

New Jersey Department of Agriculture
Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBG)
SCBG Agreement # 12-25-B-1083

FINAL REPORT

Submitted; December 27, 2013
(Revised March, 30 2014)

SCBG Final Reports:

New Jersey Department of Agriculture	Page 2
New Jersey Peach Promotion Council	Page 13
New Jersey Farm Bureau	Page 19
Garden State Wine Growers Association	Page 32
Landisville Cooperative Association	Page 35
Jersey Grown Advertising and Promotion Project (Amended from the NJ Museum of Agriculture Project)	Page 40
New Jersey Blueberry Association	Page 47
The New Jersey Nursery and Landscape Association	Page 54
Tri-County Cooperative Market Auction Association	Page 59
New Jersey Small Fruit Council	Page 63

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SCBG Agreement # 12-25-B-1083

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA)

Final Performance Report
(Revised February 3, 2014)

Project Title:

“Project designed to maximize the effectiveness of the Jersey fresh product branding and advertising program”

Project Summary

New Jersey’s high population density, and other economic factors, makes it difficult for our growers to always be the lowest cost producer of specialty crops. Due to the prevailing commodity based pricing structure for most commercial packs of specialty crops New Jersey growers are therefore at a disadvantage

One of the most important ways to add value to specialty crops is to continue to promote them as locally produced. Through the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBG) our agency seeks to improve the promotion, and market value, of locally grown specialty crops through an expansion of the *Jersey Fresh* advertising and promotion program through increased advertising, branding at the point of sale and the involvement of non-profit specialty crop growers organizations. The purpose of these projects is to maximize the effectiveness of the *Jersey Fresh* product branding and advertising program.

The following statistics illustrate the steady decline in all farms including specialty crop producing operations;

Year	# of NJ Farms	Land in NJ Farms (acres)	Average size of NJ Farms in acres
1957	19,000	1,560,000	82
2010	10,300	730,000	71
2011	10,300	730,000	71

USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service. Data as of 05/14/2012.

In the past 54 years New Jersey has lost half of its farmland. It is important for the NJDA to work to add value to specialty crops to improve the economic viability of New Jersey specialty crop producers. The SCBG funds assisted in this effort.

For the past twenty-nine years the Jersey Fresh program has promoted a consistent brand image of New Jersey’s fruit and vegetable crops as fresh, nutritious, high quality and locally grown.

The most effective methods of promoting, and maintaining this consistent consumer and industry recognition of the brand, has been through the use of television, print, outdoor and point of purchase advertising. This project built upon past projects funded by both

the State of New Jersey, individual grower organizations and the Specialty Crop Block Grant program.

Because the process of marketing and brand identification is continual it is important to always promote a consistent brand image. Product branding ensures potential customers that they will have a consistent experience whenever they purchase a branded product. Another part of the branding experience for consumers is the creation and maintenance of a certain brand identify which communicates a level of quality and consistency, its' market position relative to other products and a type of product personality.

The continuation of similar advertising and promotional efforts to build brand identity is necessary to maintain consistent brand identification.

Project Approach

For the past twenty-six years the *Jersey Fresh* program has promoted a consistent brand image of New Jersey's fruit and vegetable crops as fresh, nutritious, high quality and locally grown. The most effective methods of promoting, and maintaining consumer and industry recognition of the brand, has been through the use of television, radio and print media combined with point of purchase advertising.

The Specialty Crop Block Grant – Farm Bill funds were used to supplement the existing *Jersey Fresh* promotional program for locally grown fruits and vegetables. The funds were used to purchase of media buys for existing *Jersey Fresh* print and television advertisements, outdoor media, the development of point of sale advertising materials and the creation of a new trade show display for the *Jersey Fresh* program. Working in close coordination with CMD & Partners, the contracted advertising agency for the *Jersey Fresh* program, consumer television and outdoor advertising media buys were made in order to continue to support and enhance consumer awareness of the *Jersey Fresh* brand. Using the easily recognizable *Jersey Fresh* brand name the ads were designed to promote the availability and quality of locally grown fruits and vegetables directly to consumers at the peak our growing season.

Trade Print Advertising

Produce News

In 2011 Jersey Fresh advertisements were placed in eight editions of Produce News. With a circulation of 12,456 a total estimated number of 99,648 media impressions were achieved in this produce industry publication.

Produce Business

In 2011 Jersey Fresh advertisements were placed in four editions of the Produce Business magazine. With a circulation of 14,893 a total estimated number of 59,316 media impressions were achieved in this produce industry publication.

The Packer

In 2011 Jersey Fresh advertisements were placed in three editions of the Packer. With a circulation of 12,000 a total estimated number of 36,000 media impressions were achieved in this produce industry publication.

Edible Jersey

In 2011 Jersey Fresh advertisements were placed in three editions of the Edible Jersey. With a circulation of 100,000 a total estimated number of 300,000 media impressions were achieved in this consumer publication.

Food Trade News

In 2011 Jersey Fresh advertisements were placed in one edition of the Food Trade News. With a circulation of 21,543 a total estimated number of 21,543 media impressions were achieved in this produce industry publication.

See; <http://www.producebusiness.com/media/ebooks/11jun.pdf> which is the June 2011 edition of the Produce News. For a copy of the Jersey Fresh trade advertisement see Page 61. The text of the article on pages 60 – 69 of this edition of the Produce Business describes specialty crop production, marketing and distribution in New Jersey and how the Jersey Fresh program supports those efforts.

Television Advertising

During the period of 9/16/2011 and 12/13/2012 a total of \$23,522.46 of television media was purchased.

During the period of 12/14/2012 and 9/17/2013 a total of \$158,797.29 of television media time was purchased and utilized.

An estimated total of 310 Jersey Fresh television ads ran on Comcast cable television from June to August 2013.

An estimated total of 207 Jersey Fresh television ads ran on the NJN network from June to August 2013.

An estimated total of 207 Jersey Fresh television ads ran on the 12 New Jersey local news channel from May through August 2013.

Outdoor Advertising

Sixteen “Ultra Super Bus King” advertising wraps were created for NJ Transit Buses and were featured on 16 buses for an eight week period from the period of 7/29/2013 – 9/22/13.

Radio Advertising

In July 2011 a total of 1,190 individual radio advertisements were broadcast on 30 different radio stations throughout New Jersey.

In August 2011 a total of 723 individual radio advertisements were broadcast on 23 different radio stations throughout New Jersey.

In September 2011 a total of 702 individual radio advertisements were broadcast on 24 different radio stations throughout New Jersey.

In October 2011 a total of 997 individual radio advertisements were broadcast on 26 different radio stations throughout New Jersey.

Media Buyers Commission

From the period of January 1, 2011 to September 17, 2013 the NJDA has paid a total of \$20,587.66.

Account Management Fee

A total of \$13,316.35 in account management fees were paid to CMD Partners for the period of January 1, 2011 to December 19, 2011.

A total of \$6,102.50 in account management fees were paid to Princeton Partners for the period of January 1, 2013 to September 17, 2013.

Consumer Awareness Study

A comprehensive post season “Awareness and Purchase Report” was conducted during the period of September 16, 2013 and October 4, 2013. To qualify for this study consumers were required to be the “primary grocery shopper” responsible for at least 50% of the household shopping for households with a minimum annual income of \$40,000. The purpose of this study was to quantify identification of, and preferences for, the Jersey Fresh brand as a means to measure the effectiveness of this advertising and promotion project.

No Program Income was generated.

NJDA Jersey Fresh Project Staff:

Al Murray, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, the administrator of the Jersey Fresh program provided oversight for project development and approved the budget, projects and creative themes.

Joe Atchison, Market Development Representative, is provided Jersey Fresh product development and procurement services. Mr. Atchison also worked as the primary department liaison to CMD Partners which, in accordance with the State of New Jersey Department of Treasury guidelines, was the designated advertising services provider to the Jersey Fresh program

William Walker, Agricultural Marketing Specialist, provided professional marketing support and assisted in point of purchase advertising materials distribution. Mr. Walker also hired and supervised two college interns who assisted in the mailing of point of

advertising materials and also made direct to store deliveries of Jersey fresh point of sale advertising materials.

Logan Brown, Economic Development Representative, assisted with the implementation of promotional and advertising projects related to the Jersey Fresh promotional program. Mr. Brown also served as the Jersey Fresh projects reporting and compliance officer for the utilization of Specialty Crop Block Grant funds utilized for the Jersey fresh program.

Lynn Coffin, administrative assistant, facilitated payments and worked to track expenses related to the utilization of Specialty Crop Block Grant funds utilized for the Jersey fresh program.

Advertising Agency Services

CMD & Partners

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President
30 Two Bridges Road
Fairfield, NJ 07004-1593
Tel: (973) 227-8600

Princeton Partners, Inc.

Jeff Cheseman
President
Princeton Forrestal Village
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Goals and Outcomes Achieved

The goals of this project were achieved through the completion of the planned television, print, outdoor advertising efforts. Summaries of those efforts can be found in the above project approach section of this final report.

The outcomes for this project can be measured through the consumer awareness survey. In the past consumer awareness surveys of the Jersey Fresh brand and its attributes have been conducted in 1984-1988, 1993, 1995, 1996, 1999 and 2002 and 823 consumers were surveyed from December 18, 2012 through January 7, 2013 to measure the effectiveness following the 2012 media buy and 854 consumers were measured in September 2013 to measure effectiveness following the 2013 media buy.

Princeton Partners of Princeton, New Jersey, in accordance with the State of New Jersey Department of Treasury guidelines, is the new designated advertising services provider to the Jersey Fresh program.

Consumer Awareness and Industry Utilization Survey

Princeton Partners retained the services of the research firm Bruno & Ridgeway to conduct the online consumer survey.

The Executive Summary is below;

“The findings from this wave show that Jersey Fresh remains a strong “brand” presence from a consumer standpoint.

- Both awareness and purchasing of JF are strong and unchanged from January of this year.
- Compared with January, significantly more consumers say they are more likely to purchase produce labeled as Jersey Fresh.
- The south to north pattern noted in the pre-wave is still apparent in many of the key measures within New Jersey-- South Jersey being the strongest area for Jersey Fresh.
- Among those familiar with JF, overall positive perceptions continue to rival those of the national brands.

This wave shows several key changes of note vs. the pre-wave.

- Higher recognition of blueberries as a Jersey Fresh crop and slightly higher purchasing.
- Growth in awareness and purchase of various Jersey Fresh crops in Staten Island.
- Growth in store identification of Jersey Fresh products as well as the proportion of consumers saying they are more likely to buy Jersey Fresh.

In terms of specific JF crops, there is strength but opportunities exist to build them further.

- Awareness and purchase continue to be greatest for tomatoes, followed by corn and blueberries. There is an opportunity to broaden the association of many other crops with Jersey Fresh.
- Awareness and purchase of specific crops also follow the south-to-north pattern noted above.
- The produce most readily associated with JF is also more likely to be considered superior to produce from other states. There may be an opportunity to leverage existing superiority perceptions to other crops by emphasizing them as Jersey Fresh produce.

The core needs of the consumer, when buying fresh produce, continue to be freshness, taste/flavor and overall quality.

- Being grown by local farms remains relatively lower in importance, along with longer shelf life. There may be an opportunity to link “local” to the core needs of freshness, taste and quality to help further differentiate Jersey Fresh and insulate it from national brands.

The current standing of Jersey Fresh should continue to be used to refine goals for the future.

- Consideration should be given to possible targets for increased growth of the Jersey Fresh brand, both in terms of the degree of growth expected and the specific geographies in which growth is desired.
- Clearly, a broadening of crops that are associated with Jersey Fresh is an area of opportunity.
- Given the strongly positive perception of the Jersey Fresh brand, there exist numerous opportunities to leverage its appeal in partnership with other entities, specifically:
 - The NJ Farm to School Program
 - NJ Produce Councils
 - Supermarkets, restaurants and food service providers
- An expanded social media presence could represent an opportunity for growth of awareness and positive perceptions of Jersey Fresh.”

In the past surveys consumer awareness surveys were coordinated by the Jersey Fresh program’s advertising contractors and conducted either by the Gallop Organization or Mapes and Ross, Inc. – both leading consumer research firms located in Princeton, NJ. The survey conducted in 2013 measured the outcome of this project using similar questions and was coordinated and conducted in the same manner.

Following the completion of the Jersey Fresh activities in support of the 2013 marketing season for Jersey Fresh products a post project survey was conducted. The survey results can be compared to similar studies seeking the same information that have previously been conducted in the following years; 1984 – 1988, 1993, 1995, 1996, 1999 and 2002. The most recent survey interviewed 854 consumers in New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania and Staten Island, NY.

Benchmarks taken from past studies were from the period 1984 – 2002 were available to measure the outcomes achieved through this project.

Goals for the results of this project were developed prior to the conduct of this project to establish and quantify the objectives of this project.

Three of the objectives of the past and current tracking study were;

- 1) Determine the inclination of consumers to purchase products identified as Jersey Fresh
- 2) Discover the rate that supermarkets are identifying produce as Jersey Fresh.
- 3) Evaluate awareness of advertising and promotional activities for Jersey Fresh farm products.

The benchmarks, established goals and results achieved through this project are as follows;

- **What is the consumer inclination to purchase fruits and vegetables if they are advertised as Jersey Fresh?**

The 2002 Benchmark for this question was 45%

The target set for this project was to raise that benchmark to 65% or more for respondents to agree that they are inclined to purchase fruits and vegetables if they are advertised as Jersey Fresh?

In September 2013; 70% of consumers reported that they were “More likely to purchase produce identified as Jersey Fresh.”

Benchmark;	45%
<u>Goal;</u>	<u>65%</u>
Outcome Achieved;	70%

- **As a consumer are you aware of the promotion of New Jersey Farm products as Jersey Fresh?**

The 2002 benchmark for this question was 41%.

The target set for this project was to raise that awareness benchmark to 50% or more of consumers being aware of the promotion of New Jersey Farm products as Jersey Fresh?

In September 2013; 78% of consumers reported “awareness of Jersey Fresh” as a brand promoting local produce.

Benchmark;	41%
<u>Goal;</u>	<u>50%</u>
Outcome Achieved;	78%

- **Are you “not likely,” “likely” or “very likely” to ask for New Jersey produce if it is NOT identified?**

The 2002 benchmark for this question is a combined 40% for likely and very likely responses.

The 2012 survey target will be that the “likely” and “very likely” responses will be at least a combined total of 50% of the responses.

In September 2013; 46% of consumers responded that they are “likely to ask for Jersey Fresh if not in the store.”

Benchmark;	40%
<u>Goal;</u>	<u>50%</u>
Outcome Achieved;	46%

- **Do you perceive New Jersey fruits and vegetables to be of higher quality in comparison to out of state competition?**

The 2002 benchmark for this question was a preference for the following New Jersey fruits and vegetables; Tomatoes 71%, Corn 58%, and Blueberries 43%.

