

# Rhode Island

Spring 2004

## Ag-Review

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

### Chief's Corner

by: Ken Ayars, Chief  
RI Division of Agriculture

#### USDA ANNOUNCES CROP INSURANCE DEADLINE FOR RI NURSERY CROP

Rhode Island nursery producers should be aware that the final date for a new applicant to apply for insurance on nursery for 2004 is May 31, 2004, according to the Raleigh Regional Office, USDA Risk Management Agency. New applicants for crop year 2004 may be accepted until May 31, 2004 with coverage beginning 30 days after receipt of your signed application. The premium for a new policy is prorated according to the month the coverage begins. Applications accepted after May 31, 2004 will not begin coverage until October 1, 2004. For existing policies, coverage automatically attached on October 1, 2003. The insurance year runs from October 1 through September 30. Crop insurance provides protection for field-grown and containerized nursery plants against losses due to adverse weather conditions, fire, failure of irrigation water supply, wildlife and delay in marketability of plants resulting in reduced plant value. Insurance premium subsidies have been significantly increased in recent years, particularly at the higher levels of coverage. Producers are strongly urged to contact a local crop insurance agent as soon as possible for a premium quote and additional details. For a list of crop insurance agents in your area, contact the

### Plant Industry News

#### CAPS Program 2004

JA Macfarlan  
Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey-State  
Survey Coordinator

Following the success of the 2003 season, the State of Rhode Island Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) is up and running for 2004. CAPS is a combined effort by Federal and State agriculture organizations to perform detection, surveillance, and general monitoring activities of agricultural pests and biological control agents. In the last two years, the CAPS program has become an important

part of the Rhode Island Division of Agriculture and Resource Marketing. The sampling performed throughout Rhode Islands' five counties is integral in the protection of the integrity of the States' green industries and natural biodiversity. On a national level, the CAPS program is involved with the protection of our nations' ability to produce quality agriculture products and the maintenance of a healthy natural environment.

The subjects of this years' survey work include fungi, plants, and insects. The areas being surveyed are as varied as our target pests; they include warehouses, woodlands, abandoned orchards, turf farms, dairy farms, and tree plantations. Sampling will be performed from March through October of this year. Four surveys that were performed last year will be continued this season; these are the Giant Hogweed, Exotic Wood Boring Bark Beetle Warehouse, Sudden Oak Death, and the Exotic Wireworm/Click-Beetle Surveys. The new work-plans that will be implemented specifically target the following pests: Emerald Ash Borer, Japanese Pine Sawyer, Chrysanthemum White Rust, Fruit Tree Tortrix and Light Brown Apple Moths, and the Red Haired Pine Bark Beetle.

There are presently three surveys in the field. The Exotic Wood Boring Bark Beetle Warehouse Survey is underway with over forty Lindgren Funnel Traps deployed in all counties. Each trap has an array of pheromones to attract both soft and hardwood borers of European and Asian origins. These bark beetles have the potential to cause significant damage to local woodlands and forest industries. The information dissemination and visual detection survey for Chrysanthemum White Rust is also being implemented throughout Rhode Island. The Sudden Oak Death Survey is also in progress with surveyors visiting nurseries and garden-shops, inspecting host material, and passing out literature on the fungus. Last years' survey work could not have been possible without the cooperation and good will of Rhode Islands' green-industries, private businesses, and residents. CAPS will continue to build a strong relationship with these groups in order to maintain a healthy, productive, and greener Rhode Island.

### Animal Health News

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING

##### ANIMAL CARE

Please find below a summary of the Division of Agriculture, Animal Health Sections proposed promulgation of Animal Care Regulations governing the standards of care in facilities licensed and inspected by the Animal Health Staff. All licensed facilities and individuals who request notification will be provided with copies of the drafted regulations and afforded the opportunity for comment prior to official public hearings and filing of the final regulations.

