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## Equine Ag's Peerless Advocate

*(Editor's Note: On August 4, New Jersey Farm Bureau Executive Director Peter Furey interviewed Rutgers Cooperative Extension's equine specialist and founding director of the Rutgers Equine Science Center Dr. Karyn Malinowski about her views on the status of equine agriculture in New Jersey. Her 37 years of dedication and passionate leadership for the industry really has no peer in production agriculture and perhaps the entire industry itself. This discussion covered several aspects of the economics, public policy and leadership issues for the industry. (Karyn was appointed ESC director in*

*2001 and has been a faculty member at Cook College/now SEBS since 1978. She served as Director of Rutgers Cooperative Extension for six years from 2002 to 2008. Her research and extension programs concentrate on improving the well-being and quality of life for the equine athlete while ensuring the vitality of the equine industry statewide and nationally. Her research for two decades has focused on the physiology of aging in horses and in documenting the importance of the New Jersey equine industry to agriculture and open space.)*

**Q. Before we get started with the**

**formal questions, you had to be happy with the outcome of the Haskell Invitational.**

A. I was extremely happy. The weather was great. Monmouth Park did a great job. The results echo what we put in the 2007 report — that the quality of the product for the betting fans of Monmouth Park and the Meadowlands worldwide is still here! People still want to bet on our thoroughbreds and standardbreds at both venues.

**Q. You have the reputation within institutional ag as the greatest individual**  
*Continued on page 2*

## "A Great Day in N.J. Sports"

Horse racing in New Jersey has had its ups and downs in recent years. Competition from casinos and racinos have lured away both New Jersey dollars and New Jersey horses.

But...on August 2, The Haskell Invitational at beautiful Monmouth Park gave everyone involved with the New Jersey horse industry a day of great pride. Triple Crown winner American Pharoah packed the place.

I was one of the 60,000-plus in attendance, and the atmosphere was just plain exciting. Whether you are a fan of racing or not, to see the enthusiasm in grand stand made you feel good.

We got to see one the finest equine athletes in history, and he did not disappoint. When he came out of the gate, the fans erupted — and then going into the third

turn and coming out of the pack on the mile and one-eighth track, jockey Victor Espinoza whispered in his ear and American Pharoah pulled away, cruising to victory.

Many New Jersey Farm Bureau members have a connection to the horse industry, directly or indirectly, and some rely heavily on the business they get from their equine customers. We are proud of our New Jersey horse farms, and happy to have them as part of New Jersey Farm Bureau — so even though American Pharoah was born in Kentucky, Zayat Stables (owner of American Pharoah) is headquartered in Teaneck, N.J., and that makes him a Jersey Boy to me.

— *Ryck Suydam*  
President, New Jersey Farm Bureau



# Equine's Large Economic Contribution ...



Dr. Karyn Malinowski and friend.

*Continued from page 1*

**proponent for horses. You don't have to acknowledge that, but let's have you comment on the importance to agriculture. What should other farmers know that the equine sector represents?**

**A.** As a preface to answering this question, I think production ag farmers outside of equine already "get it" about the importance of the horse industry. This was amply demonstrated when the horse racing segment was experiencing difficult times in 2010 and the farming industry rallied to its support alongside the racing interests. That was very heartening to see.

One of the biggest values is equine's contribution to the large acreages of tax-paying open space in this densely populated, urban space. It's the scenic values of those foals in the pasture; it's the heritage of horses as the state animal, which a lot of people appreciate. For the 800,000 acres of farmland in the state, equine occupies much of that state — close to 222,000 acres (176,000 acres for equine, 46,000 acres for the hay, straw and grain needed to feed 42,500 horses). Even with the closure recently of major operations like Peretti's and Showplace Farms, equine plays a major role in maintaining the scenic countryside in New Jersey.

Of course, the large economic impact of the industry is well-documented. The well-known 2007 report on the economics of equine agriculture showed a \$1.1 billion impact of annual economic activity and asset values in excess of \$4 billion. That study was the gold standard of economic impact reports, because it was done the right way by the National Ag Statistics Service (NASS), which administers the U.S. Ag Census. We worked hard to have everyone in the industry complete their surveys. Of the \$1.1 billion, some 75 percent is devoted to racing (\$500 million/racetracks, \$647 million/breeding, other) and the remaining 25 percent goes to the pleasure horse/recreational side. This latter por-

tion is going strong; the former is now experiencing many challenges from competition in the surrounding states.

Excerpts from the report include:

## Employment

- Nearly 13,000 jobs generated
- 9,150 jobs by horse farms
- 3,820 jobs at racetracks

## Taxes Generated

- Estimated \$160 million in federal, state, local taxes
- \$85 million by horse farms
- \$75 million by racetracks

## Animals

- 42,500 equine animals housed in New Jersey
- 30,000 in non-racing activities
- 12,500 in racing activities
  - (4,200 thoroughbreds)
  - (8,200 standardbreds)

## 7,200 equine operations/farms

### in New Jersey with \$4 billion in assets

- \$582 mil. in equine animals
- \$2.9 bil. in land/buildings (non-racetrack)
- \$476 mil. in land/buildings (racetrack)

**Q. Do you think the equine industry is overlooked/underappreciated by the state of New Jersey for what it brings to the state?**

**A.** I think the cold reception by the fans for the governor at the Haskell might answer that question. The official representative of the state was not well-received. Otherwise, with the support from the Experiment Station by Executive Dean Bob Goodman and Dean of Research Brad Hillman for the equine center, I cannot say we are underappreciated there. Likewise, the Department of Agriculture's Division Animal Health has developed much better lab facilities in Ewing, N.J. That's a sign of a good support. In the Legislature, equine has many allies notwithstanding the differences with some who are protective of the casino interests in Atlantic City.

