Goals of the Small Farms Initiative:
- Educational programming for production, marketing, farm planning and farm preservation
- Helping to link farmers and local markets
- Seeking resources and funding for farmers
- Assisting farmers with value-added products
- Helping to link landowners with aspiring farmers

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Buncombe County Small Farm Initiative Updates
This summer the Small Farms Initiative is holding on-farm demonstrations, with special funding by Buncombe County Government, at four different farms in the county. On June 12 at Full Sun Farm in the Sandy Mush Community, Alex Campbell and Vanessa Brown shared with 22 attendees their practice of season extension that enables them to produce squash and melons up to 2 weeks earlier than methods generally used to grow these items. Alex and Vanessa explained how they spread fabric over raised beds and drip tape, plant the transplants previously grown in their greenhouse, and then construct small “tunnels” over the beds using wire hoops and white Remay fabric. The tunnels and black plastic provide extra warmth and protection during the early spring when cool nights would otherwise stunt growth of the transplants.

The second on-farm tour will be at the Dillingham Family Farm in Barnardsville on July 24, and will feature egg production for the small farm or backyard. For more details and to find out how to register, see a full description of the tour on page 3.

The third on-farm tour will be held at Thatchmore Farm in Leicester on August 5, where farmers can see the start-up process for an organically grown Christmas tree enterprise. The farmer, Tom Elmore, is exploring production of both container-grown “tabletop” trees and field grown trees for a retail, pre-sold, selective harvest operation.

The 4th and final on-farm tour will be in September on the Burnette farm in Black Mountain, where Van Burnette will demonstrate woodland production of two medicinal herbs that have economic promise in the NC mountains: ramps and an endangered species, goldenseal. The exact date for this tour has yet to be determined but will soon be announced.

Upcoming Educational Programs through the Small Farms Initiative and NC Specialty Crops Program
Mark your calendars for the Getting Started in the Nursery Business Workshop on September 24th, 9 am—2 pm with lunch, at the Mountain Horticulture Crops Research and Extension Center, Fletcher, NC. Topics to be covered include risk management, business planning, farm resource assessment, site selection, and marketing, plus a tour of nursery production at the research station. Registration fee of $10 includes lunch. More detail to follow.

A Specialty Cut Flower Workshop is being planned in October….stay tuned for details......
Small Fruit Conference for Small-Scale Mountain Farmers a Success

Fifty-five farmers attended the Small Fruits Conference for Small-Scale Mountain Farmers organized by Jean Harrison of the Small Farms Initiative and Jeremy Delisle of Mitchell County Cooperative Extension on Friday, May 9. A majority of the attendees were new farmers that are looking to sell blueberries, blackberries, raspberries and strawberries through direct markets in the next few years. An evaluation of the day-long event revealed that 100% of the farmers responding were either satisfied or very satisfied with the overall quality of the training.

Fresh Produce Safety Trainings

On Thursday, July 24 and Friday, July 25 farmers are invited to attend training sessions at two area farms on fresh produce safety. The training sessions will provide information on the general practices that growers, field workers, and packers of fresh fruits and vegetables should use to handle fresh produce safely, reduce the potential for outbreaks of food-borne illnesses, and address the risks associated with the movement of fresh produce into the marketplace. “Good Agricultural Practices” (GAP) and “Good Handling Practices” (GHP) food safety certification audit demonstrations will be conducted at two farms and a packing facility. Audits will be conducted by a third party auditor with the Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association.

Space is limited. Sign up now to reserve your spot.

Registration deadline for both trainings is July 18th

For more information and to register visit: http://asapconnections.org/special/2008/FoodSafety.htm

On-Farm Demonstration: Egg Production for the Small Farm or Backyard

Dillingham Family Farm, Barnardsville
Thursday, July 24, 2008
Time: 4:00-5:30 pm

Farmers are invited to an on-farm demonstration in Barnardsville on Thursday, July 24 from 4:00-5:30 pm to see a recent startup operation of egg production on a small-scale. The Dillingham’s broiler chicken house has been used as a tobacco barn for the past 35 years. They have renovated and “predator-proofed” the structure, and have installed electric poultry netting for an outside run. The operation currently includes 40 Highline and 30 Leghorn birds. This tour should be of interest to anyone considering startup egg production on a small farm or in a backyard setting.

This demonstration is one of four being conducted by the Small Farms Initiative, through Buncombe County Cooperative Extension with special support from Buncombe County Government and farmer cooperators in the county to implement new production practices or to test and demonstrate the production of new farm commodities. For more information or to register for this free program, contact Jean Harrison or Jeff Bradley at the Buncombe County Extension office at 255-5522 or jean_harrison@ncsu.edu or jeff_bradley@ncsu.edu.

Directions: Follow future I-26 west to exit 15, the Barnardsville/Jupiter exit. Turn right onto Highway 197 and travel 6 miles. Turn right onto Dillingham Rd. and follow it for approximately 6 miles until you see two large chicken houses on your left (one red, one gray block). Look for the NC Cooperative Extension on-farm tour signs.

