



S U M M E R 2 0 2 0

Municipalities Certified: 204, Participating: 456 ♦ Schools Certified: 321, Participating: 969 ♦ Districts Participating: 352

SUSTAINABILITY IN ACTION: SIX SUCCESS STORIES

Sustainable Oakland Promotes Buy Fresh Buy Local (Bergen County)

Local farm and food businesses in New Jersey are responding in innovative ways to feed the community during this unprecedented pandemic. To support their effort, the [Sustainable Oakland Green Team](#) lost no time in developing and launching a successful Buy Fresh Buy Local promotion. In May 2020, a comprehensive list of farms, CSAs, farmers markets, local honey providers and local restaurants that buy local produce, was compiled. The initial [Oakland Borough Buy Fresh Buy Local list](#) included curbside pickup and delivery options for local farms to provide fresh produce to residents during the COVID-19 lockdown. The list met an urgent community need by offering fresh produce options during a time in which selections were limited at commercial grocery stores due to shortages and customer reluctance to shop in-store.

Alison Fleeson, co-chair of the Sustainable Oakland Green Team explained, "We promoted the list on social media and through partners sharing the link and flyer." She added, "Food resiliency means a community has farms growing food on the soil surrounding community members. If supply chains break, your neighboring farms are growing food nearby. But in order for community farms to survive, they can't be a last resort. We hope the promotion highlights our local resources and helps community members value and enjoy their locally grown food." Hungry? Take a look at the full list on the Oakland Borough Website at: www.oakland-nj.org/buy-fresh-buy-local. The program is also contributing to the Borough of Oakland's certification application as it fulfills the Sustainable Jersey action [Buy Fresh Buy Local Programs](#).



Lincoln Roosevelt Elementary School Creates Secret Garden (Morris County)

For years, students and staff at [Lincoln Roosevelt](#)

[Elementary School](#), looked into their school courtyard only to see a bare space filled with stones and a brick wall. With the help of a Sustainable Jersey for Schools grant,



funded by the New Jersey Education Foundation, the school is now creating a "secret garden" and outdoor classroom in this space. To build the garden structures, the school enlisted the help of students from the [Roxbury High School Structural Design and Fabrication](#) course. The high school students, many of them former Lincoln Roosevelt School students, were asked to design and build a boardwalk, furniture and planting boxes. Using [SketchUp Make](#), students designed the boardwalk and built a scale model. The boardwalk was built in pieces, labeled and reassembled onsite. The Structural Design and Fabrication class also designed an ADA accessible ramp and unique benches that fold and can be combined for use as a table. After the garden beds are built, they will be filled with a variety of plants. A vertical hydroponic growing garden is showcased in the indoor atrium overlooking the outdoor classroom. Once completed, the elementary classes will be able to go outside and enjoy fresh air while doing projects and labs in the space. The project builds on the wellness and sustainability initiatives the school is engaged in as it maintains its Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification. In the future the school can use this project to satisfy the Sustainable Jersey for Schools [Outdoor Classroom](#) action. Photo courtesy of Roxbury High School.



Newark Schools Coordinate 2020 Census Outreach (Essex County)

In support of the City of Newark's effort to ensure that everyone in every household is counted, the [Newark Board of Education](#) partnered with [2020 Census](#) and more than 100 community partners to promote the importance of completing the Census. The Newark Public Schools District, with 66 schools and a student population of over 37,000, is the largest school system in New Jersey. Statistics show that urban areas like Newark are historically undercounted in the Census. The extensive 2020 Census outreach conducted by the Newark Board of Education is intended to contribute to raising the Census participation levels. To prepare and plan the best practices to reach parents within the district, members of the district's parent engagement teams attended monthly training sessions on Census completion with Census Bureau staff. Each of the schools then served as individual hubs for 2020 Census outreach by using their [parent liaisons](#) to educate parents on the process. [Arts High School](#) hosted a 2020 Census [Kickoff Event](#) with a performance by their talented students. Workshops were held and school staff engaged parents in a culturally and linguistically sensitive manner; multilingual materials were distributed, including 36,000 flyers that were handed out at the Parent Teacher Conferences. Students learned about the importance of completing the census as part of their social studies and math classes. Eighth graders from [Luis Muñoz Marin Elementary School](#), designed the [Newark City Art 2020 Census logo](#) and took part in a celebration where Senator M. Teresa Ruiz, Mayor Baraka, Lt. Governor Shelia Oliver, Assemblywoman Mila Jasey and others participated. The logo includes the tag line: 2020 Census: Initiate, Participate, Educate, Liberate. The comprehensive 2020 Census outreach earned Newark schools points toward their Sustainable Jersey for Schools certifications. Photo courtesy of Newark Board of Education.