Having said all that, there are some issues between equine operators who own preserved farms and the policies of the SADC (State Farmland Preservation Committee). There have been several instances of disputes over the permission to build on-farm housing for employees and things of that nature. It's a matter of dealing with what are seen as overbearing rules on deed-restricted lands.

**Q. What do you see as common misconceptions about the equine industry in New Jersey?**

**A.** Without a doubt: that "all horse people are rich." Oh my gosh, nothing could be further from the truth! What I see are people who love horses, who sometimes work extremely hard to make ends meet, but the love of horses gets them by.


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# Meet the Gloucester County DREAM Park

By Ben Casella  
NJFB Staff

There is a beautiful equestrian center in Gloucester County that may be unknown to those not involved in the equine industry. The Gloucester County Improvement Authority (GCIA) DREAM Park, opened in June of 2008, was built as part of a land preservation project directed by the Gloucester County Board of Chosen Freeholders.

The County found a large parcel of property that was earmarked for dredge spoils from a dredging project in the Delaware River. The forward-thinking leadership in Gloucester County were proactive in realizing the site could house a premiere equine and events facility.

The county built the equestrian center, boarding facilities, barns and pastures on part of a 277-acre parcel along the river in Logan Township just south of the Commodore Barry Bridge. Along with this facility creating jobs, income and services, surrounding businesses like hotels, restaurants, convenience stores and gas stations have also benefited economically due to major events at the DREAM Park.

The GCIA Dream Park is the host to many local and national events for the equine industry. Horse breed shows are often held and feature the following breeds: Paint horse, Quarter Horse, Saddlebreds, Morgans, and Warmblood to name a few.

The facility also features equine sport



*The Gloucester County Improvement Authority DREAM Park is host to many local and national equine events, and is also the home of the Therapeutic Riding Center of South Jersey*

shows such as Reining, Mounted Games, Hunters, Jumpers, Rodeo, and riding clinics. The facility also serves as a host for community events as well, as well as hosting showcase dog events for breeding and agility which are open to the public.

The facility features a 150-by-300-foot temperature-controlled indoor arena, with bleacher seating for 600 spectators and a separate area for auctions, exhibits, or off-season instructional clinics. The facility also features two show barns to accommodate 238 horses; a Clear Span 144-by-120-foot indoor arena with state of the art fans and lighting; and five outdoor rings, one which has state-of-the-art lighting for night events.

There is also designated parking areas for trailers and recreational vehi-

cles with electric and water hookup, and RV support facilities with bathrooms and showers. This was made to provide convenience to those that travel by RV to compete at the facility and have full service while staying overnight on the premises.

The facility also tries to cater to the local horse owner who may need a facility to board their horse. The GCIA Dream Park has resident stabling which can accommodate up to 70 horses and features private grass turnouts and three exercise rings.

The facility currently has 44 horses that are boarded at the facility and owned by people in the local area. The park also offers riding lessons, horse training, summer camps and therapeutic riding.

The Dream Park is underway with a second phase of the original plan to develop riding trails. The trails will be routed through the facility's 200 acres that will take riders along the river and creek providing scenic waterway and nature views.

The Dream Park staff is currently working on completing the trails and expects to have a portion of the trails done by spring of 2016. This will be an excellent opportunity for local equine owners who are looking for places to ride in the South Jersey area.

The DREAM Park is also proud to be a home for the Therapeutic Riding Center of South Jersey. The center offers horseback riding and driving

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# More Volunteer Leaders Are Needed . . .

*Continued from page 2*

This is particularly true for people who decide to buy one or two horses and try to farm besides. It is part of the challenge for surfacing horse industry leaders to serve on groups like the State Board of Agriculture, as a way to have the reality of equine agriculture communicated and deflect some of these misconceptions.

There is also the lingering image problem for horse racing founded on the twin issues that racing is abusive to the animal and also the threat to the integrity of the sport from misuse of pharmaceuticals. On the former, I would say that horses love to run, plain and simple. On the latter, it is the subject of constant monitoring.

Our Equine Science Center has as one of its five focus areas the maintenance of integrity in the sport. Our labs do research on drug testing, which is expensive — but we make a contribution there and are actively involved. We also see some key figures like racetrack owners step up and do some self-policing along with the rules of the Racing Commission.

**Q. Where are the touch points from public policy that affect the equine industry?**

*“With a fuller supply of volunteer leaders available, there is a better chance that all views get covered and we get big picture priorities accounted for.”*

**dustry? If county boards of ag and Farm Bureau want to know where they can be helpful, what should they look for?**

**A.** Most importantly, look at the future course of the gaming industry overall and particularly as it relates to casino gambling. Will there be a referendum statewide in 2016 to enable gaming outside Atlantic City? Will the public approve it? Might it supplement the experience of the Meadowlands that extends to horse racing?

Frankly, the state “missed the boat” when it took no action during the advance of casino and racino operations in the surrounding states. Atlantic City lost so many customers. It’s hard to say what happens next.

There’s a lot of state policy represented from state appropriations in the state budget, which for the equine industry has withered over time after a won-

derful gesture years ago that directed \$1.2 million in uncashed pari-mutuel tickets to NJAES and equine. We’re still fortunate to have significant support, though. Salaries for the five full-time professors and for operational support staff within the Equine Science Center are funded by NJAES and SEBS, derived from a combination of federal and state funds. NJAES also remains committed to animal care, funding several positions in this area.

**Q. Some people are in equine for the business, others are in it for recreation/sport competition/pleasure, and others are in it for both. How does this get reconciled into one voice for the horse industry, or are these disparate factors?**

**A.** I have spent my 37 years in this profession trying to deal with this. Think of it this way: Those who breed horses/

board horses/train horses in the business end have scarce time available to sit on volunteer leadership boards. Those more into the recreation aspects, which are about two-thirds of all equine people, are not really coming from the business or racing side of the industry, and in some cases have more time available perhaps to sit on various boards. There could be a contrast in views depending on one’s perspective.

