed for one day in August, which coincides with Farmers Market Week and so they will be the Jersey Tomatoes for one day. In addition, we're also utilizing a billboard in the outfield for the season. They have a very busy thoroughfare just outside their stadium and we have use of their outdoor electronic marquee from April through September as well. Secretary Wengryn will be there for the first pitch and whatever else and we're looking for maybe a farmer to sing the national anthem, so mark August 6 on your calendar. Finally, he reported that the Department had recently selected a candidate for Bureau Chief of Commodity and Inspection Grading, following the death of Department employee, Chris Kleingunther, who passed in October 2024. He noted that Vice President Lee participated on the interview panel that selected someone who they believe will shape the future of the Vineland Inspection Office and we are very excited.

Vice President Lee commented after participating in the interviews and seeing the work involved that is done at the Vineland Office, he thanked Joe and Nikki Steward of the Markets staff for their efforts to keep that office running, he learned a lot about what that office actually does and the thing that's really worth noting is the efforts that our Department staff made and our team made in terms of making sure that the job got done in Vineland.

Anthony Tarr, CFO, reported that the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing will be on April 21, 2026. The FY2027 Budget Review with Assembly Budget Committee on April 27, 2026. He noted that Matthew Dibbs- Administrative Analyst 3 started earlier this week. He noted that the Division worked to complete OMB request for risk assessment on federal grants. In addition, he noted that the Division continues to work with all other Divisions to review fiscal note requests from legislators and submission to OMB, there have been 15 requests completed this month.

Sandra Howland, Research Scientist, Division of Agricultural & Natural Resources, reported on behalf of Division Director Frank Minch who was attending a conference in Washington, DC. She reported that although there has been some rain, we are still within the DEP drought warning. She noted that we expect a discussion and a substantial update from DEP about the outlook this Friday at the Water Supply Advisory Council meeting. While the current precipitation has been quite helpful, we will need quite a bit more to get out of this drought. Second, there is an updated Farmland Assessment Soil Productivity Mapping Tool hosted by Rutgers that just launched today. She provided a handout with a press release to follow; the new tool adds some additional functionality from the first version. In addition, there is now an online portal for farmland assessment. As all of you know, the Division of Taxation, a few months ago, did a press release and are doing a soft roll out or optional roll out this year in four counties, Cape May, Camden, Mercer and Somerset. The goal is to have the portal up and running by the end of April. The Division continues to work with the Division of Taxation as well as with Farm Bureau to be sure to have adequate assistance available. Of course, the first resource that individuals should go to is their assessor or the Division of Taxation. She noted that they expect a good deal of questions on this and reported that there's a whole team of staff at the Department to assist. She reported that the Division of Taxation will be offering training to their assessors on this new electronic format.

Tameko Webster, Chief of Staff, congratulated Secretary Wengryn on his second term as Secretary of Agriculture and noted that the entire Department is proud of you. She added that the Governor's team recently had a meeting of all the Chief of Staff's and will be meeting with us bi-weekly onsite at the State House. This is their effort to ensure that we are at the front of the line in terms of communication and they will be having similar standing meetings with the Public Information Officers, HR Managers and CFOs. She noted that this is a nice opportunity for us to get together with all the other departments. Internally, we're working continuously on our mass communication effort. Our department along with SADC and OFSA have created a communications team that is working to ensure all our communication leads to organizations is centralized. We are almost done completing our continuing continuity of operation plan, which is better known as our COOP plan. That COOP plan really talks about what we do in terms of emergencies and aligns with our domestic security preparedness planning. In closing, it is my honor to tell you today that the Department, in collaboration with the Farm Bureau, the Ag Society and the Vegetable Growers Association of New Jersey, in celebration of the International Year of the Woman Farmer, are hosting a women's history event, Rooted in Excellence Women Cultivating the Future of Agriculture. This will be held on Monday, March 30 at the Rutgers Eco Complex and we are really excited for this event. We had such a good turn out that we had to close the registration because of the seating capacity, we are only taking reservations for virtual attendance at this time.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Rick Gardner reported that he recently attended the Warren County Board of Ag where there were questions about the possibility of legislation that would take three sportsman member seats and possibly replacing them with individuals from PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals). It was legislation that had been proposed in prior sessions but did not move. He attended a Farm Symposium that was led by the new Warren County Agent Dr. Hassan Warriach, and he did a great job putting it together, there were several excellent speakers from Rutgers. He reported that the Livestock Cooperative was doing great and noted that they had over \$100,000 which was an all-time high.

