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Beyond the Pantry: How SCC's Pop-Up Farm Stands are Cultivating Student Success & Community Connections

NJ Council of County Colleges
Opportunity Summit

June 6, 2025



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Student Success!

How can we holistically support our students and provide them a welcoming, safe, and supportive environment to SUCCEED?

Supporting Student Basic Needs Security @ SCC

- Caring Campus
- Hunger and Basic Needs Task Force
- Hunger Free Campus awarded FY24 & FY25
- Food and other basic needs Assistance offered
 - Oak Essentials Food Pantry
 - Vouchers and gift cards
 - Lockers / Pantry Soft
 - Food boxes
- Is there more we can do beyond the pantry??



The QUESTION?

*How can we bring fresh produce to
our students and expand and
promote our food access services?*

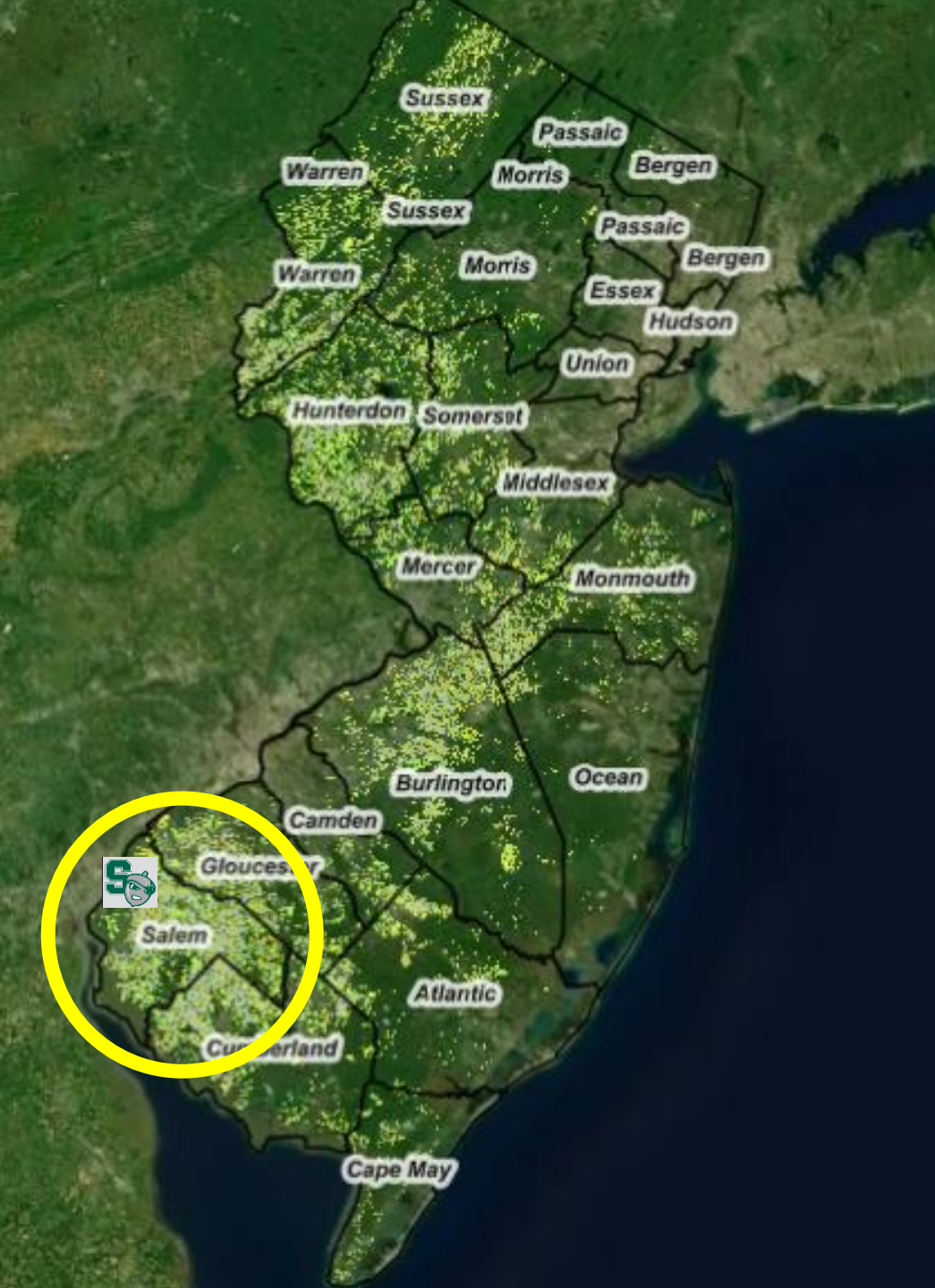


The IDEA...