This is one reason why I am so determined to find leadership training courses and mentoring for young adults in the horse industry. With a fuller supply of volunteer leaders available, there is a better chance that all views get covered and we get big picture priorities accounted for.

**Q. I want to get to the Equine Science Center as a hub of attention for equine, but first tell us the condition of the economy/opportunities for equine ag.**

**A.** Unfortunately, the purses and breeding incentives for the racing industry are now greatly reduced from what they once were. This in turn has led New Jersey horses to race in surrounding states which have learned how to better

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# Horse Park of New Jersey at Stone Tavern: Invaluable Asset for State's Equine Industry

By Tom Beaver  
NJFB Staff

Nestled on the outskirts of Allentown, just off of Route 195, is the Horse Park of New Jersey at Stone Tavern. The facility spans 185 acres in rural Monmouth County, and is a cornerstone of New Jersey's robust equine industry.

Opening in 1988 with the aim of providing a venue for diversified equine interests from throughout the region, the Horse Park has established itself as all that and more in the years since. From show riders to dressage practitioners, trail-riders to trainers, the Horse Park now offers something for every equestrian enthusiast.

Well-appointed, amenities include a stadium-lit show ring with grandstands, a dressage arena, a climate-controlled indoor riding and show facility, access to adjacent parkland for trail-riding and more than 380 rentable stalls, among other things. The facility has come a long way since its humble beginnings. Amazingly, the Horse Park claims these accomplishments as a 501(c)(3) non-profit, entirely dependent on sponsorships, donations, memberships and the tireless work of its volunteers.



*NJFB continues to be a proud supporter of the Equine industry and the Horse Park of New Jersey. (Photo by Ed Wengryn).*

Even despite their myriad successes, the operators of the Horse Park remain dutifully ambitious. Their calendar of

events boasts of a full agenda, ranging from regular open riding sessions to hallmark events like the Freedom Fest State Fair (which ran during the second and third weeks of July), barrel-riding competitions and their premiere showcase, the annual Jersey Fresh International.

The Jersey Fresh International is a three-day event held in May every year that draws more than 100 top riders from throughout the country and thousands of spectators for show-jumping and cross-country competitions that serve as qualifiers for the well-known U.S. Pan-Am Games. Next year's International is already scheduled, and will once again bring out expert riders from various disciplines and onlookers alike from May 11-15, 2016.

Roughly equidistant from both Philadelphia and New York City, the Horse Park enjoys a prime location to attract equestrian enthusiasts from throughout the region. Add to that the fact that venue is sited on an unspoiled tract of land permanently preserved

through the Green Acres program, and it's not secret why it has become a "can't miss" destination for so many.

Nevertheless, and despite its unmitigated success to date, the Horse Park relies on the continued support of dues-paying members and generous sponsors to sustain its operational overheads. Perhaps as important: volunteerism. The Horse Park always welcomes new volunteers, whether they have extensive experience in the equestrian industry or are greenhorns interested in supporting this unique facility.

To learn more about the Horse Park of New Jersey — including the calendar of events, information about membership and how to volunteer — visit them on the web at [www.horseparkofnewjersey.com](http://www.horseparkofnewjersey.com).

The Horse Park is a testament to the strength of New Jersey's vibrant equine sector. Farm Bureau continues to support the work that they do on behalf of the industry, and encourages its members to explore all that they have to offer.

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# Lower Purses Hurt Racing Industry ...

*Continued from page 4*  
incentivize racing for horse owners.  
Look no further than the closing of Peretti's and Showplace Farms in the heart of Monmouth County's horse country. These are market forces at work. It's fortunate that New Jersey's excellent highway network allows for a commute for race horses from New Jersey farms, otherwise more breeding farms and training centers might shut down.

The diminished purses also suffer from the elimination of the annual purse enhancement awards from the Atlantic City casino industry. These lower purses discourage the number of horses entering the races, so racetrack owners complain that a smaller field (5-6 horses running) makes it difficult to entice bettors seeking long odds from one or two horses in a larger field. The economic problems in horse racing have been a chain reaction to diminished purses. Horse breeding needs strong purses, and New Jersey does not have that currently.

On the other side, the pleasure horse industry is holding its own. The mild recovery in the economy since the big recession in 2008-09 has rejuvenated this \$250 million sector somewhat. Look, \$250 million worth of activity is still a good-sized industry.

**Q. So now, say a few things about the Rutgers Equine Science Center, a significant achievement in your career that serves the horse owner so well here and around the country.**

**A.** The mission follows the classic land grant profile, and we are proud of that. We seek better horse care, through research and education, for the well-being of the equine athlete, as well as promoting the equine industry as a whole. This is all done through science-based research. It works.

The Rutgers equine center is unique for its unusual following of users. Our website demonstrates, through its volume of hits daily and throughout the year, that horse people are seeking information and advice. Look, we have a following from 25 countries around the world. No other U.S. academic institution can claim those numbers.

Let me tell you about two upcoming events we are sponsoring to illustrate where we think our emphasis needs to be. Both involve undergraduates. First, we have Sally Ike of the U.S. Equestrian Team coming in to talk about her life story, to help the students visualize their future and hopefully get involved leading the industry like Sally has.

The other is an appearance by Wendy Williams (not to be confused with the talk show host), who's written

a book about the horse/human bond entitled "Can Horses Read?" She will have her first book-signing event here at the Rutgers G.H. Cook Campus on Oct. 29 ... all are welcome. Check out our website (<http://esc.rutgers.edu>) for

details on both events. There is an admission charge.