John Hart reported that he is trying to get others to preserve their farmland into the Farmland Preservation Program but township officials in Mercer County are using the money for open space and not farmland preservation, there have not been any farms recently from Mercer County preserved. He noted that there are continuing issues with County officials wanting additional safety concerns to be addressed.

Dave DeFrance reported at the recent Hunterdon County Board of Ag meeting there was a very good, dynamic discussion about raw milk. Dan Wunderlich did an excellent presentation to the Board explaining the rules, regulations, the clarification on insurance, how to acquire insurance, down to the potential risk of trying to provide raw milk. He reported that they have recently changed the layout of their meetings, they are bringing in presentations, and I can tell you it goes a lot further because you have their concentration. He recommends that other county boards do these presentations on a regular basis because the education goes a lot further. I can say that it was a robust presentation that lasted 45 minutes and I thought they were going to throw me out, but at the end of the day the feedback was very constructive. He stated that getting good information from the Department and disseminating it through the county boards is how it is supposed to work. We've cut our reports down to less than three minutes and we are continually bringing in speakers, whether it be from the state or outside the state, to do presentations during the meetings. It is bringing a lot more awareness to different issues and he encouraged other county boards to encourage a more educational platform on the county structure. Finally, he reported that the Route 579 trail has been getting a lot of attention and other counties are trying to emulate what they have started, it was noted that both Sussex and Warren Counties are interested in doing something similar.

Hillary Barile commented that Salem County had their annual dinner this past weekend and Dante Spina, Sr. was honored with their Distinguished Service award. She noted that it was a nice event that was also well attended. She noted that there were some questions about some additional money that came in for the construction of an FFA building in Salem County that was through the state budget. They've also been doing some fundraising there and they are running up against some issues trying to get to the construction part. The other meeting that I attended was the Cumberland Salem Gloucester Soil Conservation Districts Local Working Group meeting that was held in Woodstown, President Blew was also in attendance. When you reported for NRCS, it seemed like the big issues coming out of that meeting or some of the questions were around the funding of irrigation practices through EQIP. And why it seems like over time that has been decreasing and then some questions around the timeliness of reviews and payments and moving through the contract process and understanding what the requirements are to become a TSP, to be able to assist with those things moving faster as we understand the current situation with NRCS staffing. In addition, she was really encouraged to see that communications can go back to the local working groups.

Holly Sytsema noted that Secretary Wengryn attended the Sussex County Board of Agriculture meeting earlier this week, and it was the highest attendance that we've had all year. The Board members were very excited to have him in attendance and there were some great questions for him. In addition, Nutrient Ag was there to talk about fertilizer issues that the farmers are experiencing and it's not just fertilizer, we have the component of the fuel as well and you know farmers are very anxious about this. So, as Ashley reported, there are some growers that are not going to be planting because of that cost ratio with the inputs that we have, and then the commodity prices that we're receiving, it doesn't make

sense for everybody. So that's definitely a big concern. The beef symposium will be held in Warren County, Rick will be attending, as well as Frank Minch on April 29 at 12:00 PM. She reported that there were a lot of tax questions that came up regarding what kind of programs do we have. It was noted that a lot of people had questions about writing grants. So, she reached out to the Chamber of Commerce to see if there was anything that they could do, with that, she reached out to Sussex County Community College and on April 14 they will be holding a Grant Workshop, that will help growers be able to apply for grants. The topic of the Fish and Game seats came up as a concern, but Secretary did very good in responding to that but noted that Sussex County is going to write a letter. The big event of the evening was, as Dave talked about, I looked at this county Route 579 trail and they had such success with that that I really wanted to see something happen across the state, so she prepared a Resolution, and presented it Monday night, she worked with one of the Commissioners in Sussex County and we got the first Agricultural Scenic Byway pass for Route 519 across Sussex County. They are hoping that every county will do the same. Mitchell Jones was there from Warren County, and he will be preparing one for Warren County. Hopefully they can get it gone and then we can go across the whole state; once that happens, we can institute an agricultural scenic byway from top to bottom and then we can apply for national funding. Finally, she reported that Steve Komar will be holding the drone seminar in either September or October at the Snyder Research Farm in Pittstown.

