



Email Update

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ADFP Trust Fund Awarded \$2 Million in Recurring State Funds!

The ADFP Trust Fund staff is pleased to announce that the ADFP Trust Fund was awarded \$2 million in recurring funds in the state appropriations budget. The Trust Fund staff would like to thank all of you who contacted your respective state senators and representatives. This was a huge success, especially considering the large state budget deficit. Your encouragement and support of the ADFP Trust Fund program is much appreciated.

ADFP Trust Fund News: 2010-2011 Grant Cycle III Update

For the 2010-2011 grant cycle, the ADFP Trust Fund received 45 applications, requesting a total of over \$7 million in grant funds. After carefully reviewing all applications, a total of 21 applicants have been chosen for funding. The selected projects consist of 9 agricultural plans and development projects and 13 easements that are distributed throughout the state. They are as follows:

Agricultural Plans and Development Projects:

- Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project, Marketing Opportunities for Farmers: \$7,500
- Catawba County, VAD Program: \$6,000
- Franklin County Cooperative Extension, Feasibility Study: Slaughter Facility and Value-Added Center, Marketing Plan: \$25,000

Agricultural Plans and Development Projects (continued):

- Natural Capital Investment Fund, Grain Storage Expansion Project: \$65,000
- NC's Eastern Region, 4-county Farmland Protection Plan: \$100,000
- Piedmont Land Conservancy, Surry County Farmland Protection Plan: \$25,000
- Randolph County Cooperative Extension, Randolph County Farmland Protection Plan: \$25,000
- Swain County SWCD, Outreach and education to develop a Farmland Protection Plan: \$2,500
- WNC Communities, Livestock Facility: \$74,000

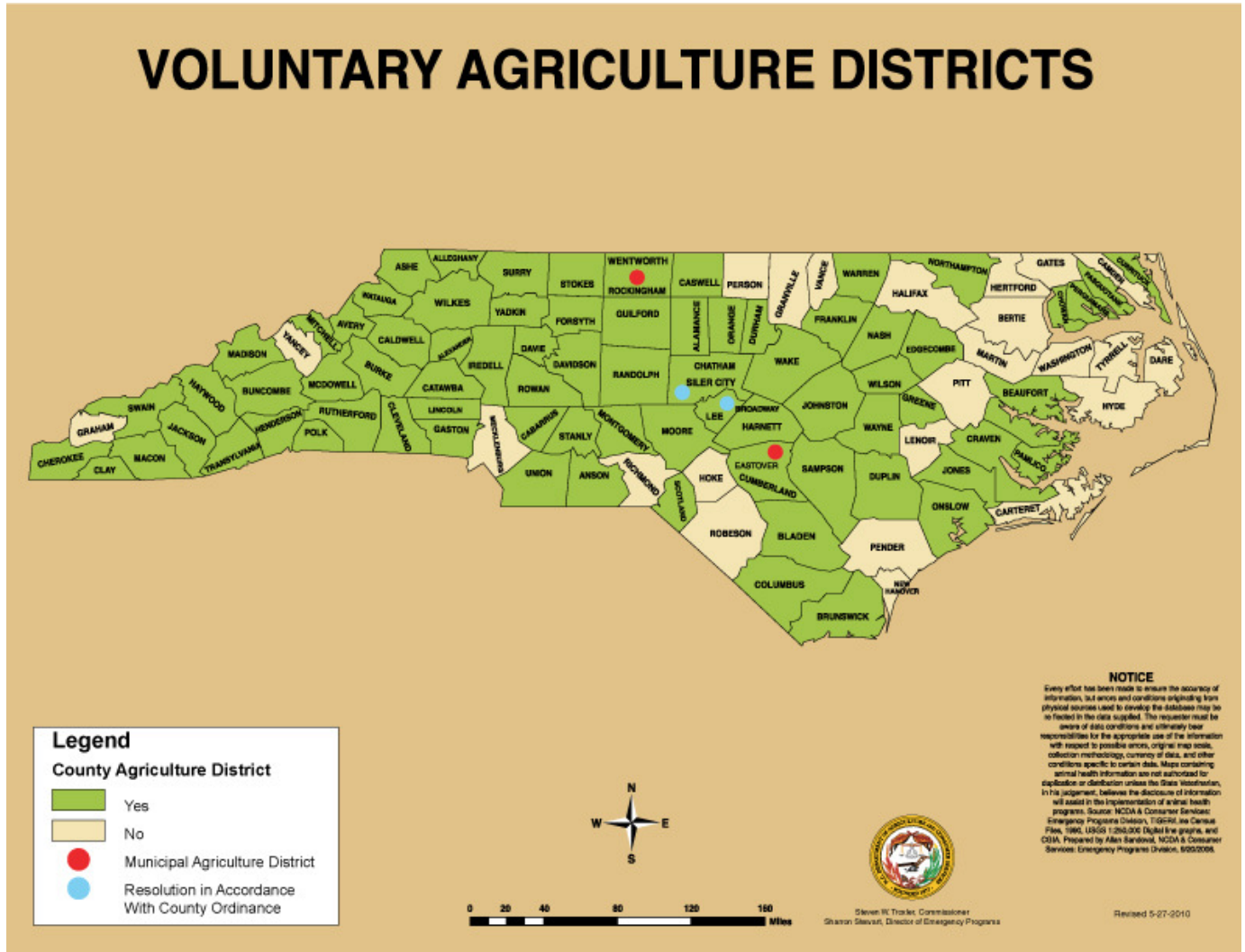
Easements:

