



**NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
WEEKLY UPDATE
Week Ending 8/15/08**

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
8/13/08	Guilford County	Retirement Luncheon for Sheilda Sutton and Thelma Feaster
8/14/08	Edgecombe County	NC 4-H Agents Association Annual State Meeting

4. Items for Information

- Economic development is everyone’s job. In order to keep the economy of Surry County strong, NC Cooperative Extension has partnered with the local Economic Development Partnership 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. Cooperative Extension has become a respected and important part of this development team with a seat on the Board of the Partnership, and has been involved with recruitment efforts for several businesses to the county. In April, *Fibrowatt* (<http://www.fibrowattusa.com/>), a poultry-based power generator announced plans to build in Surry County. This \$150 million investment will provide 100 jobs to the county and will serve as another poultry waste management option for producers.
- According to the Greene County Schools Wellness Policy, the goal is that all students possess the knowledge and skills to make healthy food choices and recognize the significance of physical activity as a lifetime behavior. North Carolina Cooperative Extension partnered with Snow Hill Primary School through *Project Eat Right Add to Life* program to provide nutrition education to second graders whose BMI's were at the 95 percentile or greater. Using *Food for Thought*, a K-5 curriculum to deliver nutrition education, 43 students learned about the food guide pyramid, nutrition fact labels, serving sizes, and physical activity. After 4 months of alternating nutrition education and 30 minutes of extra physical activity, 26 students reduced their BMI's. One mother stated that her daughter began reading the nutrition fact label and the brother duplicated his sister.
- 4-H works at building self-esteem in youth. Measuring self-esteem is difficult until you see a change in a child months or years later. Rondel came to Robeson County 4-H while in the process of being adopted by his 70 year old foster mother. He didn’t say much, or have any future goals. Four years after being in 4- H, he is getting ready to graduate from the Early College Program with his high school diploma and an Associate’s Degree. He is an assistant manager of a shoe department store and living his dream of being a minister. During a recent sermon, he talked about the influence of 4-H on his life, and how it has given him faith in himself and allowed him to pursue his dreams. He stated that without 4-H, he would not be the person he is today, and encouraged other youth to join.

- NC Cooperative Extension in Surry County partnered with the Surry County Cattlemen's Association to educate beef producers about the importance of mineral nutrition for their cattle. This year, over 68,000 pounds of minerals have already been utilized by producers through a cooperative purchasing program. This program saved producers almost \$8,500 so far this year in purchase price, and increased production/income from beef herds in the county by \$87,000. Over the last nine years, this program has saved and increased income to producers by over \$1.4 million.
- Fertilizer prices have soared in 2008 causing farmers to look for ways to reduce expenses. The NC Cooperative Extension in Edgecombe County worked with tobacco growers to reduce the phosphorous analysis of their base fertilizer on soils testing high in that nutrient. These growers were able to save \$22,200 in reduced fertilizer expenses and not affect plant growth.
- The Alternative Energy Series entitled *Using Wind & Water Power for the Home and Farm* held in the fall of 2007 made a substantial economic impact for one family. One of the participants was extremely happy to report she installed a ram pump in a pasture spring to supply water for their house and cattle watering boxes. She said this saved them over \$10,000 because they did not have to drill a well or run an electric pump.
- Wheat acreage in Edgecombe County has more than doubled this year due to good prices. Educational efforts by NC Cooperative Extension in Edgecombe County focused on helping new growers with basic production practices and established growers to maximize profitability. One area of concern in this year's wheat crop was a scattered infestation of cereal leaf beetles. Growers were assisted in scouting their crop for the insect and were able to save \$20,880 by not spraying their crop when the threshold was not reached.
- The NC Legislature recently passed more stringent stormwater regulations that will affect coastal counties. The regulations require stormwater runoff controls for properties that exceed a certain threshold of impervious surface. The Town of Pine Knoll Shores in Carteret County requested that NC Cooperative Extension provide a review of the new regulations and explain how the new rules will affect future development. In response to this request, Extension analyzed the regulations and prepared a presentation that summarized the new rules, provided information on stormwater best management practices (BMP) and showed specific examples of when BMP will be required. The information was presented to Town officials and citizens during a town hall meeting. As a result of these efforts, the Town of Pine Knoll Shores has a better understanding of how the rules will affect their town, what BMP are most suitable for their environment and how the rules will affect future development.
- The City of New Bern, NC is required to reduce water withdrawal from deep aquifers that are experiencing declining water levels and/or salt water intrusion. Furthermore, at one of the City's buildings, stormwater runoff from the rooftop was eroding their gravel drive and transporting sediment towards the Neuse River. NC Cooperative Extension in Craven County partnered with the City and Council of Governments to acquire grant funds and manage the installation of a water-harvesting system near the City building. The system includes a 3,400 gallon cistern and pump connected to the building's storm gutters. Stormwater is now piped from the building gutters to the storage cistern, and not the gravel drive, thus reducing erosion and sediment transport. Also, over 15,700 gallons of cistern water, rather than potable water, have been used to irrigate park grounds, thereby reducing aquifer water consumption.

5. Routine Items – None this week.