**Q. Wrapping this up, tell us what you observe about the consensus of opinion about the equine industry leadership and its collective political**

**"ask" at the state level.**

**A.** Number one, there is probably a collective cry of "help" from horse owner/farm operators to the high cost of running a farm in this state — cost of

*Continued on page 9*

# Consensus on Solution Is Elusive ...

*Continued from page 8*  
taxes, land, labor, regulations and so forth. It's very difficult to operate a farm in New Jersey.

Beyond that, a consensus of opinion is somewhat elusive because of the

absence of a single, unifying policy-making force. If I have to deduce what the political priorities are as viewed by the whole of the industry, I would say in no particular order: the sports betting initiative by Sen. Ray Lesniak and

Dennis Drazin; gaming outside of Atlantic City; taxation/cost of farming in New Jersey; and revisions to farmland preservation rules, despite the good work done a few years ago on the equine AMP under the Right to Farm

program.

**Karyn, we could probably chat a lot more. Let's leave it there. This is very informative. Thank you so much, and best wishes for the Equine Science Center and the horse industry overall.**



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# Biographies: The Race Tracks of New Jersey

By Ed Wengryn  
NJFB Staff

## Monmouth Park Race Track

175 Oceanport Ave

Oceanport, New Jersey

[www.Monmouthpark.com](http://www.Monmouthpark.com)

Racing days May through September with May and September racing Saturday and Sunday June, July and August Friday-Sunday. See complete calendar on the website.

Monmouth Park is New Jersey's historic thoroughbred race track, dating back to 1870 when it first opened near its current site by Long Branch New Jersey, the concept was to bring added excitement and attract more business to the Jersey Shore.

For three years the track operated, earning itself a reputation for quality racing and generating comparisons to the famed Newmarket Racetrack in England. A new syndicate of owners took over the site and spent four years renovating the track and facility bringing back the glory of thoroughbred racing in 1882. The race track became so popular an expansion to the facility and a new Monmouth Park opened in 1891.

At this time efforts began in the legislature to ban pari-mutual wagering (betting on horse races). The racing industry fought back by moving the Monmouth meet to Jerome Park and Morris Park to expose more people to racing, but in 1894 the legislature finally approved a wagering ban and the park was closed and the land sold.

In the 1940s efforts began to lift the wagering ban on both Standardbred and Thoroughbred racing in New Jersey and by June 1946, after a 53-year hiatus, the

third Monmouth Park was opened on its current site in Ocean Port, New Jersey. The track continued to hold races of national and international importance, reinstating many of the classic Thoroughbred races from the 1800s including the Oaks and Colleen stakes and adding new races like the Molly Pitcher Handicap and the Lamplighter.

In 1986 the New Jersey Sports and Exhibition Authority purchased and began operating Monmouth Park, adding to its holdings in the Meadowlands, the home of Standardbred racing. The Authority added additional high profiles races with both the Iselin Cup Handicap and the expansion of the Haskell to an Invitational honoring the two men who worked to restore racing in New Jersey and the rebuilding of Monmouth Park. The Authority worked hard to bring the Breeders Cup to Monmouth Park in 2007 but a rainy weekend hampered the overall success of the event at the venue.

With the approval of casino gaming in Atlantic City, the state's racetracks began to see a steady decline in revenues, as gamers now had other opportunities to enjoy games of chance. In the 2000s neighboring states began to approve casino style gambling at their racetracks to improve both their state revenues and to improve the purses at their own tracks, further cutting into New Jersey's gaming and horse betting revenue stream. Those out of state actions impacted both Atlantic City and the states race tracks.

This led the Sports and Exhibition Authority to seek other operators for Monmouth Park. In 2011 a five-year lease was signed with Morris Bailey, co-



owner of Resorts Casino Hotel in Atlantic City, The partnership with Bailey has helped improve the marketing and visitor experience at Monmouth Park increasing attendance and wagering handle each year.

## The Meadowlands Race Track

### The Big M

50 State Route 120

East Rutherford, New Jersey

[www.thebigm.com](http://www.thebigm.com)

Racing days, Night Racing November through August, mostly Friday and Saturday Nights. Check the complete schedule at the website.

Opening in 1976, the Meadowlands Race Track quickly became the country's premier harness race track. Built and operated by the New Jersey Sports and Exhibition Authority the racetrack sits near the MetLife Stadium, home of the Giants and Jets, and the Izod Center.

Famous for its traditional night racing

schedule, the wide sweeping curves of the mile long track has created some of the fastest harness racing times. The current fastest time by a standardbred of 1:46 4/5 was set in 2006 by Holborn Hanover.

The night racing schedule was a major factor in the success of the race track, "Racing under the Moon" was an early marketing campaign for the track, and the weeknight night races proved popular for gamblers looking for an after work betting opportunity.

The closeness of the track to New York City was also a draw and the view of the City skyline and the Empire State Building from the old grandstand made a night at the races something special.

The track also contains a grass oval that is seven furlongs long and is used for thoroughbred racing in the fall. This year the track will host the thoroughbreds in October after the Monmouth racing season ends.

Since 1981 the Meadowlands has hosted the Hamiltorian, the first leg of Trotting's Triple Crown — the other two races being the Yonkers Trot at Yonkers Raceway in New York, and the Kentucky Futurity at the Red Mile in Lexington Kentucky.

Like Monmouth Park and the other race tracks in the state, the Meadowlands and the horse racing industry took a hit with the growth of casino gaming not only in Atlantic City but when neighboring states began incorporating casinos at their racetracks. The Meadowlands was no longer the only opportunity for North Jersey and New York City gamblers looking for a convenient gaming opportunity.

The reduced betting at the track began series of changes for the horse racing industry. Reduced racing days was one way to encourage better attendance at the track. It is the "at the track" betting handle that helps create the largest portion of prize money paid to

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Who said, "There is no such thing as a stupid question?"

