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Contacts: Peter Woolley 973.443.8725; Rich Higginson 908.213.1971
Peter Furey 609.393.7163

Putting the Garden in the Garden State

Better than four in five (85%) New Jersey voters say they would like to see more Jersey Fresh fruits and vegetables served with public school meals, even if it costs slightly more. According to a recent Fairleigh Dickinson University PublicMind poll sponsored by the New Jersey Farm Bureau, support is strong across all demographics, and in fact in no category is it less than 80%. "Our support here in New Jersey for locally grown produce coincides with the national attention Michele Obama has given to improving the diets of school children," said New Jersey Farm Bureau Executive Director Peter Furey.

Moreover, nearly three in four of those surveyed (73%) have "a lot" of confidence in the safety of the Garden State's locally grown produce. This echoes previous polling data taken since 2006. More than four in five (83%) say they or their family members have purchased Jersey Fresh fruits and vegetables from a farm stand or farmers market over the past several months. "New Jerseyans' confidence in locally-grown food and their concern with safety is reflected in the U.S. Congress's current attempt to make a sweeping overhaul of food safety laws which would, if passed, provide for some inspection of foreign food facilities," added Furey.

Three of five voters (60%) correctly identify the meaning of the state's nickname — *the Garden State* — which was meant to reflect the state's farming interests, though results vary somewhat across groups: nearly two-thirds (65%) of those over the age of 60 know about the Garden State moniker, compared to just 45% of voters under age 30. In the more rural southern and western portions of the state, 71% and 73% of voters respectively correctly associate the Garden State nickname with farming, compared to only 43% of respondents in the urban core of the state, 55% in the northeast counties, and 61% in the central part of the state. "Conveying this message to people inside and outside of the state is part of our mission at the New Jersey Farm Bureau," said Furey.

On an emerging environmental issue, only one in four of those polled (26%) who apply fertilizer to their lawns test the soil to ensure that the fertilizer they use matches the need of the soil. According to Furey, "There is growing interest in this topic. Fertilizers are expensive. Farmers use them judiciously and homeowners are encouraged to do the same."

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll was sponsored by the New Jersey Farm Bureau and conducted by telephone from Nov. 15 through Nov. 22 using a randomly selected sample of 608 registered voters statewide. The margin of error for a sample of 608 is +/- 4 percentage points at the 95 percent level of confidence.

Tables, questions, and methodology always available on the web at: <http://publicmind.fdu.edu>
For more information, please call 201. 692.7032.

Methodology and Tables

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll was sponsored by the New Jersey Farm Bureau and was conducted by landline telephones from Nov. 15 through Nov. 22 using a randomly selected sample of 608 registered voters statewide. The margin of error for 608 randomly selected respondents is +/- 4 percentage points at the 95 percent level of confidence. Survey results are also subject to non-sampling error. This kind of error, which cannot be measured, arises from a number of factors including, but not limited to, non-response (eligible individuals refusing to be interviewed), question wording, the order in which questions are asked, and variations among interviewers. All PublicMind interviews are conducted by Opinion America, Inc. of Cedar Knolls, NJ. Professionally trained interviewers use a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system. Random selection is achieved through computerized random-digit dialing. This technique gives every person with a phone number (including those with unlisted numbers) an equal chance of being selected. The questions included in this release are as follows:

Even if it costs slightly more, would you like to see more locally grown Jersey Fresh produce served in public school meals?

Responses	Total	Age				Gender	
		18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Male	Female
Yes	85%	97	86	83	87	82	88
No	8%	0	8	9	8	11	5
Don't Know	7%	3	6	7	5	7	6

Responses	Northeast	Urban Core	Northwest	Central	South
Yes	89	85	83	84	85
No	5	9	4	10	9
Don't Know	6	6	12	6	6

Northwest: Sussex, Hunterdon, Warren, Morris and Somerset Counties

Northeast: Passaic and Bergen Counties

Urban Core: Hudson, Essex and Union Counties

Central: Ocean, Burlington, Mercer, Monmouth and Middlesex Counties

South: Cape May, Atlantic, Cumberland, Gloucester, Camden and Salem Counties

And what about safety... How much confidence do you have in the safety of locally-grown Jersey Fresh produce...?

