

# Rhode Island

Spring / Summer 2007

# Ag-Review

RI. Ag-Review is a publication of the RIDEM/Division of Agriculture, 235 Promenade St. Prov., RI 02908, 401-222-2781

## Rhode Island Ag-Day set for May 22, 2007

### RI Agriculture Day

Rhode Island Ag Day will be celebrated on Tuesday, May 22, 2007 at the State House. This event is Rhode Island's day to celebrate agriculture in the Ocean State and inform the public about the importance of agriculture. Agriculture provides open space, tourism, and employment for all Rhode Islanders. Most important, it reminds everyone, agriculture provides food from the farm to the their table every day.

Rhode Island Farmers, farm organizations, distribution wholesale and retail outlets, and other farm related agencies will be present. The event will begin at 11:30 AM sharp and go to approximately until 5:30PM. Come and taste some of Rhode Island's finest grown and produced products. Remember, "Take Some Home, Rhode Island Grown – Fresher and Better" for you.



### DEM FARMERS' MARKETS 2007 SEASON HAS STARTED

The four farmers' markets, sponsored by the Department of Environmental Management opened the first week in May. Colt State Park in Bristol and Goddard Park in Warwick opened



the first Friday in May. Fisherman's Memorial State Park Narragansett opened the first Sunday in May. Haines Memorial Park opened the first Wednesday in May. The Capitol Hill Farmer's Market at one Capitol Hill will open on Thursday, July 26, and the Pastore Complex Farmer's Market will open on Friday, July 27. The Blackstone River State Park Farmers Market in Lincoln will open on Tuesday, July 17. This will be the second year for the Pastore and Blackstone River Farmers Markets. All the farmers markets finished very strong last year and we are looking forward to a great 2007-selling season. The farmers' markets are a great success for area farmers and local residents. Area farmers will have a great selection of produce to sell. Strawberries, corn, tomatoes, apples and peaches are a short list of the items

that will be available in the coming months. Now is a great time to pick up a hanging plant or bedding plant for your home.

Also, at these farmers markets WIC Farmers Market Coupons and Senior Farmers Market Coupons will continue to be accepted. The Senior Farmers Market Coupons will be accepted at farmers markets and roadside stands throughout the State of Rhode Island.

This year, the DEM/Division of Agriculture plans to do all it can to help Rhode Island Farmers market their goods throughout the State. We also plan to work with partners of the State Employee Worksite Wellness Initiative to bring farm fresh fruits and vegetables to worksites throughout the State. The DEM/Division of Agriculture will continue to work with the Departments of Elderly Affairs, Labor and Training, Administration, Health and the DEM/Division of Parks, to provide Rhode Island Grown fresh fruits and vegetables for all our citizens.

The DEM/Division of Agriculture Farmers Market Program has become so successful that it is estimated it adds over a \$550,000.00 of income to the Rhode Island economy at the seven DEM/Farmers Markets. This figure does not take into account the added sales generated at farm stands due to customer, vendor relationships that develop at these farmers markets.

DEM's Division of Agriculture and Resource Marketing, which helps farmers with marketing information, offers a free brochure that lists the locations of all farmers' markets and roadside stands, along with addresses, hours, days and months of operation, and telephone numbers, go to [www.rigrown.ri.gov](http://www.rigrown.ri.gov) and click on farmers' markets. If you would like to participate at any of the state run farmers markets please contact Pete Susi at [peter.susi@dem.ri.gov](mailto:peter.susi@dem.ri.gov) or 401-222-2781ext4517.

The RI Ag-Review is a publication of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management Division of Agriculture and is published two times per year. All correspondence should be directed to The RI Division of Agriculture 235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI 02908  
Kenneth D. Ayars, Chief  
Stephen M. Volpe, Deputy Chief, Editor

## Staff News

The Division of Agriculture is pleased to welcome Scott N. Marshall, DVM, to our Animal Health staff as RI Public Health Veterinarian. He will join Peter Belinsky, VMD,



to address the challenges of today's animal diseases and the concerns of domestic and farm animals. Dr. Marshall is married and has a farm in North Smithfield, Rhode Island.