The 2012 survey target for preferences will be a total of; Tomatoes 75%, Corn 60%, Blueberries 60%.

In September 2013 consumers thought that the following Jersey Fresh commodities were a higher quality product when “compared to the same products from other states.”; Tomatoes 78%, Corn 72% and blueberries 62%.

	Tomatoes	Corn	Blueberries
Benchmark;	71%	58%	43%
Goal;	75%	60%	60%
Outcome Achieved;	78%	72%	62%

Perhaps most impressive of all was total consumer awareness and overall opinion of the Jersey Fresh brand in comparison to national produce brands.

Total Awareness of Specific Brands;

- Chiquita; 99%
- Dole; 99%
- DelMonte; 98%
- Jersey Fresh; 78%**
- Ready Pac; 69%
- Foxy; 67%
- Bonita; 29%

Overall Opinion of Brand as “Excellent/Very Good”

- Jersey Fresh; 80%**
- Chiquita; 79%
- Dole; 78%
- Ocean Spray; 71%
- Del Monte; 69%
- Foxy; 64%
- Ready Pac; 57%
- Bonita; 37%

A digital pdf copy of this study is available from the New Jersey Department of Agriculture. For a copy contact; logan.brown@ag.state.nj.us and Request a copy of the; “September 2013 Jersey Fresh Awareness and Purchase Report.”

Beneficiaries

In 2011 there were 10,300 farmers in New Jersey working 730,000 acres with the average farm size being 71 acres.

Vegetables

According to preliminary data from the National Agricultural Statistics Service for the 2012 growing season the Area harvested for the eighteen **fresh market** and 5 major **processing vegetables**, totaled 41,550 acres. This was up 6% from 39,100 acres in 2011. Both fresh market and processing vegetable harvested acres increased. Combined production of fresh and processing vegetable was 360,550 tons, up 16% from 2011. Gross value for all crops increased 2% to \$208.3 million in 2012, compared with \$204.8 million in 2011, despite a 12% decrease in season average prices.

Fruit

According to preliminary data from the National Agricultural Statistics Service for the 2012 growing season the four major fruit and berry crops grown in New Jersey are apples, blueberries, cranberries, and peaches. The warm weather throughout the spring prompted early blooms and fruit buds. A late frost in April, along with rainstorms and high winds in the summer months, all affected fruit development for many growers. As the season concluded cranberries had higher production, while apples, blueberries, and peaches had lower production. Value of utilized production of these crops totaled \$178.8 million, down one percent from the 2011 total of \$180.8 million.

In 2012 New Jersey produced about \$387 million of fruits and vegetables and about \$347 million of Nursery and greenhouse horticultural products. Every single grower of fruits and vegetables in New Jersey is a potential benefactor of the Jersey Fresh advertising program.

The Specialty Crop Block Grants was utilized to expand the marketing of, and increase the demand for, New Jersey specialty crops through the advertising and promotion of the Jersey Fresh local branding program.

In 2004, a USDA funded Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program study documented the return on investment for the Jersey Fresh branding program. The study which drew upon the then twenty year history of the Jersey Fresh program documented that every dollar spent on the Jersey Fresh program, increased fruit and vegetable sector sales by \$31.54. According to the 2004 study, increased sales in agricultural products created additional economic activity. The increased economic activity impacted other parts of the economy, namely agricultural suppliers and service providers. In fact each dollar spent on Jersey Fresh promotion resulted in an additional \$22.95 of sales in agricultural support industries and other related industries. Therefore the total additional economic activity to be created by every dollar spent on the Jersey fresh promotional program created \$54.49 in additional economic activity for New Jersey's agricultural economy. ("Returns to the Jersey Fresh Promotional Program, the Impacts of Promotional Expenditures on Farm Cash Receipts in New Jersey," Ramu Godvindasmy, Rutgers the State University, March 2004.)

The potential impact of the \$479,612 of SCBG funds utilized for the support of the Jersey Fresh advertising and promotional program could have been expected to yield an increase of \$15.1 million in specialty crop sales in the State of New Jersey and another \$11million in additional economic activity for New Jersey's agricultural economy.

Lessons Learned

During the three year period of this SCBG project staff learned the need for a continued and consistent product branding and marketing message to maximize the benefit of the Jersey Fresh state branding program for New Jersey producers of fruits and vegetables.

The results of this project document that a modestly funded and well-targeted buy local produce promotion program can compete with much larger and significantly better funded national produce advertising programs and creating economic benefits for small producers (under 71 acres) of specialty crops.

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SCBG Agreement # 12-25-B-1083

Final Performance Report
(Revised February 3, 2014)

New Jersey Peach Promotion Council

Project Title: “Program to promote and advertise Jersey Fresh peaches”

Project Summary:

For the past 60 years, the New Jersey Peach Promotion Council has conducted successful marketing and promotional campaigns for the advancement of the peach industry in New Jersey. Our success in recent years has been in promoting the quality of locally grown Jersey Fresh peaches; compiling the Wholesale Peach Buyers’ Guide and distributing it to retail facilities; planning and hosting various media events; coordinating retail promotional events; providing education and information to consumers, buyers and the media via print advertising, website information, personal contact

Our intention was to expand the scope of our promotional campaign by incorporating new promotional activities into our program; to update our marketing theme; to reconstruct our website to provide more information and interaction to users; to continue with, and expand upon, our successful and proven educational outreach and dissemination of industry information and to have a larger impact, overall, on our target audiences.

Upon consultation with consultants the sub-grantee decided that the value-added project would not proceed due to insufficient funding

We then tried the IPM project by hoping to establish an IPM brand. It did not work out for the reason described below. We shelved that idea too.

Project Approach:

The purpose of this grant was to maximize the exposure of New Jersey peaches to potential consumers and indirectly to wholesale and institutional buyers who sell to consumers. We tried to make the peach growers, shippers and other handlers of NJ more profitable and viable. The approach of our efforts was focused during the period from 01/01/2011 to 09/30/2013. Since funding was received in 2011 much of the money was spent during this season but some was spent in 2012 and 2013. Much of the funding was used to pay qualified consultants and companies to implement and deliver the programs and projects since NJPPC is a voluntary organization of directors all who are in the business of marketing peach products and supplies.

A paid consultant, a Rutgers IPM faculty (Dean Polk), directors (mostly Phil Neary the author of the grant) who are growers meet and formulated a program to brand IPM grown fruit.

IPM production research is under the direction of the Rutgers NJAES (Dean Polk) and the growers who are all directors of NJPPC. They gave the growers advice on what they could spray, how to control pests and recommended fertilizer applications. Rutgers faculty (Dean Polk) and a consultant also met. The departure of a faculty member, horrible weather and the invasion of new insect pests destroyed the whole program and its development.

Program income was not generated under the grant.

Value-Added Peach Project

The directors of the NJPPC and their consultant investigated the feasibility of developing some value added products, including a study on processing peaches and felt they had insufficient funding to further investigate. In past studies the problem has always been with many value added product that growers could not supply or sell peaches at a quality level or price to meet any regular and potential demand.

A study was not definitively done like this because there was insufficient time and money and no ideas could be cost effectively implemented. Cost effectively means that according to our business planning the products that could be developed could not be marketed at a price that would cover any increase in the price of peaches. Our deliberations with the directors and consultants are still seeking new ideas on profitable value added projects. Like many agricultural commodities prices are strongly correlated to supply and demand.

The Directors and consultants volunteered their time and met with outside groups at Rutgers University to try and figure out what could be practically and cost effectively done. They decided to shift some of their funding to other projects mostly in the area of social media.

The directors and consultants did support individual growers, approximately 30 participating in the Integrated Pest Management program. Seven worked as a team to collectively market IPM developed in 2011. The coordinator of this program changed positions and the marketing strategy was discontinued in 2012.

The Integrated Pest Management Program is a program focusing on pest control on peaches through the use of reduced chemical and increased biological and chemical control. The goal was to develop a name for this service, quantify the chemical use and market it to the public as is done in some other countries in the world. Due to the invasion of brown marmorated stink bug and subsequent natural disease pressure in 2011 and the Rutgers University faculty member that was developing the strategy of quantification retired at the end of 2011. Both situations had not been resolved at the conclusion of the grant.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved:

We like to think that our marketing and promotional program affect prices however we have learned over 60 years of promoting peaches that environmental factors like frost, winter injury and wet weather during the growing season as he affect supplies of fruit in our markets, have a greater influence on price than our promotional program. This may be the case in 2013 when demand was slow and prices were lower and yet we had a strong promotional program. We continue to believe that we need to advertise and promote because we level out these peach and valleys in price and sustain our industry

The expected outcome was to see a substantial 5-10% increase in wholesale peach prices, increased sales volume, and timely and regular movement during the 2011 shipping season.

According to data from the New Jersey Agricultural Statistic Service (NJASS) 68,000,000 pounds of peaches were produced and sold at an average wholesale price of 46 cents per pound. In 2011 New Jersey produced 60,000,000 pounds of peaches and sold for an average wholesale price of 61 cents per pound. In 2012 New Jersey produced 60,000,000 pounds of peaches which sold for an average wholesale price of 66 cents per pound. We have no retail price data for 2013 yet or have no retail data from NJASS. In 2013 data collected from our supermarket survey in August and September showed retail prices from 89 cents per pound to 1.99 cent per pound.

It is always difficult to measure the impact of consumer advertising from studies and surveys. We have learned that even though we have limited influence on wholesale buyers with this advertising we do keep our name in front of the public. We know we have this exposure to the public as you can see from the circulation. We focus on areas of New Jersey, New York City and Philadelphia. This helps us put pressure on retailers to purchase local Jersey Fresh peaches in these areas We also know we have an increasing number of members and other growers that retail directly to the consumer. This is done by farm markets, community farmers markets, CSA's and U-pick operations. Our membership requires this advertising. We know we do not have nearly enough funding to make the impact we need to increase peach prices but we do know from personally visiting supermarkets and other retailers that they hear about NJ peaches from our advertising and the exposure we get in the editorial media.

The survey of commercial growers and shippers to quantify their experience was not conducted because there was no time or money to do this other than a verbal survey of the grower directors who attend the meetings and are contacted by me.

The Council was hoping to get “free” press in media outlets through the distribution of press releases and follow up contact with editors, and other media types. It is difficult to tract and correlate the impact of press releases however the jerseypeaches.com website recorded a total of 515 hits on the press releases posted on their website.

Although not part this project's budget the Council had hoped to conduct visits to major wholesale buyers of New Jersey peaches however that activity was not conducted.

Although not a part if this project's budget the Council had also hoped to conduct a survey measuring the effectiveness of this project's advertising however that activity was not conducted.

Video Project:

A consultant was hired to shoot good video footage of all segments of growing, handling, marketing, and promoting peaches. Many hours of raw footage were shot during and after the growing season. The video company consultant also sub contracted a professional announcer to do some of the voice over footage. One horticultural consultant was hired to stage location of shooting and provide technical information input. This consultant and a marketing consultant worked with growers, retired growers, and personnel from Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station to be interviewed, provide sites for shooting and review all content.

The buyer video staging was complete and the footage shot. This video has not been completed. The handling and marketing video was staged the footage shot and completed but the final video is not finished. The consumer and general peach video was completed and posted on U Tube and our peach web site at www.jerseypeaches.com One hundred and fifty copies were printed on DVDs and most were sent to key members and prospective peach buyers in July 2013. We have also promoted the video on our Facebook page and through email to members and others.

We exceeded our original \$8,000 budget and actually transferred \$5,000 from the money budgeted the value added peach project. We will continue to finish these videos using other sources of revenue and will more aggressively market them in the future. We have not collected u tube or other data yet since final were just finished in the summer of 2013.

Website update;

We significantly updated and revised our website www.jerseypeaches.com. All 65 members are listed on our site in one location or another. All grower members who sell peaches are listed with their web site or email. We had 410,387 total hits in 2013 compared to 222,548 in 2012 and about 40,000 in 2011. We have seen tremendous growth in activity on our website. Since we no longer have an official office or staff the website is the focal point of all peach information in New Jersey. Some of the most used pages are listed below. Since our main peach video is listed on our home page and then directed to a U tube site we have more difficulty measuring the video impact. The following are major peaches most used by consumers.

JERSEYPEACHES.COM: TOP PAGES

Rank	Page	Page Views
1	/home page	11,902
2	/shippers_nj_peach_promotion_council.	2,929
3	/industry_facts_nj_peach_promotion_council.	1,040
4	/consumers_nj_peach_promotion_council.	967
5	/growers_nj_peach_promotion_council.	707
6	/press_releases_nj_peach_promotion_council.	515
7	/availability_nj_peach_promotion_council.	478
8	/contact_nj_peach_promotion_council.	435
9	/members_membership_nj_peach_promotion_council.	429
10	/media_nj_peach_promotion_council.	415
Total of Other Pages		7,439
Total(s) of all Pages		27,256

We have spent all \$3,000 shifted from the value added peach project budget to cover costs of the website update and all this funding has been spent.

Peach Value Added project:

Consumer Advertising -All of the grant money was used to develop, place, and pay for consumer advertng space the first year. Directors designed the ads but a consultant was used to buy space and place the ads and manage circulation and impact.

2011 Consumer Ad Placements & Costs

14 Print outlets carried PPC ads, including 1 daily newspaper, 2 radio stations, 2 magazines, 9 local weekly newspapers, covering all New Jersey and eastern PA

Total Audience Reach	2,564,352 (14 Print Outlets)
Total Cost:	\$22,685.71
Philadelphia Inquirer	482,457 circulation
Star Ledger Inside Jersey	100,000
Edible Jersey	40,000 copies 250+ distribution sites; 140,000 readers
News Transcript	38,861
Independent	31,121
East Brunswick Sentinel	31,047
Princeton Packet Time Off	70,000
Wayne Today	19,548
Sussex Aim	10,087
Suburban Trends	9,333
Millennium Radio-11 stations	1.4-million weekly
Greater Media Radio-3 stations	700,000 weekly

Beneficiaries:

Approximately 90 peach farmers grow and manage 6500 acres of peaches. The utilized value of this production is 30,000 tons or 60 million pounds with a value \$39,600,000 in 2012. These 90 growers plus their families, employees and the industries like packers, shippers, other handlers and the supply and service industries that support this industry are also beneficiaries. Indirectly the consumers who buy and utilize local and Jersey Fresh peaches benefit from our industry. Also citizens of the state of New Jersey benefit by having a tree fruit industry that preserves trees and open space for obvious environmental and economic reasons mentioned.

Lessons Learned:

We have insufficient funding to operate and employ people to run a New Jersey Peach Promotion Council office. Thus we have to hire consultants with the marketing and technical expertise to do our work because most of our directors have other full time businesses and have limited time to operate a promotion council. Our web site www.jerseypeaches.com has been a tremendous asset to be a source of peach information. It is tied into everything we promote. This is reflective in the number of hits we receive.