						Age				Gender	
Responses	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Male	Female
A lot	73%	72	72	67	69	69	70	76	74	80	66
Some	20%	20	18	23	20	22	24	19	17	15	25
Just a little	4%	5	4	6	5	8	2	2	6	2	6
None at all	1%	1	3	1	2	0	3	1	0	1	2
Don't Know	2%	2	2	3	5	0	1	2	3	1	2

Responses	Northeast	Urban Core	Northwest	Central	South
A lot	72%	64	76	78	73
Some	23%	24	19	16	21
Just a little	3%	6	0	4	4
None at all	2%	2	2	1	1
Don't Know	1%	5	3	1	0

In the past three months have you or anyone in your family purchased any Jersey Fresh or locally grown fruits or vegetables at a farm stand or farmers market?

Responses	Total	Age				Gender	
		18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Male	Female
Yes	83%	89	86	86	76	85	81
No	16%	11	11	13	23	14	17
Don't Know	1%	0	2	1	2	1	2

Responses	Northeast	Urban Core	Northwest	Central	South
Yes	82%	76	91	80	89
No	16%	22	8	19	10
Don't Know	2%	2	1	1	0

By the way, to the best of your knowledge, why is New Jersey called the Garden State?

Responses	All	Age				Gender	
		18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Male	Female
Farming/produce/vegetables	60%	45	54	63	65	64	56
Gardening/flowers	11%	17	9	11	10	6	16
Other	9%	8	7	9	10	10	8
Don't Know	20%	30	30	16	14	21	20

Responses	Northeast	Urban Core	Northwest	Central	South
Farming/produce/vegetables	55%	43	73	61	71
Gardening/flowers	11%	15	12	9	8
Other	12%	7	5	12	6
Don't Know	22%	35	10	17	15

[If household has a lawn and they have used fertilizer...] Thinking of the last time you or a family member applied the fertilizer to your lawn, did you test the soil first to make sure the fertilizer matched the needs of the soil, or did you not have the chance?

N=275	Total	Age				Gender	
		18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Male	Female
Yes	26%	36	23	23	29	26	25
No	65%	24	66	69	61	73	56
Don't Know	10%	40	11	8	10	2	19

	Northeast	Urban Core	Northwest	Central	South
Yes	30%	10	24	25	36
No	45%	80	66	68	62
Don't Know	25%	11	10	7	1

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Results are also available on the web at: <http://publicmind.fdu.edu>

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Exact Question Wording and Order

NJFB1. By the way, to the best of your knowledge, why is New Jersey called the Garden State?

[OPEN-ENDED, PRE-CODED]

Farming/produce/vegetables

Gardening/flowers

Other

Don't Know [DON'T READ]

NJFB2. How much confidence do you have in the safety of locally-grown, Jersey Fresh produce?

A lot

Some

Just a little

No confidence at all

Don't Know [DON'T READ]

NJFB3. How important is it to you to buy locally grown fruits and vegetables when they are in season READ?

Very Important

Somewhat Important

Not Very Important

Not Important at All

NJFB4. In the past three months, have you or someone in your family purchased any Jersey Fresh or locally grown fruits and vegetables at a farm stand or farmers market?

Yes

No

Don't Know [DON'T READ]

NJFB5. When in the grocery store, how much do brochures and signs about locally grown fruits and vegetables impact your decision to buy them?

A lot

Some

Just a little

Don't Know [DON'T READ]

NJFB6. Even if it costs slightly more, would you like to see more locally grown, Jersey Fresh produce served in public school meals?

Yes

No

Don't Know [DON'T READ]

NJFB7. In the past five years, have you or a family member applied fertilizer to your lawn?

Yes

No (Skip NJFB8)

Don't have a lawn/NA (Skip NJFB8)

Don't Know [DON'T READ] (Skip NJFB8)

NJFB8. Thinking of the last time you or a family member applied the fertilizer to your lawn, did you test the soil first to make sure the fertilizer matched the needs of the soil, or did you not have the chance?

Yes

No

Don't Know [DON'T READ]