



Direct News.....

May 2005

Volume 2 Issue 2

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Officers

Neil Robson
President

Tannwen Mount
Vice-President

Bob Phillips
Treasurer

Jackie Bricker
Secretary
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This and that:

- The next Director's mtg is May 18, 7 PM at NJDA
- The summer Twilight mtg is planned for Aug 11, at the Robson farm in Wrightstown
- Membership for 2005 is up to 132 members.
- For questions, feedback, or suggestions regarding this newsletter contact editor Pegi Ballister-Howells 609-426-1690 or Pegi@comcast.net
- MADMC 2006 is scheduled for Feb 22—26 in Reading Pa. The first planning sessions is April 20 at the Reading Sheraton.

From the President: Getting Started

The season for direct marketing got off to an early start this year. Easter in March jump starts the opportunities and the demands on the direct marketer. Creating awareness that the farm market is open is key to bringing back your many loyal customers. In turn, using your early sales to promote your later season produce and products has proven to be beneficial. Flyers with coupons for later in the season are inexpensive promotional tools that can go home with every customer. Include dates of events, contact information, a recipe, or even availability chart of what produce you will have at what time of year. Anything that will make the customer want to hold onto the flyer will encourage them to look at it again throughout the season. A discount coupon for the following

week may bring them back quickly.

Diversity of early product will also bring in customers with the first breath of spring air. Pansies are a must, but a selection of early bedding plants and heirloom vegetables has appeal to home gardeners. Many gardeners enjoy the homey feeling of a farm stand. If more of their garden needs can be met at your market, they may skip the big box stores altogether.

Don't forget to take advantage of the marvels of technology. Let Jackie Bricker at the NJDA know of any changes you want on your listing on the website at www.jerseyfresh.nj.gov. If you have an email list of customers be sure to send out an eye catching note to remind them you are open. Coupons and availability

charts can be sent through cyberspace extremely cost effectively. Customers want to come back. We just have to let them know we are ready.

Neil Robson
President

NJ Farm & Rural Energy Seminar 2005

The cost of energy in production agriculture takes a large bite out of farmers' profits. A cost savings tool may be implementation of renewable energy projects or energy conservation measures. The USDA Rural Development & the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU), Office of Clean Energy, assisted by the US Department of Energy are holding a series of Public Information Meetings concerning the availability of renewable energy grants and energy efficiency as well as rebates for farmers and businesses in New Jersey. They will be held in Warren County on April 22 and Cumberland County on May 12. Eligibility criteria and funding under USDA Farm Bill Section 9006 will be explained. Grants of up to 60 to 70% for renewable energy projects will be discussed. Seminar registration information can be found at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/nj/docs/NJfarmseminar.com> or contact Karen Kritz (NJDA) 609-984-2506 for more information.

Tom Everett Says Good-bye

Tom Everett stepped down as Vice-President of NJFDMA in March. This is just one of the many agricultural organizations where Tom generously gave his time. You could not meet Tom and not be impressed with his quiet strength and sense of integrity. While a man of few words, whatever he said was worth hearing. He succumbed to pancreatic cancer after a long battle at age 55 on April 2. In this, as in all things, Tom lived and led by example. His many awards give testimony to this, but nothing is more telling than his loving wife Kris and wonderful children Rachel, Kaitlin and David that he has left behind. Tom's own light has gone out, but he brightened the world in so many ways, he will long be remembered. Donations can be made to the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network Inc., 2221 Rosecrans Ave., Suite 131, El Segundo, California 90245.

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Be Direct!



Order Jersey Fresh POP materials NOW!

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Small \$5 per roll of 1000
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JF Tee Shirts (Limit 20 total)
Large \$7 ea.
X-Large \$7 ea
FREE ITEMS
7" x 11" JF price cards
7" x 11" commodity specific
JF price cards
3½" x 5½" JF price cards
JF availability chart/poster
2½ ft x 2½ ft JF decal/poster
**CONTACT: Jackie Bricker
NJDA 609-292-8853 ☼**



BEWARE!

Ken Wightman brought to the attention of the Board that there is a New York business group attempting to encroach on the fall activities that are a major part of the Direct Market business plan. This group approached the Middlesex County Fair Association to rent the fair grounds for the month of October. They wanted to set up a family entertainment center of hayrides, animals, pumpkins etcetera. This kind of large scale operation would be in direct competition with the most critical profit making opportunities available to farm markets. The Middlesex County Fair Association turned down the group, but they are looking for alternative locations.



VGANJ Cookbooks 50th Anniversary Edition

VGANJ has reprinted their cookbook with over 750 recipes. Most are from long established farm families, but others are from celebrities including Lady Bird Johnson and Kenny Rogers. These are meant to retail for \$15 but can be purchased by the case (27 per case) for \$11 each. Call Pegi Ballister-Howells for more info (609-426-1690). ☼

Promotion Brochures Under Consideration

Tannwen Mount of Terhune Orchards and VP of NJFDMA, suggested the development of tri-fold brochures to promote the markets of members of the Association. The brochure could include a map of the state with market locations indicated. The exact content is still under consideration, but there is nothing current available to the public that lists the farm markets. Due to budget cuts most printing of this type of promotional material by the State have been eliminated. Rest stops, visitor centers and even hotels are always looking for handouts to encourage tourism.

NJFDMA received Jersey Fresh matching funds that need to be used. All promotional activities are now required to be directed towards consumers. Farmer to farmer promotion no longer fits the requirements. This brochure project may be the perfect promotion to fulfill these requirements and really reach out to the public. A decision will be made after all the costs and benefits have been evaluated.

Del Val Opens New Farm Market

On April 16th, Delaware Valley College opened a new State-of-the-Art Farm Market. This new market is intended to be a teaching facility and all proceeds will benefit the college. The project was supported by a \$600,000 grant from the Dept. of Community and Economic Development. The 8,200 square foot facility is on a 20 acre site on the Bucks County Campus. The College has operated a farm market for 18 years. This new and improved version will be better equipped as a tool for teaching and recruiting students as well as for farmer training.

FreshMan Coloring Books Available

The Story of FreshMan coloring book tells the story of the challenges facing many New Jersey farmers. The 16 page booklet has the story and 8 pages to color which include several activity pages. They retail for \$1 each. Quantity discounts are available. Contact Pegi Ballister-Howells for more info. (609-426-1690)