

Farmland Advisors New Jersey

Cali Alexander, M.A., H.O.

Cali Alexander recently transitioned after completing a 35-year career in environmental science and law as a Public Health Administrator. As a licensed Health Officer & Director, Cali managed and delivered years of environmental public services and programs at the local level. Her experience includes extensive on-site soil evaluations, land use review and environmental law, as well as retail food inspection and regulation. She further served as an administrator for the New Jersey Department of Health licensing all aspects of the wholesale pharmaceutical industry, as well as administrator overseeing the licensing and operational compliance of the wholesale seafood and shellfish industry, fish farmers and aquaculturists while serving on national executive committees. In 2014, Cali received a Governor's appointment to the NJ Board of Pharmacy. On a multi-agency committee at the state, her work was instrumental on policy, outreach and education involving and establishing fish consumption advisories in urban estuaries, and environmental justice.



She is on the NOFA-NJ Board, active in policy issues and organic farming. In addition, Cali is a Agricultural Justice Project (AJP) Certified Inspector involved with food justice. Environmentally passionate and inspirational, she has been raising goats and gardening organically for 20 years.

Gillian Armstrong

Agricultural Resource Specialist, New Jersey State Agriculture Development Committee

Gillian Armstrong is an Agricultural Resource Specialist with New Jersey State Agriculture Development Committee, where she provides assistance to landowners and other agricultural constituents with Farmland Stewardship and Farm Viability projects. Gillian became passionate of the agriculture industry at a young age through her involvement on her family's farm in Burlington County, New Jersey. She holds a B.S. in Agriculture Science and Food Systems from Rutgers University with a special interest in agricultural development. Gillian is excited to be part of the Farmland Advisors: New Jersey team where she can continue to support the next generation of farmers in New Jersey.



Amanda Brockwell

Director of Programs and Outreach, Monmouth Conservation Foundation

Amanda Brockwell serves as the Director of Programs and Outreach for Monmouth Conservation Foundation (MCF) and is the owner of Brockwell Solutions Consulting. She currently manages land conservation and environmental programs to protect and preserve Monmouth County, New Jersey. Brockwell is the driving force behind Kids for Conservation, the Field to Farm Project, and the Nature Wellness initiative at MCF. She also administers the Monmouth County Open Space Grant Program through Brockwell Solutions Consulting. After preserving thousands of acres of land and working at a

Farm Link organization earlier in her career, she joined the team at MCF in 2015 to develop outreach, education and advocacy programs for the land trust. After growing up on a farm, she fell in love with nature at a young age and has been actively involved in environmental protection her entire life.

Kendrya Close

Executive Director, Foodshed Alliance

Kendrya’s passion for local food and activism for sustainable agriculture led her to her position as the Executive Director of the Foodshed Alliance, a non-profit organization working at the intersection of food, farming and the environment. Kendrya’s experience in the local food movement includes working to engage farmers in sustainable agriculture, educate the community with food issues and connecting what we eat to the land from which it comes.



Kendrya has a bachelor’s degree in environmental biology from Ohio University and her extensive work as a plant pathologist and urban forester for the Davey Tree Company are among her credentials.

The combination of sustainability issues and a basic love of eating well is what drives Kendrya’s current work for the Foodshed Alliance including projects such as developing a feasibility plan for a Food Hub in New Jersey, implementing a Regional Foodshed Resiliency Plan, creating and managing both winter and summer farmers’ markets, and overseeing programs that ensure access to local, fresh, healthy food by all people, regardless of means.

Katherine Coyle

Director, Morris County Agriculture Development Board

Katherine attended the University of Maine where she obtained a M.S. in Resource Utilization from the Department of Resource Economics and Policy. During her time at the University of Maine, Katherine worked as a research assistant for the University of Maine Cooperative Extension. Upon graduation, Katherine worked for the NJ State Agriculture Development Committee as a staff person in the Right to Farm Program. Since 1999, Katherine has been employed by Morris County, working as a staff person for the Morris County Agriculture Development Board.

Gabi Grunstein

Gabi has spent the bulk of his professional career assisting farmers and the agriculture community in New Jersey. From 2001 – 2007 Gabi served as the Environmental and Water Policy Specialist for the New Jersey Farm Bureau helping farmers individually and collectively navigate environmental policy and regulations. He served as a liaison between the farm community and various state and federal agencies as well as environmental groups on issues concerning watershed management, water quality, non-point source pollution and conservation. Gabi continued his work with New Jersey agriculture when he started with the USDA Farm Service Agency where he currently serves as the County Executive Director for Monmouth, Mercer and Middlesex Counties. In this capacity, Gabi assures the effective and efficient delivery of USDA programs to assist farmers with natural disasters,



commodity and price support, conservation practices and loans. Additionally Gabi serves as the New Jersey Communication Coordinator for Farm Service Agency where he directs efforts in disseminating program information. Gabi has been a licensed real estate agent in New Jersey for the last 13 years as well.

Adrian Hyde

Executive Director, NOFA-NJ

Adrian Hyde is the Executive Director of the Northeast Organic Farming Association – New Jersey. He also owns and manages Dunwald Farm, a Certified Organic vegetable farm in Hopewell, NJ. Adrian received his undergraduate degree from the University of Virginia and his graduate degree from Harvard University. Prior to residing in New Jersey, Adrian held a New York real estate license. He is an experienced real estate investor and a former real estate fund manager.



