



**NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION  
WEEKLY UPDATE  
Week Ending 10/17/08**

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
10/14/08	Duplin County	Back Home Visit with Congressman Mike McIntyre

4. Items for Information

- Urban growth is rapidly covering what was formerly farmland with asphalt and houses. NC Cooperative Extension worked with a Cabarrus County Commissioner to appoint an Agricultural Advisory Board. This board will continue to inform farmland owners of the opportunity to participate in an Agricultural District and an Enhanced Agricultural District. Currently, over 150 landowners have placed over 11,000 acres into the program in which they agree to continue using their land for agricultural, horticultural or forestry purposes rather than development for the next ten years. About 60 percent of the land is enrolled in the enhanced program. For land to continue to be used for agricultural purposes, farmers must continue to make a profit. With the support of these groups, an application for grant funds to build a livestock slaughter facility has been given partial funding by NCDA's Ag Development and Trust Fund.
- Agricultural producers in Cabarrus County average a farm gate gross income of over \$18 million annually. Most of it comes from the sale of agricultural commodities that leave the County for processing or added-value, that are then shipped back as food items. County Commissioners are interested in a developing a more sustainable food supply within the County. An Agricultural Summit attended by over 100 interested people was held to discuss possible ways of developing a more sustainable local food system. Ideas included the development of a local slaughter facility for cattle, goats, sheep and swine that would allow producers to retail market rather than sell commodities.
- According to the Department of Energy, the typical US family spends close to \$1,300 a year on home utility bills. After attending an E-Conservation training session from NC State University, a train-the-trainer workshop on Reducing Your Home Heating Cost was conducted. Four Extension and Community Volunteers in Cumberland County attended and learned ways to help save energy and money in their home. Each volunteer was encouraged to offer this workshop to their club members and to people in their community. Program evaluations showed an increase in knowledge. Each participant will be contacted for a six-month follow up.

5. Routine Items – None this week.