Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) Cooperative Extension helps the diverse population of New Jersey adapt to a rapidly changing society and improve their lives and communities through an educational process that uses science based knowledge. Through science-based educational programs, Rutgers Cooperative Extension truly enhances the quality of life for residents of New Jersey and brings the wealth of knowledge of the state university to local communities. Cooperative Extension goals are to ensure healthy lifestyles; provide productive futures for youth, adults, and communities; enhance and protect environmental resources; ensure economic growth and agricultural sustainability; and improve food safety and nutrition.

The program thrust areas include:
- Economic Growth and Agricultural Sustainability
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Human and Community Development
- Environment and Natural Resources
- Food Safety and Nutrition

This report highlights program impact for the calendar year 2010:

- 65,547 Fact Sheets Distributed
- 17,829 Telephone Inquiries
- 46,804 Website Visits
- 10,831 Office Visits
- 30,840 Volunteer Hours Donated
- 266 Educational Meetings
Over 600 youth participated in Ocean County 35 4-H Community Clubs, After School Clubs and our Military 4-H Club at Lakehurst. A new Horse Club- Hoffprints began in Lacey Township and Celtic Riders Horse Club reorganized in Manahawkin-Barnegat.

Volunteers: All club leaders go through screening, training and attend meetings to update skills and keep current on 4-H policies, county and state programs. These volunteers are the backbone of the 4-H program, donating numerous hours yearly. Each leader commits 200 volunteer hours just for club meetings, additional time for weekend events, animal shows and fieldtrips. In 2010, seventy five leaders were honored for contributing over 544 years of service to the Ocean County 4-H Youth Development Program.

The 2010 Ocean County Leader of the Year is Laura Ferrie, Point Pleasant. Mrs. Ferrie is the Organizational Leader for Noah’s Ark Pet Pals and the Fair Superintendent of the Rabbit and Small Animal Show. She is the current President of the O.C. 4-H Association and the county representative to the NJ State 4-H Association and Advisory. She has been a 4-H volunteer for 11 years. The 2010 Ocean County Community Volunteer is Mie Lowe, Whiting of Manchester. Mrs. Lowe is the Organizational Leader for the Hare Club, the Showmanship Superintendents during the county fair and Treasurer of the O.C. 4-H Association. Through Mrs. Lowe’s leadership, the Hare Club has received numerous awards for their community service projects around Manchester. Mrs. Lowe has been a volunteer for 7 years.

Ocean County also recognizes two clubs yearly for outstanding 4-H work. The Puppy Power Club, of Toms River, which is a club dedicated to the Seeing Eye Project, received the 2010 Public Relations Award. Club members promoted 4-H around the County through their continued support and educational outreach with raising Seeing Eye puppies. Both youth and adults raise these puppies. Members are often seen walking their puppies at malls, attending Blue Claw games and even riding the train in Point Pleasant to expose the puppies to human behavior.

Noah’s Ark Pet Pals received the 2010 Community Development Award. This club based in Point Pleasant joins in with projects and events in their township. The club is active with beach cleanups, assisting at the yearly Rabies Clinic, offers a Literacy Program with their rabbits and promotes 4-H along the way. The club yearly learns about an environmental issue affecting them. The club is an animal project club, with members having rabbits and other small critters. It is the goal of 4-H to enable our youth to develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to become competent, caring and contributing citizens of the world. Through their 4-H experience, 4-Hers will gain independence, master life long skills and learn to give back to their communities.

National 4-H is targeting three areas: Healthy Living, Science & Technology and Citizenship.

Healthy Living: Ocean 4-H continues to be part of the State wide initiative: Get Moving Get Healthy with 4-H. 4-H Staff taught nutrition at the Lakewood 21st Century Grant After-school program offered at the Clifton Avenue School for Spanish speaking children. 4-H Clubs have health officers assisting the clubs to think healthier with choosing healthy snacks and enjoying more physical activity during meetings. Three clubs took the Rutgers challenge to “Walk” from High Point to Cape May via walking around Ocean County and recording their mileage on the Rutgers RCE web site. Members from the Lakehurst Lightening Bolts, our military Club at Lakehurst, planted a Pizza Garden, with tomatoes, basil, parsley and green peppers.

The Speakers Bureau doubled their talks to sixty with a total audience of 1,634 residents of Ocean County. They created new talks and revised past talks to improve their education Outreach program. Twenty different subjects were presented. Perennials and butterflies were the most popular. Outreach started a program at the Stafford Library in Manahawkin to increase their outreach efforts in southern Ocean County. Twice a month during the growing season, they presented a program at the library and were also available to answer questions.
Family & Community Health Sciences
Joanne Kinsey, FCHS Agent, Ocean and Monmouth Counties

The FCHS program offers nutrition, diet, and healthy lifestyle programs to children and adult communities in Ocean County. Workplace Wellness Series programs continue to be presented at ARC Ocean County in Lakewood. Topics covered have focused on reducing sugar-sweetened beverages, stress management tools, lowering blood pressure with healthy foods.

