

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
WEEKLY UPDATE
Week Ending 7/18/08

1. Items for Approval – None this week.
2. Items for Discussion – None this week.
3. Summary of County Visits by Dr. Jon Ort

DATE	COUNTY VISITED	PURPOSE
7/13/08 – 7/15/08	Guilford County	National Association of County Agricultural Agents Meeting
7/17/08	Guilford County	National Association of County Agricultural Agents Meeting

4. Items for Information

- ⊞ Economic development is very important in a Tier I, economically depressed county like Caswell, which was tobacco dependent for the majority of its income before the government tobacco buyout program. In order to keep the economy of the county strong, NC Cooperative Extension has partnered with local and state government officials to expand current industry and to recruit and provide information to new industry interested in the county. One major part of this initiative is to promote the value of agriculture to the county. NC Cooperative Extension has become a respected and important part of this development team with a seat on the Board of Economic Development, and has been involved with recruitment efforts in \$435,700 of Golden Leaf Funds through the Golden Leaf Community Initiative Forum. These funds will be used for the Value-Added Meat Processing Project at Matkins Processors, Inc., which will enable over 100 livestock producers to generate a net return to their farms of \$2 million.
- ⊞ In the first six months of 2008, Perquimans 4-H Friends Of Youth Volunteer Mentoring/Community Service Work Program served a total of 42 youth, 26 of which were troubled youth (court involved). Not one of these youth were referred to the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (DJJDP) Youth Development Centers (YDC) in 2008. To house one juvenile in a State YDC for one year costs the State of North Carolina \$103,000. Perquimans 4-H Friends Of Youth Volunteer Mentoring and Community Service Work Program operates with an annual budget of \$50,930, saving the State of North Carolina \$4,326,000. Collaborations included: Department of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention; Board of Directors for Governor’s One-On-One; Chief Court Counselor (1st District); Perquimans Crime Prevention Council; Perquimans Judicial Attendance Council; Public School System; NC Cooperative Extension, Perquimans County Center; Social Services; Health Department; Law Enforcement; Parents and Volunteers.
- ⊞ This year’s *Festival for the Eno* recovered 93% of its waste through composting and recycling. Our Extension Solid Waste Specialist in the Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering worked with vendors, event organizers and festival goers with trash recovery in mind. Festival organizers erected 12 trash recovery stations, staffed with volunteers, to help festival goers choose which items they could compost or recycle, and which had to go in the trash. Of the 5,300 pounds of waste generated, 4,929 pounds will not be thrown away. As a result, other event planners are contacting Cooperative Extension for assistance in composting and recycling at other events.

- ❖ A major concern for people on prescription drugs is the price they have to pay for their medications. A program designed to assist people on Medicare pay for their prescriptions is Medicare Part "D". NC Cooperative Extension, Pasquotank County Center has two staff members assisting with the program. Assistance was provided to one person who was being terminated from their employer's health plan. Medication costs were \$700 per month. The plan they chose will assist them for four months with a savings of \$560 monthly. Another client had two medicines costing over \$800 a month. The cost of his medicines from his plan choice was less than \$20 a month, a savings of \$780. These were only two cases; since January 2008, 55 different clients had a total savings of \$95,174.93. This program has made a tremendous impact on the community.
- ❖ For the past two years, NC Cooperative Extension in Durham County has helped organizations obtain their IRS 501(c)3 Nonprofit Status. To date, one organization has received the status, one has submitted their application and one is entering the final stages prior to submission. The New Beginnings Outreach CDC has begun effective positive changes in the lives of Durham residents, before their 501(c)3 status is granted. In collaboration with Omega Industries, they have started a transitional housing and vocation training program for those who find self-sufficiency difficult due to a history of incarceration and/or other societal issues. Efforts are currently underway to obtain more property for renovation and subsequent availability as low-income housing.
- ❖ Anson County's farm income estimates for 2006 were \$136,365,232, which is great for a rural, economically distressed county. However, offices that serve Anson County agricultural producers are not housed together, and the current buildings do not adequately provide for educational programs. These issues, and the added county-wide need for meeting facilities, prompted the Anson Cooperative Extension Advisory Council to request that the staff begin asking for a new center. The formation of a study group led to meetings, tours of other facilities and a grassroots initiative to advocate for new facilities. With a \$16,500 grant from Farm Bureau, Pee Dee EMC, and the County of Anson, a consultant was hired to conduct a feasibility study and facility program to design and present a floor plan for a new Agri-Civic Center. The pre-architectural rendering will be presented to the Anson County Commissioners with a request to pursue funding for a new facility.
- ❖ Landowners may be provided natural resource management suggestions from well-meaning advisors, but that are not practicing resource management professionals. Following ill-fated advice may lead to unwarranted costs and not achieving the resource management objectives for the landowner. This circumstance was the case for a woman who contacted the Alleghany Center of NC Cooperative Extension before committing to expensive pond renovation and timberland site preparation advice given by a contractor. Following a site assessment by our Extension Agent, sharing of educational materials, and discussing alternate strategies for correcting pond problems and meeting long-term forestry objectives, the landowner chose not to implement the contractor's advice. Her savings exceeded \$15,000. An intangible outcome was the pond was not drained and earth work not undertaken during a time when the landowner's family's vacation visits and enjoyment of the stream fed pond and home place surroundings were planned.
- ❖ Many youth have limited access to experiential learning opportunities in science due to lack of teacher training, curriculum, and expertise in this area based on elementary teacher training program requirements. To meet this growing need, Richmond County 4-H collaborated with 37 Richmond County School classrooms for a 4-H Embryology Project. Teachers were provided training, curriculum, supplies, and support to complete the project, which involved hatching chicks in the classroom. Almost 800 students in 1st and 2nd grade classrooms learned about bio-security, recordkeeping, life cycles and agriculture during the three-week project. Teachers reported that 100% of their classes showed an increased interest in science while 90% showed an increase in science grades. Teachers also reported that the project was a great lesson for students of varying achievement levels and learning styles. The program will be offered again next school year, with varied resources for the different grade levels.

5. Routine Items – None this week.