In 1999 the Rhode Island Legislature appropriated funds to hire a second State Veterinarian to address animal welfare and regulations concerning animal care. In January 2000, Dr. Peter Belinsky was selected to research welfare issues, develop standards and address the need for laws and regulations, including euthanasia, carbon monoxide chambers, reporting of abuse and animal care. Since 2000, under legislative direction, and as allowed by statute (Rhode Island General Law Title 4, Chapter 19, entitled Animal Care) Dr. Belinsky and the Animal Health Staff have been developing regulations governing the standards of care and housing for animals. The purpose of the regulations is to establish standards of care that insure the health, welfare and safety of animals and humans, while maintaining compliance with the existing laws and regulations concerning different species of animals and contagious diseases, such as rabies. These standards will be applied to all animal facilities licensed and inspected by the state, including animal shelters, municipal pounds, pet shops, kennels, dealers, livestock facilities, petting zoos and animal exhibitions. The regulations will address feeding, shelter, housing, husbandry, veterinary care, disease control, record keeping, emergencies, definitions, protocols (see page 3)

The RI Ag-Review is a publication of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management Division of Agriculture and is published four 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

## Marketing Update

### DEM FARMERS' MARKETS 2004 SEASON TO BEGIN

The four farmers' markets, sponsored by the Department of Environmental Management will open the first week in May. Colt State Park in Bristol and Goddard Park in Warwick, will open the first Friday in May. Fisherman's Memorial State Park in Narragansett will open on the first Sunday in May. Haines Memorial Park will open the first Wednesday in May. The farmers markets finished very strong last year and we are looking forward to a great 2004 selling season. The farmers' markets have been a great success for area farmers and local residents. If you are a local grower, now is the time to call to join one of our farmers market locations.

Also, at these farmers markets, WIC Farmers Market Coupons will continue to be accepted. This year we hope to make Senior Farmers Market Coupons available to Rhode Island Seniors. These coupons also will be accepted at farmers markets and roadside stands throughout the State.

This year the DEM/Division of Agriculture will continue its partnership with Brown University Food Services Program. This partnership has created many links between RI farmers and Brown University to supply fruits and vegetables for Browns Food Service Program. Also, Brown University in partnership with the DEM/Division of Agriculture, has created a farmers market at Brown University to benefit students, staff and area residents. The farmers market will be held this year every Wednesday 10 am to 3 pm starting in September. The Brown Farmers Market is a great success and we will continue this farmers market this year.

The DEM/Division of Agriculture Farmers Market Program has become so successful that it is estimated that it adds over a \$300,000.00 of income to the Rhode Island economy at the five DEM/Farmers Markets. This figure does not take into account the added sales generated at farm stands due to customer and vendor relationships that developed at these farmers markets.

To obtain more information on joining one of our local markets call Pete Susi at 222-2781, and press 1-4517 or write to the DEM Division of Agriculture and Resource Marketing, 235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI 02908 or email him at peter.susi@dem.ri.gov

## Pesticide Briefs

### TRIAZINE & ACETANILIDE HERBICIDE MONITORING PROJECT UPDATE

You will remember that last winter the Department of Health notified the Division that the herbicides Atrazine, Metolachlor, and Simazine, were being detected in public drinking water supplies. The Division began monitoring to determine the levels, fluxuation, and/or prevalence of these chemicals in the water resources of the State. The results show low levels of these herbicides are entering streams feeding a number of reservoirs. Preliminarily it appears, better control of field runoff is needed along with the development of farm pesticide use management plans to prevent this from occurring.

In February, the Eastern Conservation District hosted two meetings at which the Division presented to crop producers and nurserymen the preliminary monitoring results. A good turn out of about 50 people attended these meetings. As a result, a number of growers have sought assistance from the District in reducing their use or field runoff to prevent off site movement of these herbicides. In addition, the Division of Agriculture has been informed by a number of growers that they are planning to eliminate their use and switch to other less mobile herbicides.