NOTE: The next on-farm tour will be a demonstration of the start-up process for an organically grown Christmas tree enterprise at Thatchmore Farm in Leicester on Tuesday, August 5. The project will explore both container-grown “tabletop” trees and field grown trees for a retail, pre-sold, selective harvest operation.
Mobile Processing Unit Available For Exempt On Farm Processing of Small Animals

Foothills Family Farms is happy to announce that the Mobile Processing Unit (MPU) is nearly complete and we will begin taking reservations July 14th for processing dates through December 31, 2008. The MPU is designed for on farm processing of poultry and rabbit by the producer for personal use or sale under the NC Dept. of Ag and Consumer Services (NCDACS) provision for inspection exempt processing. Individuals may slaughter up to 1,000 chickens or rabbits of their own raising for wholesale or retail sale without benefit of inspection. Please refer to NCDACS regulations for your particular situation.

The MPU is offered to producers within a 60 mile radius of Old Fort for $40/ daily (outside 60 miles are charged a reasonable mileage fee). The renter is responsible for pick-up and drop off of the unit in Old Fort. A capable vehicle with a 2-5/16" ball is required for towing. Currently, you must be able to attend a short training session on set-up, take-down and cleaning to be eligible to rent the unit. A training video will be available soon that will satisfy this requirement.

To inquire about the MPU or make a reservation, email info@foothillsfamilyfarms.org (Subject line "MPU") or by calling 216-2966.

This project is funded by Heifer Appalachia and Foothills Family Farms and in cooperation with McDowell Cooperative Extension and the Independent Small Animal Meat Producers Association of WNC.

For information about what items are supplied with the MPU, and what you will need to provide, contact the email address or phone number above.

2008 Hay Field Day, Mountain Research Station, Waynesville

The 2008 annual Hay Field Day will be held on August 12 at the Mountain Research Station in Waynesville. Registration begins at 9:00 am, and mowing and tedding demonstrations will run between 9:30 and 10:30 am. These will be followed by demonstrations and educational exhibits on "Legumes as a replacement for N fertilization", and “Stand Renovation and Soil Sampling Techniques”. From 11:30 to 12:30, attendees will enjoy a trade show and lunch sponsored by Carolina Farm Credit.

Sessıons after lunch include information on weed control and how to use a no-till drill. The afternoon wraps up with demonstrations on raking and baling, from 3-4 pm.

For more information about the Hay Field Day, or directions on how to get to the Mountain Research Station, contact your county Extension office. To see a program brochure go to www.cals.ncsu.edu/agcomm/writing/field_Days/Hay_08.pdf

Present Use Value Program in Buncombe County

The Present Use Value program allows reduced tax assessments for individually owned property used for agriculture (10 acre tracts), horticulture (5 acre tracts) or forestry (20 acre tracts). Property accepted into this program is taxed at its “present use value” as a farm. This value is usually less than the market value of the property. The difference between the market value and the present use value is “deferred”. When the property or a portion of the property is removed from the program for any reason, the deferred taxes for the current year and the previous three years plus interest becomes due. For more information about this program, see www.buncombecounty.org/GOVERNING/depts/tax/exempt.htm.
The first **WNC Green Industry Tradeshow** will be held in Haywood County on Sept. 13-14 at the Haywood County Fairgrounds. Growers, landscapers, and other green industry companies are welcome to participate and market their goods and services. For more information visit the following link:
or call Tim Mathews at 828-456-3575

**The North Asheville Tailgate Market** is now accepting applications for day vending spaces. Day Vending at the North Asheville Tailgate Market provides an excellent opportunity to sell either crafts or your seasonal offerings without having to be at the market each Saturday throughout the season. It is also a great way to become accepted as a permanent vendor. Day vendors are being sought to compliment the existing vendor mix. Farm and food-related crafts, home or farm-based artisan foods, plants, fruit, and meat will be considered. Vegetable and flower vendor applicants will need to focus on niches that are not filled by existing vendors in order to be approved. Hours are 7-12 on Saturdays from mid-April to December. The Day Vending fee is $20 per day. To apply, call Paul Littman at 712-4644 or apply through the website at www.northashevilletailgatemarket.org. Click on “Become a Day Vendor” on the home page at the upper right.

The **True Nature Country Fair** welcomes exhibitors who demonstrate that their product showcases local, organic and sustainable items. Preference will be given to items that are produced from resources that are at least 50% organic and/or sustainable. Exhibit space is available for many different products, including a farmer’s market, fresh food, and crafts. Charges for a booth selling goods or services are $75 for three days, Sept. 26-28. Farmer’s market booths selling perishable items are available at no charge. For more info about food vending or exhibits, contact Karen Vizzina at 828-342-1849 or Karen@organicgrowersschool.org

Got extra **blueberries, raspberries, black berries**? Walter Harrill of Imladris Farms wants to buy your fruit. Give him a call at 628-9377.