- Black Family Land Trust, The Thompson Farm: \$50,000
- Catawba Lands Conservancy, The Howey Farm: \$286,860
- Foothills Conservancy, The Jones Farm: \$170,000
- The Land Trust for Central NC, Inc., The Stokes Farm: \$175,000
- NC Coastal Land Trust, The Guthrie Farm: \$270,000
- North American Land Trust , The Jumping Run Farm: \$10,000
- North American Land Trust, The Jumping Run Farm: \$182,600
- Orange County, The Breeze Farm: \$150,000
- Piedmont Land Conservancy, The Iseley Farm: \$300,000
- Sandhills Area Land Trust, The Gainey Farm: \$159,940
- Southwestern NC RC&DC, Inc., The Henson Farm: \$69,000
- Southwestern NC RC&DC, Inc., The Robinson Farm: \$55,000
- Triangle Land Conservancy, The Cohen Farm: \$165,000

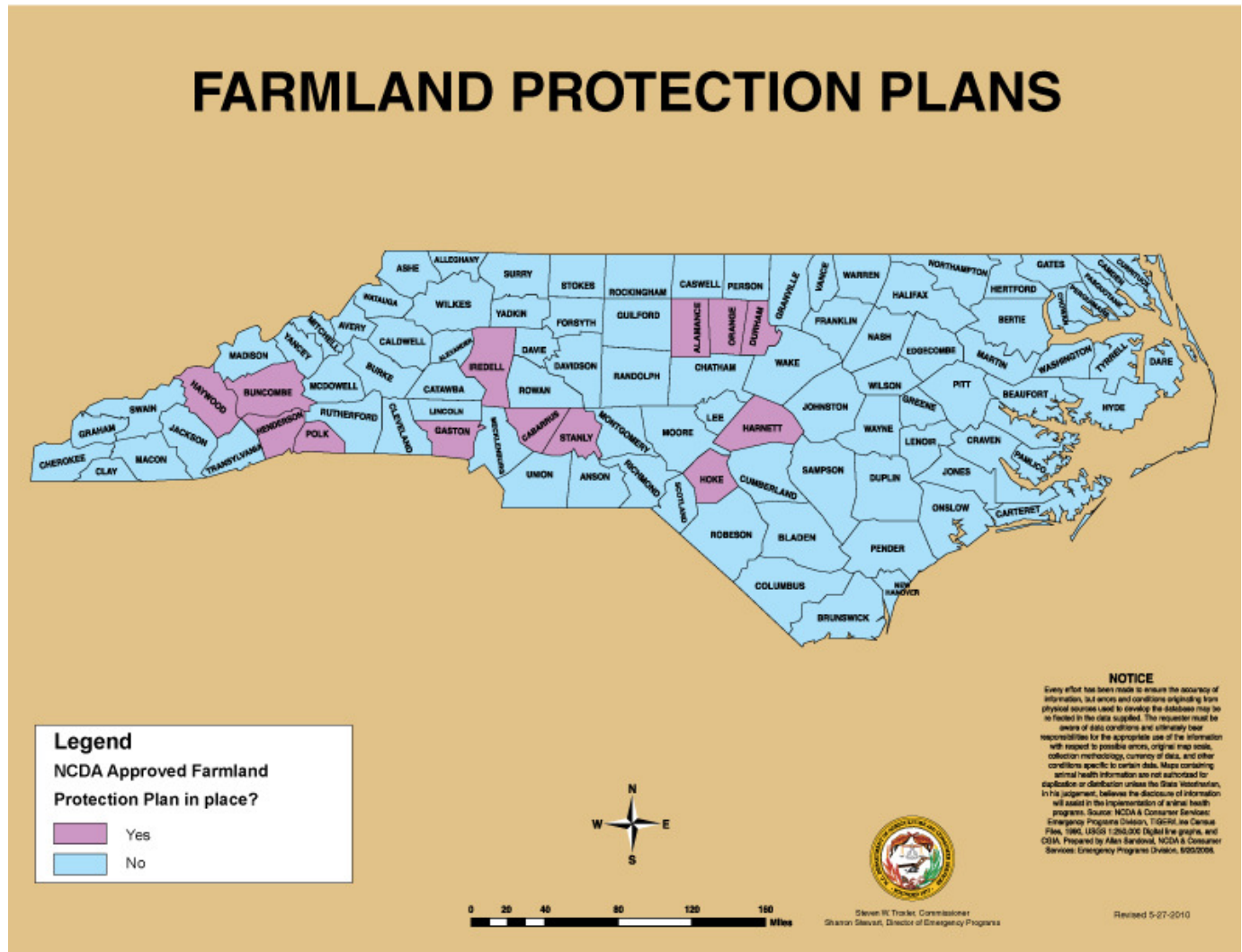
These grants were made possible by a \$2 million appropriation from the General Assembly. The trust fund was able to award an additional \$330,000 this year because of unspent grant funds from previous years.

Voluntary Agricultural District News

The VAD Program in North Carolina is making great strides towards increasing agricultural awareness and planning in all 100 counties across the State. Currently 76 counties have either a voluntary agricultural district ordinance and/or an enhanced voluntary agricultural district ordinance in place. Most recently, Montgomery and Pasquotank passed their VAD Ordinances, leaving only 24 counties left!



The NCDA has also recently approved farmland protection plans for Stanly and Harnett counties, bringing the total number from 11 to 13 in the State.



Agricultural News

Charlotte Observer

Farmers markets sprout at mall, suburban sites

Farmers markets in the south Charlotte suburbs are spreading as the idea of buying and eating local foods grows in popularity.

In Monroe, a mall parking lot will soon have its own fresh produce farmers market. Monroe Crossing mall at U.S. 74 is teaming with the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service to launch the mall's first farmers market, open Saturdays 8a.m. to noon from May to late September. Organizers are recruiting farmers, craft vendors, and local bands for live music.