In the interest of being proactive, the Division would like to encourage farmers to continue their voluntary efforts to reduce the use, both in frequency and amounts applied of these herbicides. Farmers are also encouraged, as some have already done, to review their Best Management Practices for herbicides and field soil erosion. Because many of our farmers are in the watersheds for public water supplies, they may be eligible for USDA/NRCS federal cost share assistance with Best Management Practices, which can control herbicide field runoff. Farmers should contact Tom Sandham, District Manager at the Eastern District, or NRCS directly, and take advantage of these programs.

The Division will continue to monitor the situation and keep you informed of any developments.

If you have questions or need technical assistance in this area please contact Eugene Pepper in the Division's Pesticide Section at 222-2781, x4512

### Pesticide Section Releases Enforcement Actions taken during FY 2003 for Pesticide Violations.

by Liz Lopes-Duguay, Program Manager

The Division's Pesticide Section is responsible for enforcing the state and federal pesticide laws to protect people, property, and the environment

against improper use of pesticides. This is accomplished by routinely conducting inspections with commercial businesses providing pest control services, government agencies that apply pesticides, as well as agricultural facilities to ensure pesticides are being applied properly. In addition, staff also responds to complaints to determine if pesticides are being misused.

During 2003, the Division took enforcement action, ranging from Letters of Warning to Notice of Violation including a penalty, against 12 facilities and/or businesses for violating state pesticide laws and regulations. The violations ranged from failure to wear the appropriate personal protective clothing as required by the label, failure to comply with the lawn care regulation; pesticide use inconsistent with it's labeling, as well as violations of the Worker Protection Standard required of agricultural establishments. In addition, two companies were assessed penalties ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,000 per violation for allowing pesticide applications by unlicensed applicators.

A penalty matrix is used to ensure enforcement actions are uniform and fair. The matrix takes into account the seriousness of the violation, whether it is a first or a repeat offense, and whether there are any aggravating or mitigating factors involved.

### New England's "Buy Local" Program

By Steve Justis, Marketing Specialist  
Vermont Agency of Agriculture

Despite efforts to connect producers and consumers through such direct marketing venues as farmers markets, farm stands, CSAs, and the Internet, supermarkets and other grocery retailers still account for a whopping 95% of food sales in the U.S.

Modern food retails are generally characterized by large corporate management structures owned and operated to benefit stockholders. Most large retailers now have stores in multiple states, and foreign corporations own a growing number of chains operating in the U.S. Because of their cumbersome international bureaucracies, many of these large chains are reluctant to work with small producers or producers groups. They are also reluctant to embrace individual state promotion programs, citing, for example, problems with distribution from centralized warehouses.

The Harvest New England marketing program was initiated in 1995 to help create a regional identity for locally grown produce for those growers interested in selling through wholesale channels. In 2003, each of the New England state departments of agriculture pooled funds to expand the program to include new product categories:

- Fresh and processed produce (i.e. fruit & vegetable) products
- Milk and dairy products

- Greenhouse and nursery products
- Processed/value-added/ gourmet food products
- Aquaculture products
- Maple syrup and other maple products
- Christmas trees, wreaths and similar products
- Farm-derived fiber and processed fiber products
- Livestock and livestock products
- Eggs
- Honey
- Others

### *Convenience is Key*

Surveys show that lack of convenience is the greatest obstacle to consumers' support for "buy local" programs. Most busy consumers find supermarkets and other grocery retail outlets to be the most appropriate place to buy their food.

For those producers interested in wholesale channels, the Harvest New England program offers an opportunity to complete in the "value-added" or "branded product" market rather than the commodity market. Harvest New England helps consumers identify regional agricultural products where they shop most—in supermarkets.

Late in 2003 the Harvest New England program began working closely with several of the region's key supermarket chains, including Stop & Shop, Shaw's, Big Y Foods, C & S Wholesale, Roche Brothers, and Bozzuto's to begin carrying more New England products, and making them more recognizable to shoppers. The program is planned to expand its work in 2004, including more New England products promotions.