We have learned that we are grossly under-funded to produce videos of the quality we need to make an impact. We have produced one video to date and have received favorable comments on its content. We need to generate more funds to complete the other peach promotion and educational videos. Producing these has been a time consuming job.

We expected to visit and document visits to 40 major wholesale buyers of New Jersey peaches. My recollection was that our consultant started to do this but it was a lot of money to cover travel expenses and time to wait and then visit with major buyers. It was decided to stop doing this because it was not effective after the first year.

A survey had been planned to measure advertising however our advertising survey was conducted by our consultant by verbal surveying buyers she visited, and growers and marketers who attended our meetings. We also collected data from the stations and publications where we advertised, the hits we had on our web site, the surveys our web site readers filled out.

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Additional Information:

The link to the YouTube video can be found here; www.jerseypeaches.com/jerseypeaches-video.html

Final Performance Report
(Revised February 3, 2013)

New Jersey Farm Bureau

Project Title:

“Jersey Fresh Consumer Education and Grower Direct Marketing Outreach Program”

Project Summary:

The purpose of our grant project has been to i.) educate consumers about the benefits of buying locally grown, Jersey Fresh produce and the accessibility of local produce to school food service professionals, and to ii.) educate farmers on direct marketing opportunities and provide farmers with point-of-purchase display materials to help market the benefits of buying the fruits and vegetables they grow.

New Jersey is unique in that it is the most densely populated state in the country with 8.7 million residents and it is also a leading producer of many fruits and vegetables. New Jersey has over 9,000 farms, many of which produce the very fruits and vegetables that our citizens need to lead healthy lifestyles. Most New Jersey farmers are within an hour drive of major population centers where there are now approximately 135 community farmers markets. According to the National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) in 2007 there were over 1,900 farmers involved in some form of direct-marketing.

In order to sustain the long-term viability of New Jersey farms, there exists a need to increase markets for their farm products and to increase the dollar value farmers receive for those products. NJFB working with the NJ Farm to School Network and Rutgers Cooperative Extension, utilized this grant funding to educate farmers about direct marketing opportunities and implementation of direct marketing strategies and conversely to educate consumers about the benefits of eating locally grown, Jersey Fresh food. We further utilized the funding to develop and provide a resource for school food service professionals that allow them to understand when locally grown, Jersey Fresh produce is available with the goal of shifting purchasing decisions in favor of local farm providers. This produce availability resource proved to be so popular that we expanded production and distribution to consumers statewide. All grant funds were used to solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. All promotional materials developed as a part of this grant solely promote fruits or vegetables within their content. The educational seminars were specifically designed for specialty-crop farmers.

This project was timely in that there is a growing focus on the importance of the social, economic and environmental benefits of consuming locally grown food.

Project Approach:

Activities Performed

1.) Develop and design local produce seasonal availability charts for distribution to school food service professionals for their use when ordering and planning meals.

The New Jersey Farm to School Network and the New Jersey Farm Bureau worked with a graphic designer to design bright, colorful, easy to read seasonality chart 11” x 7” postcard for New Jersey fresh produce.

<http://njfb.org/wp-content/uploads/njfb/localfarms/seasonality.pdf>

In May/June of 2011, five thousand of these postcards were printed and 2,900 were mailed to New Jersey school food service directors through a mailing list provided by the NJDA Division of Food and Nutrition. The remaining 2,100 seasonality chart cards were distributed through various, non-grant funded farm to school promotional events, including three farm tours for food service professionals in May/June 2011 and farm to school week in September 2011. Feedback received was very positive with professionals across the agriculture and food distribution industries in New Jersey asking for quantities of the cards for their distribution. Because of this and low printing costs, we utilized grant funding from within the “promotional materials” budget category to print 5,000 more seasonality chart cards in February 2013. These were distributed to consumers quickly through various public events that we attended throughout the year, such as county fairs and trade shows. We also gave a quantity to the New Jersey Department of Agriculture for them to distribute at their events. This second round of printed cards went so quickly that we further utilized grant funds in the promotional materials category to print an additional 15,000 seasonality chart cards in September 2013. We opted to produce more of these more popular post cards and lessen the number of promotional nutrition brochures as they were well received but not as fast moving. This printing allowed us to forward 750 of the cards to the Rutgers Cancer Institute, who works with ten houses of worship in central New Jersey to distribute 50-100 produce vouchers bi-weekly to their congregants. The seasonality chart cards were distributed to the congregants with the produce vouchers. Through winter events we have exhausted the supply of these cards and distribution is complete.

2.) Educate farmers on direct marketing opportunities and provide them with point-of-purchase display materials to help promote the benefits of locally grown.

Working with the Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension Agritourism team, we were able to hold three identical educational seminars for farmers in each region of the state (North, Central, South) on January 24, 25 and 26, 2012. These seminars were planned through a series of meetings, conference calls and email communications throughout 2011.

The conference agenda was packed with presentations by experts in the areas of on-farm direct marketing and agritourism, from Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension, North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension and private insurance educators.

The “theme” for the morning sessions was “Potential for Agritourism/On-Farm Direct Marketing.” Farmers heard from; Brian Schilling – “Agritourism in NJ, Where Are We Now and What is the Potential?”, Stephen Komar – “Is Agritourism Right for You?”, Dr. Samantha Rozier Rich, Assistant Professor and Tourism Ext. Specialist, NCSU and Sue Colucci, Area Specialized Agent, Agriculture, North Carolina Coop. Ext. - “Using Communication Technology to Expand Your Business”, Jenny Carleo – “Creating the Customer Experience”, and Luanne Hughes – “Using Health and Nutrition to Market Fresh Produce”

The afternoon “theme” was “Realities of Agritourism/On-Farm Direct Marketing” The afternoon presentations included; Jenny Carleo – “Getting Started with a Business Plan”, Bill Bamka – “Farm Safety From a Bird’s-Eye View”, Ryck Suydam, Charles Nemeth and Staci Dempsey (insurance agents/brokers in their respective regions of the state) “Risk Management/Insurance Realities of Agritourism”, Michelle Casella – “Trials and Tribulations of Creating a Statewide AMP for On-Farm Direct Marketing” with discussion and Q &A to wrap up the day.

Attendance and feedback from the conference indicate a welcome response by New Jersey growers. Originally budgeting for 50 attendees at each site (150 total), actual attendance was 211 participants total at the three locations. Comments from attendees reflect the value they derived from the conference, including statements like: “This program far exceeded my expectations!” “The program was well thought out, hit many subjects, and was good for people starting out in agritourism and for those of us who have done this for years.”

Each participant received a packet of information which included;

- 2012 Agritourism/Direct Marketing conference survey
- RCE CD with information and tools to teach kids about food, nutrition and the farm,
- RCE fact sheet – “22 Quick and Easy Ways to Eat More Fruits and Vegetables”
- RCE fact sheet – “Agritourism – Keeping Passengers Safe on Hay Rides”
- RCE fact sheet – “Is an Agritourism Venture Right for Your Farm?”
- RCE bulletin – “Marketing 101 for Your Agritourism Business”
- RCE bulletin – “The Economic Contributions of Agritourism”
- National Children’s Center Policies and Procedures Guide – Supplement A to Agritourism Health and Safety Guidelines for Children
- National Children’s Center Worksite Guide – Supplement B to Agritourism Health and Safety Guidelines for Children
- Photocopies of speakers’ slide presentations from the conferences
- Conference participants were also provided with a sampling of the nine price cards that were developed using this grant and the CD which provides a digital copy of each of the cards.

Participants were given a typical program evaluation form to complete, the results of which show that the majority found the presentations to be moderately to very useful and the content of the conference to be very good to excellent. All participants who filled out

the evaluation form said that the information presented either met or exceeded expectations.

Past experience has shown us that charging a minimal registration fee leads to more accurate RSVP counts as people are more likely to follow through when they have paid. Because of this, we charged a conference registration fee of \$10 per person with the intent of reinvesting the fees into program activities. The total program income received was \$1480. To date, \$169.82 of that total has been expended on promotional materials that were developed as a part of this grant and our intent is to expend the remaining \$1310.82 on another printing of the Seasonal Availability Chart that was developed as a part of this grant project and which solely promotes specialty crops.

We understand that federal regulation “[§3019.35](#) Supplies and other expendable property” states that “(a) Title to supplies and other expendable property shall vest in the recipient upon acquisition. If there is a residual inventory of unused supplies exceeding \$5000 in total aggregate value upon termination or completion of the project or program and the supplies are not needed for any other federally-sponsored project or program, the recipient shall retain the supplies for use on non-Federal sponsored activities or sell them, but shall, in either case, compensate the Federal Government for its share. The amount of compensation shall be computed in the same manner as for equipment.”

The current remaining inventory of supplies that we have on hand has an estimated value of \$1500. The inventory consists of the Local Farms Local Foods/nutrition brochure which we are continuing to distribute to specialty crop growers and consumers at various events and through our Agriculture Extension Agents.

3.) Develop promotional, point-of purchase materials for farmers who seek retail/direct marketing opportunities.

Working with a graphic designer, colorful, eye-catching price cards were designed for nine different fruits and vegetables in early 2012. That same designer, in the spring of 2013, developed one additional card with a generic “fruits and vegetables” design that can be used for the marketing of any fruit or vegetable. The price cards include the Jersey Fresh logo and a nutrition chart to educate consumers about the nutritional value of the specialty crop pictured on the card, or in the case of the generic card, some general nutrition facts about fruits and vegetables. Price cards are designed for each of the following specialty crops; tomatoes, blueberries, peppers, sweet corn, squash, sweet potatoes, broccoli, peaches and apples.

<http://njfb.org/wp-content/uploads/njfb/localfarms/tomatoes.pdf>

<http://njfb.org/wp-content/uploads/njfb/localfarms/blueberries.pdf>

<http://njfb.org/wp-content/uploads/njfb/localfarms/bellpeppers.pdf>

<http://njfb.org/wp-content/uploads/njfb/localfarms/sweetcorn.pdf>

<http://njfb.org/wp-content/uploads/njfb/localfarms/summersquash.pdf>

<http://njfb.org/wp-content/uploads/njfb/localfarms/sweetpotatoes.pdf>

<http://njfb.org/wp-content/uploads/njfb/localfarms/broccoli.pdf>

<http://njfb.org/wp-content/uploads/njfb/localfarms/peaches.pdf>
<http://njfb.org/wp-content/uploads/njfb/localfarms/apples.pdf>
<http://njfb.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Generic-Card.pdf>

We were able to distribute a sampling of the price cards along with a digital version of the nine, crop specific cards to the 211 farmer participants in the winter 2012 educational seminars. Further distribution to farmers for use at their farm markets has continued at the various meetings, fairs and events that we attended throughout 2012 and 2013. The price cards were so well received by the farmers for use in their farm markets as a tool to better sell their specialty crops, that we ordered the printing of 20,500 more cards in May of 2013. We ordered 2,500 each of the 7 most popular cards (including the newly designed generic card) and 1,000 each of the three slightly less popular cards. These cards were distributed to farmers for use in their markets with the assistance of the Rutgers Cooperative Extension agricultural agents in 15 New Jersey Counties. The availability of these cards was made known to farmers through the NJFB weekly newsletter and farmers continue to visit their local RCE offices to receive them. Through winter events we have exhausted the supply of these cards and distribution is complete.

4.) Develop and design educational brochures about produce, its availability, and benefits.

New Jersey Farm Bureau worked with the Rutgers University Family and Community Health Sciences department to develop a brochure outlining the nutritional benefits of local produce. <http://njfb.org/wp-content/uploads/njfb/localfarms/localbrochure.pdf>

This brochure is geared toward consumers as a point-of-purchase promotional item. The brochure includes information about the variety, quality, freshness and safety of locally grown produce as well as a few smart eating tips for busy families. We incorporated the previously developed seasonal availability chart onto one panel of the brochure to further promote the availability of fruits and vegetables. The brochure also contains a link to the website that we have developed as a part of this grant www.njfb.org/localfarms.

In March 2013 we began distribution of the first 25,000 brochures. Distribution of the brochures was done at the same time as the second order of produce price cards and through the same means. Rutgers Cooperative Extension agricultural agents in 15 counties were given boxes of the brochures for distribution to farmers that market directly to consumers. We also distributed boxes of the brochures to farmers' market managers throughout New Jersey. We are now confident that these brochures are displayed on the counters of farm markets across New Jersey for consumers to pick up and take home. After the first 25,000 brochures were distributed, we ordered a second print run of 30,000 brochures. Farm Bureau continues to promote the availability of these brochures to farmers through its membership database and through its contacts at Rutgers Cooperative Extension and we continue to distribute the brochures through the various events that New Jersey Farm Bureau, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, the New Jersey Farm to School Network and the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Ag agents attend throughout the year.

5.) Create a website domain that consumers can visit for additional information on the benefits of the consumption of locally grown produces. Advertise the domain the public through public media sources.

Implementation of this grant project led us to the determination that the website domain should be a resource for farmers and wholesale buyers as well as the consumers that were the target of the website domain in the grant proposal. Because development of the website was an in-kind contribution of New Jersey Farm Bureau, we opted to develop it as a page within the existing NJFB website. The 'Local Farms, Local Food' page of the NJFB website was launched in the spring of 2013, however it went through a complete overhaul and update along with the rest of the NJFB website in August/September of 2013.

When you visit the 'Local Farms, Local Food' page of the Farm Bureau website today, you will find that it is divided into three sections, each with a different target audience. The first section has resources and materials for farmers, the middle section has links and resources for consumers and the last section has resources for wholesale buyers. Resources include printable, electronic versions of each of the ten point-of-purchase price cards so that farmers can go online and print them for use in their markets. You will also find electronic versions of the nutrition brochure and the seasonal availability chart that were developed through this grant. Consumers will find links to nutrition and health resources at the USDA and Rutgers Family and Community Health Sciences websites. There are also links to resources that assist consumers in finding farm markets and places to purchase local produce near them. We felt that it was best not to re-invent the wheel with these resources and rather to direct people to the most reliable sources for up-to-date information.

Moving forward, New Jersey Farm Bureau plans to include additional informational resources for farmers, consumers and wholesale buyers on this webpage as we become aware of them. This is not a part of the grant but rather would be a part of an effort to continue the usefulness of the local farms webpage.

6.) Advertise the website domain to the public through public media sources, such as radio or internet. Use the domain to track website hits and gain feedback from farmers and consumers about its usefulness.

