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Contact Us
Amanda Stone
Extension Agent
Agriculture
Commercial Horticulture

Check out Buncombe County Center’s website at:
http://buncombe.ces.ncsu.edu
or BLOG
wncgreennews.blogspot.com

BUY LOCAL
Buncombe County Choose & Cut Christmas Trees

- Sandy Hollar Farm - 63 Sandy Hollar Lane
Leicester, NC 28748
Directions: From Asheville take NC 63 (Leicester Hwy) - 11 miles to N. Turkey Creek Road (left); go 1 1/2 miles to split, veer right. Go 6 miles to Robinson Cove Road on right. Farm is 2nd drive on left past Robinson Cove Road (Sandy Hollow Lane) or call for directions.
Operating hours & dates: For Choose & Cut, Saturday & Sunday, 9am-4:30pm beginning after Thanksgiving. Through December 20, subject to availability.
Tree species & height: Fraser Fir 4 feet and up.
Accessories & Special Services: Wreaths, garland, gift shop, refreshments.

- Reeves Tree Farm - Leicester
(828) 779-0115, (828) 683-3152
Directions: From Asheville take NC 63 (Leicester Hwy) - 18 miles from Patton Avenue. Please call for specific directions.
Operating hours & dates: For Choose & Cut, Friday & Saturday, 10am-5:00pm beginning after Thanksgiving through Christmas, subject to availability.
Tree species & height: Fraser Fir 4-10 feet
Accessories & Special Services: Wreaths and refreshments.

- Hope Hollow Farms
289 Locust Grove Road - Weaverville, NC 28787
(828) 645-4621
Directions: Weaverville
Operating hours & dates: Please call for directions and operating hours.
Tree species & height: Norway Spruce, Sheared White Pine.

Tree Seedling Sale
The Buncombe Soil and Water Conservation will hold its annual tree seedling sale starting on Feb. 25-27 at Jesse Israel and Sons Garden Center, WNC Farmers’ Market. The sale is scheduled - Thurs. 25th, 1-6pm, Fri. & Sat. 9am-4pm, or until the seedlings are gone. Seedlings will be available on first-come, first-served basis. (No advance orders). Eastern White Pine seedlings are 25 cents each. Hardwood species are 75 cents each. The following species are available: Eastern White Pine, Black Walnut, Crabapple, Flowering Dogwood, River Birch, Persimmon, Black Cherry, White Ash, Eastern Redbud, Northern Red Oak and White Oak.
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November 8
An Introduction to Beekeeping, Folk Art Center, Blue Ridge Parkway. Free registration. Explore the world of bee keeping with a short introduction geared to the individual who has no experience with honey bees. Attendees will learn about basic bee biology, equipment necessary to get started in this fascinating hobby and have opportunity to ask questions of experienced bee keepers. Sponsored by the Buncombe County Beekeepers Chapter. Because space is limited, please pre-register at: http://www.wncbees.org.

November 18
Hops Production Meeting, 1—5 pm. Camp New Life at the Mountain Research Station, Waynesville, NC. Learn about the challenges and opportunities for growing hops in WNC. To register contact Haywood County Extension, 828-456-3575. $5/person.

January 12-16
“Green & Growin” Educational Conference and Trade Show, Greensboro, NC. For more information visit the NC Nursery & Landscape Association website at: http://www.ncnla.com. Pesticide credits will be available.

January 28
The Business Side of Agritourism Workshop, Lake Logan Episcopal Center, Canton, NC. So you want to start an agritourism farm? Topics include: market evaluation, internet marketing, taxes, liability, types of agritourism enterprises, collaborating with your chamber of commerce and more! More info coming soon!

January 30, 31 and February 6,7

February 11

February 25

March 6 and 7

March 17
Western North Carolina Turfgrass Conference, Asheville, NC. More info coming soon.

NCDA&CS Putting Agronomic Reports online to save postage, paper
Starting Nov. 1, the NC Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services will no longer routinely mail out paper copies of agronomic reports. This policy will apply to reports for soil tests and nematode assays, as well as plant tissue, waste, solution and soilless media analyses.
All these reports are readily available through the NCDA&CS Agronomic Division’s website: http://www.ncagr.gov/agronomi.
Switching exclusively to electronic reports will allow the Agronomic Division to save a lot on postage, printing and paper.
In addition to environmental and fiscal benefits, this change should increase convenience and efficiency for our customers because online reports are available more quickly than mailed reports. They also make record keeping much easier because they can be easily downloaded and saved. Plus, the analytical data can be exported to a spreadsheet.
Eventually, the department would like to notify all clients via e-mail when their reports are available online. Clients who provide a valid e-mail address on their sample information form, or who register an e-mail address with the Agronomic Division online, can receive electronic notification. In the interim, all others will receive a postcard with instructions on how to find their reports.
Clients who visit the Agronomic Division home page should select the “Find Your Report” link from the left-column navigation bar. This link takes visitors into the division’s laboratory-information site’ known as PALS. For most people, using the ‘Quick Report Search’ link is the most convenient way to access reports.
Basic instructions are outlined at: http://www.ncagr.gov/agronomi/reportsearch.htm. Anyone who has difficulty using the PALS report-search feature or has questions can call (919) 733-2655 for assistance during regular weekday office hours.
You’re invited to a free workshop entitled...