The goals of the Harvest New England program include:

- 1) Supporting the marketing efforts of New England agricultural producers and processors selling through wholesale channels by representing and supporting all New England agricultural products in the market.
- 2) Increasing sales opportunities for New England agricultural products, by building relationships among New England producers, processors, supermarkets and state departments of agriculture.
- 3) Increasing the visibility of New England agricultural products in supermarkets by creating customized point-of-sale materials, pamphlets and other materials to help consumers recognize products produced in the region.
- 4) Strengthening consumer attitudes towards New England agricultural products by promoting the importance of New England producers and processors.

5) Reinforcing "buy Local" campaigns of New England states, supporting, not supplanting, state programs.

For more information on Harvest New England and its efforts to get more local products into regional supermarkets, please contact Steve Justis, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, 116 State St., Montpelier, VT 05620-2901. Telephone: (802) 828-3827; e-mail: [stevej@agr.state.vt.us](mailto:stevej@agr.state.vt.us).

Harvest New England, Inc. is a 501 © (5) tax exempt organization sponsored by the following state organizations:

- Connecticut Department of Agriculture
- Maine Department of Agriculture
- Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Markets & Food
- Rhode Island Division of Agriculture & Resource Marketing
- Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

## *Farm Viability News*

The weekly monitoring of water levels in the Queen river, Chipuxet river, Usquepaugh river, Beaver river, Pawcatuck river, Wood river at Hope Valley and Wood river at Arcadia will begin again in May. Water levels have increased over the winter and more drastically over the past month or so. Monitoring will continue on a routine basis during the remainder of the spring season and into the summer so data can be compiled and reviewed against previous years. Anyone who applied for an emergency pond permit due to the drought and has not yet completed their project due to financial/ and or inclement weather conditions may be eligible to receive an extension. Please contact Lis Peterman from the Division of Agriculture at 401-222-2781 x 7261 for further information.

The Rhode Island Agriculture Land Preservation Commission has been accepting applications for the purchase of development rights for farmland in Rhode Island. The program has been met with overwhelming response and new funds will become available this coming fiscal year. As of this date, 59 farms within the state have been protected accounting for over 4300 acres of land. The Commission was recently hard at work compiling applications to be submitted to the Federal Farm Land Protection Program. The three farms which were selected are Dutra Farm in Jamestown, Peckham Farm in Tiverton, and Knight Farm in Scituate. All three farms are very active and hopefully will receive funding from the Federal program for land protection. Anyone wishing to apply for the Purchase of Development Rights Program can contact the Division of Agriculture for an application or further information at 222-2781.

(Animal Health continued from page 1)

welfare, and other topics. Currently the standards enforced by Animal Health are accepted guidelines and established protocols that apply the basic requirements for facilities to have adequate food, shelter and housing, for the number and types of animals housed, and that the materials and construction allow for cleaning, disinfection, ventilation, lighting, storage and safety. These accepted guidelines are being expanded upon to address the needs of the many different species of animals being housed in a wide variety of facilities around the state. Due to the broad scope of the regulations, the content of the rules will reflect standards that can be applied to all facilities, as well as sections concerning specific activities and species, such as communal living of dogs and cats.

In compliance with Title 4 of Rhode Island General Law, and the purpose of the chapters addressing animal disease and licensed facilities, the Division of Agriculture has addressed the need to apply a uniform standard to the housing and communal living of animals in a variety of different facilities with different goals and functions. The State Veterinarians have researched extensively the large volume of literature on the topic. Recent outbreaks of disease in pet shops and shelters have demonstrated the need for certain basic requirements. One of those basic requirements is adequate primary and secondary enclosures must be provided for the number of animals in a building or facility. In the event of disease outbreaks, sanitization requirements, overcrowding, trauma, illness, building problems, emergencies or circumstances when animals must be contained, facilities need cage space available for each animal. References and experience indicate that communal living must reflect this and that common rooms are designed and constructed with the same standards as other animal housing.

