

January 9, 2006

FY 2006 Quarter 1

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

<i>New Mgmt. Paradigm</i>	2
<i>Future Direction</i>	2
<i>Grass Root Support</i>	2
<i>Waterways and PMC</i>	3
<i>Links of Interest</i>	<b>Back</b>

## CAPE MAY PMC 40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION A HIT!

The Cape May PMC hosted its 40th Anniversary celebration. The event was attended by over 110 elected officials, Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisors, federal, state agencies, local municipalities, partners and private commercial growers/farmers.



Above left Doug Zehner NJ State Conservationist (acting), addresses those in attendance while National Plant Materials Program Manager Robert Escherman and Cape Atlantic Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisor Joe Lomax look on (top left).

The 40th Anniversary was followed by an afternoon Conservation Field Day with about 90 people touring the PMC fields by trolley car. NJ SRC Dr. David Smart explains PMC products at one of several tour stops.

Below starting from left:

**Andy Ernst** of Ernst Conservation Seeds explains the significance of Suther Prairie Big Bluestem recently released by the Cape May PMC. **Curtis Dell** of USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) PA. explains the NRCS ARS Inter-agency Carbon Sequestration Study. Lastly, **Richard Zobel** Root Physiologist with USDA ARS WVA. explains the function of aerenchyma tissue in a soon to be released switchgrass that grows in standing water.



## DOES *YOUR* PMC HAVE A STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE?

I know, I know, Strategic Planning? Ugh! Well that tends to be most peoples first response when I describe what we have done here at the Cape May PMC.

We have been blessed with several outstanding conservation champions that have graciously dedicated their time and talent to developing some strategic direction to the PMC. These champions include:

- Art Brown NJ State Secretary of Agriculture for 28 years.
- Joe Lomax NACD Executive Leadership.
- Don Hamer NJPMC Manager (retired).
- W. Curtis Sharp National Plant Materials Leader (retired).
- Other member include districts, partners and NRCS friends.

How about your PMC? Are there some Conservation Champions and retired leadership in your area waiting to be involved?

---

## STATE CONSERVATIONISTS SET STAGE FOR CAPE MAY PMC'S FUTURE

On October 2, 2005, the NJPMC State Conservationist Advisory Committee formally adopted both the Technical Advisory Committee Meeting recommendations and the Strategic Planning Committee recommendations. The Technical Focus Areas for 2006-2010 are:

- USDA Conservation Programs
- Coastal Resource Systems
- Community Resource Systems
- Sustainable Native Plant Systems

Each of these focus areas are current NRCS National Programmatic Priorities.

---

## PMC BEACH PLUM COOPERATIVE ADOPTED BY THE CAPE MAY COUNTY BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

For hundreds of years, Indians and settlers have used the fruit of beach plum to make jams, jellies, and wine. Long term fruit harvesting depleted the seed banks in the sand dunes that have led to the plant becoming scarce in many locations.

The Cape May PMC helped shape a new partnership between Rutgers, Master Gardner and local farmers. This partnership was formally recognized by the Cape May County Board of Agriculture meeting held at the PMC this year.



Prized fruit of beach plum. Note how plump fruit are on sand dunes during a drought.

*“What would be the feeling of this Nation, should a foreign nation suddenly enter the United States, and destroy 90,000 acres of land, as erosion has been allowed to do in a single county”.*

*Hugh Hammond Bennett.*

## CALL FOR NEW ESTUARY SITES TO PERFORM PLANT STUDIES.

The Cape May PMC will be conducting some new technology studies aimed at increasing the success of direct seeding smooth cordgrass into the estuarine eco-system.

All partnering agencies and coastal land managers that have sites suitable for locating studies are encouraged to contact Bill Skaradek PMC Manager at 609-465-5901 or Chris Miller NJPMS at 609-465-9284.



In light of coastal damages from Katrina, the rate of estuary shoreline loss in the mid-Atlantic is concerning.

---

## U.S. ARMY CORP OF ENGINEERS WATERWAY EXPERIMENT STATION AND CAPE MAY PMC DISCUSS PARTNERING SCIENCE EFFORTS.

PMC Manager Bill Skaradek and representatives from the US ARMY Corp of Engineers waterway experiment station met at the 2nd Annual Dredge conference held in NJ this year.

After some exchange of information it

was evident that both entities share a common mission in addressing dredge spoil stabilization technologies.

The Army Corp and the PMC have scheduled Chesapeake Bay site visits in Spring of 2006 in order to find suitable locations for studies.



Photo Courtesy of US Fish and Wildlife Service

*“We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect”*

*Aldo Leopold*

**NRCS Mission Statement**  
Helping People Help the Land

**USDA NRCS**  
**Conservation Plant Materials Centers**

The purpose of the program is to provide native plants that can help solve natural resource problems. Beneficial uses for which plant material may be developed include biomass production, carbon sequestration, erosion reduction, wetland restoration, water quality improvement, streambank and riparian area protection, coastal dune stabilization, and other special conservation treatment needs. Scientists seek out plants that show promise for meeting an identified conservation need and test their performance. After species are proven, they are released to the private sector for commercial production. The work at the 26 centers is carried out cooperatively with state and Federal agencies, commercial businesses, and seed and nursery associations.

The Cape May Plant Materials Center has been a leader in developing new native plants and technologies for coastal, marine and estuarine habitat. To learn more about us, visit our web sites at:

- <http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/njpmc/>

Other links of interest include: <http://plants.usda.gov/index.html> and <http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/>

**Field Offices, District Employees, Partners and Volunteers:**  
**Want to increase your visibility and notoriety as a cutting edge scientist??**

The Cape May PMC serves a nine-state service area extending from Massachusetts's to the North Carolina South Carolina border. The plant developmental process used by the Cape May PMC relies heavily on cooperation conservation partners to locate native plant stands; collect materials and ship them to Cape May; locate suitable plant testing sites; record plant performance data; and *publish new scientific findings*. If you or anyone you know would like to become a partner and volunteer your talents contact us at:

**USDA NRCS Cape May PMC**  
**1536 Route Nine North**  
**Cape May Court House NJ 08210**  
**(609) 465-5901**



'Atlantic' Coastal Panicgrass

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA's TARGET Center (202)720-2600(Voice and TDD).

To file a complaint, write the Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250, or call 1-800-245-6340(voice) or (202)720-1127 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity employer.