Once the webpage was completed and live, we moved forward with advertising it as a resource for consumers to find about local food. As a way to reach a large consumer group that is interested in food, we developed two advertisements to run in Edible New Jersey magazine. One designed for the high-summer 2013 and another for the fall 2013 issue. This is a publication that is focused on food in New Jersey and has a distribution of 40,000 copies to over 350 distribution sites capturing 140,000 readers with each issue. The advertisement was designed to market www.njfb.org/localfarms as a place to learn more about buying Jersey Fresh, "in-season" produce as a part of a healthy diet along with www.visitnjfarms.org as the place to find a source for farm fresh fruits and vegetables. Visitnjfarms.org is a central clearinghouse for consumers to enter their zip

code and find a farm market nearby. The advertisement was designed with a background photo of fruits and vegetables at a farm stand with the message, “It’s that time of year again! New Jersey farmers are harvesting their bounty and bringing it straight to you! Find your source for farm fresh fruits and vegetables at www.visitnjfarms.org” and “Buying Jersey Fresh, ‘in-season’ produce makes healthy eating easy and flavorful. Find out more by visiting www.njfb.org/localfarms.”

We further advertised the webpage by purchasing an ad campaign through NJ.com, the main on-line newspaper for the state of New Jersey. The campaign was set to coincide with the start of the fall harvest season in New Jersey and ran on the NJ.com website and mobile application for three weeks in September 2013. The campaign consisted of a half-page advertisement, a leaderboard rectangle and a smartphone advertisement that would appear throughout the NJ.com website during the three week period. The message of the advertisement was “Fall harvest time is here again!” “Eat healthy, buy locally grown “Jersey Fresh” fruits and vegetables”. Clicking on the ad would bring the viewer directly to the www.njfb.org/localfarms page. The target audience was not limited by county or region as we felt that consumers throughout New Jersey would benefit from the promotion of fruits and vegetables via www.njfb.org/localfarms. The total impressions (people who would view the advertisement in one form or another) for this ad buy was 650,000.

Through website tracking, we found that this “click-through” advertising on NJ.com, in particular, drove people to the website. In the months leading up to September, views of the webpage remained fairly steady in the 150 hits/month range. In September, we tracked 1,300 hits. In October and November the numbers receded to around 200/month. Our tracking data also shows us how many downloads were made off of the “Local Farms, Local Foods” page of the website of things like the seasonal availability chart, the nutrition brochure and the produce price cards. Again, we found a spike in September, particularly of downloads of the nutrition brochure and the seasonal availability chart.

Below is a chart of the last three full months of tracking of the “Local Farms, Local Foods” website.

Month	Total Hits	Nutrition Brochure	Season. Chart	Price Cards								
				Apple	Peach	Squash	Pepper	Blueberry	Corn	Tomato	Broccoli	Sweet Potato
Sept.	1,326	135	107	89	35	19	17	26	21	50	26	19
Oct.	215	34	61	45	10	9	12	11	5	16	6	7
Nov.	191	5	12	13	9	4	8	10	8	7	12	9

We intend to continue to promote this web page a source for information and expect an increase in views and downloads as the spring season begins to ramp up again in 2014.

We did develop a pop-up survey designed to ask visitors about the usefulness of the site when they arrived at it. This was to be a measurable for the number of people reached, unfortunately, the lesson learned is that people are not readily willing to take a short

survey as we had absolutely no responses. We feel that the tracking data is a sufficient measurable to determine use of the website.

7.) *Gain insight about consumer awareness of the benefits of local food through public survey.* In November 2010 and October 2011 NJFB included several questions to gauge consumer awareness of the benefits of local food in its annual Fairleigh Dickinson University PublicMind Poll. This polling was funded by New Jersey Farm Bureau and not the grant; however the results lend themselves to the grant project work and can be used as way of measuring consumer sentiment.

When asked in 2010 about their level of confidence in the safety of locally-grown produce, nearly three out of four (73%) New Jersey voters said they have “a lot” of confidence in the safety of locally grown Jersey Fresh produce. Ninety-three percent said they have “some” or “a lot” of confidence. Only 4% said they have “just a little confidence” and just 1% said they have “no confidence.” In 2011, we saw a slight drop in confidence when about 6 in 10 (64%) of New Jersey voters said they have ‘a lot’ of confidence in locally grown Jersey Fresh produce. It appears that despite New Jersey’s produce historically being safe, its reputation suffers with the media coverage about tainted foods elsewhere in the country. This demonstrates the importance for educating consumers about the value of locally grown produce.

The polling also asked respondents about the importance of buying locally grown fruits and vegetables when they are in season. In 2010, we found that six in ten respondents (60%) feel it is “very important” to buy locally grown fruit and vegetables when they are in season. In 2011 results showed that more than 9 in 10 (94%) say it is “very important” or “somewhat important” to buy locally grown fruits and vegetables when they are in season.

In 2010, we specifically asked respondents about how much brochures and signs about locally grown fruits and vegetables impact their decision to buy them when in the grocery store and we found that 62% of all those surveyed indicate the presence of brochures or signs about locally grown fruits and vegetables has “a lot” or “some” impact on their decision to buy them.

Another way to gauge consumer awareness of the value of locally grown fruits and vegetables is to ask them if they or someone in their family has purchased any Jersey Fresh or locally grown fruits in vegetables at a farm stand or farmers market in the past three months (polling conducted in October). In 2010, we found that than 8 in 10 (83%) answered yes to that question, and in 2011 the number increased slightly to 87%.

Unfortunately, when we posed this question in 2013, we saw a decrease in that number by ten percentage points to 77% of New Jersey residents who said that they or a family member have purchased locally grown produce at a farm stand or farmers market in the past 3 months. However, in that same 2013 survey, we found that the majority of residents are willing to pay something extra for such locally grown produce. Sixty-six percent say they would be ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ likely to pay 10% extra for locally grown fruits and vegetables, while 56% would be ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ likely to pay 25% extra.

This willingness to pay extra for locally grown produce also showed up in our 2010 and 2011 surveys when we asked, *Even if it costs slightly more, would you like to see more locally grown, Jersey Fresh produce served in public school meals?* In 2010, 85% and in 2011 90% of the respondents polled said they would like to see more Jersey Fresh produce served in public school meals, even if it costs slightly more.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved:

Goal # 1: Increase the knowledge and awareness of New Jersey Consumers about the nutritional and community benefits of local food at home and in our schools.

Activities completed to meet Goal #1

- Design, development and distribution of a brochure that describes to consumers the benefits of eating locally grown food and offers tips on how to increase consumption of fruits and vegetables for a more nutritious diet.
- Design, development and distribution of a New Jersey seasonality chart 11” x 7” postcard that educates consumers and school food service professionals about the when the different fruits and vegetables are in season in New Jersey.
- Development of a ‘Local Farms, Local Food’ page of the Farm Bureau website which includes links to nutrition and health resources at the USDA and Rutgers Family and Community Health Sciences websites as well as links to resources that assist consumers in finding farm markets and places to purchase local produce near them. The webpage also has electronic versions of the nutrition brochure and the seasonality chart to further educate consumers.
- Design, development and distribution of ten different produce price cards designed to educate consumers at the point of purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables about the nutritional benefits on the fruit or vegetable they are about to purchase.
- Educated farmers about ways to market fruits and vegetables using nutritional information and other benefits of locally grown produce. Provided farmers with specialized promotional materials to assist them in marketing their produce. This method gives farmers the tools to better educate their customers.

Measurable outcomes of Goal # 1

- The PublicMind polling data shows that New Jersey residents consistently to support locally grown fruits and vegetables and are willing to pay a premium for it. There is room for growth, however, in connecting more people with a farm to buy these fruits and vegetables.
- Tracking the number of visits to the www.njfb.org/localfarms web page that was developed as a part of this grant shows that there is interest from people in learning more about locally grown fruits and vegetables, when produce is available in New Jersey and the nutritional benefits gained from increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables.
- We were able to distribute at least 25,000 Local Farms Local Food brochures and 15,000 seasonality chart cards during the grant period.

Goal # 2: Educate farmers on direct marketing opportunities and provide them with point-of-purchase display materials to help promote the benefits of locally grown.

Activities completed to meet Goal #2

- Held three identical educational seminars for farmers in each region of the state (North, Central, South), reaching 211 farmers and providing each of them with tools to better promote fruits and vegetables.
- Development of a 'Local Farms, Local Food' page of the Farm Bureau website which includes electronic versions of point-of-purchase resources, allowing farmers to download and print them for use in their markets.
- Design, development and distribution of a brochure that describes to consumers the benefits of eating locally grown food and offers tips on how to increase consumption of fruits and vegetables for a more nutritious diet.
- Design, development and distribution of a New Jersey seasonality chart 11" x 7" postcard that educates consumers about the when the different fruits and vegetables are in season in New Jersey.
- Design, development and distribution of ten different produce price cards designed to educate consumers at the point of purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables about the nutritional benefits on the fruit or vegetable they are about to purchase.
- Provided farmers with additional education materials and marketing strategies at summer twilight educational events co-sponsored by Rutgers NJAES and the NJ Farmers Direct Marketing Association.

Measurable outcomes of Goal #2

- Over 200 farmers attended the educational seminars held in the winter of 2012.
- Survey responses from those farmers who attended showed overall positive feedback.
- We were able to distribute approximately 20,000 produce price cards to farmers for use at their markets as point-of-purchase sales materials. Additionally, many of the nutrition brochures and seasonal availability cards went to farmers for distribution to their customers.
- Tracking the number of downloads of the produce price cards from the www.njfb.org/localfarms web page that was developed as a part of this grant indicates that farmers are downloading printing them for use at their markets.
- Sixty farmers attended summer educational twilight meetings where they received educational materials on marketing strategies.

Beneficiaries:

The groups that benefited from the completion of this project's accomplishments include:

- New Jersey growers of specialty crops who directly or indirectly market fresh fruits and vegetables to consumers. According to the National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) in 2007, there were over 1,900 farmers involved in some form of direct-marketing and that number demonstrates an increasing trend since 2002. According to a report entitled, "The Economic Impact of the Jersey Fresh Program," which was commissioned by the NJDA to determine the impact of Jersey Fresh promotion on farmer

cash receipts in NJ, an econometric analysis showed promotional efforts such as those completed during this project boosted farm income. For every dollar spent on the Jersey Fresh promotional program in 2003, NJ's agricultural fruit and vegetable sector revenues increased by \$31.54. In addition, the economic activity created in the agricultural industry also had impacts on other parts of the economy, resulting in an additional \$22.95 of sales in agricultural support industries for every dollar spent on Jersey Fresh promotion.

- New Jersey residents and consumers who have read the Local Farms Local Foods brochure and/or who have the seasonality chart on their refrigerator are now better informed about the nutritional advantages to eating locally grown fruits and vegetables and are more aware of when they are available to purchase. Likewise, consumers now have a reliable resource to find the farm stand or community farmers market nearest them. Encouraging consumer efforts to support locally grown produce as this grant does, increases the number of people who know where their food comes from. The inherent benefits of having more people know the farmer that grew their food is an important one.

- The New Jersey Farm Bureau – the largest member-based, farmer organization in New Jersey benefits by demonstrating to its farmer members that we continue to do work to enhance the viability of specialty crop agriculture in New Jersey. Taking part in grant projects such as this one allows us to play an active role in educating consumers about New Jersey agriculture and educating farmers in strategies to increase their business so that it can be maintained for generations to come.

- New Jersey Farm to School Network – an organization dedicated to increasing the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables served in school meals, benefits from this project as it helps to further the goals of the organization. Providing the seasonal availability card to 2,900 school food service professionals allowed the Farm to School Network better educate that industry about the feasibility of utilizing local produce in school meals.

- The Rutgers Cancer Institute has benefited from this project by being able to include more educational information along with produce vouchers it provides through the ten houses of worship in central New Jersey

- Rutgers Cooperative Extension/NJ Agricultural Experiment Station benefits from this grant by utilizing the resources it provided in its ongoing education and outreach efforts to New Jersey Farmers.

Lessons Learned:

There is an ongoing need to educate the public about the many benefits of consuming locally grown fruits and vegetables. Even with ongoing education efforts, the PublicMind polling results showed a decrease in the number of people whose families have purchased any Jersey Fresh or locally grown fruits or vegetables at a farm stand or farmers market in the preceding three months. In 2010 and 2011 the response rate was 83% and 87% yes, respectively, but that number dropped to 77% yes in 2013.

Unfortunately, our online feedback survey did not receive any responses. Perhaps this isn't the best avenue to gain consumer input. This area will need exploration if we ever do a similar project in the future.

Distributing large quantities of materials so that a diverse group of people will have access to them is challenging. The nutrition brochures and produce price cards needed to be distributed in large quantities to farmers, community farmers' market managers, and others so that they could be available for customers at the point of purchase. We found the best way to do this was to make them available at the local Rutgers Cooperative Extension offices for pick up. The RCE offices report that the produce price cards were quickly picked up by farmers who direct market but that the brochures were not as popular. Providing the ability to download the produce price cards electronically via the website has allowed farmers to print them as-needed and when a crop is in-season. We saw a spike in downloads of the 'apple' price card in the month of September, as apple season in New Jersey was gearing up.

Hosting the educational conferences for the farmers taught us that what one person finds to be an attribute, another person will complain about. Educational seminars cannot be all things to all people and having a focused agenda was a benefit. Through conference survey feedback we learned that there is a need for further education and information on insurance and regulations that impact farmers who are direct marketing.

Contact Person:

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Additional Information on file with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture

NJ Seasonality Chart (2pgs)

Brochure: Local Farms Local Food for Better Nutrition and Health (2pgs)

Summer squash produce price card

Sweet corn produce price card

Sweet potato produce price card

Tomato produce price card

Apple produce price card

Bell pepper produce price card

Peach produce price card

Broccoli produce price card

Blueberry produce price card

Generic produce price card

Advertisement developed for high-summer issue - Edible NJ magazine

Advertisement as it appeared in high-summer issue - Edible NJ magazine

Advertisement developed for fall issue - Edible NJ magazine

Advertisement developed for fall issue - Edible NJ magazine

Advertisement developed for NJ.com leaderboard

Advertisement developed for NJ.com mobile app

Advertisement developed for NJ.com half-page ad

Advertisement as it appeared on NJ.com
Program/flyer for Agritourism conferences (2pgs)
Survey compilation data for North Jersey Agritourism conference
Survey compilation data for Central Jersey Agritourism conference
Survey compilation data for South Jersey Agritourism conference
Survey comments compilation for the three Agritourism conferences

Final Performance Report
(Revised February 3, 2014)

Garden State Wine Growers Association

Project Title

“An expanded Wine Trails promotion of New Jersey wines”

Project Summary

The project sought to expand the popular Wine Trail program in New Jersey by creating a “Barrel Trail Weekend” with the focus being to give wine consumers in New Jersey a deeper understanding and appreciation for the wine making process. Along with providing patrons intimate access to our vintners, the program was designed to assist with developing an appreciation of the fine wines produced in New Jersey and to promote the three American Viticultural Areas (AVA) designations found in the state.