1. Is that cow really angry with me for messing with her cute little calf or is that just a defensive posture she assumes because it is expected of her?

2. Did Dad rope that front foot on purpose?

3. I had a pickup like that. Have you tried choking it?

4. How come the first calf in the crowding alley is turned backwards?

5. Did the mill make a mistake, or did you really recommend taking all the grain outta the finish ration?

6. I've never seen a horse do a complete back flip. Did you teach him that?

7. This Elko is quite a place. Which one of you guys is a cowboy poet?

8. Why didn't you quit before you took that last drink?

9. That dog in the gate...is he yours?



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ON THE EDGE OF COMMON SENSE

## Stupid Questions? Here Are 26

10. That's a great tattoo. Were you drunk?

11. You don't see too many left handed team ropers. You a heeler?

12. Does the NO TRESPASSING sign mean I can't hunt on your place?

13. Didn't you know that wire was hot?

14. It worked on the scouring pigs, didn't it? See, I feel better already.

15. Sure I can run one of these. How do you start it?

16. Nice dismount. You with

the circus?

17. Is the Forest Service upping your AUMs this year?

18. Do you mean to tell me not one of you top hands can milk a cow?

19. Fifty dollars on a pair of threes! Were you bluffing?

20. Hello...did I wake you?

21. That's gonna need stitches! Does it hurt?

22. How could you possibly have missed that last steer? We would've won \$1500!

23. I didn't know you could put a book of cowboy poetry as a ranch expense?

24. Did the packer buyer pay you more when you told him they weren't branded?

25. Didn't you hear me yell "IN!" on the black bally and "BY!" on the other three?

26. Were you scared? Better go back to the house and change.

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# The Racetracks of New Jersey ...

*Continued from page 10*

the horsemen, jockeys and owners. With neighboring states adding revenue from casino gaming to the handle placed at the track, neighboring states have been attracting more of the faster horses and training teams to their locations as the payouts to the winners are bigger.

In 2010, the Hanson Commission issued its report on gaming and horse racing in New Jersey. The recommendations were for the Sports and Exposition Authority to get out of the business of operating the Race Tracks. This became a time of real change and opportunity for both the harness and thoroughbred industry in New Jersey.

In 2012, a deal was completed for Jeffery Gural of the Newmark Knight Frank group to operate the racetrack, with the deal including the building of a new smaller grandstand that seats 2,200 and a new stabling area. Jeff also operates Tioga Downs in Nichols, N.Y. and Vernon Downs in Vernon, N.Y.

A strong supporter of Standardbred racing, he too is interested in the entertainment experience that can only happen at a race track. The new grandstand opened in November 2013 the entertainment-oriented venue and club atmosphere has help improve the racing handle at the track. The shift to private

management of the race tracks have shown to be small steps for improving the racing industry in New Jersey but movement in the right direction.

**Freehold Raceway**  
130 Park Avenue  
Freehold, New Jersey  
[www.freeholdraceway.com](http://www.freeholdraceway.com)

Freehold holds two meets per year, January through May and September through mid-December. See the website for complete race dates.

Racing began at the Freehold race-track location in the 1830s, making the track and its location the oldest race-track in the country. In December 1853, the Monmouth Agricultural Society was formed and the following year the annual harness race was being held on the rented ground in conjunction with an annual fair. The track was and remains to this day a half-mile oval with most races run with two turns around the track to complete a mile run.

In 1858 the society purchased 20 acres including the 10-acre track site to continue to hold races and the fair. As time passed, continued improvements and other events were added to the fair. The track hosted the first polo matches in the United States in 1884.

The annual meet and fair were popular but financial difficulties caused the



disbanding of the Monmouth County Agricultural society in 1888. Even as the legislature moved toward a ban on wagering of horse races, the Freehold Driving Club was formed in 1896 and began using the site, holding annual trotting races.

In 1909, the driving club disbanded and the Freehold Driving Association was formed. They redesigned and leveled out the track to improve the racing conditions. Despite the state betting ban, annual races were held with people attending the events to cheer the horses and drivers on for the "sport of it." The first major meet with \$1,000 prize purses was held in 1917.

From 1936 through 1965 the race-track went through several private owners, and in 1965 the track was acquired by the Gibraltar Pari-Mutuel Group of Canada. They reconstructed the race-track to permit eight-horse races around the half-mile track. They are also responsible for enclosing the grandstand to allow for year-round racing.

A May 1984 electrical fire destroyed the grandstand but racing resumed under tents. Later that year, the Wilmot

family purchased the racetrack and rebuilt the grandstand and restaurant. The grand opening was in 1985.

In 1990 the Freehold Raceway Mall was opened adjacent to the racetrack and the track was sold to Kenneth Fischer of Gaitway Farms in Englishtown. In 1995 he sold the track to International Thoroughbred Breeders Inc., the Parent Company of Cherry Hill Raceway. Pennwood Racing acquired the track in 1999 as part of a larger gaming holding that includes Parx Casino and Racetrack in Bensalem Pa.

The Pennwood group also operates the state's third off track wagering facility, "Favorites of Tom's River." This diversity of holdings and income streams can help stabilize the operations at Freehold, which offers the best chance for racing opportunities for the less famous and smaller Standardbred breeders in the state. It also reflects the opportunity for combining the gaming industry in the state to ensure that casino, horse racing and convenience gaming can happen to the benefit of the industry and the state of New Jersey.



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## GCIA DREAM Park . . .

*Continued from page 3*

lessons to children and adults with a variety of special needs.

The facility is a PATH (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship) International member. PATH began with a focus on horseback riding as a form of physical and mental therapy. The organization and its dedicated members have since developed a multitude of different equine-related activities for therapeutic purposes, collectively known as equine-assisted activities and therapies (or EAAT).