For more information and to obtain copies of the applicable existing regulations, state laws and references, please contact the Division of Agriculture at the address provided, or visit the RIDEM website at [www.state.ri.us/dem](http://www.state.ri.us/dem) and the links to Rhode Island General Laws. Any person wanting to obtain copy of the draft regulations and be notified of meetings or hearings can contact the Animal Health Section at 401-222-2781. All written comments and recommendations can be submitted directly to Animal Health for review and response.



## Special Update

### AVIAN INFLUENZA UPDATE ANIMAL HEALTH SECTION

The Rhode Island Division of Agriculture, RIDEM, in cooperation with Little Rhody Egg Farm and the USDA-APHIS Veterinary Services, has successfully completed the depopulation of the chickens exposed to Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI) at the Little Rhody Egg Farm in Foster, Rhode Island. All chickens on the property were humanely euthanized and disposed of at the landfill. All equipment and materials used during the depopulation were cleaned and disinfected. All staff working on site were disinfected and instructed to not visit farms with chickens for 72 hours. There were no injuries or illness reported by staff. The chicken coop and all other facilities and equipment on the farm are now being cleaned and disinfected, under the supervision of the State Veterinarian. The manure is being removed and composted on site, per the approved manure management plan. Once the building is cleaned and thoroughly disinfected, the farm will then remain free of all avian species for a period of 4 weeks, during which environmental testing and ongoing improvements to the equipment will be performed. A formal quarantine and the existing 2-mile restricted movement zone will remain throughout the cleaning period, pending negative testing and approval of the facilities sanitization.

Avian Influenza has continued to occur in North America, with recent outbreaks in Delaware, Texas and British Columbia. The state of Delaware experienced a minor outbreak of Low Pathogenic AI in February of 2004, threatening a large number of poultry operations in the Delmarva Peninsula. Also in February, Texas confirmed the presence of the foreign form of High Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) prompting an emergency response from the USDA and a large-scale eradication program. Fortunately, both these outbreaks have been successfully contained at this time, with ongoing surveillance indicating no further spread of either virus. British Columbia is currently battling a major outbreak of HPAI, with as many as 22 farms infected and plans to euthanize 19 million birds as part of an aggressive and necessary eradication effort to prevent this deadly, and potentially zoonotic, highly pathogenic virus from propagating. These outbreaks demonstrate the need for local farmers and fanciers to practice strict biosecurity and disease prevention at all times by taking the appropriate measures to prevent unhealthy birds from entering the property and potentially contaminated materials or visitors from coming into contact with poultry. The RI Division of Agriculture requires that all poultry, hatching eggs, and related fowl must be certified healthy and free of diseases, specifically avian influenza, prior to entry to the state. This includes poultry for fairs and shows. Health certification by the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) or individual health certificates must accompany all shipments, as well as a mandatory poultry importation permits issued by the Division

of Agriculture for all poultry entering the state. Permits and information on importation requirements or Avian Influenza can be obtained by contacting the Animal Health Staff at 401-222-2781.

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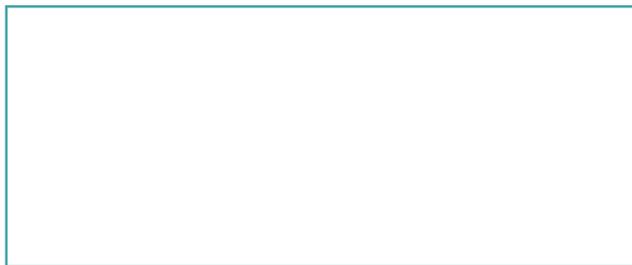
local USDA Farm Service Agency office or logon to the following Risk Management Agency web site: <http://www3.rma.usda.gov/tools/agents/>

Join us for  
**Rhode Island  
Ag - Day**  
May 25th 2004  
*at the State House*

For more info contact Ron Newman  
at 222-2781 x 4518 or at  
[ronald.newman@dem.ri.gov](mailto:ronald.newman@dem.ri.gov)



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