"It's another opportunity to give the community another place to meet, purchase local foods, and support the local economy," said Sarah Enten, marketing director of the mall.

Other area markets launched last year are reopening.

The Meeting Street Market at Cedar Walk in south Charlotte opens Tuesday evenings starting May 4.

The Saturday produce market at Ballantyne Hotel and Lodge, featuring farmers from Rutherford County, opens June 26.

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/2010/04/05/1356885/farmers-markets-sprout-at-mall.html>

Asheville Citizen Times

Ranchers see need for processor

Farmer George Lenze owns a cattle ranch in Pisgah Forest. Up until last year, he ran a cow/calf operation, where the farm raises calves and sells the young animals to feedlots in the fall. Because of the increased demand for locally grown meat, Lenze changed his business model. He decided to sell his meat locally at restaurants and directly to consumers. As the local food movement has grown in Western North Carolina, more livestock producers like Lenze are selling their products locally. They sell cuts of beef, sausage and jerky. The problem, however, is that the mountains do not have the infrastructure to support locally grown meat. No facility exists locally to slaughter and process it. "It's a two-and-a-half-hour drive (to slaughter)," said Lenze, who owns Everett Farms. "That is time and the cost of fuel." Lenze and many other small livestock producers in Western North Carolina travel to Mays Meat Food Service in Taylorsville, just north of Hickory. The facility is USDA approved and processes beef, pork and lamb from throughout the region. ...

<http://www.blueridgenow.com/article/20100404/SERVICES03/4031034/1170?Title=Ranchers-see-need-for-processor>

Fayetteville Observer

Find local produce at farmers market

Looking for fresh produce and handmade crafts?

The Fayetteville Farmers Market kicks off its fourth season Saturday with lots of seasonal fruits, vegetables, flowers, jams, homemade soaps and more.

The market will be open twice a week. On Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., head to the parking lot of the Cumberland County Courthouse off Gillespie Street. On Wednesdays, the market will be set up in the Festival Park overflow parking lot on Maiden Lane behind the AIT building. ...

<http://www.fayobserver.com/Articles/2010/04/04/987087>

Burlington Times-News

State to grow more cotton, peanuts; county plants corn, soybeans

State farming trends won't apply to Alamance County farms in 2010, says the director of Alamance County's N.C. Cooperative Extension office. The N.C. Department of Agriculture expects sharp increases in cotton, peanuts and sweet potato harvests this year and a drop in wheat, soybean and tobacco production, according to a press release. Cotton acreage is up by 540,000 acres this year, a 44-percent jump from last year. State farmers will grow 80,000 more acres of peanuts this year, a 19-percent increase, and 50,000 more acres of sweet potatoes, a 6-percent increase. But farmers in Alamance County will grow more corn and soybeans this summer than usual to make up for a miserable wheat crop this winter, Roger Cobb, the extension office director, said this week. That bucks a state trend, showing soybean growth down 8 percent, to 1.65 million acres. Cotton and peanuts aren't grown in Alamance County, Cobb said, and only a few farms grow sweet potatoes. ...

<http://www.thetimesnews.com/news/state-32797-won-peanuts.html>

Sustainable Grub Blog

McReynolds: 'Food Safety' bill could kill sustainable farming

Congress is debating legislation that would give the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) wide-ranging new authority over farming practices and food production. In its current form, the bill's requirements would be impossible for many small-scale farmers and food processors to fulfill. In other words, small farms committed to producing healthy food are the ones that could be driven out of business by initiatives designed to ensure food "safety." The House has already passed a bill, HR 2749, and in April the Senate will take up its version, S 510, which is co-sponsored by NC Sen. Richard Burr. With or without a new law, FDA is moving forward with rules on produce safety on the farm, and already has authority to require food producers to register with the federal government. Unfortunately, the FDA's initiatives treat small farms, organic agriculture and local food businesses as if they are giant corporate food processing companies, an approach that will crush the community food movement that so many of us hold dear. ...

<http://sustainablegrub.wordpress.com/2010/03/31/food-safety-bill-could-kill-sustainable-farming/>

Winston-Salem Journal

Land trusts plan to use money to save lands

Ten land trusts collaborating as the Blue Ridge Forever coalition hope to increase their ability to permanently protect western North Carolina's agricultural lands this year through a \$25,000 grant from the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area.

"Maintaining western North Carolina's base of productive agricultural land and the scenic integrity of our agricultural landscapes is a key goal of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area's 10-year management plan, and we believe that the Blue Ridge Forever land-trust coalition is uniquely positioned to help accomplish that," said Angie Chandler, the executive director of the Heritage Area. ...

<http://www2.journalnow.com/content/2010/apr/07/land-trusts-plan-to-use-money-to-save-lands/news-ncpolitics/>

Durham Herald-Sun

Teachers and others in Chatham County interested in helping youth and adults understand the relationship between people, agriculture, food and our environment are invited to a "Food, Land & People" workshop hosted by Area 3 Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The program is designed for teachers, parents, Scout leaders and other youth program leaders.

The workshop runs from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 a.m. July 20-22 and will be held at the Western Senior Center in Siler City. Registrants must pay \$35 per person as an advance deposit that will be refunded after attending the workshop.

Qualified attendees will receive continuing education credits for teachers as well as credits toward their North Carolina Environmental Education Certification.

During the workshop, attendees will receive a notebook that includes fun and educational activities for young people. They also will be involved in hands-on activities during the event that can be used to teach young people or adults about how we are connected with food production and our environment.