**New Book on Agritourism**

The New Agritourism provides inspiration and practical information to increase farm revenue and build support for local agriculture.” more info at www.nwpub.net

**Cool Sites**

Online tree pruning guide—really cool. Check it out and share with others. http://www.arborday.org/trees/pruning/animation/launch.cfm

[www.RuralBounty.com](http://www.RuralBounty.com), a North American directory of the rich bounty of the rural countryside, including farm fresh products, activities, entertainment, attractions, and family events and festivals.


[http://www.ruralclassifieds.com/](http://www.ruralclassifieds.com/) is a new website directing visitors to five websites offering FREE internet ads to Rural America’s farmers, ranchers, businesses and residents. The RuralClassifieds websites include: BullShop.com, GoatBreeders.biz, SheepBreeders.biz, RuralAds.com and RuralCalendar.com. RuralAds.com users can find and place ads for other livestock, machinery, feed & seed, real estate and much more. On any of the above websites, users can have a FREE State Ad running anytime.
**July 17** Southeast Regional Farm to School Gathering, Isaac Dickson Elementary, Asheville. $50 Reg. fee. For more information and to register, go to [www.growing-minds.org/rla%20flyer.php](http://www.growing-minds.org/rla%20flyer.php).

**July 24** On-farm demonstration: Egg Production for the Small Farm or Backyard, Barnardsville, 4:00-5:30 pm. For directions or to register for this free program, contact Jean Harrison or Jeff Bradley at 255-5522.

**July 24-25** Fresh Produce Safety Trainings. For more information and to register visit [http://asapconnections.org/special/2008/FoodSafety.htm](http://asapconnections.org/special/2008/FoodSafety.htm) or call the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project at 828-236-1282. Reg. fee $10 per day.

**July 25-27** Wild Herb Weekend, Valle Crucis. For more info see [http://ncherbassociation.com/](http://ncherbassociation.com/)

**Aug. 5** Starting a Commercial Bunchgrape Vineyard Workshop, South Creek Vineyard and Winery, Nebo, NC, 8:45-5:15. Send in registration fee of $20 by Aug. 1. For more information contact the McDowell County Extension Office at 828-652-8104.

**Aug. 5** On-farm demonstration: Organic container and field-grown Christmas trees, Leicester, 4:00-5:30 pm. For directions or to register for this free program, contact Jean Harrison or Amanda Stone at 255-5522.

**Aug. 7** Tomato Field Day, Mt. Hort. Crops Research Station, Fletcher, 12:30-5:30 pm. For more information, go to [http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/fletcher/events/2008-tomato-fieldday/index.html](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/fletcher/events/2008-tomato-fieldday/index.html)

**Aug. 7** Small Farms Field Day, NC A&T State University Farm, Greensboro, 9-12. To register for the program, contact Adrea Brooks at 336-334-7957.

**Aug. 12** Apple/Peach Field Day. Mt. Hort. Crops Research Station, Fletcher, 12:30-4:30 pm. For more information, contact Jim Walgenbach, 684-3562 or jim_walgenbach@ncsu.edu


**Aug. 26** The Up and Coming Organic Landscape and Lawn Care Industry, NC Arboretum Auditorium, 3-5 pm. Reg. fee $20. Contact Meredith McKissick at 828-450-2026 or at Meredith@organicgrowersschool.org

**Sept. 13-14** WNC Horticulture & Landscape Show, Haywood County Ag. & Activities Center Arena, Waynesville. For exhibitor or other information, contact Tim Mathews, Haywood County Extension, 828-456-3575.

**Sept. 24** Getting Started in the Nursery Business, Mt. Hort. Crops Research Station, Fletcher, 9-2. Contact Jean Harrison or Amanda Stone at Buncombe County Extension for more info at 255-5522.

**Sept 26-28** True Nature Country Fair, Deerfields, Mills River. For more information, go to: [www.organicgrowersschool.org/events.html](http://www.organicgrowersschool.org/events.html)

**Oct.** Specialty Cut Flowers Workshop, Buncombe County. Date and location TBA.

**Oct. 16** Pumpkin/Gourd Field Day, Mountain Research Station, Waynesville, 2 pm.

**Oct. 31-Nov. 2** Annual Sustainable Agriculture Conference, Anderson, SC. For more information, go to [www.carolinafarmstewards.org](http://www.carolinafarmstewards.org)
Buncombe County Small Farms Initiative

More and more farmers have been sharing with our agents that they desire to continue to farm, but are desperately looking for ways to increase the income from their farming operation to preserve the farm. With the support of our Buncombe County Commissioners and County Management, Cooperative Extension is initiating a program to aggressively work to help farmers diversify their operations, add value to their products or market products differently in order to increase the income from their operations.

Individuals with disabilities who would like to participate in any program mentioned in this newsletter, but who need special assistance to do so, should call the Extension Center at 828-255-5522 at least five days prior to the event.