He received his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree in 1991 from Tufts University, and his Bachelor of Science degree in 1986 from the University of Rhode Island.

Dr. Marshall has 16 years of veterinary experience taking care of horses and numerous domestic and farm animals. He has gained many years of experience by working at New England Horse Care Center in North Smithfield, Rhode Island and operating his own veterinary hospital.



### Attention Logo Users

Logo items are ready for the 2007 season. If you need bags, price cards, labels or tags call Pete Susi at 222-2781 x 4517 or at [peter.susi@dem.ri.gov](mailto:peter.susi@dem.ri.gov)

## Plant Industry News

Matt Green  
Nursery and Organic Programs

The number of growers and dealers of nursery stock in Rhode Island continues its upward trend. At the start of this season, the number of licenses issued to nurseries and nursery stock dealers had grown to a total of 91 nurseries certified by inspection of over 1,900 acres of nursery stock, and 211 nursery stock dealer locations. Licensed nurseries are granted certification after an annual inspection of their nursery stock, which includes any hardy, woody plants and plant parts for propagation. Nursery stock is certified to be free from injurious plant pests and diseases to allow their shipment and sale within and outside of the state. Other inspections and certifications conducted to meet requirements for exporting and importing nursery stock include phytosanitary certification for interstate and international exports, and post-entry quarantine of international imports. Lists of certified nurseries and licensed nursery stock dealers and the Rhode Island Nursery Law can be found on the Division web page at: <http://www.dem.ri.gov/topics/agricult.htm>

The organic certification program of the DEM Division of Agriculture maintains accreditation by the USDA National Organic Program as a certifier of organic crops producers and handlers. Through this program qualified organic operators are certified as growing produce and handling/processing products according to the National Organic Standards. Currently 18 organic farms and 2 organic handlers are certified organic by the Division. Organic food is produced by farmers who emphasize the use of renewable resources and the conservation of soil, water and wildlife to enhance environmental quality for future generations. Organic farming is done without using most conventional pesticides and fertilizers made with synthetic ingredients or sewage sludge, bioengineering or ionizing radiation. Organic farmers provide Rhode Islanders with a fresh, local supply of healthy farm products through a variety of outlets including wholesale and retail outlets, farm stands, farmers markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA).

Information on certification and a list of certified organic farms and handlers as well as CSAs (includes some conventional farms) can be found on the RI Organic Certification Program web page at: <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnates/agricult/orgcert.htm>

Applications for organic farm certification are due by March 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

To apply for a nursery or nursery stock dealer license or for organic certification please contact Matt Green at the Division of Agriculture at (401) 222-2781 ext. 4516.

## PESTICIDE NEWS

### PROMULGATION OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES & REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO PESTICIDES.

On October 24, 2006, The Division of Agriculture finalized and filed the Amendments to the Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Pesticides. These Rules, which have been under review by the Division for several years, took effect on November 13, 2006.

Failure to comply with these regulations could result in the Division of Agriculture taking an enforcement action, which could include an assessment of an administrative penalty.

Some of the major revisions include, increasing the number of recertification hours both private and commercial applicators must obtain in order to maintain their certification as well as requiring Commercial Licensed Applicators to obtain pesticide educational credit.

It also classifies as "state-limited" use pesticide, several herbicides, such as Acetochlor, Simazine, and Metolachlor, which will now require applicators to maintain and submit these records on the use of these products. These herbicides have been identified as having the potential of contaminating groundwater and surface water.

Other noteworthy changes include establishing minimum age requirements for obtaining a pesticide license, implementing pesticide storage and transportation requirements and additional record keeping requirements for both commercial and private applicators. In addition, the rule changes also address pesticide risk minimization for employees and groundwater/surface water protection.

The final Rule was based upon written and oral comments received from an Informal Workshop held on September 15, 2005 and the Public Hearing, which was held on June 15, 2006 at the Department of Environmental Management, 235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI.

