



August Newsletter

August 2016

Important Dates!!!

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August 10th is the final planting date for processing beans!

August 15th acreage reports are due for processing bean policies!



Dickeya dianthicola update: 8/2/16

Source: <http://plant-pest-advisory.rutgers.edu/dickeya-dianthicola-update-8216/>

Special Points of Interest

- *Dickeya* is not covered by crop insurance
- Whole Farm Revenue Protection is available in every county in the nation
- Today, approximately one-third of New Jersey's population has a foreign-born background and actively seeks food crops not commonly found in U.S. grocery stores

In addition to *Dickeya dianthicola* being found in potato fields in New Jersey, the pathogen has also been detected in fields from Long Island to Florida this summer. To date using PCR testing and seed certification records, the pathogen has been detected in 11 states (DE, FL, MD, MA, NJ, NY, NC, PA, RI, VA, and WV). Potato growers, crop consultants, and Extension personnel in states which grow potatoes from Maine or New Brunswick, Canada

should remain vigilant by scouting their fields for *Dickeya* symptoms on a regular basis and by submitting any suspect samples for diagnostic testing. *Dickeya dianthicola* has been detected in the US in the past, and because of this, APHIS just recently announced that the pathogen has been designated as a **non-reportable/non-actionable pathogen** despite its potential to cause 100% crop loss. A link to the USDA/APHIS website for information on

Dickeya dianthicola detection and control can be found at: www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/planthealth/plant-pest-and-disease-programs/pests-and-diseases/sa_nematode/sa_potato/ct_dickeya



Crop Insurance Continues to Strengthen Rural Communities

Source: <http://blogs.usda.gov/2016/07/14/crop-insurance-continues-to-strengthen-rural-communities/>



America's farmers and ranchers work hard to provide food for the world, contributing to the nation's economy, as well as to the strength of our rural communities. To support our nation's hardworking producers, we've developed programs designed to help them stay at the forefront of global production, to adapt to market changes and protect their operations even after bad years.

Although many farm programs have come and gone, one program has continued to grow and become even more critical to the farm safety net. Federal crop insurance has become the preeminent risk management tool for our nation's agricultural producers, and has adapted to meet the diverse needs now more than ever. In fact, even Congress recognized the importance of the federal crop insurance program in the 2014 Farm Bill. As other programs were eliminated or reduced, new requirements and expansions were mandated for the program as a cost-efficient and proven way to keep agriculture strong.

New policies like the Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) and APH Yield Exclusion (APH YE) were implemented by the Risk Management Agency as a result of the Farm Bill, providing new options for producers suffering from years of drought or other severe weather conditions. The Whole-Farm Revenue Protection policy (Whole-Farm), also outlined in the Farm Bill, was developed by USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) in concert with producer groups, to provide an innovative and effective tool for smaller farms, diverse farms, and those growing specialty and organic crops. Whole-Farm was first offered in 2015, and by 2016 it was available in every county in the nation – a first for federal crop insurance.

Even as the crop insurance program expanded, RMA took steps to strengthen program integrity. It reduced its error rate for improper payments by more than half; and at 2.2 percent, it is well below the government-wide average of 4.39 percent. The agency also improved its compliance methodology to include additional layers of data analysis, to continue to have better oversight of program dollars.

These expansions and the efficient delivery of the program have helped keep the rural economy going, even after severe weather has ruined fields and lowered prices for crops. When crop prices are low, access to credit is critical for farmers to manage risk. Producers who purchase federal crop insurance have better access to credit and are often able to receive lower loan interest rates.

The program continues to grow for the 2016 crop year and into the future. More crops than ever will be eligible for organic price elections, offering organic producers the ability to insure their products closer to market value than the conventionally-grown equivalent. Expansion in the availability of SCO for certain crops will continue, just as more crops will be eligible under the APH YE program, meaning more producers hit with years of drought will be able to find some relief. Even the Whole-Farm Revenue Protection program has expanded. It provides coverage under one policy for all revenue from a farm, up to \$8.5 million. This now can include greenhouse and nursery products up to \$1 million and animals and animal products up to \$1 million as well.