Throughout the world, hundreds of thousands of individuals live with Down Syndrome, spinal cord injury, stroke re-

covery, depression and other physical or mental impairments. The EAAT program proves to be an excellent resource to the community served by the Dream Park. The facility has 16 participants in the program and the success and popularity of the program has created a waiting list to participate in the therapeutic riding program.

The Equine industry is an important part of agriculture in the state, based on the revenue generated and the services used. It is hoped that this facility and others like it in the state will grow the show horse industry for the future, while also providing economic improvements to local areas.



# Rutgers Equine Science Center Showcases Best Management Practices in Equine Ag

By Liz Thompson  
NJFB Staff

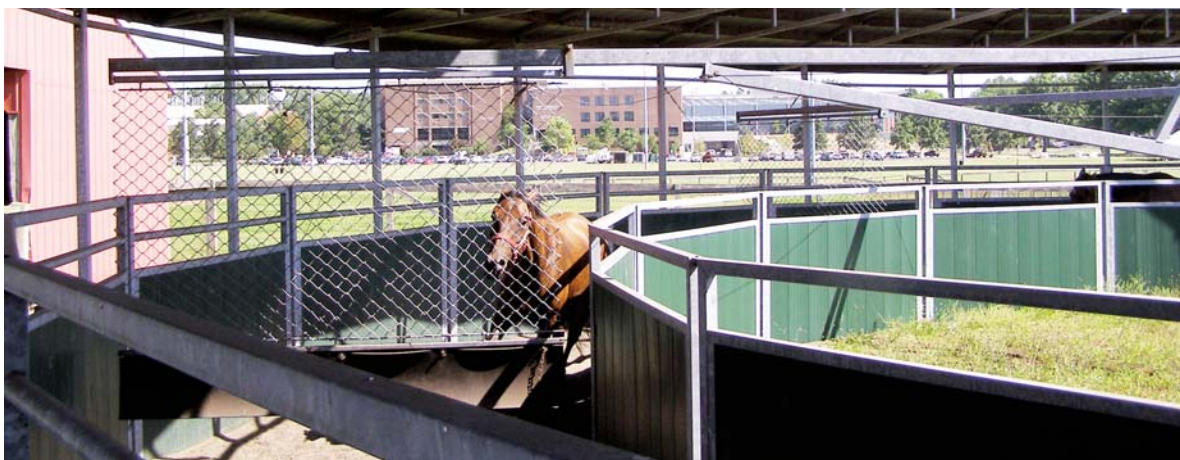
The Rutgers Equine Science Center mission sounds simple: better horse care through research and education to advance the well-being and performance of horses and the equine industry. But the equine industry is complex and multi-faceted, and so must the approach of the center. The mission is being accomplished with efforts in three major areas: extension, research and teaching.

The Extension and outreach component of the center is best seen at the Best Management Practice Demonstration Horse Farm on Ryders Lane. This working horse farm showcases the implementation of BMPs that address things like pasture management, stormwater and manure issues. The farm is open to the public, and brochures outlining the various BMPs shown on the property can be found when visitors arrive.

The farm is also host to educational tours and programs that allow visitors to see and hear about the various practices demonstrated. BMPs currently demonstrated include: construction of a biofiltration swale; manure and compost bedding; development of a manure storage structure; rain garden construction; and the development of a rotational grazing system.

The center's website, <http://esc.rutgers.edu>, is also a major part of its outreach effort. With the site's "Ask the Expert" feature, horse owners and enthusiasts have access to the expertise of center faculty and staff, 365 days a year.

The site also has a section just for children called the "Kid's Corner." In



The "Equi-cizer" — a motorized free stall equine exerciser — is part of the Equine Exercise Physiology Laboratory.

the Kid's Corner, science education is presented in an interactive and fun way using the center's equine mascot, Lord Nelson, as the main educator of the on-line portal. Children can read Lord Nelson's blog and take a virtual tour of the Equine Exercise Physiology Lab.

Research is at the heart of the center. At the Exercise Physiology Laboratory, with its over \$2 million of state-of-the-art analysis equipment, research studies range from learning more about the effects of exercise on muscle development and digestion, to geriatric horse care, to studying the nutritional impacts of certain feeds and supplements.

As part of the laboratory facilities, the center has both an "Equi-cizer" — a motorized free stall equine exerciser — and a high speed equine treadmill for the animals. These are both used in the exercise related studies.

As part of the University, teaching is, of course, a major component of the center for both undergraduates and graduate students. In addition to whatever classes these students may be taking, there are many other opportunities for them to learn in a hands-on way at the center. Students help with the feeding and care of the horses, and also assist with the ongoing studies. Students are also often used in the outreach efforts of the center.

Perhaps the most surprising facet of

the center is that it is not a singular physical place. It's a virtual center, utilizing the experience and expertise of many Rutgers faculty and staff from various departments.

Although their offices are spread out on campus, center faculty meet regularly to ensure that they are working toward common goals. The center is led by Director Karyn Malinowski, Ph.D. More information about the Equine Science Center can be found at <http://esc.rutgers.edu>.

## NCRS Assists Farmers With Conservation Plans

By Carrie Mosely  
New Jersey State Director  
USDA, NRCS

For 80 years, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has been a pioneer in conservation, working with landowners and agricultural operators to maintain a healthy and productive working landscape. Originally established as the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), the name was changed in 1994 to better reflect the ever-increasing scope of natural resource issues that challenge agriculture. Today, NRCS works with landowners and agricultural operators, and with local and state agencies and partner groups and organizations to leverage resources and expertise.

### Conservation Planning

The backbone of NRCS assistance is the development of the conservation plan. Always voluntary in nature, a conservation plan includes an inventory and assessment of the natural resources on the property conducted by a soil conservationist.