Tara Kenyon, AICP/PP

Principal - Kenyon Planning, LLC

Tara Kenyon is a licensed Professional Planner in the State of New Jersey and accredited by the American Institute of Certified Planners. She has spent the bulk of her career assisting farmers with farmland preservation, Right-to-Farm matters, and agricultural stewardship. In addition to her work with the agricultural community, Tara has extensive experience with land use and zoning issues, natural resource conservation and sustainability planning. Tara is a certified Agricultural Mediator with the State Agriculture Development Committee and was recently recognized as a Distinguished Alumni of the Environmental Planning Department at Rutgers University. She resides in Manville, New Jersey with her husband and two children. Her firm, Kenyon Planning, LLC, also located in Manville, New Jersey, offers a wide array of Professional Planning services to the public and private sectors.



David Kimmel

Agricultural Resource Specialist, New Jersey State Agriculture Development Committee

David Kimmel has been an Agricultural Resource Specialist with the NJ State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) for fifteen years. In addition to helping support the SADC’s Farmland Preservation, Right to Farm, and Agricultural Mediation Programs, he has helped develop the SADC’s Farm Link Program. This has included developing land access resources, such as the NJ Farmland Leasing Guidebook and NJ Land Link website, and efforts to support beginning farmers and farm viability. He regularly responds to inquiries from farmers and landowners to provide information and resource referral on getting started in farming, access to land and farmland opportunities, finding farmers, and other topics.



Melanie Mason

Land Steward, New Jersey Conservation Foundation

Melanie joined NJ Conservation Foundation as a Land Steward in 2018. She is responsible for management and development of NJCF’s preserves in the northern region of the state. Her background includes stewardship and monitoring of NJ’s natural resources for New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife and Morris County Park Commission. Most recently she administered the Farmland Preservation Program and County Agriculture Development Board for Hunterdon County. She holds a B.S. in Ecology and Natural Resources from Rutgers University and a certificate in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) from Penn State.

Jennifer Matthews

Program Associate I, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Cumberland and Cape May County

Jennifer Matthews has been with Rutgers Cooperative Extension since 2008 and a part of the Rutgers On-Farm Food Safety Team since 2017. She has been involved in grant funded programs to educate women and beginning farmers across the state, including the Ultra-Niche Crops Project and Annie’s Project. She is trained to do On-Farm Readiness Reviews as well as deliver the FDA approved Produce Safety Curriculum. Jennifer was Director of the New Jersey Agricultural Leadership Development Program before becoming a Program Associate at Rutgers Cooperative Extension in 2017 and owns and operates an organic farm in southern New Jersey.



Meredith Melendez

Agricultural Agent, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Mercer County

Meredith Melendez is the agricultural agent for Rutgers Cooperative Extension in Mercer County, NJ. She offers outreach and education to growers in Mercer County focusing primarily on diversified small farms. Meredith offers outreach to farms statewide on produce safety including preparation for third party audits, Good Agricultural Practices and compliance with the FSMA Produce Safety Rule.



Rebecca Szkotak

Program Associate II, Agriculture, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Camden County

Becki Manages the Rutgers Master Gardener Program of Camden County including volunteer recruitment, training, and recognition. Coordinates Rutgers Master Gardener Program class syllabus, teaches and arranges guest lectures and supervises related operational activities. Prepares internal and external communication and educational efforts with Rutgers Master Gardener Program and participants and the general public. Coordinates Rutgers Master Gardener Volunteer activities and community outreach.



Coordinates educational, demonstrational and outreach efforts in concert with County personnel on horticulture and ornamental plant production via utilization of Camden County’s Lakeland Greenhouse

Facility. Develops education programs and outreach efforts for local community volunteers. Provides training on greenhouse management, propagation, pest management, and related topics, using hands on plant production as an educational method. Instituted Volunteer Management Software Program for all volunteers to log hours and sign up for activities themselves.

Responds to consumer and commercial horticultural questions individually and through lectures/presentations to community groups, horticulture business sector, and related clientele. Provide information and educational support to County Parks and related divisions as necessary.

Laura Tessieri

Executive Director, North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development Council

Laura Tessieri is Associate Director of the North Jersey Resource Conservation & Development Council (RC&D) with over 10 years of experience in conservation and watershed management. The North Jersey RC&D supports programs in areas of agricultural sustainability, water resource protection, and community development. Laura works with farmers to improve their on-the-farm stewardship practices and helps implement recommended agricultural best management practices. The North Jersey RC&D holds farmer trainings, assists with conservation practices, and promotes the adoption of soil health practices. Prior to RC&D, Laura worked with the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) as a Water Resource Engineer. Her career also includes time spent in consulting firms advising on stormwater management, site design, and municipal engineering. Laura is a licensed professional engineer and holds a dual B.S. in Bioresource Engineering from Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey.



Ed Wengryn

Research Associate, New Jersey Farm Bureau

Ed joined New Jersey Farm Bureau as a Field Representative/Research Associate in 1998. His main areas of responsibility are State legislative initiatives, outreach, education, and policy development with Farm Bureau members in the northern counties of the state with emphasis on direct marketing, ornamental horticulture, land use, sales tax, livestock and equine issues.



Ed is a resident of Trenton New Jersey residing in the Mill Hill Historic district where he maintains an 1860 brick Victorian home, a yard and garden and keeps bees. He is a 1986 graduate of Delaware Valley Collage (University) in Doylestown PA with a B.S. in Ornamental Horticulture