To register for the workshop, contact Brenda Williams by e-mail at brenda.williams@chathamnc.org or call her at 542-8240. A registration form also is available on the Chatham County website at: www.chathamnc.org/Index.aspx?page=131.

http://www.heraldsun.com/view/full_story/8453154/article-Food--land-program-offered?instance=main_articleFood, land program offered

WRAL

Fifth-generation family farm protected by land trust

A fifth-generation Sampson County farm that provides vegetables and flowers for retailers has been protected from residential or industrial development.

The Coastal Land Trust is providing the protection for the Jackson Family Farm, east of Godwin and north of Fayetteville.

<http://www.wral.com/news/state/story/7900918/>

Richmond County Daily Journal

Move on to protect farmers, educate public

Richmond County is moving forward with a plan to show its support for agriculture and agribusiness through the creation of voluntary agricultural districts.

http://www.yourdailyjournal.com/view/full_story_home/8551619/article-Move-on-to-protect-farmers--educate-public?instance=homesecondary_news_left_column

Winston-Salem Journal

Pilot Mountain Pride helping smaller farmers process their produce as well as finding buyers

A new company in Pilot Mountain is helping small and mid-size farms by providing a market for their local produce.

Pilot Mountain Pride is set up as an LLC (limited liability company) owned by the nonprofit Surry County Economic Development Foundation. ...

<http://www2.journalnow.com/content/2010/jul/07/pilot-mountain-pride-helping-smaller-farmers-proce/>

WNCT

A local crop sweetens eastern Carolina's economy

It looks like honeydew and has the texture of a pear. It's called sprite melon and

95% of them in the U.S. are grown here in Eastern North Carolina.

<http://www2.wnct.com/news/2010/jul/06/5/local-crop-sweetens-eastern-carolinas-economy-ar-271297/>

News & Observer

A farm for good

In the rolling-hill country between Pittsboro and Siler City, Bill Dow's farm has fresh crops of cucumbers, peppers, basil, parsley and blueberries just coming in. Just up the rocky road leading into his place, there's another farm where a fresh crop is coming in: houses. From Orange County to the north and from Wake County to the east, the development pressure is on in Chatham. Not at Bill Dow's place, though. His was North Carolina's first farm to be certified organic. He was Chatham County's first farmer to make a business of selling directly to restaurants. Now he's the Triangle's first small organic farmer to put land under a conservation easement in perpetuity. "That's going to have a real big impact," in keeping agriculture alive in Chatham County, said extension agent Debbie Roos. "I don't know, it just seemed like the right thing to do," Dow said. Dow, a retired physician, owns 30 acres, a couple of miles from U.S. 64 with woods enclosing the three acres he cultivates spring, summer and fall. "It's all I can do, with good help," he said. The amount of help varies depending on what needs doing, he said. One recent afternoon Dow had five pairs of helping hands at work - one hoeing weeds, two tying squash vines and two setting posts for cucumber trellises. The numbers vary depending on what's to be done, he said. ...

<http://www.newsobserver.com/2010/07/04/564672/a-farm-for-good.html#ixzz0suF4e0bp>

Hendersonville Times News

Farmer's market: Safety tips for food

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, more than 76 million cases of food-borne illness occur each year in the U.S. In light of recent food-borne illness outbreaks involving sprouts and lettuce, many consumers are turning to local farmer's markets to purchase their groceries. While local growers do their best to minimize risk of their products, consumers have a responsibility to help maintain the integrity of those products. Here are a few tips for handling the great local products that you purchase from the many wonderful farmer's markets in our area. (These tips are also important at the grocery store.) Clean

Wash your hands before handling produce. If you handle potted plants and get soil on

your hands, don't handle the fresh tomatoes at the next vendor's table without washing your hands first.

Always wash produce. Wash fresh produce thoroughly before you use it, not right when you bring it home. Fresh produce has a natural protective coating that helps keep in moisture and freshness. Washing produce prior to storage causes it to spoil faster.

...

<http://www.blueridgenow.com/article/20100705/ARTICLES/7051003/1018?Title=Farmer-8217-s-market-Safety-tips-for-food>

Fayetteville Observer

Shelling out for seafood: Oil spill affects local businesses

The oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico has begun to affect Fayetteville seafood lovers. Oysters may be more expensive - if they can even be found. ...

<http://www.fayobserver.com/articles/2010/07/06/1011063>

Pacc-10 TV News

NC Watermelon at State-Operated Farmers Markets

July 4, 2010 - RALEIGH — Visitors to the five state-operated farmers markets will be able to sample delicious North Carolina watermelons at Watermelon Day events in July and August. The events celebrate the state's watermelon season, which runs from July through August. "Watermelons are a great summer tradition for many families," said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. "The season is off to a good start and shoppers should find plenty of North Carolina watermelons at farmers markets, roadside stands and grocery stores." ...

<http://www.carolinadaybreak.com/news/?p=3669>

WXII-TV

NC Peaches Expected To Have Sweet Season

Statewide Events Planned To Celebrate 'Exceptional' Crop

Due to a cold winter and no late frosts, the North Carolina peach crop is expected to be "exceptional," North Carolina Department of Agriculture officials said. "This is shaping up to be a potentially perfect peach season, and growers are anticipating a great crop," said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. "We had a cold enough winter this year, which has helped peach trees produce heavy blooms, and we didn't have any late frosts to damage their growth." Last year during peach season -- which runs from May to September -- growers produced 5,600 tons of peaches and more than 70 different varieties, officials said. ...