After a discussion with the operator about his or her goals and objectives for the property, different activities are dis-

cussed and recommended to help keep the land in the most productive state possible. The producer is provided maps and materials along with a "plan" of the activities that the plan owner chooses to implement. Conservation plans are protected by privacy and NRCS never shares this information with anyone without your permission.

### Financial Programs

What if your conservation plan is more ambitious than your current finances allow? Beginning in 1992, Congress began putting financial opportunities in place by creating conservation programs in the Farm Bill for farmers and ranchers who were interested in implementing certain conservation activities. In some programs, participants enter into contracts with NRCS and NRCS pays for a large portion of the activity. Some programs offer easement opportunities for specific lands.

Examples of conservation activities that were offered through our conservation programs in 2015 include:

- Constructing or improving water management or irrigation structures

*Continued on page 14*



Among the Best Management Practices showcased at the Rutgers Equine Science Center is pasture management, comparing rotational versus continuous grazing practices.





NJFB President Ryck Suydam presented numerous awards at the convention, including the Ag Issues Awards sponsored by NJFB.



The 2015-2016 New Jersey State FFA Officer Team includes (l-r, front row) Myranda Bond, Chelsey Fitton, Hope Cahill, Hannah Mann, (back row) Morgan Rutar, Tyler Kohlhaas and Alyssa Ferraro.

# 86th New Jersey State FFA Convention Inspires Attendees to “Break Through Limits”

The New Jersey FFA Association welcomed more than 650 FFA members, advisors and guests to the 86th State FFA Convention held at Monmouth University in West Long Branch. The convention, held May 20-22, recognized FFA members and chapters for their accomplishments in career development events and other activities held throughout the year.

The New Jersey Farm Bureau sponsored the Agricultural Issues Career Development Event for the first time this year. Northern Burlington FFA placed first and will represent New Jersey at the National FFA Convention in October. State and national scholarships totaling \$49,400 were presented to FFA members planning to continue their education.

National FFA Central Region Vice President Kristen Schmidt assisted with the Blue Jackets, Bright Futures presentation where 49 FFA members received a brand new FFA jacket, provided through a special project of the New Jersey FFA Foundation. Fifty-one Garden State FFA Degrees were awarded, and ten members were recognized as American Degree candidates.

Myranda Bond, of the South Hunterdon FFA, was recognized as the 2015 State Star Farmer; Chelsey Fitton, of the Woodstown FFA, was recognized as the 2015 State Star in Agricultural Placement; and Charles McDaniel, of the South Hunterdon FFA, was recognized as 2015 State Star in Agribusiness.

Keely Weinberger, agriculture teacher at Salem County Vocational Technical School, was selected as the 2015 FFA Advisor of the Year; and

Paige Hennighan, from the Sussex Tech FFA, was selected as the 2015 FFA Member of the Year. New Jersey FFA was honored to have several guest speakers in attendance including New Jersey Farm Bureau President Ryck Suydam.

Concluding the 86th State Conven-

tion was the election of the 2015-2016 New Jersey State FFA Officer Team. Hope Cahill of the Monmouth County FFA chapter will lead the team as State FFA President, along with State Vice President Chelsey Fitton of Woodstown FFA, State Secretary Morgan Rutar of Phillipsburg FFA, State Treasurer

Myranda Bond of South Hunterdon FFA, State Reporter Hannah Mann of Salem County Vo. Tech FFA, State Sentinel Tyler Kohlhaas of Cape May Tech FFA, and State Parliamentarian Alyssa Ferraro of Sussex Tech FFA.

It was a successful year, and New Jersey FFA looks forward to more to come!

## Conservation Plan Assistance ...

*Continued from page 13*  
Agricultural Management Assistance — AMA);

- Implementing conservation practices or activities to fix natural resource impairment, such as installing water ways to curb erosion, implementing a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) for a livestock facility as required by state law, or installing a micro-drip irrigation system to conserve water (Environmental Quality Incentives Program — EQIP);

- Taking conservation to the next level, being compensated for existing practices and doing additional conservation activities (Conservation Stewardship Program — CSP).

- Purchasing easements for whole farm preservation (Agricultural Conservation Easement Program — Agricultural Land Easements, or ACEP-ALE); and

- Purchasing easements where wetlands have been drained or manipulated in the past and restoring the wetlands (Agricultural Conservation Easement Program — Wetland Reserve Easements, or ACEP-WRE)

In 2015, these programs will bring over \$11 million to New Jersey agricultural producers.

### Technical Soil Services

Every farmer knows that the land and the soil on the land impact everything that he or she does. NRCS has the technical expertise to help you understand your soils. We have completed soil surveys and descriptions for almost the entire United States. Soils information is available at the local office and will be included in your conservation plan. All soils data is now also available on the web on the Web Soil Survey at <http://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>.

### Plant Materials Center

Through the years, many of the plants needed for conservation activities were not readily available through traditional commercial nurseries. The NRCS Plant Materials Center in Cape May, New Jersey was formed to develop specific plant materials to stabilize coastal regions and soils in the mid-Atlantic coastal plains.

### Service Centers

Contact your local NRCS office for

assistance. Our offices are located in:

- Columbus (serving Burlington, Camden and Ocean counties) — 609-267-1639, ext 3;

- Freehold (serving Mercer, Middlesex and Monmouth counties) — 732-462-0075, ext 3;

- Frenchtown (serving Hunterdon, Somerset and Union counties) — 908-782-4614, ext 3;

- Hackettstown (serving Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Passaic, Sussex and Warren counties) — 908-852-2576, ext 3;

- Vineland (serving Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland counties) — 856-205-1225, ext 3; and

- Woodstown (serving Gloucester and Salem counties) — 856-769-1126, ext 3.

If you have never visited an NRCS field office, the following video can provide a brief introduction: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4HPCZubEEA&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4HPCZubEEA&feature=youtu.be). For more information about our conservation programs and technical services, visit the New Jersey NRCS website, [www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov).



