

## **Patricia D. Hastings**

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**Sent:** Friday, August 27, 2004 4:41 PM  
**Subject:** Deer Fencing on Farms: Funding - Eligibility Criteria- Application Sources

*NJDA Press Release on deering fencing program for immediate release: August 24, 2004.*

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### **'NJDA, DEP ANNOUNCE FUNDING FOR DEER FENCING ON FARMS Farmers' Application Process Getting Underway'**

(TRENTON) – New Jersey Agriculture Secretary Charles M. Kuperus today announced \$300,000 in funding is available for a **deer fencing program that will be run cooperatively with the Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife and Rutgers Cooperative Extension.**

The cost-share program, in which the farmer would bear part of the cost and the responsibility for installation, will provide fencing material, plus up to 30 percent of the line posts at no cost to qualified farmers.

"Whether it is our Jersey Fresh marketing program, or cost-share initiatives to help farmers conserve natural resources, we are always looking for ways to partner with the agricultural community and thereby help farms stay viable and vital," said Secretary Kuperus. "Deer fencing has proven effective in keeping the deer at bay and is a good investment assisting farmers who otherwise would not be able to build fencing around their property."

The DEP operated a deer-fencing program in the 1990's. It was so popular, the DEP experienced a backlog. The Department of Agriculture utilized grant money to dissipate the backlog. However, that funding source dried up and the deer-fencing program was discontinued.

A Rutgers Cooperative Extension survey of farmers who participated in the 1998 deer fencing program indicated that almost 70 percent of wildlife crop loss is attributable to deer. The New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station estimates the economic loss to farmers to be between \$5 million and \$10 million annually.

Secretary Kuperus was joined for the announcement by Martin McHugh, Director of the Division of Fish and Wildlife and Jack Rabin, Associate Director/Farm Services, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, who agreed the deer problem is increasing.

"The Department of Environmental Protection has a long history of working with the Department of Agriculture and the agricultural community to responsibly manage the New Jersey deer herd," said Director McHugh. "Managing the deer population minimizes economic loss to farmers while providing recreational and economic benefits to the citizens of our state. The deer fencing program exemplifies the successful partnership forged between both departments."

"The nature of how the state has been developing has left farmers with no way to manage the deer herd on their own," said Rabin. "The state needs to help provide a remedy."

Also attending the announcement were Assemblymen Jeff Van Drew and Douglas Fisher, who advocated for the renewed fencing funding in the Legislature.

"We can't forget our farmers--they need our support," said Assemblyman Van Drew. "In order to keep open space and farms, we need to help our farmers where and when we can. This is a competitive industry that relies on

supplies such as deer fencing.”

“This kind of program helps farmers continue on their land by making sure their crops avoid damage by wildlife,” said Assemblyman Fisher. “When we keep working farms working, we increase the state’s prospects for maintaining farms as green space.”

The NJDA is providing \$250,000 in new funding allocated in the Fiscal Year 2005 state budget for the program. The DEP is contributing \$50,000 to the program.

**To participate in the program, farmers must meet these eligibility criteria:**

- Be a New Jersey farmer having documented proof of a minimum of \$40,000 in sales of agricultural commodities produced by the applicant on a New Jersey farm
- Be a New Jersey certified organic farmer having documented proof of a minimum of \$20,000 in sales of agricultural commodities produced by the applicant on a New Jersey farm
- Be the owner of the land or have documented proof of renting preserved farmland or farmland that is enrolled in an Eight-Year Farmland Preservation Program
- Complete a mandatory deer fence installation workshop sponsored by the NJDA, NJDEP, and Rutgers Cooperative Extension

Farmers receiving help with fencing will be required to use the material solely for the purpose of keeping deer off their land and are prohibited from using the fence to contain equine, livestock, poultry, or other animals. Any unused fence will have to be returned to NJDA and cannot be sold.

**Applications** for deer fencing will be available to farmers after September 1. They will be available through the NJDA, county extension offices and the following Fish & Wildlife field offices:

- Clinton WMA, 7 Van Syckles Road, Hampton
- Assumpink WMA, 386 Clarksburg-Robbinsville Road, Robbinsville
- Southern Regional Office, 220 New Brooklyn-Blue Anchor Road, Sicklerville
- Pequest Natural Resource Education Center, 605 Pequest Road, Oxford

Farmers also can call the NJDA at (609) 292-5532 for more information.

Posted on NJDA's webpage @ <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/news/deerfencingPR.htm>

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Rutgers Cooperative Extension of New Jersey, the Garden State!

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PMO websites @ <http://www.pestmanagement.rutgers.edu>; Farm Safety website @ <http://www.rce.rutgers.edu/farmsafety/>