Joel Viereck reported that he had also attended the Salem County Board meeting and noted that the NRCS Working group was discussed and thanked Julie Hawkins for the assistance that they are trying to provide during this difficult time. He too congratulated Dante Spina, Sr., on a remarkable 47 years on the Board of the Vineland Produce Cooperative. In addition, they recognized Henry DuBois for being honored at the recent State Agricultural Convention and they surprised Eric Buzby with a service award. He noted that the Gloucester County CADB will be meeting on April 23 and there are four farms on the agenda for preservation, they are anxious to see the values using the new formula. He attended the VGA meeting, and it was noted that we need to work collaboratively towards the Convention. He noted that the Wakefern meeting was pretty optimistic and that the most notable thing for the meeting was they wanted to take their yearly buying power of local produce up to \$100 million yearly, in the next three years. So that's something to look forward to that I think will make an impact. The way they want to do that is to differentiate Jersey products through labeling that's Jersey Fresh specific and a special PLU number for the Jersey products. Also, from the Wakefern meeting was that they invited Secretary Wengryn and myself to join Dave Arena and Ross Farnsworth for a panel discussion at their Producer Summit in July. Finally, on a personal note, I testified on behalf of Viereck Farms at the budget hearing and thought that it was very productive what was said at the Assembly budget hearings. So pretty much all the asks were covered that everybody's looking for and hopefully something productive about that. For Farm Credit, ballots for the yearly election should be out now. The two candidates are Kurt Alstede, New Jersey and Jamie Jones, both candidates are very qualified, and he encouraged everyone to vote. Finally, he announced that there will be a budget committee meeting on April 9 where we be discussing commodity taxes and we'll be reviewing the Ag and Natural Resources Division. He thanked Secretary Wengryn for forwarding the invitation about the event at the White House on Friday. I was lucky enough to be picked for that and look forward to going to DC and will report back after.

Vice President Lee reported that he had attended the Atlantic County Legislative Dinner, held at Tomasello Winery and that it was well attended. Jen LaMonica, Brandon Razzo and Augie Wuillermin all spoke to the group. He noted that there is a very strong Atlantic County Commissioner support for

agriculture which is a very good thing. He reported that Assemblywoman Andrea Katz, Chairwoman of the Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee was also in attendance to hear firsthand from farmers some of the problems that they are having. He commented that throughout today's meeting communication with the DEP has been mentioned several times and suggested that it may be a good idea to have a Committee of this Board meet with the leadership of DEP. We need to change the narrative, and we need to change our approach. He commented that Chairwoman Katz has asked that we be able to provide testimony so that we can tell our story to the members of the different committees. He noted that he was able to reach out to former Board members Kurt Alstede and Lisa Specca who were able to provide testimony that was helpful for the members to hear about the importance of Jersey Fresh. He noted that the more we talk publicly about our challenges the more it helps the legislature in terms of being able to fight on our behalf when it comes time to line items in the budget. In addition, he thanked Board member Joel Viereck for taking the time to testify, you're representing your farms, but just having testimony from the farming community has really helped the legislature. He noted that Camden County Board of Agriculture will be having their legislators' event on April 21, at Springdale Farms and that all Board members would be getting an invitation. I also sadly have to report on the passing of Bonnie Pastore of Pastore Orchards on March 22, her funeral is tomorrow. For those of you who don't know, Bonnie's son is Neil Pastore, who is the President of the Camden County Board of Agriculture. He noted that in Burlington County, the commodity reports were given by all the folks in the room and everyone's anxious about getting the season ready to go in terms of getting back to work. I informed the Burlington County Board of Agriculture that he was interested in pursuing the State Board of Agriculture seat for next year and that he has submitted a letter to John Vanini, President of the South Jersey Caucus. He stated that Burlington County Board member Roger Kumpel indicated that the caucus meeting on March 17, Saint Patrick's Day, had the highest attendance they've ever had in 30 years and I think it amplifies the importance of what the caucus structure is about, what it's for, and how it helps guides us, so I'm really excited about that high turnout. He reported that Secretary Wengryn was in attendance and reported to the Board on the things that are happening in the Department and touched on the importance of having good communication and working with the Legislature in terms of the Department budget. In addition, he reported that there is a lot of prescribed burning going on in South Jersey, this has been one of the few periods of weather that we've been able to do prescribed burning. We have roughly, I think right now in South Jersey, roughly 1000, maybe 1500, 2000 acres that are burned thus far, the deadline for that was March 15 but the Forest Service has given us the ability to be able to burn a little later going into the end of the month, and that it is all weather dependent. As you know, I attended the Ocean Spray annual growers meeting where I was able to learn a little bit about what's happening in terms of Specialty Crop Block Grant monies that have been appropriated, unfortunately, there seems to be a battle within USDA and OMB in terms of when to release that money.