<http://www.wxii12.com/news/24121988/detail.html>

News & Observer

Smithfield takeover rumored

Smithfield Foods stock jumped by as much as 8 percent in early trading Tuesday, amid rumors that the world's largest pork-processing company might be taken over by the Brazilian company JBS S.A. JBS is the world's biggest meatpacker and in 2008 purchased Smithfield's Beef Group division. Smithfield spokeswoman Keira Ullrich declined to comment on the rumor, which was reported in the Brazilian newspaper Valor Economico on Tuesday, though no source was named. The newspaper reported that JBS also declined to comment on a potential deal. Any deal would have repercussions in North Carolina, where Virginia-based Smithfield has 10,000 employees at various facilities as well as contracts with hog farmers across the state. About half of the company's North Carolina employees work at a plant in Tar Heel, about 80 miles south of Raleigh. It is the largest pork-processing plant in the world. Smithfield also has locations in Clinton, Kinston and Wilson, and many of the company's other divisions, including Stefano Foods, Butterball and Murphy-Brown, have other locations throughout the state. ...

<http://www.newsobserver.com/2010/06/30/558044/smithfield-takeover-rumored.html#ixzz0sL34EJgE>

Hendersonville Times News

Farmer's facility to keep apples fresh longer

Apple farmer Richard Staton is betting on the apple business. He's building a \$1 million state-of-the-art facility that can store apples for up to a year, instead of the five months a normal cooler can hold the fruit. Gerber Products Co., the baby food maker, buys a large quantity of apples from local farmers for its apple juice and baby food. Staton, who owns Richmind Co., has been talking with Gerber about increasing the amount of long-term storage capacity in Henderson County using a technique called "controlled atmosphere." "Gerber ... they want more storage in Henderson County, Staton said." "If we didn't have more CA in this county, we were going to lose business. Gerber is one of the biggest buyers in the area." A crew was erecting the facility Tuesday. A concrete slab has been poured, and framing for the new facility is up. Staton wants to test the facility in August and have it operational in September for the fall harvest season. ...

<http://www.blueridgenow.com/article/20100630/ARTICLES/6301010/1151?Title=Farmer-s-facility-to-keep-apples-fresh-longer>

Lexington Dispatch

Grant to help buy conservation easement on county farm

The Land Trust for Central North Carolina has received a grant to buy a conservation easement in Davidson County. ...

<http://www.the-dispatch.com/article/20100706/ARTICLES/100709957/-1/SPORTS?Title=Grant-to-help-buy-conservation-easement-on-county-farm>

Asheville Citizen Times

NC highway canola plants may provide biofuel

A small field of bright yellow flowers planted by the N.C. Department of Transportation along Interstate 40 may look like any other bed of wildflowers, but in the case of this crop, there is more than meets the eye. Two weeks ago, NCDOT harvested these flowers - actually canola plants - with the aim of turning them into fuel for diesel engines. The plants are part of a pilot program with N.C. State University to research the feasibility of growing biofuel crops on highway rights of

way. Modeled after a Utah-based initiative called Freeways to Fuel, the program, which recently garnered national attention, is unique in that it utilizes land otherwise unsuitable for food crops or livestock. Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping tools are used to find suitable locations to grow crops on NCDOT rights of way. Through this partnership, NCDOT plants and maintains the crops while N.C. State, which has a growing biofuels program, conducts research on the plantings. "The biodiesel program is one example of our department's overall commitment to creating a more livable, sustainable future in North Carolina," said Transportation Secretary Gene Conti. "We are constantly exploring innovative ways to realize this vision, whether we are using alternative fuels like biodiesel and solar power, conserving energy at the state's first green rest area or recycling construction materials." The N.C. program is in its second year, and this year's crop, totaling just under 10 acres, consisted of four plots of canola grown along roadways in Raleigh, Faison, Mount Airy and Rutherford County. N.C. State will process the crop using specialized equipment designed to extract oil from the canola seeds to make biodiesel. ...

<http://www.citizen-times.com/article/20100624/NEWS/306240040/1003/ARCHIVES>

Greensboro News & Record

Urban farm sought for S. Elm-Eugene St.

Green space has long been a part of the vision for the city's South Elm Street redevelopment area.

Folks were thinking about a plaza or a pocket park. How about a farm?

Urban Harvest organizers will propose building a 3-acre urban farm on South Elm-Eugene Street that could become a permanent home for the nonprofit. ...

<http://www.news->

[record.com/content/2010/06/30/article/urban_farm_sought_for_s_elm_eugene](http://www.news-record.com/content/2010/06/30/article/urban_farm_sought_for_s_elm_eugene)

Hendersonville Times News

TN Editorial: State should help preserve land

It may seem like a lot of money — \$33 million — but this discounted price is a small amount to pay to preserve 8,000 acres of pristine wilderness and wildlife in Transylvania County, boosting the economy at the same time by drawing outdoor-loving tourists. Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy is under contract to purchase the tract from the family of former U.S. Rep. Charles Taylor for \$33 million, nearly 50 percent less than the appraised value. The deal is expected to close in the fall. The tract would most likely fall under the authority of the N.C. Wildlife Conservation Commission and become a game land, saving it from development. CMLC is working with The Conservation Fund to buy the land and hold it until it can be sold to the state. This is the same kind of action CMLC took to acquire the 1,558-acre World's Edge Tract on the border of Henderson, Polk and Rutherford counties to add to the Chimney Rock State Park. It's a great opportunity to turn valuable land into public use, but the big issue is how the state, coming out of a major recession, will find money to buy it. The great irony is that Charles Taylor was such a vocal critic of environmental groups while in office and also of government spending. But Taylor proved that even though he was berated as a congressman by environmentalists as "Chainsaw Charlie" for voting against the environment, he has a green side when it comes to his own land. ...