If you would like a copy mailed to you please contact me directly. A complete copy of the **NEW** Rule & Regulations Pertaining to Pesticides is also posted on the DEM website <http://www.dem.ri.gov/pubs/index.htm#AGRICULTURE> listing the date 11/13/06. Listing of Federal and State-limited Use Pesticides is located at <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnatres/agricult/geneslb.htm>

If you have any questions or would like copies of the rules and/or Restricted Use list mailed to you, please contact me directly at 401-222-2781 x4510.

or via my e-mail address at [liz.lopesduguay@dem.ri.gov](mailto:liz.lopesduguay@dem.ri.gov).

## News Briefs

### Food Tests Promise Tough Task for FDA

#### Red Orbit

The Food and Drug Administration faces an enormous challenge as it begins testing six food ingredients imported from China for chemical adulterants. In 2006, the USA imported 51.9 million pounds of wheat gluten from China, 112,500 pounds of cornmeal and 5 million pounds of soybean meal, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Three other ingredients the FDA says it plans to test — corn gluten, rice protein concentrate and rice bran — are imported in such small amounts that the USDA does not track them.

The latest USDA crop planting indication report says 90.5 million acres of corn will be planted this year, up 15 percent from last year. Spurred by the surging ethanol industry, this acreage increase carries expectations for much higher fertilizer consumption both this year, and in the years ahead.



## Mosquito Abatement Program Update



As noted in the fall/winter 2005 edition of Ag-Review, the DEM Div. Of Agriculture has acquired a compact excavator and modified it for saltmarsh water management projects. Wide track pads (financed by the DEM Office of Compliance and Inspection) were installed to reduce the ground pressure from 4.3 psi to 2.2 psi. That reduces damage to the marsh and reduces the likelihood of getting stuck, when conducting projects for mosquito control and/or saltmarsh restoration.

The excavator was first used in July, 2006 at a saltmarsh parcel along Atlantic Ave. in Westerly. The mosquito control project entailed clearing several clogged channels, filling one channel, and creating two fish reservoirs. The design allows predatory fish to access mosquito larvae. Damage to the marsh surface was minimal, as noted by plant regrowth later in the season. The wide, smooth pads enabled the machine to “slide” on the marsh surface while turning.

At another corner of our state, the excavator was used in March 2007 at two saltmarsh restoration sites in Barrington. At the Allin’s Cove site, a 150 ft. long channel was dug to divert freshwater from the newly created marsh surface. The excessive freshwater input was supporting an invasive exotic plant at the expense of the native marsh grass species. At the Walker’s Farm restoration project, the machine was also used to broaden the slopes of new channels to aid in the establishment of native grasses.

### *Did you Know*

According to the Census, more than 132,000 farms specialized in the production of fruit, tree nuts, berries, vegetables, and pulse crops in 2002. Between 1987 and 2002, the number of all farms harvesting vegetables and melons (excludes potatoes, sweet potatoes, and pulse crops) fell 11 percent to 54,391 and the number of orchards (fruit and tree nuts combined, excluding berries) dropped 6 percent to 113,649. Despite the drop in farm numbers, harvested area increased 17 percent for orchards and was largely unchanged for vegetables and melons. Over the same period, the number of farms producing berries rose 3 percent to 18,234, while harvested berry area increased 26 percent.

*From the Fruit and Vegetable Backgrounder / VGS-313-01*  
Economic Research Service/USDA

## *Seasonal Positions with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management*

*The Department of Environmental Management annually employs qualified responsible individuals in a variety of positions within the State's Parks, Beaches, Research Programs, and Administrative Offices during a specific limited period.*

*Most employees of the seasonal program are required to work weekends and holidays throughout the summer, with two weekdays off.*

*Many of the classifications below have a three-step pay-grade. An employee in any of these classifications is paid at the first step during his or her first season. An employee returning to the same three-step classification for a second season is paid at the second step during that season. An employee returning to the same three-step classification for a third or subsequent season is paid at the third step during that season.*

*Unless otherwise noted, applicants must be at least 16 years of age.*

*To obtain a list of seasonal positions or for more information go to <http://www.dem.ri.gov/jobs/seasonal.htm>*



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