In addition, the project included the development of a statewide marketing/advertising campaign for the launch of the “Barrel Trail Weekend”, development of a Barrel Trail Weekend logo, creation of a Barrel Trail Weekend section of the GSWGGA web site, creation of POS collateral for each GSWGGA member’s tasting room and development of an educational seminar for members of the GSWGGA.

Project Approach

The approach of this project was to develop a program that focused on the fine wines of New Jersey and educated consumers about the significance of the three AVA regions found within the state. Expanding the already popular Wine Trail Weekend series in New Jersey enabled the GSWGGA to build upon the success of the series and provide the consumer a much richer experience (intimate access to the vintners, deeper understanding of the wine making process, and sampling of the “futures” and education of the AVA heritage in NJ). In order to insure success for the Barrel Trail Weekend the GSWGGA had to present a unified branding program to potential consumers. In addition, the GSWGGA had to develop an educational component for their members that supported the continuing emphasis on developing fine wines in New Jersey.

Statewide Marketing/Advertising of Barrel Trail Weekend

The GSWGGA was extremely pleased with the overall branding and awareness campaign designed to support the first time “Barrel Tasting Trail” which took place in July 2011. With support from the SCBG the GSWGGA matched the \$20,000 from the grant with another \$20,000 for a total statewide marketing budget of \$40,000 solely for the promotion of the first time “Barrel Tasting Trail”. The response to this wine trail was tremendous! This newly designed wine trail not only was supported by long time patrons of NJ Wineries, but brought out first time attendees to a NJ Wine Trail. Wineries reported increased attendance and sales over the wine trail weekend that is certainly the outgrowth of a strong statewide marketing campaign for the event. Wineries and patrons

alike reported great satisfaction with the concept of the Barrel Tasting Trail which focused on the quality wines of NJ along with the educating patrons about the winemaking process....there is no doubt that the additional marketing dollars were the key to the success of this event.

Logo Design/Web Design

The GSWGA developed a very attractive and elegant logo for the “Barrel Trail Weekend”. The logo was used, and continues to be used, on all marketing materials for the event. In addition, the GSWGA added a section to their web site dedicated solely to the Barrel Trail Weekend with significant highlight placed on identifying and explaining the three distinct AVA regions found in New Jersey. The Barrel Trail Weekend has its own “drop down” from the GSWGA home page. Once in this section of the GSWGA web site one can learn all about the Barrel Trail Weekend program as well as view a statewide map identifying the three AVAs and the wineries who are part of each of these distinct regions. Significant information is given about the fine wines of New Jersey and the elements that make each of the three AVAs unique. The highlight of Barrel Trail Weekend web page is the informative video piece that tells the story of fine wines and wine making in New Jersey through the eyes of two distinctive vintners who are members of the GSWGA.

Collateral Materials/POS Pieces

The GSWGA did develop and produce a number of collateral materials in support of the “Barrel Tasting Trail”. These pieces included a rack card, POS pieces and in winery signage about the trail. Postcards were distributed throughout the state by various means and participating wineries displayed all POS pieces about the event. In addition, each GSWGA member (where applicable) has been provided signage for their tasting rooms that identifies their winery as being located in that particular AVA region. The in tasting room signage ties back to the identifiable marks found on the AVA map on the Barrel Trail Weekend section of the web site.

Educational Symposium

The GSWGA was provided the opportunity to expand their symposium offerings in 2012 and 2013 to two for their members when they combined efforts with Rutgers University and supported Great Expectations as a sponsor of the event. Members of the GSWGA Research Committee selected several speakers for the symposium who covered a number of important topics regarding grape growing, disease management and cultivation.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved

In all respects this project was a complete success. The goal of developing a complete marketing and branding campaign highlighting the growing fine wine category for New Jersey wines has been embraced by wine consumers throughout New Jersey. The Barrel Trail event continues to provide a focus upon which NJ wineries can collectively promote the idea of “putting the grape out front”. The elegant logo design, informative web site page, collateral materials and in tasting room signage provide a unified brand for New Jersey’s fine wine category. The success of the program has been affirmed by the steady increase of over 5% in the numbers of consumers who took part in The Barrel Trail

Weekend events each year since it began in July 2011. In addition, the Barrel Trail page in the GSWGA web site ranks fourth in the highest views of the entire site. Perhaps the most important outcome of this project has been that with a focus being placed on the fine wine category numerous NJ wineries have had the necessary support to produce and sell higher end wines into the marketplace. This has elevated the profile of NJ wines in the overall wine industry.

New Jersey wine sales increased by more than 5% from 2010 to 2011. Wine sales in 2010 were at approximately \$21,000,682.50 and according to a recent GSWGA economic study total New Jersey produced wine sales for 2011 was \$21,105,000 including direct sales, distributor sales and retail/restaurant sales.

Beneficiaries

With over 40 operating wineries, New Jersey remains the fifth largest wine producing state in the U.S. Certainly these members, and those who have joined since the grant was initiated, have benefited greatly from the increased support and awareness.

Lessons Learned

It is evident by the response to the expand Wine Trail Weekend schedule that wine consumers in New Jersey are beginning to view the winery offerings from the Garden State at a whole new level of sophistication. By branding the fine wines of New Jersey through a featured “Barrel Trail Weekend” the goal of “putting the grapes out front” is being accomplished. Building an entire marketing campaign, starting with an identifiable logo, helped launch an awareness of the depth of wines found in New Jersey. Providing wine consumers, both new and old, with a multiple of resources to learn about the fine wines of New Jersey and the distinctions that come with each of the AVA regions found in our state raised the respect of NJ wines even further. A complete marketing and branding campaign for the fine wines of New Jersey through the Barrel Trail Weekend program has been instrumental in giving many members of the GSWGA the opportunity to showcase their higher end wines. The critical lesson learned is that a complete marketing/branding campaign can successfully translate to new levels of awareness, can educate a wine consumer to appreciate and purchase finer wines and does motivate wineries to deepen their wine products to meet the growing demand for higher end wines.

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Final Performance Report
(Revised February 3, 2014)

The Landisville Cooperative Association

Project Title

“Expanding the market for the Landisville Cooperative to include consumers and the food service industry.”

Project Summary:

Background for initial purpose of the project is the continued and growing interest in the freshest, locally grown produce among chefs and consumers, this new farm market enterprise allows the LPC to capture a greater share of the retail value of its members produce. Consumers request for fresh locally grown fruits and vegetables is the driving force behind this project. LPC can accommodate consumers, restaurants, and local produce stands with the freshest supply of product. Many items that are sold directly to consumers in this retail capacity are usually harvested the same day of sale, which provides a niche opportunity for LPC sales marketing.

The primary motivation for this project is to increase the sales of the members’ produce through an onsite direct-to-consumer and business-to-business market enterprise by enhancing product quality with refrigerated displays. Additional sales will increase income and viability of LPC farmers. Income generated by this enterprise will be distributed to individual members based on sales of produce to supply the market as well as distribution of net revenue prorated on the volume of business done with LPC. Timeliness of the project was vital as the importance to consumers for locally grown produce is at its peak. As consumers stated, only “food safety” was of a greater importance than having the product “locally grown” from a retail survey conducted by Associated Wholesalers Inc. in Robesonia PA.

This project was not built on a previously funded project with the SCBGP.

Project Approach:

Activities and tasks performed were as follows:

Cleaned and removed debris from prospective building to facilitate farm market. Painted facility both interior and exterior, conducted survey test group for viability of farmers market in the community. The NJDA’s “Jersey Fresh” program assisted in the development of point of sale material and placement of the material in farmers market.

The following project activities were completed utilizing Federal Funds;

The task of creating storage/display units for smaller lot and consumers sales was completed.

Distributed bulk mailer and displayed grand opening signs throughout the outlying community.

Erected a special purpose sign solely promoting the existence of the farmers market which only sells fruits and vegetables, placed advertising sign at Community Park to promote the new local farmers market.

The following project Activities were completed utilizing Federal Funds;

Installation of 2 Trenton 10,000 lbs. Refrigeration Units. (Specialty Crop Block Grant funds were utilized to purchase this pre-approved special equipment.)

The following project Activities were completed utilizing Cooperative and Third party Funds;

Evaporator-Condenser units were completed.

Completed installation of modular cold room the results for this project have been varying in success.

The sales numbers for the end of the 2013 growing season were far less than anticipated at the completion of the project during its start up. Although sales to local farm stands and restaurants did increase our overall sales at LPC the lack of local consumer support was paramount. And sparse walk in business for product ultimately led to the determination that a full time employee was not cost effective in working the daily operations. LPC used a full time employee from its wholesale produce platform to assist any customers that came into the farm market facility. In conclusion, the project has strong sales results in relation to the direct sales to local farm stands and local restaurants, as compared to very sluggish sales to the public directly.

The “Jersey Fresh” team was very proactive in their assistance to our project. They supplied LPC with many point of sale items and made references to their current “Jersey Fresh” members who buy local product that a new small box quantity farmers market was now open at LPC.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved;

Activities completed by LPC to meet its performance measure were the aggressive advertising and community awareness of the new farmers market available to the local residents.

- a) Refrigerated displays were used to prolong shelf life of product.
- b) Cooler capacity was increased to assist in space needed to warehouse product for increased sales from farmer's market project.
- c) Local farm markets and restaurants were kept up to date on product availability, quality, as well as pricing for fresh produce to stream line the ordering of said produce by consumers.

2). Benefits of the farmers market project were immediately impacted for LPC for 2013 with increased sales of fresh produce and increased revenue for our grower members.

3). Goals and measurable outcomes for this project were estimated to be an increase of 5,000 to 25,000 packages sold thru the farmers market in addition to approx. 800,000 packages sold thru the marketing end of LPC. To date, the increase in sales thru the farmers market is 3,350 packages. These comparison figures represent a softer draw on product than what was estimated. Factors for this are the current state of the national economy and stiff competition from wholesalers who "deliver" product directly to restaurants and local farm stands. Also, inclement weather during the summer cut supplies of many hardware items including peppers, eggplant, cucumbers, and green and yellow squash. Plus, the new farmers market needs time to stake a hold in the purchasing routines of local residents for their fresh produce.

4). The sales data indicates that although the increase in sales is beneficiary to LPC the farmers market still has strides to make in achieving significant sales goals in the future. For the 3,350 packages sold thru the project, and average price of \$16 was well below what was estimated. The reason for this was aggressive pricing by General Manager Felix Donato in order draw in potential long term customers with solid initial savings on fresh produce. Many "sales specials" were run in accordance with market pricing on abundantly available New Jersey fruits and vegetables. This was done to help our grower members move more of the product that was sitting in the fields during a glut in harvest times. Progress will continue in this project as the farmers market becomes more visible to local consumers during the New Jersey growing season as the community begins to associate local produce harvest with the LPC farmers market.

5). The Special Purchase Equipment for this project is located on premises at 202 North East Blvd. in Landisville New Jersey. The cooler units located at said address are working properly and have greatly increased the capacity of LPC to warehouse fresh produce. The produce display cases at the same address (202 North East Blvd) located in the farmers market building and our currently winterized until opening in the spring requires then to be turned on once more for the display of local produce.

All grower members of the cooperative benefit from the added cold storage capacity free of charge and no fees or revenue is generated by the utilization of this cold storage capacity.

Beneficiaries:

The target beneficiaries from this project are the local growers of New Jersey fresh fruits and vegetables. Most significantly the grower members of LPC. Approximately 30 local growers were beneficiaries of this project, with increased sales of their locally grown fruits and vegetables for the newly established farmers market. These increases in sale for these growers would not have been possible without the implementation of the farmer's market project. Increased sales and increased product demand and awareness will positive impact the product produced here locally by quality growers. At the retail level consumers are much more aware of the product they are buying (then say a large produce wholesale distributor) and the people who produced it, making label/grower recognition a strong benefit to this group.

The data presented earlier clearly identifies an increase in produce sales from this project. Without the farmers market this small box count sales would be nonexistent. With time and effort the farmers market could see a very large increase in sales over the coming season as local consumers change their produce buying habits to source area product direct from the source. LPC will also benefit from the increased sales and increased product revenue as the produce sold thru the farmers market will have a significantly higher average box price than product sold thru the marketing platform to large wholesalers.

Lessons Learned:

- 1) The implementation of this project was a vigorous process by the personnel staff to come to fruition. The action of getting the farmers market even up and running was time consuming for all working on the project, due to the fact that farmers market must accommodate and be appealing to the consumer. So great care was taken in the preparation of the building itself for walk in business. The completion of the project was extremely satisfying for all who participated.
- 2) There are many positive results for this project.
 - Increased sales of locally grown produce
 - Increased visibility of locally grown produce direct to the consumer
 - Elevated position of LPC as a leader in the community for providing such a market, where local residents can come and purchase the freshest in New Jersey fruits and vegetables
 - Positive participation from the minority local community as LPC provides many ethnic selections of fruits and veggies
 - Negative results were few but still apparent.
 - Lack of direct walk in business from the local community, the demographics of population is extremely lite for this rural area. Just not enough people in the area to sustain significant walk in trade.
 - Maintaining a strong profit margin while still being able to compete with other retail establishments was difficult.

3) All outcomes were expected except the lack of walk in business for the farmers market. Although small case count orders via the telephone and fax through the farmers market were very positive.

4) The increased sales of local produce could have been much stronger from direct consumer walk in business. LPC believes that this will increase as the farmers market gains a foothold in the communities produce buying tendencies. Only recommendation for a similar project is that it be created in an area with a strong population.

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SCBG Agreement # 12-25-B-1083

Final Performance Report
(Revised February 3, 2014)

New Jersey Department of Agriculture

Project Title: “Jersey Grown Advertising and Promotion Project”

(Formerly Known as; “Keeping the Garden in the Garden State Project.”)

Project Summary:

Due to New Jersey’s high population density, and other economic factors, local growers cannot always be the lowest cost producer of specialty crops, and therefore are at a disadvantage due to the prevailing commodity based pricing structure of specialty crops. These market conditions have required New Jersey growers to become some of the most innovative at adding value to their specialty crops.

One way producers of trees, shrubs, plants and flowers grown in New Jersey seek to add value is through the use of the *Jersey Grown* brand to differentiate their product as higher quality and as locally grown. Through the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBG) the New Jersey Department of Agriculture seeks to increase the branding of locally grown horticultural products at the point of sale and to expand consumer and industry print advertising of locally grown horticultural products.

Begun eight years ago, the *Jersey Grown* quality and promotional program certifies trees, shrubs, plants and flowers grown in New Jersey to meet established quality standards and to be disease and pest-free.

This SCBG project sought to develop and create *Jersey Grown* point of sale advertising and promotional materials for New Jersey produced horticultural products. The program was designed to help retailers and consumers to recognize the plants that are locally produced, and therefore accustomed to the State’s growing conditions, and also that the plants have not been exposed to the rigors of long distance travel and protracted distribution processes.