Adult healthy lifestyle programs have been presented at several senior communities including: A Country Place in Lakewood, The Pines at Whiting, The Enclave in Lakewood, Plumstead Township Seniors, and at the Berkeley Senior Nutrition Site. Programs include simple strategies that help people increase their level of physical activity, choose colorful fresh fruits & vegetables, reduce sweetened drinks, and choose low-fat dairy foods. A presentation was conducted at the Toms River Library during Women’s Health Week in May, and the Master Gardener’s received a presentation on the Health Benefits of Herbs.

Jackson Township’s Christa McAuliffe Middle School hosted a Healthy Teen Expo that focused on healthy lifestyle behaviors and designing a personal strategy for living a healthy lifestyle. At Liberty High School, a presentation on Portion Control was conducted for their Culinary Arts Summer Program.

The Ocean County Strengthening Families Initiative found the FCHS programs engaging, the result was five Parent Nutrition Education programs presented at the following local child care centers: Peppermint Tree in Toms River, Toms River Nursery School, Beachwood Nursery School, a Child Care Providers Training in Toms River, and one at the Ocean County Children’s Home Society Director’s Meeting. In addition, the FCHS programs continue to be successful component of the Brick Library’s Series for Parents of Preschool Children.

SNAP-Ed
Angela Greene, Program Associate

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) offers basic nutrition and food safety information to limited resource residents in Ocean County. Through a series of at least six sessions, we present a variety of topics to adult and youth audiences.

Adult classes have continued at Preferred Behavioral Health of NJ – DARE and WARN programs in Lakewood and NJ Department of Labor One Stop Career Center – WorkForce NJ in Toms River. In 2010 we reached 200 heads of household, impacting a total 684 family members.

Our programming for adolescents is presented during bi-weekly sessions at the Ocean County Children’s Shelter in Toms River. We reached approximately 30 adolescents during the school year.

The largest segment of the county population reached through our program was elementary school youth, with 3,341 children participating in this year’s project. A series of six learning sessions were presented to each class (grades K-6) at Hugh J. Boyd Elementary School in Seaside Heights, South Toms River Elementary School in South Toms River and all of the Lakewood Elementary Schools -Clifton Ave. Grade School, Ella G. Clarke School, Oak Street School and Spruce Street School.

Science and Technology: Science remains deeply rooted in Ocean County 4-H with more than 250 of our members owning animals. Members learn about animal management and animal science to keep their animals healthy.

Animalogy: A favorite winter program is a team competition based on project knowledge about horses, goats, cats, dogs, rabbits, cows, first aid and nutrition. Four team teams study together, then the rounds begin, with finally one Junior and one Senior team earning the best of the best Score for the event.

The Horse program has two state events based on animal science skills: Horse Bowl and Horse Judging and Hippology. Two senior members, Alexa Forman, Jackson and Ellyn Bissey, Toms River, represented Ocean County on the 2010 State Team for the National Round Up in Lexington, KY during November.

TNR: Trap, Neuter and Release: 4-H members from the Hare Club and Fancy Felines assisted the Ocean County Animal Shelter’s Volunteer Auxiliary with projects in Manchester and Jackson. One feral cat might produce 8 off springs in one year, which can in turn produce at least another 20 cats. Since the 4-Hers do not want to see more animals in the shelters, they helped with this project of trapping, neutering and releasing the animals.

Robotics: Lakewood Lightning Bolts, our military club on the Navy Base at Lakehurst has been working with robotics. The Military 4-H Assistant, Miss Michele visits the club monthly, with various science lessons. One of the most popular lessons was learning about robotics.

Citizenship: Learning about Civic engagement and giving back to their communities is one of the most important lessons the 4-H program practices each year. Teen Council sewed warm hats for a church’s outreach at the Square in Lakewood.

Pet Pantry: 4-Hers love their animals and pets. With our recent economic times, many families know of families that have had to give up their pets due to lack of funds for food. 4-Hers are assisting local food banks with pet food donations. In 2010, 4-H and a few county residents donated over 900 pounds to two food banks: one in Jackson and one in Toms River. Our cat club brings cans of cat food for their monthly dues, which in turn is donated to the Ocean County Animal Shelter in Jackson. The food banks say the clients are so thrilled to receive “real food” for their dog or cat as opposed to feeding them rice or pasta. Leader, Miche Lowe said “my club feels so good when we can bring in 10 to 15 bags of dog food, knowing we are helping families”. For the 2010 Awards Night, 4-Hers brought over 200 toys which were collected for the Toms River Police’s Annual Toys For Tots Drive.