Bergen County Hub Launches Creative Bergen

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The Sustainable Bergen County Hub has been busy during the COVID-19 lockdown. Meeting weekly via Zoom, the group formed a new creative arts team called Creative Bergen. The green team members, artists, business leaders and community members are partnering to advance support for the arts. Creative Bergen's mission is to implement creative programs in conjunction with municipal governments; to develop strategies to improve the quality of life in Bergen County; and to support mutual sustainability goals. A creative team is in place and the compilation of the creative assets inventory is underway. A 2021 Arts Crawl event is in the planning phase and will be the public launch of this initiative. Creative Bergen finds that supporting the arts pays dividends by enhancing community vibrancy, richness, economics, cultural diversity and contributes to overall quality of life. The participating municipalities will also add points toward their Sustainable Jersey certification through completion of Sustainable Jersey's five Arts and Creative Culture actions: 1) [Establish a Creative Team](#); 2) [Creative Assets Inventory](#); 3) [Creative Placemaking Plan](#); 4) [Municipal Commitments to Support Arts and Creative Culture](#); and 5) [Utilizing Your Creative Assets](#). The Sustainable Bergen County Hub is one of ten Sustainable Jersey Regional Hubs.



New Jersey Makes Energy Efficiency Outreach Easier

Municipalities are a key partner in encouraging meaningful action in communities across New Jersey to make homes and businesses more energy efficient. To support municipalities, Sustainable Jersey worked with [New Jersey's Clean Energy Program™ \(NJCEP\)](#) to create a [Residential Energy Efficiency Outreach Toolkit](#) and a [Commercial Energy Efficiency Outreach Toolkit](#). These resources show residents and business professionals in the Garden State how they can participate in NJCEP's "[Home Performance with ENERGY STAR®](#)" residential program and its "[Direct Install](#)" commercial program. The toolkits include sample materials and templates for Residential Energy Efficiency Outreach ([municipal letter](#), [press release](#), [social media](#)) and Commercial Energy Efficiency Outreach ([municipal letter](#), [press release](#), [social media](#)). You can also find best practices for a [Residential Energy Efficiency Campaign](#) as well as a [Commercial Energy Efficiency Campaign](#). Need more help? Watch a replay of our webinar, [Community Energy Efficiency Outreach Made Easier with Sustainable Jersey Toolkits](#). A full list of Sustainable Jersey energy webinars is located [here](#). To request a consultation with Sustainable Jersey staff to use these materials to create an action plan for your municipality, email info@sustainablejersey.com.



Denville Township Organizes Eco-Seminars (Morris County)

The [The Denville Green Sustainability Committee](#) organized a successful lecture series called, "A Lifetime of Green." For this series, ten seminars on a variety of ecological topics were held in local schools, the Denville Library and Town Hall. Seminar topics included: recycling, sustainable gardening, solar power, plastic pollution, wildlife appreciation, rain gardens and sustainable



agriculture. For two of the seminars, the movie "Bag It" was screened and plastic pollution was discussed. The Sustainability Committee was happy with the attendance rate at all of the sessions; especially the "Bag It" screening at Valleyview Middle School, which resulted in a lively discussion with over 50 student attendees. For the other seminars, a speaker presented background information on the topic before the group discussion. Speakers included a representative of New Jersey's Clean Energy Program, the Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority and an educator from Wallaby Tales, Eyes of the Wild. Denville Township used a \$2,000 Sustainable Jersey grant, funded by the PSEG Foundation, to cover expenses. Denville has participated in the Sustainable Jersey program since 2010 and is currently certified at the silver level. Photo courtesy of Denville Green Sustainability Committee.

More Sustainability Stories

Take a moment to read about the people doing impressive work in their communities. Catch up on the monthly Sustainable Jersey blog for the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

June Hero: [Nancy Blackwood, Red Bank Environmental Commission](#) (Monmouth County)

July Hero: [Valerie Brown, Program Coordinator, Camden County Office of Sustainability and Member, Sustainable Voorhees](#) (Camden County)

August Hero: [Julie Crawford, STEM Coordinator/Enrichment Programs/Math Mount Arlington School](#) (Morris County)



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