President Blew reported that Liz Thompson from Farm Bureau was at both Cumberland and Cape May county board meetings and there was a great turn out. She gave me a lovely sticker with a cow on it that I stuck on my iPad. So, I'm really happy about that because I love my baseball hats and my stickers. Anyway, she brought out a map, and she wants everybody to put a dot or a star and rotate where their farms are on a map, and I thought it'll be a really cool collection when she's done it. It showed me how excited farmers are to brag about where they are and what they do, but also how terrible we are at geography because she didn't put any roads on. It was just an outline of the county. So, if you're near the county border, you're good, but otherwise it's all over the place. He reported that something coming

out of Cape May County Board meeting was about SNAP payment training and they think it would be great if this could have an online option for that. I don't know how we even go about it. Secretary Wengryn stated that during COVID they allowed them to have an online training but have now said that they must be in person again. Secretary noted that we are working on this to see if something could be done. President Blew reported that he had attended the first Urban Ag Committee initial meeting with the Urban Ag community, and although we did not solve all the world's problems, we definitely got a good conversation flowing and going to be meeting more regularly. Later that evening, Vice President Lee and I attended the quarterly meeting of the Vegetable Growers Association. Joel Viereck was also there, and it was a great meeting for a number of reasons. One, we talked about the convention about what worked, what didn't work, how it can be improved to make a better convention for everyone involved. We also just fielded a lot of questions. It was amazing how many farmers were there that came up to us afterwards to say, hey, it's been a long time since you just had somebody from the State Board that wasn't a VGA member just show up to a meeting and field questions and talk to us about any grievance issue or a question about a piece of legislature. It was it was just a really great collaborative meeting and I'm going to try really hard to make it to one of those meetings going forward and I would love as I come off the board, a commitment from the members surrounding me to try to at least get to a couple of those meetings a year because I think they warrant our attention and anything we can do to help the partnership between them and the department would be beneficial for both of us.

Board member Dave DeFrance stated to the audience that Department employee, Dan Wunderlich, Dairy Specialist, presented Hunterdon County Board of Agriculture with a very clear, positive discussion on raw milk and that he gave them a lot of good, pertinent information that was very informative and that this was a very positive meeting to have an understanding of raw milk.

NEW BUSINESS

ON the MOTION of Joel Viereck, seconded by Rick Gardner, the Board voted unanimously to make the following motion to accept and adopt the evaluation of Secretary Wengryn from March 2024 through December 2025 as presented and establish this evaluation as the base:

WHEREAS, the Board has reviewed departmental financial information, including legal and operational expenditures, and recognizes the need for strengthened financial controls, oversight, and accountability; and

WHEREAS, the Board affirms its responsibility to ensure sound stewardship of public resources and the effective management of departmental operations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board directs the Secretary to take immediate steps to strengthen financial discipline across the Department, including the establishment of clear internal controls, approval thresholds, and accountability measures related to expenditures, with particular attention to legal and professional service costs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary shall present to the Board within 60 days a proposed policy and implementation plan outlining the actions taken, the controls to be instituted, and the process for ongoing monitoring and reporting to the Board.

Vice President Lee noted that the Board is still taking applications for two farmer positions on the SADC. But the Grants Committee has been working diligently on reviewing the Agritourism Grant applications and that has been taking up most of their time. The goal is to have the grant applications reviewed by March 30 and then the Committee will be meeting on April 13 for final review. He did ask that the Board vote to authorize the Grants Committee in conjunction with Department staff to submit recommendations to Travel and Tourism for the grant awards, essentially because it goes through Travel and Tourism, we must get the approval of the full Board to do that.

ON the MOTION of Stephen Lee, seconded by Joel Viereck, the Board authorizes the Grants Committee in conjunction with Department staff to approve the awards and submit them to the Travel and Tourism Division.