This Specialty Crop Block Grant project was used to supplement the *Jersey Grown* point of sale advertising with a focused print media buy. The funds were used for the purchase of advertising space in the Gardener News publication. The Gardener News is a Warren, New Jersey based monthly publication that targets gardener enthusiasts, the nursery industry, professional landscapers and also the general public.

Using the easily recognizable *Jersey Grown* brand name with the point of sale advertising items combined with print media advertising the project was designed to promote the availability and quality of locally grown plants, scrubs and Christmas trees.

Product branding ensures potential customers that they will have a consistent experience whenever they purchase a branded product. This project builds upon past SCBG projects which sought to introduce and develop awareness of the Jersey Grown brand. Because the process of marketing and brand identification is continual it is important to always promote a consistent brand image. Another part of the branding experience for consumers is the creation and maintenance of a certain brand identify which communicates a level of quality and consistency, its' market position relative to other products and a type of product personality.

The continuation of similar advertising and promotional efforts to build brand identity is necessary to maintain consistent brand identification.

Project Approach;

Print Advertising

Twelve full page color print advertisements of the *Jersey Grown* branding program to appeared in the Gardener News.

The Gardener News is a monthly publication that reaches over 30,000 gardener enthusiasts, nursery, trade, and landscapers, as well as the general public. The Gardener News covers all of New Jersey and the surrounding region.

Point of Sale Advertising

Themes and visuals for new point of sale were developed. As a result of the creative process between Princeton Partners, the NJDA and the state's horticultural industry several new point of sale items were developed. These items complimented earlier Jersey Grown point of sale items and will be utilized by the same retailers for the same purpose and will be similar in design and function to the original project plan.

The following Point of Sale Advertising materials were developed and produced;

Jersey Grown Long Tree Tags

13" long x 1" wide, bright yellow with logo & website imprinted both sides; Quantity – 25,000.

Jersey Grown Vinyl Banners

5' wide x 3' high with strings and grommets, 4-color artwork. Quantity - 1,000.

Jersey Grown Plastic Price Cards

7"x5" Price Cards on 10 mil. Plastic with 4-color artwork. Quantity – 25,000.

Jersey Grown Ground Stakes

6" tall x 4" wide 20 mil white styrene ground stakes w/ 4-color artwork. Quantity – 10,000.

Jersey Grown Aprons

Custom 1-Pocket (center waist) with white logo imprint and adjustable neck. Quantity - 1,000.

All materials were produced utilizing weatherproof plastic or vinyl except for the aprons which used a 7.5 oz. ultra-durable 65/35 poly-cotton twill, protected by ProDura stain release finish. Use of these durable materials will prolong the usable life of these items.

The point of sale advertising materials will be unveiled at the January 2014 industry trade show sponsored by the New Jersey Nursery and Landscape Association. A planned newspaper article in the Gardener News did not materialize due to limited editorial content but the Jersey Grown advertisement was featured in the January edition. A copy of the ad in the April 2014 can be seen on page 21 here;

<http://www.gardenernews.com/current-issue/>

Distribution of Point of Sale (POS) Advertising:

Trade Shows

The POS materials will be available for distribution at industry trade shows beginning with the New Jersey Nursery & Landscape show in January 2014. *About twenty percent of the POS materials were distributed at the show and another twenty percent of the materials were directly mailed to growers and retailers after the show in response to inquiries received at the show.*

Industry Associations

The POS materials will be provided to the following industry associations for them to promote and distribute;

- The New Jersey Nursery and landscape Association
- The New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association

About thirty percent of the point of sale materials were dropped off to industry associations and about another thirty percent of the materials were distributed to individual growers and retailers during industry visits and meetings.

For examples of the Point of Sale Advertising items produced please see the pictures below;





Goals and Outcomes Achieved:

The Jersey Grown print advertising was placed and the point of sale advertising materials were all developed to facilitate the recognition of Jersey Grown branded products as higher value and locally grown products.

With the print ads being placed and the point of sale materials having been purchased and planned for distribution throughout the Winter and Spring of 2014 the industry will have the ability to continue to promote the availability of locally grown horticultural products into the 2014 growing season.

All of the goals of this project have been completed. The print advertising was completed and POS materials were developed and produced. The POS Jersey Grown Tree Tags, Price Cards and Nursery Tags were produced as planned. With the available funds Jersey Grown ground stakes, banners, paper trunk mats and aprons were also produced. These items were developed and intended for distribution to and utilization by the same retailers as the originally planned POS items.

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture will be working with industry groups from December 2013 to September 2014 to track the orders for all of the above point of sale advertising items.

Beneficiaries:

In 2010 Horticulture, Sod and Christmas trees represented 43% of all cash receipts for agricultural production in the State of New Jersey. The New Jersey Landscape and Nursery Growers Association is the largest organization representing that sector and represent the majority of that industry's producers in New Jersey.

New Jersey ranked eighth in the nation in expanded wholesale value of floriculture crops with a value of \$178 million. The total crop wholesale value for all New Jersey growers with \$100,000 or more in sales was estimated at \$170 million up 7 percent from \$158 million in 2009. These operations, which comprised 45 percent of all growers, accounted for 95 percent of the total value of floriculture crops. The expanded wholesale value of floriculture crops in the 15 major producing states totaled \$4.13 billion for 2010, compared with \$4.00 billion for 2009.

Lessons Learned:

The SCBG funds currently allocated to this project were first allocated to the New Jersey Museum of Agriculture. That Museum closed in April 2011. An amendment was sought and approved on March 2, 2012 to re-direct the original project funds into another project titled, "Jersey Grown Advertising and Promotion Project"

Further delays resulted from a change of the contractor providing a pivotal role to the performance of this grant. Following a contract extension between the Treasury of the

State of New Jersey and CMD & Partners, their services as the official state approved advertising contractor for the Jersey Fresh and Jersey Grown program was ended in April 2012. In April 2012, in accordance with the State of New Jersey Department of Treasury guidelines, the Princeton Partners of Princeton, New Jersey was designated as the new advertising services provider to the Jersey Fresh program.

Although the project was largely completed within the effective dates the closure of the New Jersey Museum of Agriculture and the process of rescinding the now defunct organization's Specialty Crop Block Grant funding did create some delays in one aspect of this grant which was the distribution of the promotional materials. The majority of the inventory of point of sale items has been distributed from the NJDA to horticulture producers, farm markets, garden centers to Industry organizations that work directly with smaller growers.

A period of adjustment and transition was required as the new advertising agency, department marketing staff and the agricultural community began working together to evaluate the creative direction of the Jersey Fresh and Jersey Grown program. The time required evaluating past themes and visuals of the Jersey Fresh and Jersey Grown programs, the development of new creative themes and visuals and the determination of how to proceed did also contribute some delays in the implementation of this project.

The above delays created by the disbanding and closure of The New Jersey Museum of Agriculture, which was the original sub-grantee recipient of these SCBG funds, and the integration of a new advertising contractor for the Jersey Fresh and Jersey Grown campaign, required that some of the materials created by this project be distributed during the planning and growing season immediately following the end of the grant period. This approach was chosen for two reasons, first so that the funds to the original sub-grantee would not be considered as a cash asset and encumbered by any creditors of the disbanded organization and secondly to have the materials efficiently distributed through already scheduled events and meetings for the Horticulture industry during January and early Spring of 2014. Utilizing the scheduled and well attended January event for distribution of the materials reduced the negative impact to the industry promotion organizations that would otherwise have directed resources to shipping and handling of the materials through the mail.

The POS materials have been distributed to the following industry associations for them to promote and distribute;

- The New Jersey Nursery and landscape Association
- The New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association

Distributing materials directly to seasonally operated nursery and gardens centers which are closed during the winter months may have resulted in significant losses to materials created through this project.

The final mix of the promotional materials created through this project was influenced by lower than anticipated materials cost and industry demand. The promotional aprons

created by project and distributed to retail staff working directly with consumers were procured at lower than anticipated costs and also created in greater numbers than originally planned due the high level of significance that industry placed upon this item. Industry sources considered that having their sales staff wear these aprons was one of the best possible ways to expose consumers to the Jersey Grown brand name at the point of sale.

This project demonstrated that proper program management and inter-agency communication can overcome many administrative challenges.

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Additional Information:

Examples of the Print Advertising and Point of Sale Advertising materials can be obtained from the New Jersey Department of Agriculture at the above contact.

SCBG Agreement # 12-25-B-1083

Final Report
(Revised February 3, 2014)
(Revised March 21, 2014)

New Jersey Blueberry Growers Association

Project Title: “Advertising Jersey Fresh Blueberries Project”

Project Summary

New Jersey remains within top 5 blueberry producing states in the nation. In 2011, the year that this project was implemented, New Jersey blueberry growers produced over 60 million pounds making it the fourth largest cultivated blueberries producer in the nation.

Every year acreage devoted to cultivated blueberries has been increasing both domestically and internationally. This increase in competition has made it necessary for the New Jersey Blueberry Growers Association to find ways to maintain existing market share, as well as compete in new markets. The New Jersey Blueberry Growers Association (NJBGA) project applied for funding for a radio advertising campaign to maximize our assets most efficiently, and enable the organization to reach consumer’s through-out our marketing area.

The New Jersey Blueberry Growers Association is a non-profit organization representing all New Jersey blueberry growers and is dedicated to the promotion, education and research of New Jersey blueberries.

Project Approach

The purpose of this grant was to maximize advertising opportunities on behalf of New Jersey produced blueberries during the 2011 growing season. Consumer interest in blueberries has grown considerably over the past several years. This increase in consumption has been attributed largely due to the health benefits associated with eating blueberries and products containing blueberries. The industry, both domestically and internationally has responded by increasing acreage to the point where seasonal oversupplies have become a problem.

National Industry trade groups have responded by conducting programs of promotion and research designed to increase consumer consumption of all kinds of blueberry products. New Jersey was one the first, if not the first, production area for cultivated blueberries and even today most of its blueberries are sold fresh as opposed to being processed into products with a longer shelf life. This is always a major problem for New Jersey’s blueberry producers to move a highly perishable product, within a six to eight week window, into an increasingly crowded marketplace

The New Jersey Blueberry Growers Association sought to use this grant to conduct a consumer oriented radio campaign designed to promote New Jersey produced blueberries. The campaign aired during peak production weeks, and was broadcast in markets throughout the Northeastern Seaboard. The purpose of these ads was to differentiate New Jersey blueberries to the consumer, and promote them as a nutritious alternative in their diets.

Partners Participating in the Project:

Art Galetta, President of the New Jersey Blueberry Growers Association was responsible for representation of New Jersey’s blueberry industry and for identifying the needs of the needs of the growers as reflected in this project.

Al Murray, New Jersey Department of Agriculture Council Liaison to the New Jersey Blueberry Industry Advisory Council was responsible for the development of this project proposal.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved

Goals

The project goal was for the New Jersey Blueberry Growers Association (NJBGA) to contract with a professional advertising agency to create a radio commercial, develop a broadcast schedule, and purchase air time.

Review of 2011 Blueberry Radio Campaign

Campaign Duration;	June 22 to July 31, 2011
Target Audience;	Women 35+ who cook and shop
Media Markets	New York, Boston and New Jersey

Radio Stations

New York

WOR, WCBS, WINS, WPAT, WBBR, WFAN, WFAS
Combination direct buy and Metro Traffic sponsorship

Boston

WMJX, WATP, WBOQ, WBZ, WEEI, WRKO
Combination direct buy and Metro Traffic sponsorships

New Jersey

WMTR, WVNJ, WCTC, WMGQ
Direct buy and Weather sponsorships

Market	Gross Impressions	Net reach
Boston	351,100	253,223
Worcester	37,800	26,362
Cape Cod	10,200	7,748
Manchester	19,600	14,887
Portsmouth	31,500	21,532
New York	609,700	513,615
Middlesex-Somerset-Union	49,800	42,650
Morristown	27,300	21,280
Monmouth-Ocean	140,400	100,948
Nassau-Suffolk	194,600	143,868

According to the best Arbitron figures available the reach of the radio stations utilized exceeded 1.3 million listeners. These numbers do not include a couple of stations that were used at no cost as part of packages.

Outcomes:

Sales

The NJ Blueberry Growers Association had originally planned to survey their members at the end of the season to determine any increase in sales volume as compared to past years. Instead of conducting a mailed survey to all blueberries in New Jersey it was determined that it would be more cost-effective and perhaps more accurate and comprehensive to provide the latest available sales volume reporting data from the USDA National Agricultural Service (NASS).

The following increases in Sales were realized in comparison to past years:

The intended impact of the project was to increase New Jersey blueberry sales by a minimum of 2.58%.

- 1) New Jersey blueberries received a 16% increase the average price per pound in 2011 as compared to the previous year.
- 2) New Jersey blueberries received a 34% increase in the value of their production in 2011 as compared to the previous year.

The actual production, price and value were the following;

Year	Production Total	Average Price per Pound	Value of Production
2009	53 million lbs.	\$ 1.23	\$ 65.2 million
2010	49 million lbs.	\$ 1.28	\$ 62.5 million
2011	62 million lbs.	\$ 1.53	\$ 94.7 million

Source;

http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/New_Jersey/Publications/Fruit_Summary/fruitsumm12.pdf

The above information was provided by USDA's NASS to show how this project met its expected measurable outcome goals.

The post season survey of growers showed that the weather helped to provide good yields for New Jersey blueberries in 2011.

Year	New Jersey Blueberry Yields Per Acre In Pounds
2009	6,880
2010	6,530
2011	8,050

Most often good yields producing an unusually large crop results in growers received depressed prices for their products. But due to the near impossibility to predict how weather might affect a crop throughout a season oftentimes it is a challenge to have the correct advertising program in place prior to the harvest.

The 2011 post season feedback from New Jersey blueberry growers indicated that having the right advertising program in place, timed to the production season helped to keep the prices they received high during a year yielding high production numbers.

The effectiveness of this project as it pertained to the New England market was conducted with the New Jersey Blueberry Industry Advisory Council at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 4:10-43 the New Jersey Blueberry Industry Advisory Council was created by a grower referendum representing no less than 65 percent of New Jersey's blueberry producers representing no less than 51 percent of New Jersey's blueberries by volume.

The New Jersey Blueberry Industry Advisory Council is a unit of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture consisting of seven members consisting of five grower members, the Dean of Cook College, ex-officio, and the New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture, ex-officio or their designees. The New Jersey State Board of Agriculture appoints the grower members of the council from a list of nominations provided by the New Jersey Blue Growers Association.

