

## NJDA Hosts Annual BBQ at Demarest Farm

### EPC/Nolan Family Foundation Scholarship Awarded

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture hosted the Eastern Produce Council's Annual BBQ at Demarest Farm in Hillsdale, NJ, on Tuesday, May 23rd. Now entering its 39th year, "Jersey Fresh" is still considered one of the most successful programs of its kind in the nation. One of the most popular and well attended meetings every year, there was a great turnout of EPC members, NJDA staff, and New Jersey farmers, growers, and shippers in attendance.

EPC President, Marianne Santo, of Wakefern Food Corporation kicked off the presentations by introducing Secretary of Agriculture, Doug Fisher, who thanked the EPC for the association he's had with them over the last 14 years at his post. Doug will be retiring on July 1st, after 14 years leading the NJDA.

Doug then turned the presentation over to Joel Verick, President of the Vegetable Growers Association of New Jersey and Tom Beaver, who represented the NJ Blueberry and Peach Councils to update the crowd on the state of the NJ crops.

Following the Crop updates, Santo, on behalf of the Nolan Family Foundation and Theresa Nolan, announced the winner of this year's \$5,000 EPC/Nolan Family Foundation Scholarship, Maren Burns, daughter of EPC member Brendan Burns of Bolthouse Farms.

This marks the 9th year the EPC offered the scholarship together with Theresa and her Family Foundation and what makes this scholarship unique is that it is based solely on the essay that applicants write about an ethical situation they were faced with and how they responded. All essays are reviewed by the Nolan Family Foundation, not the Eastern Produce Council.

After dinner, NJDA's Joe Atchison and Secretary Fisher led a Trivia Game for prizes followed by a congratulatory cake for Secretary Fisher. Santo and Susan McLeavey Sarlund, EPC's Executive Director thanked and toasted Doug for his accomplishments as our Secretary of Agriculture and supporter of our industry and the Eastern Produce Council and wished him the best in his future.

The EPC will host its 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing on Tuesday, June 13<sup>th</sup> at Fox Hollow Golf Club in Branchburg, NJ. For more information, visit their website, [easternproduceCouncil.com](http://easternproduceCouncil.com).