<http://www.blueridgenow.com/article/20100622/NEWS/100629965/1014?Title=TN-Editorial-State-should-help-preserve-land>

Wilmington Star

Advocacy groups say deal with Ag-Mart falls short in protecting farm workers

After more than five years a deal might have finally been reached between the N.C. Pesticide Board and Ag-Mart over alleged pesticide violations at the produce giant's farms in Brunswick and Pender counties. But more than a dozen groups that advocate for farm workers think the state could have done more — a lot more — to make sure another situation like this doesn't happen again. After getting tipped off by the federal Environmental Protection Agency, state investigators in 2005 charged the company with 369 violations — which carried a possible maximum and record-setting \$184,500 fine — at its Leland and Currie tomato farms. Investigators with the state Department of Agriculture said workers entered sprayed fields in clear violation of pesticide application guidelines on numerous occasions. The state also claimed Ag-Mart violated rules governing safety training for workers and the proper disposal of

pesticide containers, and had insufficient worker safety and health measures at the farm sites. What followed was a protracted legal battle that eventually ended up with the Ag-Mart state regional manager agreeing to pay \$25,000 to settle violations dating from 2004, 2005 and 2006. He also was allowed to keep his pesticide applicator's license. Per state policy, violations are cited against the license holder, not his employer. Ag-Mart also agreed to fund a training program for farm workers during this and next year's growing seasons. Here's the letter from the Farmworker Advocacy Network, also signed by other groups, highlighting the alleged deficiencies in the settlement agreement. , , ,

<http://watchdogs.blogs.starnewsonline.com/12263/advocacy-groups-say-deal-with-ag-mart-falls-short-in-protecting-farm-workers/>

Asheville Citizen Times

Pick-your-own produce: Western North Carolina farms and orchards gear up for families' summer visits

Fruits and vegetables are good and good for you, no matter where you get them. But there's something about picking your own fresh produce, straight from the bush, vine or tree, that doesn't compare with the store-bought variety. A bounty of farms in the mountain region invite people to come and fill their baskets with homegrown berries, tomatoes, beans, squash, apples and other produce. They also offer opportunities for parents to prove to their kids that food comes from nature rather than a bag or cellophane-wrapped package in the grocery store. Pete Dixon, whose family owns Broadwing Farm in Hot Springs, said he's heard many children marvel at the fact that the blackberries they pick at the farm actually grow on bushes. "There was one kid here who was at the front of the farm, where it's rocky and looks out over the river, and he asked me, 'Who put all these rocks here?'" Dixon said. A number of repeat guests who stay in the cabins on the farm come back to enjoy the fresh food grown at Broadwing in addition to picking their own blackberries. ...

<http://www.citizen-times.com/article/20100621/LIVING/30621003>

Wilmington Star

Editorial: Cooperative Extension Service worth saving

Visions of pigs, cows and crops may come to mind when someone mentions the Cooperative Extension Service, but there is much more to its mission than farming. And before the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners takes a scythe to the Extension Service's budget, it needs to understand the role the service plays. Brunswick County, like neighboring New Hanover, has long since become more urban and suburban than rural. The farms that were once plentiful have dwindled, and thus the role of the Cooperative Extension Service has changed. "Master gardeners" train for their volunteer jobs helping residents with problem lawns, soil samples and answer those "What in the world is growing in my yard, and how do I get rid of it?" questions. The service has a wealth of resources for newcomers to the region about the climate and what will - or won't- grow here. ...

<http://www.starnewsonline.com/article/20100614/ARTICLES/100619845/1108?Title=Editorial-Cooperative-Extension-Service-worth-saving>

Burlington Times News

Orange County board seeks local farmer for committee

HILLSBOROUGH -- The Orange County Board of Commissioners is currently looking for a Orange County farmer to serve on the Piedmont Food and Agriculture Processing Center Steering Committee. The project is a multi-county effort involving Alamance, Chatham, Durham, and Orange Counties, as well as Weaver Street Market and Whole Foods and is hailed by its organizers as an example of public-private collaboration in the Piedmont Region. The shared-use facility located at 500 Valley Forge Road will allow farmers and local food entrepreneurs in the Piedmont region to better compete in the emerging buy local, eat seasonal, farm-to-fork economy. This value-added processing center in Hillsborough is within a 1.5-hour drive of 15,378 farms in a 22-county area, nearly one-third of all farms in North Carolina, according to 2007 USDA statistics. Recently the center has been awarded \$1,127,319 from five agencies, including the N.C. Tobacco Trust Fund, the Golden Leaf Foundation, N.C. Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund, U.S. Housing & Urban Development -- Economic Development Initiative, and the Rural Advancement Foundation International USA -- Tobacco Communities Initiative. The center is scheduled to open in March 2011

and will provide a wide range of food processing equipment in a commercial kitchen. Planning includes business development education, especially for food-based businesses. The processing center should be financially sustainable in its third year of operation through the collection of user and program fees and from the fundraising effort of the nonprofit entity that will be formed to manage the center.

<http://www.thetimesnews.com/articles/text-35147-indent-5em.html>

Charlotte Observer

Conservation groups to buy 8,000-acre tract in Blue Ridge

An 8,000-acre tract that is the largest privately owned wilderness in the southern Blue Ridge Mountains has been placed under contract to conservation groups for \$33 million, they said Thursday.

The Hendersonville-based Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy and the Conservation Fund, a national group, said they bought the Transylvania County property from Champion Cattle and Tree Farms. Champion is part of a corporation owned by the family of former U.S. Rep. Charles Taylor, R-N.C.