Board member Holly Sytsema reported that the Strategic Planning Committee has met and the Board members have a copy of the preliminary document with the table of contents, mission, vision and core values. The Committee is looking for the Board to give approval on the current draft so that we can move forward. Also attached are the goals and objective sheets. She noted that this is the first draft, but she wanted all the Board members to be able to see it first. She reported that the Committee will be engaging with the Division Directors, regarding the goals and objectives, we're going to be working with them on how their division ties into what we have listed here. She commented that this is a very fluid document, and we want to keep it that way for right now. President Blew asked if there was any discussion on just the first part of the Mission, Vision and the Core Values.

ON the MOTION of Holly Sytsema, seconded by Rick Gardner, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Mission, Vision and Core Values as presented.

President Blew again thanked the Board members not on the Grants Committee for all that they are doing to keep things moving.

It was noted that we need to develop SOPs for some things that everyone should know and be aware of. The Board would like to see that happen so that there does not need to be a learning curve with each new Board.

Urban Agriculture Committee

Chairman Dave DeFrance reported on the first meeting of the Urban Agriculture Committee that was held on March 18. He reported that turn out of the Committee members gave us a chance to better understand what the community's needs are and to highlight which direction urban agriculture is going and how we can work together. It was discussed that the meetings will move around the state and one of the places that they would like to visit is C.R.O.P.S so that we can see some of the issues that they are having. He stated that C.R.O.P.S is Communities Revolutionizing Open Public Spaces, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Their mission is to alleviate food insecurity through empowering healthy, interconnected communities by cultivating fresh produce, ensuring access to nutritious food, providing educational programming, and advocating for sustainable food systems and collaborative solutions.

President Blew said that it was a great first meeting and noted that we are addressing the resolution process of the delegates.

Board member Holly Sytsema commented that although she is not on the Urban Ag Committee but noted that both Pennsylvania and New York both have excellent programs for Urban Ag and suggested reaching out to them.

Holly Sytsema reported that at the last Board meeting there was discussion about a survey regarding raw milk for both producers and consumers. She asked Dan Wunderlich, Dairy Specialist, to give a brief overview of the Raw Milk presentation that was made to Hunterdon County Board of Agriculture. She noted that there were 1635 responses from consumers and 28 responses from producers. Key items that need to be addressed:

Raw Milk production with direct sales to the consumer requires a higher level of all around Management:

- Farmer training, education and/or mentoring.
- Risk Management Plan that fits each farm's unique conditions.
- Greater level of bacterial test standards for Standard Plate Count (SPC), and Coliforms. Lower counts at achievable levels
- Continuous Improvement.

Education of Producer:

- The goal of every farm that considers selling raw milk for direct consumption is that it is a long-term mission, never fully completed, never fully perfected. No matter how much you implement there will always be something to learn and much to teach others.
- There needs to be a complete understanding by the producer of what will be expected within the rule prior to starting any development.
- Whatever common standards are included into a regulatory document as new information is discovered and technology evolves; amendments must readily be made to reflect that information and discovery.

Farm Training and/or Hands-on Experience:

- Includes how cows are Housed Handled and cared for.
 - Herd Health reviews include testing and vaccinations as preventive measures.
 - Highest level of oversight and health of the cow itself.
 - Animal Husbandry of the herd.
 - How the cows are handled, type of living conditions, cleanliness of the cows.
 - Closed Herd or stringent testing of incoming cattle to the farm at any age.
 - All Cattle on the premises must be tested no segregating of a special group for raw milk sales.
 - Increased Bio-Security of the entire farm.
 - Milking equipment and bottling equipment are appropriate for maintaining cleanliness.
 - Includes how bottle milk is sold or transferred to consumers.
 - Sanitation protocols developed and maintained.

Risk Management Plan:

- Complete plan on operational procedures of the farm.
- Defines how the farm, barn, processing room all operate, would include Standard Operation Procedures.

- Defines time controls on cooling milk, testing of milk and shelf life of the milk restricting the sale to the consumer.
- Could include a third-party audit of the entire operation.
- Establishing a separate business entity for the raw milk bottling and sales. Protects the basic farm operation but must not be a broken shell.
- Increased levels of insurance coverage for a higher risk product being sold by the operation. Lenders may require additional insurance to protect the loan.
- Recommended that customer-based education program be developed so they understand the inherent risks.