However farming and farm products change to meet the market need, crop insurance will continue to adapt and strengthen its programs to meet the needs of our producers.

Growing Ethnic Vegetables in the Garden State; Research Focuses on Specialty Crops

Source: <https://njaes.rutgers.edu/spotlight/ethnic-vegetables.asp>

Fresh fruit and vegetable consumption has been on a steady decline but a wave of health conscious consumers and the growing "eat local" movement have provided some measure of optimism. In certain states like New Jersey, another wave of consumers of fresh produce is immigrants from other countries who bring their traditional food preferences to their new homeland. While this growing segment of the population creates higher demand for fresh produce, it is largely an uncharted market for growers.

Today, approximately one-third of New Jersey's population has a foreign-born background and actively seeks food crops not commonly found in U.S. grocery stores. Much of this ethnic produce is sourced from importers and selections may be small or not very fresh, especially for highly perishable items. Sometimes, preferred produce is not at all available and immigrants either substitute a conventional item or go without the item and change their cuisine accordingly.

While a potentially lucrative market, the questions for farmers are many. For the various immigrant groups, what are their produce preferences and are there some items that span various cultures, such as cilantro, which is used in Asian, Hispanic and other cuisines? How do they like them grown and bundled and how do they prepare and use them? Where are the markets for these items? What varieties do well under local growing conditions?

For the individual farmer researching this information would be overwhelming – enough to provide a barrier to entering this market. Several Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station faculty and extension agents have undertaken a number of ethnic crops research projects to help answer some of these questions. Under one such project, Ramu Govindasamy, associate professor and marketing specialist within the [Department of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics](#), along with Rutgers colleagues, cooperated with the universities of Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Florida in a multi-faceted study to document and quantify the ethnic produce market to identify opportunities for farmers to grow crops targeted from a demand perspective.

The specific ethnic market subjects of study are the Asian and Hispanic segments, chosen for their strong recent growth and continued growth expectations. The top two subgroups within each of these segments were chosen for the study; Chinese and Asian Indian and Puerto Rican and Mexican. A 2006 consumer survey of the total ethnic produce market on the East Coast was estimated at more than \$1 billion for all four ethnic groups combined.



Ramu Govindasamy examining pepper plant trials at Rutgers Gardens.

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Growing Ethnic Vegetables in the Garden State Research Focuses on Specialty Crops CONTINUED...

Ethnic vegetables have been the focus of various field and research trials conducted by Rutgers faculty members James Simon, director of the New Use Agriculture and Natural Plant Products Program; Brian Schilling, associate director, [Food Policy Institute](#); instructor Albert Ayeni; research associate Venkat Puduri; as well as several agricultural and resource management agents, including William Sciarappa (Monmouth County); Richard Van Vranken (Atlantic County); Peter Nitzsche (Morris County) and Stephen Komar (Sussex County).



**Habanero pepper trials at Rutgers
Agricultural Research and Extension
Center.**

There is compelling evidence to encourage New Jersey farmers to take the plunge, says Govindasamy. "In the Eastern United States, stakeholders agree there is an urgent need to make farming more profitable to reduce the decline in the number of farmers and farmland acreage. New Jersey's vegetable marketing structure was reviewed by a team of national experts, who concluded that the economic decline of the state's vegetable industry is imminent without a significant change in marketing strategies."

The findings of the various Rutgers NJAES specialty crops research projects reveal that New Jersey's climate is favorable for growing and marketing ethnic crops and have already begun to show small, but growing, dividends for New Jersey farmers. A glimpse at the bounty from our New Jersey farms already indicates that change is underway as evidenced by the array of exotic greens, squashes, exotic eggplants and hot peppers that accompany our traditional staples of corn, tomatoes, sweet peppers and cucumbers.

This newsletter is brought to you by the Garden State Crop Insurance Education Initiative, a partnership between the USDA Risk Management Agency, New Jersey Department of Agriculture and Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Salem County. For additional information about crop insurance contact a crop insurance agent (www3.rma.usda.gov/apps/agents/ or visit our website <http://salem.njaes.rutgers.edu/cropinsurance>, or call our toll free hotline 1-800-308-2449 <http://www.rma.usda.gov/tools/agent.html>

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