**KEEPING YOUR FARM**

We will discuss updates on issues effecting farm and forest landowners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics of discussion:</th>
<th>Event will take place:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Tax information</td>
<td>November 12, 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Insurance and financial options</td>
<td>8:00 am—4:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Forestry management plans</td>
<td>Lunch provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Conservation easements</td>
<td>November 13, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Value added and new enterprises</td>
<td>One on one consultations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Farm transition programs</td>
<td>9:00 am—4:00 pm</td>
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Commissioner David Gantt will discuss the Buncombe County Strategic Plan and the goal To preserve farmland

To register contact Erin Bonito at the Buncombe County Cooperative Extension (828) 255-5522

Registration will be limited to 100 people

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**North Carolina Announces Energy Grants, Loans for Farmers**

Farmers are welcome to attend an informational meeting—Thursday, Nov. 19, 7pm, Mountain Horticultural Crops Research & Extension Center, 455 Research Dr., Mills River, NC 28759

The North Carolina Farm Energy Efficiency Project (FEEP) originated from a grant awarded to North Carolina Farm Bureau by the North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission. The project’s goal is to provide educational and technical support for farmers regarding agricultural energy use and efficiency. Farmers may also apply for low cost energy audits that will evaluate ways to save farm energy costs.

The USDA’s Renewable Energy for America Program (REAP) can provide grants and loans on projects that meet the criteria to save energy or implement new energy programs. (FEEP) will also provide matching funds that will improve a farmer’s ability to obtain funds from (REAP).

The funds will provide technical support needed to analyze proposals, perform energy audits, and prepare competitive applications for (REAP) loans and grants.


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**Persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency may request accommodations to participate in activities mentioned in this newsletter. Please contact Amanda Stone at 828-255-5522 during business hours at least 3 days prior to the event to discuss accommodations**
2010 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Signup is Underway!!

New!! EQIP has been expanded to include Forestry

The USDA -Natural Resources Conservation Service is now taking applications for the 2010 EQIP program. EQIP is a cost-share program for any farm or landowner with problems such as: erosion issues on cropland, pastureland, or woodland. EQIP provides payments up to 75% of the incurred costs and income foregone of certain conservation practices and activities. Erosion issues on horticultural land are also eligible. Organic producers can apply thru special provisions of the EQIP program.

North Carolina woodland owners are eligible to participate in expanded cost share programs focusing on woodland management practices that protect water quality from non-point pollutants; conserve ground & surface water resources; improve forest health and biodiversity; and reduce soil erosion from agricultural and forest lands. Several management activities included under the cost share program include: forest stand improvements, tree/shrub establishment, restoration and management, firebreak, prescribed burning and more!

The steps involved include having a farm number with the Farm Service Agency; woodland owners must have a Forest Management Plan (contact NC Division of Forest Resources or a consulting forester); and apply at the local NRCS Office. Both os these offices are upstairs from the Buncombe County Extension Office, 94 Coxe Avenue. NRCS is taking applications thru the end of the calendar year.

Call Loring McIntyre with NRCS at 250-4790 for more information.

Community Conservation Assistance Funds Available

The annual allocation of Community Conservation Assistance (CCAP) funds has been received, and the Soil Water Conservation District is ready to start writing contracts. The CCAP is relatively new so allocations are typically small. This year’s total allocation is just over $11,000. This cost share program helps fund conservation practices in urban and rural settings on land that is not directly involved in agricultural production. Typical best management practices include rain gardens, constructed wetlands, cisterns, critical area planting, pet waste receptacles, stream bank and shoreline protection, riparian plantings, and impervious surface conversion. The cost share rate is 75% of the actual or average costs.

If you are interested in the program, please call Gary Higgins at the District office, (828) 250-4785.
Project Skill-UP

A program to help you stay in farming, return to farming or get training in an exciting new career

Opportunities:

- Scholarships available
- New Certificate Program for Farmers
- Special training or education for farming in the 21st century
- Guidance to individuals interested in a new career

Eligibility: Individuals who have roots in Madison and Buncombe counties and who have been affected by changes in tobacco

To Find Out More Call: Maureen at 254.1921 X 5832

Project Skill-UP is offered by:

Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, 1459 Sandhill Road, Candler, NC 28715
E-mail: mmacnamara@abtech.edu

Funded through a grant from the NC Tobacco Trust Fund Commission
WNC AgOptions Grants for Farmers—deadlines approaching!

Intent to apply Deadline: November 23, 2009!! Contact your local extension agent!
Deadline for grant application: January 8, 2010

Farmers in WNC will have the opportunity to apply for grant funds through NC Cooperative Extension for the next two years, to support their efforts in evaluating alternative farm income opportunities. In 2010, WNC AgOptions will award grants valued at $3,000, $6,000 or $9,000 through a competitive application and review process. In order to be eligible for the $9,000 grant, you must have a project budget that totals $27,000. Awards will total $225,000 each year within 17 western NC counties and the Cherokee Reservation. Award recipients are encouraged to explore crop diversification, ways to replace lost tobacco income and marketing & production techniques that demonstrate economic sustainability.

The grant will be provided by the NC Tobacco Trust Fund Commission, which will partner with Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI) and the WNC Agricultural Options program to accept applications and monitor the recipients’ projects. Examples of projects are as follows:

- Transition from tobacco production to ornamentals, berries, trout farms or agri-tourism;
- Improvements of existing operations, including horse boarding, mum production and choose-and-cut Christmas trees;
- Creative markets for livestock, including goats for invasive plants removal, grass-finished beef and naturally grown pork;
- Beekeeping, including integrated pest management and queen-rearing;
- Native plants, nursery start-ups;
- Season extension for vegetables

Interested farmers and representatives of agricultural cooperatives or associations may obtain applications from their local NC Cooperative Extension Office or at http://www.wncagoptions.org. Previous grant recipients may apply again. There is an application on the website for previous recipients. Please make sure you fill out the correct application! Applicants are encouraged to contact their local agricultural extension agent by November 23 to discuss and research their project. Applications must be postmarked by January 8. Award recipients will be announced in February.

You can get this newsletter via email. Contact us either by phone at 828-255-5522 or email: Amanda_stone@ncsu.edu