



**NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
WEEKLY UPDATE
Week Ending 11/21/08**

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
11/21/08	Cumberland County	Farm City Week Luncheon

4. Items for Information

- In Duplin County, there are an increasing number of child abuse and neglect cases. The cost of foster care per day is \$14. NC Cooperative Extension in collaboration with the Duplin County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council and the Duplin County Department of Social Services provide parenting education for parents who are referred for custody issues and issues related to child abuse or neglect. Returned surveys report: 100% of children whose parents were involved in the parenting program had no new convictions while participating in this program; 90% of parents report an increase in functional family behavior; 80% of parents demonstrated more confidence in dealing with family problems; 80% of the children enrolled in the program have increased school attendance; and 28% of the students have received academic recognition. Based on the estimated cost to imprison an inmate in North Carolina (\$65 a day) a savings of \$854,100 is realized economically for 36 families.
- For the general public, two aspects of red imported fire ant infestations are particularly annoying: the unsightly mounds formed in lawns and yards and the painful stings received when mounds are disturbed. Within 24 hours after a person is stung, a pustule-like sore forms at each sting site, which usually itches intensively. A small proportion of people stung are highly allergic to fire ant stings and requires immediate medical attention. As part of a local hospital health fair, over 200 women were educated on the identification and control of fire ants in home landscapes. By correctly identifying and controlling fire ants, the participants avoid any negative health consequences and reduce the spread of fire ants.
- With the economy taking a turn for the worse this year, our agent in Buncombe County had several calls from clients wishing to increase their farm income with minimal input. One farm in particular had an existing structure that could be utilized for raising chickens for egg production. Cooperative Extension guided them through the process of preparing the house, locating birds, feed supplies, etc. The client bought birds that were ready to produce, and in two months time added nearly \$300 to their monthly income by selling locally produced eggs at a tailgate market. As a result of Extension's assistance, this client plans to expand their operation in 2009.

- An estimated 76 million illnesses are attributed to foodborne illness in the US each year. Although most of these infections cause mild illness, serious complications do occur in high-risk populations. Foodborne illness is nearly 100% preventable if the food handler applies safe food handling practices. It is estimated that the average cost of a foodborne illness outbreak to an establishment is about \$75,000. North Carolina foodservice regulations will change July 1, 2009 requiring food safety training to qualify for 2 points on their sanitation grade. Twenty-seven participants representing businesses from Beaufort, Bertie, Chowan, Hertford, Martin and Washington counties took part in the ServSafe food certification program offered by NC Cooperative Extension in Martin County. Of the 27 participants, 22 passed the certification exam, which will make their business eligible for the 2 points. Food safety education saves these counties \$450,000 in revenue loss due to loss of jobs and business.

5. Routine Items – None this week.