Pathogen Control and Milk Quality:

- Starting with a pure product. Standards must be at a value-added level as there are no safety nets to destroy pathogens or protect quality.
- Regulations should contain the language "Milk Must Not Contain Harmful Pathogens".
- Herds tested for Tuberculosis and be Brucellosis Free.
- Four main Pathogens
 - Salmonella spp.
 - E. coli 0157:H7.
 - Campylobacter spp.
 - Listeria Monocytogenes Milk Quality
 - PMO standard for Grade A, SPC 100,000 CFU/ML vs Raw milk direct sale at 5,000 CFU/ML.
 - PMO standard for Grade A Coliforms 10 CFU/ML vs Raw Milk direct sale 10 CFU/ML.
 - Both are based on three-month average but taken monthly. It should have a maximum single count limit.
 - No comingling of milk from other farms.
 - Milk cooled to below 40 degrees F within two hours verified by a time clock.
 - Cooling media such as water may or may not be allowed to cool the bottles.

Continued Considerations and Improvements:

- A clear definition of how and where milk could be sold.
- Volume limits of sales. Sales intended for the end consumer.
- Must maintain all licenses for regulatory sales without lapses.
- Will program only be milk or could include milk products.
- Restrictions on other types of sales in the state such as shares or club trading of milk and/or milk products.
- Regulations must be fluid in a way to amend as needed or on an emergency notice.

Records:

- All milk batches bottled must be Appendix N tested for antibiotics.
- Producer minimum requirement of composite sample of each bottled batch kept frozen for two weeks. Additional samples and longer hold time recommended.
- List of all customers with address must be maintained.
- List of transitions must be maintained as defined by a regulation with minimum recommendation of one year.

- All products must abide by a labeling regulation defining type of product. The wording **Unpasteurized** in bold letters.
- Has a risk statement included on the label in bold print to identify the product is unpasteurized and may contain harmful bacteria and pathogens.
 - Example “Consuming raw unpasteurized milk may cause illness, particularly in children, seniors, persons with weakened immune systems, and pregnant women”.

The Board thanked Dan for the informative presentation.

Our mission is to alleviate food insecurity through empowering healthy, interconnected communities by cultivating fresh produce, ensuring access to nutritious food, providing educational programming, and advocating for sustainable food systems and collaborative solutions.

President Blew reported that at the recent VGA meeting they talked about the Resolution from the State Ag Convention looking into Commodity Groups, check off programs and they would like the Board to review them as they feel that there are a few programs that are not generating a lot of money and seem to be more of a hassle to producers than what they are worth.

Joel Viereck, Chairman of the Budget & Operations Committee noted that the Commodity Councils is one of the things that the Committee would be looking at when meeting with the Division of Markets.

Secretary Wengryn announced that he had just received an invitation from the Mount family who will be having a Memorial Service for Gary on April 14 at 1:30 pm at Terhune Orchards.

Vice President Lee announced that on April 29, 2026, there will be a Memorial Service for Dr. Nicholi Vorsa, who was the Director of the Marucci Center for many years.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tim Hionis, Board member-elect, was on the phone to bring up on behalf of farmers that are leasing state land, and he has been hearing for the last couple of months since the convention that there's issues with the restrictions that are on leased land. He wanted to find out if there is any follow-up to what's going on with this. He's hearing it's not favorable for farmers. It seems like they're getting their hands tied into what they can and cannot do on these lands.

Secretary Wengryn commented that the DEP Commissioner has met with a couple of those farmers on this issue there. He kind of explained the position of his agencies preserved leases and lease agreements farmers signed. The terms are in the lease agreement. Know your agreement before you sign it. Whether you agree or disagree with what DEP is trying to do, those are discussions we're going to continue to have with the Commissioner about better ways to do some of the program things they want to accomplish through their leases.

Tim continued, I asked kind of like the same thing, do you negotiate the restrictions beforehand? And I was kind of getting a back-and-forth thing. So, most of them were saying not really. The bid is the bid and whatever they put it on as far as restrictions are, it's a take it or leave it type of attitude towards the farmers. If it was me, I would want to be able to at least negotiate. If these farmers are putting in the

effort and the cost and the time to utilize these fields, they should have a say of what goes on. What they can and cannot do before they say yes.

It was noted that these discussions are ongoing and that it is important that we stay engaged because when the leases turnover and the new language is instituted many will not be happy. It was also noted that this could be one of the items that the new DEP Committee can work on, including pesticide licensing and all the DEP interfaces.

MEETINGS

The next regular meeting of the State Board of Agriculture will be held on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, at 200 Riverview Plaza, Trenton, beginning at 1:00 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

ON the MOTION of Hillary Barile, seconded by Rick Gardner, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the regular meeting at 3:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Edward D. Wengryn