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/2010/06/04/1476728/conservation-groups-to-buy-8000.html>

Southeast Farm Press

Carolina grower downsizing operation

North Carolina agriculture is losing -- kind of -- one of its finest, but gaining a dedicated and more active leader in helping agriculture in the Tar Heel state develop a sound business model for rural and urban partnerships. Long-time North Carolina cattleman and grain grower Henry Walker says he is gradually getting out of the grain business and downsizing his cattle operation. He grew up on the Davie County farm he operates and literally worked on the place all his life. All of his adult life has been involved in building his farming enterprise. The price of long hours and hard work has taken its toll. He suffers from a tough combination of lung ailments that he says has him in the short rows of production agriculture. "I had hoped my son would carry on the Walker family farming tradition, but he has a different set of health problems that will likely force him out of the farming operation sooner than later," Walker says. Though farm work took precedence over formal college training, Walker took a natural penchant for math and more than his share of good common sense and built a farming operation that at one time included more than 1,500 acres of grain crops and several hundred head of stocker and feeder cattle. Along the way, he has been active in the North Carolina and U.S. Soybean associations and too many county and state agricultural organizations to mention -- all of which started with an active 4-H program in grade school. ...

<http://southeastfarmpress.com/grains/retirement-farming-0601/>

American Farmland Trust E-Newsletter

Losing Farmland, State by State

Updated information on farmland loss during the last 25 years is in -- with Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, New Jersey and Massachusetts topping the list of states losing the greatest percentage of prime farmland. The 1.5 million acres no longer in farming or ranching in the Lone Star state has Texas leading for sheer loss of acres, followed by Ohio, North Carolina, California and Georgia. "These findings and others from the 2007 National Resources Inventory (NRI) serve as a stark reminder that our nation's agricultural land base -- and the benefits it supplies -- is threatened by poorly planned development," said our president Jon Scholl. Farm and food advocates in at least one of these "biggest loser" states are calling for action, with the North Carolina Sustainable Local Food Advisory Council urging legislators to provide \$5 million in funding to support farmland preservation. ...

<http://www.farmland.org/news/newsletters/enews/2010/E-newsMay.asp>

N.C. News Network

Farmers Urged To Prepare For Hurricane Season

Tuesday is the start of hurricane season and forecasters say the Atlantic could be quite busy this year. State Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler said farmers should be planning now ahead of any possible storm. "The farmers need to start making preparations for their families, their workers, their equipment and buildings," said Troxler. "Many farming operations have a lot of all of these. The big thing is they

need to have backup plans for electricity and drinkable water for the farm. That's two very important things to do." Troxler added that it is important to make sure any backup generator system does not interfere with the regular power grid.

<http://www.ncnn.com/content/view/5953/26/>

The New York Times

Bias Payments Come Too Late for Some Farmers

On a recent Sunday in rural Macon, N.C., John W. Boyd Jr., the president of the National Black Farmers Association, went to his fourth funeral in a week. Mr. Boyd has been burying his group's members with bitter frequency, attending two or three funerals most weeks. Each death makes him feel as if he is running out of time. Wrangling over the federal budget in Washington has delayed payouts from a \$1.25 billion settlement that Mr. Boyd and several others helped negotiate with the federal government to compensate black farmers who claimed that the Agriculture Department had discriminated against them in making loans. "I thought that the elderly farmers would get their money and get to live a few happy days of their lives," Mr. Boyd, a Virginia farmer who is not a plaintiff in the settlement, said in an interview. "They deserve the money before they leave God's earth." ...

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/26/us/26farmers.html>

News & Observer

She cultivates organic farming and healthy eating

For years, the state has watched textile mills close and tobacco farms turn to seed. More recently, technology jobs have been lost, and the state has 10 percent unemployment. But at N.C. State University, there's a woman quietly bringing together farmers, businesses, politicians and individuals to nurture a new economic sector in North Carolina: locally grown organic food. Nancy Creamer, director of N.C. State University's Center for Environmental Farming Systems, is cultivating sustainable, organic farms and the infrastructure they need to get their food to market across the state. It's a plan that she hopes will create small businesses and jobs, as well as boost local economies that have lost jobs to overseas competitors. And she's not just lofty talk. After her center hosted a series of meetings across the state in 2008 to hear from people interested in organic farming, Creamer brought together a broad-based group to take those ideas and write "From Farm to Fork: A Guide to Building North Carolina's Sustainable Local Food Economy." The 97-page, bound document consists of nine recommendations - "game changers," Creamer calls them - including recruiting young farmers, expanding local market opportunities and getting the locally grown food into schools. ...

<http://www.newsobserver.com/2010/05/23/495822/she-cultivates-organic-farming.html#ixzz0oqshY97C>

WGHP Fox 8

Program Helps Young Adults Start Career in Farming

In a business with high start-up costs and an aging population, Pilot Mountain Pride is helping younger people consider a career in farming. With Pilot Mountain Pride works to make it easier for younger people to consider a career in farming. "It's just a great thing to be able to farm and grow stuff for people, and knowing that it's going to stay local here is awesome." said Zach Slate. "I decided to get into it to make a little bit of money." said Brandon Cooke. Slate and Cooke are both under the age of 25 and have decided to start a career in farming, and they participate in the Pilot Mountain Pride program. ...

<http://www.myfox8.com/news/local/wghp-pilot-mtn-pride-100522,0,5787882.story>

Health News Digest

The Bane of Hog Farming Operations

Hog farming has always been a messy business, but surging demand for pork in recent years has exacerbated an already foul problem: dealing with the continual production of the bodily waste of thousands of animals. Pigs are kept in tight quarters and their waste is channeled into huge open-air lagoon pits and sprayfields. The lagoons can rupture during heavy rains, unleashing a torrent of bacteria- and virus-laden feces and urine into nearby groundwater, lakes and streams. Likewise, sprayfields, where some farmers discard animal waste by spraying it over otherwise unused land,

