



PRESS RELEASE – *For Immediate Release* – July 18, 2017

Ocean County Soil Conservation District and Partners Awarded Grant Funding to Support Urban Agriculture Conservation Initiative in Lakewood Township

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Ocean County Soil Conservation District (OCSCD) is pleased to announce an award of \$50K in grant funding from National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) and USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). These funds will support our "Urban Agriculture Conservation Initiative", a project developed in partnership with Georgian Court University, Lakewood Township, Brick Township Municipal Utilities Authority, Barnegat Bay Partnership, and New Jersey Agricultural Society. An Urban Agricultural Advisory Committee consisting of all partners, as well as Fulfill (previously Monmouth-Ocean Food Bank), Lakewood High School, and New Jersey Farm Bureau, has been established. The Committee will utilize the knowledge and skills of partners in their areas of expertise to provide strategic advice and planning towards accomplishment of our goals:

- assist in establishing a *Sustainable Jersey Green Team*
- enhance existing urban agricultural programs
- support the implementation of new community gardens
- facilitate educational workshops on best landscape management practices and sustainable urban food gardening
- coordinate community food harvesting and distribution

Outcomes of this project include building capacity in Lakewood Township in an effort to encourage civic engagement and education that is necessary to prosper as a leader in providing healthy food and clean water for the community. By engaging residents in meaningful practices, participating partners will be building the foundation for a sustainable urban agriculture program in Lakewood Township that will benefit the community for many years to come.

For more information about this project, please contact Becky Laboy, OCSCD Education Outreach Specialist, 609-971-7002 ext. 114, Education@soildistrict.org Connect with the many resources on healthy soil found at the Ocean County Soil Conservation District website: www.soildistrict.org.

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