It is the duty of the official representatives of the New Jersey Blueberry Industry Advisory Council to represent New Jersey's blueberry growers and to provide for research programs of new product development, production procedures and marketing procedures designed to benefit the New Jersey Blueberry Industry

The five current grower members of the New Jersey Blueberry Advisory council currently represent about eighty percent of the state's blueberry production. The report on this project from the New Jersey Blueberry Advisory Council provided feedback they

obtained from wholesale and retail buyers of New Jersey blueberries in the New England area whose customers were the target for the focused advertising campaign. The New Jersey Blueberry Advisory Council received the feedback from New England wholesalers and retailers such as Big Y, Stop & Shop, Shaws and Market Basket.

New Jersey Blueberry Advisory Council members representing New Jersey blueberries growers were asked the following three questions about this project;

- 1) *Since the target of the promotion was consumers in the New England marketplace had the retailers in New England been made aware of the advertising effort that was undertaken by New Jersey blueberry growers to promote New Jersey blueberries in New England?*
- 2) *According to the feedback that the members of the New Jersey Blueberry Advisory Council received from the buyers in New England did the retailers in New England report that the advertising efforts were effective and assisted in their sales of New Jersey Blueberries in New England.*
- 3) *As wholesale and retail buyers of New Jersey Blueberries in the New England would they recommend the continuation of the advertising program as an effective method of promoting New Jersey blueberries to their customers in New England.*
- 4) *The New England retailers were aware of the advertising effort sponsored by the New Jersey blueberry growers.*
- 5) *The New England retailers believed that the commercials added to their efforts to successfully market New Jersey blueberries in their markets.*
- 6) *The retailers and wholesalers of New Jersey blueberries in New England recommended that the New Jersey blueberry industry continue to support similar efforts as the best way to promote and brand New Jersey blueberries to their customers in New England.*

For New Jersey’s blueberries the Specialty Crop Block Grant program provided exactly the correct type of support in precisely the right markets at exactly the right time.

Long-Term Prospects

The long term prospects for consumer demand for New Jersey’s blueberries remains strong within their primary market. The same market targeted by this project. Consumers were tested about their preferences for New Jersey blueberries before the Jersey Fresh advertising campaign began in 1984, in 2002 after 18 years of the program and in 2012 after 28 years of the Jersey Fresh program.

Year	Percentage of consumers who considered New Jersey blueberries to be superior to blueberries from other states;
1984	28 %
2002	43 %
2012	62%

Beneficiaries

Blueberry production is labor and capital intensive and commercially production is limited to areas with a moderate climate and sandy highly acidic soil which drains well. New Jersey has 148 blueberry farms growing on 7,700 acres which yielded over \$ 90 million for New Jersey's blueberry growers in 2011.

Lessons Learned

The NJ Blueberry Growers Association had originally planned to survey their members at the end of the season to determine any increase in "sales volume" as compared to past years. As a substitute for the NJ Blueberry Growers Association's survey of their members it was decided to use the same data collected by USDA's National Agricultural Statistical Services (NASS).

It was decided that it would be more cost-effective and more accurate to use the NASS sales figures instead for the following reasons;

- 1) The latest available reporting on New Jersey blueberry sales figures collected from New Jersey Blueberry growers is available free from the USDA National Agricultural Service.*
- 2) A description of the program's effectiveness in New England from the members of the New Jersey Blueberry Industry Advisory Council This was decided because often individual growers working through brokers and marketing cooperatives may be unaware of the final destination of their product and therefore less in a position to gauge the impact of the seasonal performance of specific regional markets.*

For more details on the NASS sales data and feedback from the New Jersey Blueberry Industry Advisory Council please refer to the above "Outcomes" section of this final report.

The ability to advertise specialty crops in a targeted method during a critical growing period can help to provide a competitive advantage for those specialty crops.

The market for fresh blueberries is greatly influenced by uncontrollable weather conditions, plus other variables, which can provide great inconsistencies in market conditions from one year to the next. Targeting specific markets with well-timed advertising of specialty crops can help to reduce market uncertainty and provide for a more efficient marketing of specialty crops.

Although there were no unexpected outcomes this advertising project did help to increase demand to move a specialty crop commodity in a crowded marketplace at a high of unusually high supply. The end result was a higher demand during a period of high supply. Specialty Crop producers of high perishable products are particularly vulnerable to market forces and this project helped to make 2011 a good marketing season.

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SCBG Agreement # 12-25-B-1083

Final Performance Report
(Revised February 3, 2014)

The New Jersey Nursery & Landscape Association

Project Title:

“Consumer and Industry Advertising of the *Jersey Grown* brand”

Project Summary:

The initial purpose for this project was to reach out to New Jersey’s residents, growers, landscape contractors, and retail garden centers to promote Jersey Grown products and services provided by New Jersey’s nursery and landscape industries. The motivation for this project came from the success of the Jersey Fresh brand in promoting locally grown produce, and by an increasing trend in positive consumer attitudes towards locally grown and produced products. While not part of the original intent, this project did build upon consumer outreach efforts through the nationally licensed ‘Plant Something’ campaign which were revised into a previous years Specialty Crop Block Grant program.

Through our participation in the New Jersey Flower show the NJNLA distributed hundreds of promotional pieces associated with the Plant Something and Jersey Grown the attendees to inform them of the benefits of plants and buying local. At the three retail roundtable meetings, which reached dozens of New Jersey garden centers over the last three years, the NJNLA has distributed Jersey Grown and Plant Something tags and posters. As part of the distribution costs of this activity the directory, which was a significant part of this project, was mailed to all members and distributed at the NJ Plants Trade Show as a reference guide to locating and contacting New Jersey Nurseries and green industry professionals. To enhance the impact and distribution of the directory this information was also made available online.

Project Approach:

The New Jersey Nursery and Landscape Association performed a variety of tasks and activities that were both outlined in the initial proposal as well as those which efforts to support those activities. Beginning in 2011 a regular roundtable meeting of retail garden center owners and staff was assembled to, among other things, discuss the Jersey Grown program and the gain insight from retailers what their needs and wishes were to better promote New Jersey’s nursery products. We felt it was essential to discuss our goals with this community, and ultimately based several decisions on how to proceed on the feedback we received. We also engaged the grower and landscape communities to determine what there challenges where in growing there business and promoting their products so that we could better educate them, their customers, and their clients about the benefits of purchasing plants from New Jersey nurseries.

To ensure industry input five meetings total were held at the expense of NJNLA and its members, two included retail roundtable meetings with Garden Centers to share ideas and get information. The New Jersey Department of Agriculture was present at both of those meetings to discuss the Jersey Grown Program and NJNLA talked about other tools, such as Plant Something. The other three meetings were nursery grower meetings to discuss the implementation of the grant project to include the needs of both producers and sellers.

These discussions shaped future activities through discovery of some potential obstacles were to the use of the Jersey Grown logos and some of the 'branding challenges' that growers could face.

We learned about the positive impression the Jersey Fresh program had, but that there were some grower challenges to implementing the same thing for nursery plants. We learned that Plant Something was regarded as a positive program, but didn't have much traction in New Jersey or surrounding state as of yet. We still attended consumer shows, still produced a directory of growers and service providers and distributed it, but also looked for creative ways to expand the positive message of New Jersey's nursery industry through the creative use of technology.

The directory of New Jersey nurseries, garden centers, and landscape professionals designed, printed, and distributed to consumers as well as professionals in the trade, such as landscape contractors, designers, and architects, and also include resource information to allied associations, government agencies, and Rutgers University.

A system was created to have our entire membership searchable online in a directory, rather than simply have a .pdf available for download. The NJNLA did not charge any meeting expenses to the grant for these functions.

Several conferences and twilight meetings were attended and coordinated for nursery growers where the Jersey Grown program was discussed and the Department of Agriculture staff was on hand to answer any questions about enrolling in the program. Information collected from these meetings also helped influence the final work product, similar to the retail meetings described above.

Three grower meetings and two retail meetings were held attracting a total of 285 participants. The grower meetings attracted the following number of participants; 70, 100 and 60 which was a reflection of poor weather. Two retail meetings were held which attracted 25 and 30 participants.

Ultimately the decision was made that the best way to achieve the state goals of the project was to invest in the technology that would make Jersey Grown and other marketing tools available in a customizable format for use by growers, landscapers, and garden centers to derive benefit from promoting 'local' while integrating that message into their personal branding and marketing strategy. As described below in the 'lessons learned' section of this report, this evolution on how to deliver the product, transitioning

from traditional bulk printing of materials to the development of customizable artwork stored and available online delayed the original work plan and stretched the project into the entire three year project period.

At current information is available online for growers, retailers and landscapers, but the complete upgrade to a new platform which will allow for much more interaction and promotion in the future, will not come online until January.

We could not have produced the work on this grant if not for the significant project partners we had in the New Jersey Department of Agriculture and certain units inside Rutgers University. While not formal partners, the support and guidance these organization provide to the NJNLA and to the industry is invaluable in advancing the nursery, greenhouse, landscape, and garden center industries in New Jersey.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved:

The stated goal of this project was to inform both the general public and New Jersey's nursery and landscape professionals of the benefits of buying local, Jersey Grown nursery material.

The materials that were assembled and the technology that is being put in place to distribute those materials should have additional benefits in years to come as more and more growers and retailers begin to utilize the Jersey Grown program and reap benefits of increased consumer awareness for locally grown products.

Through our participation in the New Jersey Flower show the NJNLA distributed hundreds of promotional pieces associated with the Plant Something and Jersey Grown the attendees to inform them of the benefits of plants and buying local. At the three retail roundtable meetings, which reached dozens of New Jersey garden centers over the last three years, the NJNLA has distributed Jersey Grown and Plant Something tags and posters. As part of the distribution costs of this activity the directory, which was a significant part of this project, was mailed to all members and distributed at the NJ Plants Trade Show as a reference guide to locating and contacting New Jersey Nurseries and green industry professionals. To enhance the impact and distribution of the directory this information was also made available online.

A system was created to have our entire membership searchable online in a directory, rather than simply have a .pdf available for download. The NJNLA did not charge any meeting expenses to the grant for these functions.

The measurable outcomes indicated that the following producers and retailers of horticultural products registered with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture to label products as Jersey Grown.

<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	
Garden Centers	1	0	2
Greenhouses	3	4	3
Nurseries	19	16	26

USDA-NASS data for 2012 shows an increase of 2%, or \$3,634,000, in the sale of floriculture products in New Jersey. The increase was from \$179.5 million in 2011 to \$183.2 million in 2012. New Jersey was one of only 6 states out of the 15 surveyed to show growth, and the rate of sales increase almost doubled the total growth of surveyed states, which was 1.1%.

While seeing growth, and outpacing the average, we did not meet our goal of 3% growth.

Beneficiaries:

New Jersey’s nursery and greenhouse industry has continued to grow in sales value over the last several years, even while acreage and number of operations has decreased. The clear beneficiaries of this project are the established horticulture and floriculture producers who will continue to see an increased demand for their product within the borders of the state.

All New Jersey growers had the opportunity to benefit from this project because of its work to drive increased sales and public perception of New Jersey grown plant material. There has been a better than 30% growth in the number of New Jersey nurseries participating in the Jersey Grown branding program, increasing from 19 in 2011 to 26 in 2013.

In 2010 Horticulture, Sod and Christmas trees represented 43% of all cash receipts for agricultural production in the State of New Jersey. The New Jersey Landscape and Nursery Growers Association is the largest organization representing that sector and represents the majority of that industry’s producers in New Jersey.

New Jersey ranked eighth in the nation in expanded wholesale value of floriculture crops with a value of \$178 million. The total crop wholesale value for all New Jersey growers with \$100,000 or more in sales was estimated at \$170 million up 7 percent from \$158 million in 2009. These operations, which comprised 45 percent of all growers, accounted for 95 percent of the total value of floriculture crops. The expanded wholesale value of floriculture crops in the 15 major producing states totaled \$4.13 billion for 2010, compared with \$4.00 billion for 2009.

Lessons Learned;

Perhaps the most important lesson learned was how customized, personalized, and technology driven marketing efforts of individual businesses have become in our industry. One consistent point of feedback in our group conversations, whether with growers or retailers, was the request that materials be made generic and available online so that they could be downloaded and integrated in to existing branding and signage designs.

Another challenge we encountered was the immense amount of data the grower community wanted included in a print directory, and the way in which it was to be referenced. The result was of this was again the development of a new online membership database that allows members to update their availabilities as they see fit and have them searchable. This same online database will provide for growers, retailers, and landscapers to add 'Jersey Grown' availabilities, photos and other information that will be searchable by consumers.

The results of this project and the decision, based on project feedback from intended project beneficiaries, to move to a custom technology rather than a print solution was an unexpected outcome which we believe will extend the benefits of this project well beyond the timeframe originally defined by the grant agreement.

The biggest obstacle that was encountered was adapting the work plan as the delivery method for the project deliverables evolved. Or presentations at meetings and facilitated roundtables often raised more questions and ultimately pushed the deadlines back right up to the end of the project. There are still elements that are not where we would like them and NJNLA remains committed to continue the work towards the goals of this project as part of its annual operations.

As a result of the above results the NJNLA feels that this grant has been successfully completed to the benefit of New Jersey's horticultural industry.

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SCBG Agreement # 12-25-B-1083

Final Performance Report
(Revised February 3, 2014)

Tri-County Cooperative Market Auction Association

Project Title:

“Promoting Retail Market Sales at the Tri-County Cooperative Auction Market”

Project Summary:

The 2009 season saw an increase in sales from \$625,000.00 to \$1,014,000.00, an increase of 62% in a bad economy in an equally bad production year. This can be attributed in part to experimentation with direct sales intended to test the potential for product procurement for less than wholesale buyers. It was discovered that the smaller quantity direct sales component was equally attractive for larger buyers that may come from longer distances. They could arrive at the Cooperative, pick up what they need from the growers seeking direct sales, and be back on the road without having to wait the 2 to 3 hours for the typical auction to be completed. In 2008 this was a small percentage of sales as many of the seller’s resisted change. However, in 2009 with the continued implementation of the direct sales experiment total cooperative direct sales realized 26% of total sales. Through this project the cooperative seeks to increase its share of direct retail sales.

Project Planning:

The project was planned by:

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The Project was executed and oversight was provided by:

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Project Reporting and oversight was provided by:

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Tri-County Cooperative Auction Association Board Members:

President: George Asprocacas
Vice-President: Ernie Stillwell
Secretary: John Hauser
Treasurer: Kim Dewolf
Doug Kauffman
Jim Giamarese
John Specca
Robert D. Balz
Tom Nivison

Project Approach:

The empty storage room which was converted to accommodate direct sales to consumers and also for chefs and other local foodservice companies which do not purchase in wholesale volumes through the traditional auction service provided by the cooperative. The new space created was ideal to accommodate additional direct sales vendors and to create an opportunity for farmers' market style sales at the Tri-County Cooperative which formally was only organized to accommodate wholesale sales.