can pollute surrounding waterways and contaminate drinking water. Another side effect is air pollution: The lagoons and sprayfields emit methane (a leading greenhouse gas) and ammonia (a respiratory irritant) into the atmosphere, the foul odors sully the air quality -- and neighbors' quality of life -- for miles around. The problem has been especially bad in North Carolina, where the number of hogs raised has gone up fourfold in the last two decades -- hog farmers there now raise and slaughter some 10 million hogs a year. In 1995, a hog waste lagoon overflow at Ocean View Farms in North Carolina sent 20 million gallons of hog waste into the New River, causing massive fish kills and contaminating drinking water in several neighboring communities. And the torrential rains and flooding that accompanied 1999's Hurricane Floyd wreaked havoc on hog farm waste lagoons and surrounding ecosystems across North Carolina. But while hog farming has a deservedly bad reputation, that may all change thanks to farmers, activists, researchers and policymakers who are working hard to reduce the negative environmental impacts of the business and even capitalize on the waste itself. Pioneering research conducted at North Carolina State University has shown that technologies were already available to not only reduce hog waste pollution but to use it to grow crops like duckweed that can be converted into carbon-neutral, fuel-grade ethanol. Meanwhile, an economic analysis by the non-profit Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) found that North Carolina could gain 7,000 jobs and add \$10 billion to its economy if the hog industry there were to move to more innovative systems for treating waste. In its report, EDF stresses the importance of incentives and cost-share programs to help make such new systems affordable for the farmers who need them. ...

http://www.healthnewsdigest.com/news/Environment_380/The_Bane_of_Hog_Farming_Operations.shtml

USA Today

Crop mobs sprout up on farms

The mob descended on Chris Wimmer's farm on a rainy Saturday bearing pitchforks and shovels. They went to work quickly, relocating a compost pile, digging weeds and hauling fencing. The Jefferson County Crop Mob, a group of mostly urban volunteers, spends one Saturday a month sweating for small-scale farmers such as Wimmer. In return, they learn about the food they consume and tips about organic and sustainable farming. "It's like farming 101," says Derek Bryant, 38. He and Jamie Drake, 34, tackled the compost heap, shoveling the muck into new storage bins. He works for a commercial construction company and she's an interior designer, but their dream is to turn land that's been in his family for seven generations into a sustainable farm. The first U.S. crop mob was formed in North Carolina in 2008, and now there are more than 30. "It's going to explode," predicts Kirsten Santucci, organizer of a crop mob in Washington, D.C., that's in its first season and has about 200 members.

The idea is a logical offshoot of the local-food movement, which emphasizes consumption of food grown near where you live, she says. Organizers use social media such as Facebook to enlist members and publicize gatherings. ...

http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/environment/2010-05-19-crop-mobs_N.htm

News & Observer, also appeared in Charlotte Observer, Durham Herald-Sun and on WRAL Big Tobacco cutting contracts with US farmers

CYNTHIANA, Ky. -- After years of faithfully supplying leaf to tobacco giant Philip Morris International, farmer Jess Burrier received a postcard, thanking him for his contributions and telling him his service wasn't needed this year. "They were very courteous, but a Dear John letter's still a Dear John letter," said Burrier, who has seen the amount of tobacco he grows under contract shrivel from about 600,000 pounds two years ago to 20,000 pounds this year with another leaf buyer. Kentucky, the nation's top producer of burley tobacco, a common ingredient in cigarettes, could lose a fourth of its contracts this year, said Will Snell, a University of Kentucky agricultural economist specializing in tobacco. Many contracts also have been lost in North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia as smoking continues to decline in the U.S. U.S. farmers also are seeing more competition from overseas as worldwide burley production has grown in the past two years, Snell said. And a 2009 federal law giving the Food and Drug Administration broad power to regulate tobacco has added to cigarette makers' uncertainty, making them even more conservative about purchasing, he said. ...

<http://www.newsobserver.com/2010/05/19/489725/big-tobacco-cutting-contracts.html>

Growing Small Farms Blog

NC Farmers Respond to Increased Local Meat Demand

Consumer demand for locally produced foods is encouraging more farmers to produce pasture-raised meat and poultry, according to NC Choices, a Center for Environmental Farming System's initiative that promotes sustainable food systems through the advancement of local, pasture-based animal production, processing and marketing. NC Choices points to the increase in the number of farmers it works with -- 45, up from 10 when the initiative launched in 2005 -- as well as the number of farmers who are licensed to sell meat directly to consumers. "Today, there are more than 330 meat producers selling directly to consumers," said Casey McKissick, coordinator for NC Choices. "This is a three-fold increase over the past 6 years; the market for local foods is strong and growing stronger." ...

<http://growing-small-farms.wordpress.com/2010/05/17/nc-farmers-respond-to-increased-local-meat-demand/>

Carolina Journal

Federal War on Salt Could Spoil Country Hams

Reducing salt content threatens signature N.C. foods, restaurant fare

RALEIGH -- If the food police get their way, North Carolinians can kiss their country hams, bacon, and fresh Bright Leaf hot dogs goodbye. These Southern specialties might not disappear altogether, but, if the health agency's crusade against salt is successful, they never would taste the same again. The Washington Post reports that the FDA plans an unprecedented effort to reduce gradually Americans' salt consumption. In April, the Institute of Medicine advised the FDA to lower the recommended daily intake of sodium for individuals from 2,300 mg to 1,500 mg. It also recommended setting maximum legal limits on salt in all packaged and restaurant foods. The plan is "to slowly ratchet down the sodium level, so people won't notice the change," said Christina DeWitt, a food scientist on the IOM advisory panel. Still, critics of the proposal argue that, in isolation, limiting salt in the diet may not lead improve public health. Jacob Sullum, senior editor at Reason magazine, says there's little evidence linking low-salt diets to a reduced incidence of high blood pressure or cardiovascular disease. ...

http://www.carolinajournal.com/exclusives/display_exclusive.html?id=6411