



Direct News.....

June 2005

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www.njfdma.com

Officers

Neil Robson
President

Tannwen Mount
Vice-President

Bob Phillips
Treasurer

Jackie Bricker
Secretary
609-292-5567



This and that:

- The next Director's mtg is Sept 14, 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 134 members.
- For questions, feedback, or suggestions regarding this newsletter contact editor Pegi Ballister-Howells at 609-426-1690 or Pegi@comcast.net
- Copies of our newsletter "Be Direct" have been sent to all County Boards of Ag and all Community Farmers Markets to encourage new members.

From the President: Working Towards a Great Season

Between mid April and mid May the weather took a 180 degree turn. Wet ground turned almost dusty dry and irrigation equipment came out early. The weather effects all farmers, but those of us that have retail markets worry that bad weather keeps customers home. We were lucky a bit, in that predicted bad weekend weather turned out better than expected. Many farm markets have done very well with bedding plants as it seems families are turning out with enthusiasm to dress up their yards. Crops are late though, and that is discouraging. Crop availability charts can be handed out to customers to remind them what crops will be available at what time. The NJFB Produce Growers Directory has a chart that can be printed out on the front and back of an 8½ X 11. Go to NJFB.org, click on Produce Growers Directory and then on Growing Seasons.

NJFDMA is planning a Twilight Meeting again this summer. It will be at Robson Farms, Route 537, Wrightstown on August 11. You will receive more information as we get closer but put it on your calendar now so you can be sure not to miss it. We have found the interaction of farmers is beneficial to everyone. Sharing ideas, networking and the camaraderie of getting together are some of the things that set the ag community apart. To take this one step further, we will be asking one farmer that direct markets to attend each of our meetings to share their experiences with the group. We are hoping this will allow our organization to generate new ideas and identify issues that we can address. Please plan to join us. All our members are always welcome.

Neil Robson
President

Jersey Fresh Update

Jersey Fresh Matching Grant monies have been awarded and recipients of the grants will be receiving their checks shortly. This year's total grant amount was \$75,000. The amount requested was over \$400,000 so if you are not among the lucky recipients you will not be alone. Budget cuts across the board have strained the NJDA's resources. Even so, it may be wise to continue to use the Jersey Fresh logo in ads and promotions so consumers continue to feel the presence of the Jersey Fresh concept. Budgets have a way of rebounding and it may be worth the effort to maintain continuity during this funding setback.

The Jersey Fresh logo is available on disk, by email or as clip art. Contact Jackie Bricker at 609-292-5567 or jacqueline.bricker@ag.state.nj.us.

Unfortunately, the selection process of an Advertising Agency has delayed the scheduling of promotion efforts in the media. Trade magazines are using a repeat of last year's ads, so the department was able to move forward with that aspect of the program without the new agency in place. It is hoped that the selection process is coming to an end and we will see JF ads in the near future.

Transportation Costs Way Up

May Help NJ Farmers

The shipping of produce from the west coast is getting very expensive. High gasoline prices are increasing shipping to \$5000 to \$7000 per load. In some cases from California it is as high as \$10,000. Similar transportation costs are being incurred from Texas and Arizona. Trucking south from Canada is a little less at \$3000 to \$5000 per load. This enormous burden is adding from \$5 to \$8 per package in freight alone. This can only be a good thing for local produce. Vine ripened quality combined with low freight may just get New Jersey farmers the increase in sales they deserve.

*New Jersey Farmer's
Direct Marketing Association*

C/O NJDA
PO Box 330
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0330

Phone: 609-292-5567

Fax: 609-341-3212

Email: info@NJFDMA.com

Be Direct!



Jersey Fresh POP Materials Are Still Available!

Jersey Fresh Logo Stickers
Small \$5 per roll of 1000
Large \$5 per roll of 1000
JF Banners (4 X 7 feet) \$30
JF Pennants (60 ft, vinyl) \$20
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
3 1/2" x 5 1/2" JF price cards
JF availability chart/poster
2 1/2 ft x 2 1/2 ft JF decal/poster
**CONTACT: Jackie Bricker
NJDA 609-292-8853 ☼**

VGANJ Cookbooks Supply getting low!!

Only 400 cookbooks were printed. Some were given away at convention in January. Those farms that have carried them are selling them quickly. Once the supply is gone they will not be re-printed. They retail for \$15 but can be purchased by the case (27) for \$11 each. Call Pegi Ballister-Howells for more info (609-426-1690). ☼

Community Markets Looking for Farmers

Many of the tailgate markets have proven to be a tremendous opportunity for farmers to sell their produce directly to consumers. In many cases the towns need additional vendors to round out the selection of product and to insure adequate volume. The following towns have contacted the NJDA or NJFDMA directly to indicate they are looking for farmers:

Belmar Farmers Market-Annette Berginn-732-681-9023 - Pyance & Belmar Plaza (between Main & train station) Sat., 10 am to 3 pm.

Lawrenceville Farmers Market - Mike Azzara - 609-206-0344 - 16 Grove St, Sundays, 9am to 1 pm.
Middlesex Borough Farmers Market - Jack Van Doren -732-356-1215 - on Rt. 28/Union Ave, near Middlesex High School, across from McD's

Sergeantsville Farmers Market-Deirdre Alderfer-908-284-4920, across from Delaware Township building-Saturdays 8:30 am to 12 noon

Vineland- Main Street Farmers Market - Margie Venturi-856-696-1111, 700 block of Landis Ave, Saturdays, 9 am to 2 pm

Flemington-Liberty Village Premium Outlets-Robert Moore-908-782-8550-Sundays 10am -6pm.
FREE!



Looking for Produce?

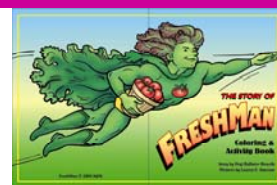
A great resource for finding the produce you need is the Produce Growers Directory website. Originally compiled as hard copy in 1994, it has been repeatedly revised and then put on the internet several years ago. Go to NJFB.org and click on the directory. If you would like to update your own listing you can go to the application pages and fill out the application. Be sure to follow all directions carefully.

If you do not have computer access, a hard copy of the Directory may be obtained from NJFB. Contact Pegi Ballister-Howells at 609-426-1690.

You can also visit the Jersey Fresh website at nj.gov/jerseyfresh/index.html. Click wholesale produce. Then go to commodities to see who grows what and follow that with a look at the growers listings to find out about each producer.

WIC & Seniors FM Nutrition Program

Only local farmers who are certified in the FMNP can accept WIC & Seniors vouchers. Last season \$1.4 million went into local farmers' pockets. We expect Farmers to take home at least that much this year. June 1 to Nov. 30 voucher recipients will be seeking farm markets who are Certified Farmer Vendors. **Current vendors, please don't forget to deposit your vouchers weekly. Regular deposits assure accurate redemption rates.**



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)