The U.S. Department of Agriculture 2022 Census of Agriculture shows New Jersey's agricultural industry:

- Added 115 new farms, leaving the Garden State just short of the 10,000 farms mark at 9,998.
- Overall agriculture products sold increased from just over \$1.1 billion in 2017, to almost \$1.5 billion in 2022.
- New Jersey continues to be among the top produce producers in the U.S.
 - #3 - Eggplant
 - #4 - Cranberries
 - #4 - Asparagus
 - #5 - Blueberries
 - Other crops in the top 10 -- peaches, plums, bell peppers, spinach, bok choy, escarole, kale, and romaine lettuce among others



NJ land in agricultural use as of 2015

Data was derived from the NJ DEP 2015 Land Use/Land Cover data and includes cropland, pastureland, other fields, agricultural wetlands (Modified). It also included polygons of old field and plantation which are an important adjunct land use to be considered as agricultural land resources.

Reference: NJ MAP -- <https://www.nj-map.com/>

WE know

FARMERS...



"One of my goals as a small organic farmer is to help get local food to people who need it the most. I really enjoyed seeing the fresh locally grown produce going to students and to see them try things for the first time like organic garlic and kiwi berries! "

David Watts, Watts Organic Farm



Connection with Local Farmers

Our Farms

Scan the QR
code to learn
more about
each of our
participating
farms!



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Watts
Organic Farm



POP-UP

Farm

Stands!!

Farm Stand Team

- **Maura Cavanagh Dick**, *Associate Dean of Academic Affairs*
- **Maddie Elliott**, *Administrative Coordinator – Student Services*
- **Glenn Rinnier**, *Technology Support Clerk/Technician*
- **Gladys Hutchings**, *Library Technician*
- **Christina Hadry**, *Administrative Support – Faculty*
- **David Watts**, *Agriculture Faculty & Owner – Watts Organic Farm*



Making it

Happen!!

Farm Stand Logistics

- Ordering supplies
- Marketing
- Day of set up
- Making our students feel welcomed
- Farm Stand Team Meetings



Ordering Supplies

- Signage
- Baskets and Tablecloths
- Shelves
- Coolers
- Bags
- How can we help students make a meal with the produce being offered?



Marketing

- How do we get the word out?
- Social Media, Flyers, and On-Campus Digital Signage
- Day-of chalk board signs

SCC POP-UP FARM STAND!

WED, JUNE 26TH

1-4PM - Students - **FREE**

3-4PM - Campus community - **Pay what you can**

Klinke Green near Contini Hall

Presented by the Hunger & Basic Needs Task Force
Funded by the New Jersey Hunger-Free Campus Grant



Day of Set Up

- Setting up tables and signage
- Selecting pantry items to be featured
- Providing recipes
- Working with David on organizing the produce











Making our Students Feel Welcomed

- Signing in to the event
- Shopping Bags
- Raffle
- Donations
- Pantry and SNAP information with a smile





Experiential Learning!

Experiential Learning Opportunities

- Agriculture Students
- Hands-on learning
- Mentoring



First Year - Data and Outcomes

FARM STAND DATE	STUDENTS	STAFF	COMMUNITY	TOTAL	PRODUCE PURCHASED	PER PERSON AMOUNT
June	46	14	0	60	\$750.00	\$12.50
July	42	23	1	66	\$750.00	\$11.36
September	120	15	1	136	\$1,200.00	\$8.82
October	93	17	0	110	\$1,200.00	\$10.91
November	105	5	0	110	\$1,200.00	\$10.91
Totals	406	74	2	482	\$5,100.00	\$10.58



Oak Essentials Pantry - AY25 Visit Data

Visits	264
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Unique Students	66
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Avg Visits per student	4.00
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Fall 2024 = 92 visits vs. Spring 2025 = 172 Visits (87% increase)

"It's so hard to budget on healthy food when you're a student. It made me feel so supported that we had this access to real, fresh food!"



"The pop-up farm stands were awesome! I had to leave my full-time job to be able to focus on and finish up my glass degree, so this helped fill the gaps!!"



“As a roommate house, we were able to get all the delicious and healthy ingredients needed to make tacos together. The hamburger was amazing! They were so good that I took pictures of those tacos!”



" Last year the farm stands were very helpful. I actually frequently checked the SCC Facebook page to see when there would be one. It has helped feed my family on two different occasions. I'm a nontraditional student with two kids under two.

Please continue to do them. They really help those of us who really need it. Thank you all for putting this together for us. "



Future Plans & Sustainability

- Future of Hunger Free Campus grant
- Fundraising programs
 - *Strong Roots, Mighty Oaks* campaign
 - AACC collaboration
- Building a role to support basic needs on campus
- New events linking pantry and farm stands with co-curricular outcomes





LETTUCE see if anyone
has any questions...no
question is too CORNY!!!