4-H in the Spotlight: Often 4-H is asked to come, share their story, animals and other projects around the county. Naturally our biggest event is the Ocean County Fair. Members, leaders and families spend the week at the fair grounds. During the 2010 fair, over 600 projects were displayed in the General Tent and 200 animals were housed by the 4-Hers. Dog members marched in the Lacey Christmas Parade, Dirt Devils built a float for the Toms River Halloween Parade, 5 clubs went to the Pine Barrens Jamboree, Noah’s Ark Pet Pals were at the Point Pleasant Summerfest, Paddock Pals of Toms River invited the public to their barn during Horse Month, Cross Street Riders and Animals Lovers assisted at Barnegat Pet Day.
In 2010, the Barnegat Bay Shellfish Restoration Program expanded on its previous successes and tackled a new way to put more shellfish into the Barnegat Bay. Twelve new volunteers completed the Shellfish Gardener Course, and helped us grow, teach and outreach about Barnegat Bay and its watershed.

Once again BBSRP was able to do a “spat on shell” tank on one of the piers that sits on the Toms River in Ocean Gate through the cooperation of Mayor Paul Kennedy and Town Council. Mesh bags were filled with shucked clean surf clam shell and then put into the tank of river water. “Eyed” oyster larvae, those which are about to metamorphose from the free swimming stage to a settled stage, were added to the tank. The 3.4 million larvae swarm in the bubbling tank for three days, on the shells, then river water was pumped in to bring phytoplankton for them to feed on.

After six weeks of careful vigilance and cleaning by the ReClam the Bay volunteers, the shells were put onto the reef established by NJDEP Bureau of Shellfisheries. About 320,000 oysters set on those shells are now living and filtering water off of Good Luck Point at the mouth of the Toms River in Barnegat Bay. Single oysters overwintered from 2009 were also added to the reef this year too.

Clam production was reduced to 1 million which allowed for better growth and survival over 2009. Because there were less clams growing, visitors to the up-weller nurseries could get a better idea about shell growth and vigor of the stock. But regardless of survival, the main message is that everything is connected, and to show how human activities affect shellfish and all other creatures in the bay.

Reharvest of overwintered seed still remains a problem but almost 40,000 one year old clams were broadcast planted in several places in Barnegat Bay after being harvested from plots at Sedge Island and Waretown. The program is re-evaluating how to solve this low return issue and will be turning to commercial clam growers for assistance.

A dedicated group of volunteers continued to monitor bacterial pathogens, temperature, and salinity at the up-wellers as part of their education about shellfish safety and water quality. In addition, volunteers began investigating simple ways they could help measure eutrophication, or nutrient enrichment, which is the most significant problem facing the bay and its watershed.

Our public outreach programs also continued to expand. The Clam Trail gained several new clams and visitors, with over 40 families and groups completing the trail in 2010. Volunteers also moved into the classroom with the Jr. Shellfish Program. Eight schools, and over 500 students in grades 5-12 participated in the pilot program, learning about shellfish, water quality, and Barnegat Bay. While many of the schools were in Ocean County (Lavallette, Manahawkin, Point Pleasant Beach, Waretown, and Seaside Heights) volunteers also visited schools from across the state (Hunterdon, Sussex, and Essex) to reach students who typically visit the shore during the summer. The overall goal is to promote stewardship in students and their families across the state and help them realize that all of their actions affect the coastal environments they enjoy. Many schools have expressed interest in participating in 2011, whether just for an assembly demonstration, or wanting to grow and study shellfish in the classroom. Overall in 2010, the Barnegat Bay Shellfish Restoration Program reached more than 8,000 people at workshops, festivals and other public events through the efforts of the ReClam the Bay volunteers.

**Marine Agent Cara Muscio continued to grow the Summer Shore Safety program as a way to provide recreation safety and environmental information to both residents and tourists. The biggest event was an expired marine flare recycling pilot at the Jersey Shore Boat Expo, in conjunction with the Marine Trades Association and the New Jersey Department of Transportation IBOATNJ program. Over 600 expired flares were collected from boaters in Monmouth, Ocean, and Middlesex counties, and even aspiring boaters were educated about the safety and environmental issues associated with flare disposal. For many NJ boaters, there is no established way to dispose of these required safety devices, which can become a safety and a potential water pollution issue if mishandled. Marine Agent Cara Muscio is working with stakeholders towards establishing a consistent disposal option for all New Jersey Boaters.

**Muscio also partnered with the Marine Academy of Technology and Environmental Science and the Save Barnegat Bay Scholarship fund to assist a trio of college students in a bacterial water quality tracking project of impaired waters in the Barnegat Bay watershed. She trained the students to use optical brighteners in conjunction with bacterial indicators to detect human sources of bacterial pollution. Also, two new fact sheets on safe recreation were published by Agent Muscio and Family and Consumer Health Science Agent Joanne Kinsey. The fact sheets (FS1132) “Be Safe in the Sun” and (FS1141) “Heat Stress and Dehydration” join the Expired Marine Flares fact sheet (FS1126) in promoting safe, environmentally aware recreation at the Jersey Shore, and are available at njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs.

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