## Garden State Bites

**By Ed Wengryn  
NJFB Staff**

High in anti-oxidants, blueberries are considered by some to be a super fruit. This is reflected in both consumer demand and higher market prices even with increased acreage being planted across the county.

In 2014 New Jersey ranked fifth in blueberry production on 8,800 acres valued at \$79.5 million this was a 40 cent per pound increase from the year before. The strong market price occurred with 2,000 additional acres in production nationwide, with states like Georgia, Washington, and North Carolina increasing planted acres.

In New Jersey the season begins late June most years and runs through mid-August. Most production in the state is used for the fresh berry market. Fresh berries can be kept in their container in the refrigerator for three to five days (rinse them right before use). The berries are easily frozen: Rinse the berries and dry flat on paper towels, then place in a single layer on a cookie sheet and place in the freeze. Once the berries are frozen pour into a zip-lock bag and keep frozen till needed.

Fresh or frozen blueberries are great for pies, smoothies, and for topping cereal or ice cream. When selecting fresh berries, look for berries with the tell tale grey/blue powder like finish.

Though New Jersey is the Garden State we are also a coastal state and that means seafood. Cape May is the sixth largest seafood port the country in terms of value of harvest and New Jersey has five more ports that that cover our coast from Port Norris off the Delaware Bay down to Cape May and up to Belford off the Raritan Bay in the north.

Over 100 species of fin and shellfish are landed in

### Blueberry Pie

- 3 pints blueberries rinsed/de-stemmed
- 1 tbsp sugar (or to taste, if berries are tart more sugar may be used)
- 2 tbsp corn starch
- 3 pats butter (1 tsp each)
- 1 package roll out pie crust (fits 9-inch pie plate)

In a large mixing bowl add blueberries, sugar and cornstarch, rolling berries in mixture till coated.

Place first crust in bottom of 9-inch pie pan, add coated blueberries. Sprinkle with remaining sugar cornstarch mixture and place three pats butter evenly around the top of berries. Cover with second roll out pie crust. Press upper and lower crusts together, venting the top crust with fork or knife slices.

Bake at 375 degrees for 45 minutes until berries bubble with liquid, and crust is golden brown. Let cool. The corn starch firms up the longer the pie cools — two hours minimum.

Serve plain or with vanilla ice cream (Serves 8, or 6 if you cut big)

### Blueberry Salad Topping

- One-half cup pine nuts toasted
- One-half cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 pint blueberries rinsed and de-stemmed

Mix the three ingredients together in a serving bowl. Spoon on to garden salads or mix with cold pasta such as bowties or macaroni with balsamic vinaigrette dressing, (serves 4)

# Blueberries and Seafood

New Jersey with a value over \$187 million in 2012, down from over \$211 million in 2011. This is the value of commercial landed seafood and does not count the recreational harvest of ocean fin and shellfish.

When selecting fin fish for eating, look for fish with

the head on to have bright clear eyes and the scales to be moist but not slimy, and a clean ocean smell. You want that same aroma if you are looking at filets. It should be fresh and clean, the flesh moist and not dried with good color and with a firm texture.

### Grilled Blue Claw Crabs

- 2 cleaned raw crabs per person
- 1 sprig fresh rosemary
- 1 sprig thyme
- 2 cloves garlic chipped
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- 1 tbsp old bay seasoning
- 2 tbsp olive oil

On a sheet of aluminum foil lay out crabs, shell side down (belly side up). Coat with olive oil, add salt pepper and old bay to taste, and sprinkle with chopped garlic, fresh rosemary and thyme. Cover with a sheet of aluminum foil, making a pouch sealing all the sides by folding the foil edges together.

Place pouch on a hot grill (400 degrees) or in a



**Grilled Blue Claw Crabs.**

425-degree heated oven, and cook 10-15 minutes. Crabs are done once the claws and shells are red.

### Easy BBQ steamed clams

- 24 little neck clams, scrubbed and rinsed
- 1 stick butter
- 4-6 cloves of garlic (crushed or chopped) more if you like garlic
- 3 stems fresh oregano
- 3 stems fresh thyme
- half bottle of white wine (a 12-ounce bottle of your favorite beer may also be used)

This can be done at home on a grill or taken to a BBQ party or picnic.

In a hal-size deep aluminum baking pan, place clams (you can fit up to 40 clams in one of these; 24-36 is perfect.) with the stick of butter cut into eight pieces and placed around the pan. Top with the garlic cloves and sprigs of fresh herbs. (If the herb stems are woody you can strip the leaves and leave the stems out.)

Cover with aluminum foil. Keep on ice if traveling with them or in the refrigerator until you are ready to grill them. On a hot grill (375 degrees or hotter) place the prepared pan, lift the foil and add the wine



**Easy BBQ Steamed Clams.**

or beer. Recover and cook for about 15 minutes. Once the liquid boils the clams will open up in 3-5 minutes. Remove from heat, uncover and serve. (Do not eat any clam that did not open on its own.)

### Flounder with lemon butter and capers

- 1 filet per person, 6-8 ounces each
  - One-half stick butter
  - 1 tbsp olive oil
  - Juice from half a lemon
  - 2 tbsp capers with juice
  - 1 tsp salt (to taste)
  - 1 tsp pepper (to taste)
- Pat dry flounder filets, adding salt and pepper to both sides.

In a large sauté pan over medium heat, heat olive oil and half the butter, till butter is melted. Add the filets. Cook on one side for three minutes, flip the filets and add remaining butter along with the capers. Once the butter is melted add the lemon juice and cook for three more minutes. Fish should be white



**Flounder With Lemon Butter and Capers.**

and flakey but not falling apart. Remove fish. Reduce the pan liquid by half and serve over the fish.





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