The Cooperative sought to draw attention to the new retail sales opportunity through their website, point of purchase advertising signage and advertising in local newspaper to attract area customers.

Activities Performed

Print Advertising

Print advertising in New Jersey Farmer 2 times
September 1, 2012 – New Jersey Farmer to announce the return of Friday night auctions
September 15, 2012 – New Jersey Farmer to announce the return of Friday night auctions

The print advertisements solely advertised the availability of specialty crops such as fruits and vegetables at the Tri-County Cooperative market.

Printing of cooperative informational brochures completed. Printing of CSA brochures distributed in local stores and to previous CSA members

Point of sale advertising

The Cooperative developed its own signage help attract customers and encourage their purchases and free Point of Sale advertising was obtained from the New Jersey

Department of Agriculture through the Jersey Fresh advertising program to help brand the retail products as locally grown specialty crops through the Jersey Fresh program.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved:

In order to increase sales at the Tri-County Cooperative the goal of this project was to create the opportunity for direct sales to the public and small foodservice vendors and promote and advertise the availability of those direct sales following the installation of the specialized equipment in the form of the overhead doors.

The Tri-County Cooperative’s direct sales farmers market allow a greater number of farmers to capture portions of that retail business more efficiently than if each tried to open his/her own retail market. The cooperative had a few members leave the auction but even more new members joined. Overall member ship increased from 73 to 75 active members.

Benchmarks

The following will be used as the twelve month period benchmarks;

2009 Total Sales;	\$1,014,000.00
2009 Direct Sales;	\$263,640.00
2009 Percentage of Direct Sales;	26%

Total sales have decreased 9% from our baseline sales. However direct sales are now 95% of total sales. While there was a decrease in overall sales, it was due the loss of income from one of the Cooperative’s main buyers. Sales from other sources have remained steady

The decrease in overall sales resulted from the loss of a wholesale buyer whose purchases were unrelated to the retail focus of this project. Without the addition of retail sales realized through this project the Tri-County Cooperative Auction would have had a devastating drop in overall sales.

Beneficiaries

The Tri-County Cooperative Auction is located in the center of New Jersey and serves and supplies specialty crops for both the Philadelphia and New York markets. The location connects Tri-County with local farms offering the freshest high quality produce that is available. Tri-County members that produce horticultural products offer a wide range of shrubs, bushes, plants and flowers. As the seasons change the auction offers mums, pumpkins, corn stalks, hay bales and straw. The market also sells to wholesale buyers for local food stores, restaurants, roadside stands, farm markets and distributors.

Consumers who use fresh fruits and vegetables for canning, freezing and preserving are frequent customers of the auction and are welcome to buy at the wholesale price.

Producers of Specialty Crops

Through this project seventy-five growers of specialty crop growers were able realize increased revenues with additional sales to the co-op and by selling their fresh produce at retail prices rather than wholesale.

Improvements funded by this project benefited additional growers who also now choose to sell through the cooperative. The dedicated retail operation increased the viability of the Tri-County Auction by allowing it to invite new membership from a greater diversity of specialty crop growers, as well as expand its membership base beyond the central New Jersey region, thereby extending its marketing season with more farm fresh crops earlier in the spring and later in the fall. In addition to realizing expanded sales overall cooperative membership was expanded by two growers.

Consumers

Residents of central New Jersey can now benefit from greater access to high quality, farm fresh produce through direct purchases or through local restaurants purchasing specialty crops at the auction. The Tri-County Cooperative is also in the process of becoming a certified third party audited safe food handling facility. This will be an important step as the state's specialty crop producers seek to continue their reputation as producers of only the safest and most nutritious products possible

Lessons Learned:

The effort to increase direct retail sales was largely matched and offset by an unrelated decreases in sales due to reduced purchases in sales from some of the traditional wholesale buyers.

The drop in overall sales was largely due to the unanticipated loss of a major wholesale buyer. Although there was no increase in overall sales as was hoped the increase in retail sales helped to mitigate the unanticipated loss in overall sales.

The most important lesson learned from this project for other teams replicating this project would be that without the ability to diversify income with increased direct retail sales the auction would have experienced a much more difficult 2012 and 2013 seasons. The opportunity to increase direct sales through this project made the difference between bad financial years for the auction and merely a smaller dip in overall sales.

The auction will continue to direct additional resources in support of continued direct retail sales to ensure the financial viability and profitability of the Tri-County Cooperative Auction.

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SCBG Agreement # 12-25-B-1083

Final Performance Report
(Revised February 3, 2014)

New Jersey Small Fruits Council

Project Title:

“Farm Scale Testing of New Strawberry Selections for New Jersey”

Project Summary:

Strawberries are a very high value crop which can bring high returns for New Jersey farmers. Farmers are continually looking for new varieties which yield well and have good flavor when produced under New Jersey’s growing conditions. Establishing and growing strawberries can also be very expensive and risky due to potential weather and pest related problems. Local farmers are reluctant to change the strawberry varieties they grow without seeing them performing well in large test plots on their farms and seeing how consumers react to them. A full scale research project allowing farmers to evaluate new strawberry selections in their own field and giving them access to performance data will provide farmers with the information and confidence they need to integrate new and improved strawberry varieties into their production systems.

Many years of work by Dr. Gojko Jelenkovic at the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) has resulted in several advanced strawberry selections with the potential to enhance the strawberry industry in New Jersey. These new strawberry selections should be able to outperform the current varieties grown since they were bred under NJ conditions and without large inputs of insecticides and fungicides. This project will make large numbers of new NJAES selections available to New Jersey farmers for field trials and consumer evaluations. This step is crucial in the breeding process as farmer/ consumer purchase is the main objective of this breeding program. As the main goal of the strawberry breeding/ research program is the commercialization of new improved strawberry varieties, the adoption of these varieties on local farms and the enhancement of the New Jersey strawberry industry.

Project Approach:

In winter and spring of 2011 three advanced selections of strawberry and the variety ‘Chandler’ were multiplied through tissue culture to generate clean stock material for propagation. This stock material was utilized to generate plug plants which were given to four growers in the fall of 2011. Three of the growers who were given strawberry plugs in summer and fall of 2011 were able to harvest fruit and evaluate fruit quality compared to commercial standards in 2012. One grower suffered a severe frost event during flowering and was not able to harvest.

Propagation and evaluations of advanced selections from the Rutgers NJAES breeding program continued in 2012. Clean stock material was generated at Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) and delivered to a commercial strawberry propagator for plug production.

Three to eight new strawberry selections were given to seven growers in the fall of 2012. One of the growers planted too late and was unable to provide any feedback on the new selections. The other six growers were surveyed and were able to provide feedback on plant/ fruit quality, yields and overall preference.

Multiple blinded taste- test panels were performed in the summer of 2012 and 2013 at several public events. These panels provided data on consumer preferences for the new selections compared to current commercially available varieties.

In 2012 a commercial strawberry nursery was contacted to begin propagating larger quantities of the most promising strawberry selections. In July of 2012 this commercial propagator was given plug plants of three of the selections for their farm evaluation trials as well as tissue cultures of three selections to serve as foundation stock for commercial propagation. These three selections were chosen based on performance in University replicated field trials, grower trials and consumer taste panel input.

Outreach was conducted throughout the project to make growers, consumers, and industry individuals aware of the work farmers and Rutgers NJAES are doing to improve the quality of locally produced strawberries and make them more widely available.

An article on the project was published in the summer 2012 issue of Horticultural News, (a publication of the New Jersey State Horticultural Society) <http://www.horticulturalnews.org/92-3/wxyzCover92-3.html>. This newsletter reaches over 400 grower and industry subscribers in partnership with the University of Massachusetts Newsletter Fruit Notes.

Collaborator Peter Nitzsche gave a presentation on the project at the Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Growers Convention in Hershey, Pa., January 30, 2013 to 85 growers and industry professionals.

An article was posted on the Rutgers website June 2013. "What's in Season from the Garden State: Jersey Strawberries – The Breed Goes On." <http://sebsnjaesnews.rutgers.edu/2013/06/whats-in-season-from-the-garden-state-jersey-strawberries-the-breed-goes-on/>.

An article on the project was published in the fall of 2013 issue of Horticultural News, (a publication of the New Jersey State Horticultural Society) <http://www.horticulturalnews.org/93-4/HN93-4.pdf>. This newsletter reaches over 400 grower and industry subscribers in partnership with the University of Massachusetts Newsletter Fruit Notes.

Collaborator William Hlubik gave an overview of the project to 20 growers during a twilight meeting at Fernbrook Farm, Bordentown, NJ on Sept. 17, 2013.

Peter Nitzsche and Bill Hlubik presented an overview of the project to 35 attendees at the Rutgers NJAES Board of Managers meeting North Brunswick, NJ on September 26, 2013.

Grower Feedback

A survey was used to collect preliminary data from 5 farmers who participated in the trials in the 2011, 2012 and 2013 growing seasons and evaluates 3 new selections.

The following feedback was provided by the participating farmers:

Two farmers mentioned that they would like to see two of the selections commercially produced. This would provide them with a better idea of their long- term performance.

Two farmers want to see an even larger scale comparison on their own farms to see if there is a comparable yield throughout the season and length of season.

One farmer mentioned they plant in April instead of when we planted in September. He would like to see the plant performance when they are planted in the early spring and given a full year to establish.

One farmer mentioned he would only continue to purchase the standard commercial variety until he was sure of the production of the new varieties.

Two farmers mentioned they would like to see how the plants perform over a 2-year period, as they will sometimes keep a field for 2 years.

One farmer noted that he planted two of the new selections later in the season than his commercial variety and both were able to “catch up” in plant growth. Both were so vigorous they “outgrew” the commercial variety and actually had to be pruned back for their 2nd year of production.

One farmer mentioned that while his customers would not pay a premium for the new strawberry varieties, their improved flavor would keep them coming back for more!

Test Panels

Three multiple blind taste test panels were held;

One panel was taken at the Snyder Research Farm where 12 participants were asked to evaluate 5 samples of strawberries. This included 1 commercial variety, 3 new selections and 1 previously patented variety. During this session one of the new selections was rated higher than the commercial variety in all categories including sweetness, acidity and overall flavor.

Two panels were taken at the Earth Center Extension Center. The first panel included 19 participants who were asked to evaluate 7 strawberry samples. This included 2 commercial varieties and five new selections. During this session 1 the new selections was rated higher than both commercial varieties in all categories including sweetness, acidity and overall flavor. 2 of the new selections rated higher in all categories compared to 1 commercial variety and higher in 2 out of 3 categories compared to the other commercial variety. The second panel included 8 participants who were asked to evaluate 9 strawberry samples. This included 3 commercial varieties and 6 new selections. During this session 1 of the new selections was rated higher than both commercial varieties in all categories including sweetness, acidity and overall flavor.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved:

1.Expected

Two to five hundred plug plants of three to four selections will be planted on at least six strawberry farms in fall of 2011. Growers will be asked to evaluate plant performance, fruit yield, quality, and flavor and report that information to NJAES. Grower evaluations in combination with replicated field trial data will be utilized to convince nursery/nurseries to propagate one or two of the best selections for commercial sales.

Achived

Three to seven selections were planted on four farms in fall of 2011, seven farms in 2012 and 10 farms in 2013. Each year growers were asked to evaluate plant performance, fruit yield, quality, and flavor and report that information to NJAES. In 2013 a survey was conducted to determine the growers' preferences and likelihood of purchasing/growing these plants on their farms. The results of this survey, along with results from replicated field trials, were used to determine which selections would be sent to a commercial propagator for mass propagation. Of the 10 selections that were evaluated during this funding period, 3 have been sent for commercial production.

2. Expected

Fruit from farm scale testing will be used to conduct taste test panels. These panels will provide further evidence that consumers prefer the selections over current strawberry varieties which will be used to convince farmers to grow the varieties and for consumer marketing materials

Achieved

Blinded taste- test panels were conducted and the data and used to decide which selections should be sent to a commercial nursery for mass propagation.

3. Expected

Consumer awareness of the project and of local strawberry production will be raised through publicity. Press releases on the project will be sent to local newspapers, TV, radio, during the harvest season in 2011 and 2012. These releases will make consumers

aware that farmers and Rutgers NJAES are working to make locally produced strawberries taste even better.

Achieved

Articles, presentations and tours have educated growers, consumers and industry professionals on the details of this project. As a result of this publicity local growers have expressed an increased interest in purchasing and growing these strawberry selections as well as two commercial propagators.

4. Expected

It is expected that strawberry acreage will increase after the commercial introduction of the new varieties however it may not occur after the completion of the project timeframe in 2013

Achieved

An increase in acreage is not anticipated until after the final commercial release of the strawberry selections. This project has helped to expedite the commercial release of the best performing selections and is expected in the very near future. Unfortunately, measuring changes in strawberry acreage in NJ will be difficult as the NJ Office of National Agricultural Statistics Service no longer maintains specific statistics on strawberry production in New Jersey because acreage fell below their minimum level after 2007. With this in mind Rutgers NJAES applied and approved for a SCBG in 2013 to assess the current status of strawberry production in NJ as well as production of other minor small fruit crops such as raspberries and ribes to help determine needs and areas for potential improvement.

No capital equipment was purchased with these funds, no interest in above \$100 per fiscal year was earned and no program income was realized that did not directly further the objectives of this project.

Beneficiaries

Ten participating farmers benefited directly by being able to grow and evaluate the new strawberries selections in their production systems before they are released and available for sale.

Many more growers benefited by viewing the selections growing in field trials, and being educated on their performance through presentations and written information (specifics in Final report).

Growers have gained awareness of the new strawberry selections and firsthand experience growing the selections that will be commercially available in the near future. Since these new selections have improved qualities such as better flavor they have the potential to increase local production, sales and profits.

Commercial strawberry nurseries have also gained awareness of the new strawberry selections and benefited from experience of propagating these selections in preparation for their release. Propagators will have new high quality strawberry varieties to market and sell to growers helping to increase the sales and profits.

Consumers will ultimately benefit from increased access to better tasting locally produced strawberries.

Lessons Learned;

One of the most important lessons learned is the number of challenges that arise when trying to efficiently propagate strawberry selections for on-farm trials. There are numerous steps to maintain and propagate clean strawberry material for farm trials and any delays in any of these steps can lead to problems. Materials must be protected from host of plant pathogens including viral, bacterial and fungal that can be transmitted by a number of insect vectors. Adequate clean stock material must be maintained in tissue culture and/or in a greenhouse over multiple years to provide material for field testing over several years to adequately assess the value of new selections in farm fields.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



Figure 1. Strawberry plants in farmer field May 11, 2012



Figure 2. Strawberry foundation stock in Rutgers NJAES greenhouse August 3, 2011



Figure 3. Close-up of one of the promising Rutgers NJAES strawberry selections May 17, 2012