Agronomic Services lab invests in equipment upgrades with peak-season soil testing fees

Outcome is increased efficiency and safer working conditions

New equipment at the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Soil Testing lab in Raleigh is helping speed up the time it takes to process soil samples, and is also adding to safer working conditions for employees. Funding for the upgrades has come from peak-season fees that are charged for soil testing from December through March. The fee was implemented in 2013 by the N.C. General Assembly with the intent that the receipts would be used by NCD&A&CS to make improvements to services offered and to help alleviate testing delays.

Colleen Hudak-Wise, director of the Agronomic Services Division, said upgrades were necessary, and the fees are being re-invested into the lab, which in the end benefits users. “The peak-season fees have certainly made us sustainable,” Hudak-Wise said. “We were on a shoestring budget and running ourselves ragged trying to keep the equipment operational. This money has helped us replace equipment that wouldn’t have been replaced.”

Among the new and upgraded equipment are a pH robot, a humic-matter robot, an automated dispensing station, a down-draft table for grinding samples, and an instrument referred to as an ICP that analyzes phosphorous, calcium and potassium.

“The money raised with the peak-season fee has filled a huge need in the lab, and we (See Investment, pg. 8)

Timber Restoration Fund to help landowners recover

$1 million available to help with tree planting, but timeline is short

Landowners in 93 North Carolina counties whose timber lands were damaged by Hurricane Matthew or wildfires last year may apply for state funds to help with tree planting costs.

The Disaster Recovery Act of 2016 included $1 million for the Timber Restoration Fund, administered by the N.C. Forest Service. “Funding for the program is available now, and landowners are encouraged to apply early,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. “This is a one-time, time-limited fund designed to help landowners who have shovel-ready projects that can be completed by April 30, 2018.”

To be eligible for the program, projects must be between five and 100 acres, and landowners must be ready to implement site preparation and tree planting practices.

All N.C. counties are eligible for the program except Alamance, Durham, Gravely, Orange, Person, Vance and Warren.

Interested landowners should contact their county ranger’s office to apply. To learn more about the Timber Restoration Fund, visit http://ncforestservice.gov and follow the links under “Managing Your Forest.”

From the tractor

by Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler

Commissioner Troxler

This year is off to a busy, busy start, and I wanted to use my column this month to pass along some news items and updates that might be of interest to you.

First, I want to invite you to join me at the N.C. Ag Awareness Day at the Legislature on March 15. This will be the second Ag Awareness Day the department, N.C. Farm Bureau and other commodity associations have hosted, with the goal to raise awareness about the importance of agriculture and agribusiness to our economy. We are calling on members of the farm community to come to Raleigh and visit with your legislators to remind them that agriculture and agribusiness is our leading industry at $84 billion.

Plan to arrive at 9 a.m. at the State Fairgrounds, where shuttles will run downtown to the legislature. I encourage you to call ahead to schedule your visits with legislators between 9 and 11 a.m. or between noon and 2 p.m.

At 11 a.m. we will hold a rally on the Bicentennial Plaza located beside the Agriculture Building between the State Capitol and the Legislative Building. A bagged lunch will be provided, and shuttles will run back to the fairgrounds until 3 p.m.

We need a strong turnout in Raleigh. I hope you will plan to attend March 15. I also want to mention the diligent work of the Industrial Hemp Commission in moving forward with temporary rules for the Industrial Hemp Pilot Project, allowing for the application process to get underway.

Since the commission’s first meeting in November, members have worked quickly to develop rules for this brand new program to get them through the rule-making process, with the goal of allowing growers to put a crop in the ground in 2017. The temporary rules have been approved by the Rules Review Commission, and the application period is now open for growers interested in the research pilot program.

To find a link to the application, go to our website and click on the Industrial Hemp page at http://www.ncag.gov/industrial. In case you missed it, I also want to mention a few take away points from presentations by two N.C. State University economists who spoke at the Ag Development Forum in early February.

Economist Blake Brown looked at production numbers, demand and prices for a number of commodities, and the outlook was down in a number of areas. Referencing large supplies of livestock, he noted that prices are expected to decline in 2017.

On the positive side, he anticipates exports being up for pork, poultry and beef.

On the crop side, Blake said there is a lot of corn, soybeans and peanuts, and cotton is struggling.

(See Troxler, pg. 2)
Agriculture Review

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Both former members of the Special Crop Block Grant Program.

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PHONE: 919-707-3001
Steve Troxler
Commissioner

NCDA&CS taking applications for specialty crop block grants

The N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is accepting grant applications for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Nonprofits and government agencies have until March 15 to apply.

The Specialty Crop Block Grant Program aims to enhance the economic growth of specialty crops in the marketplace. It is managed by the department, through funding by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

“In 2016, we awarded more than $1 million for 11 projects across the state,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. “The success and growth of specialty crops is important to our farmers and consumers. Grants are not available for projects that directly benefit or provide a profit to a single organization, institution or individual. The application deadline is March 15.

Eligible projects must involve fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, culinary herbs and spices, medicinal plants, nursery, floriculture or horticulture crops. Funding is also available for projects aimed at developing local and regional food systems and improving food access.

For grant guidelines and an application, go to www.ncagr.gov/MFGrants.

Carolinas Cotton Growers Cooperative named 2017 Exporter of the Year

Garner-based Carolina Cotton Growers Cooperative has been named the 2017 N.C. Exporter of the Year by the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

The award recognizes individuals or companies that have made a positive impact on N.C. agricultural exports.

The award was presented to Michael Quinn, the cooperative’s president and CEO, and Keith Lucas, vice president of marketing, during the Ag Development Forum on Feb. 2 at the State Fairgrounds.

North Carolina cotton growers have had two of the hardest seasons in recent memory, Troxler said. “Despite these challenges, Carolina Cotton Growers Cooperative managed to leverage their relationships and experience to find new customers in existing international markets to the benefit of its member farmers.”

Formed in 1922, the cooperative is the second oldest in the nation and serves cotton growers in North Carolina and surrounding states. It is heavily involved in the international cotton industry.

Quinn is an active member of the Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee for Tobacco, Cotton and Peanuts, which advises the U.S. secretary of agriculture and U.S. trade representatives about a wide range of international cotton trade issues. Lucas is currently president of Cotton Council International and both are members of the International Cotton Association. In addition, the cooperative has participated in outbound trade missions with the NCDA&CS to advance N.C. cotton exports.

Quinn, who lives near Claytop, was appointed president and CEO of the cooperative in July 2001. Before that, he held positions with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. A native of Jones County, Quinn is active in industry organizations such as the National Cotton Council, American Cotton Marketing Cooperatives, and N.C. Cotton Producers Association.

Lucas, a Raleigh resident, is responsible for member-grower relations and managing the day-to-day operations of cotton services. In addition, he oversees the development of export markets. A native of Alabama, he is also involved in industry organizations such as the National Cotton Council.

Horse Events

March 4 – Borderland Horse Show. Contact Billy Hunt, 910-422-9113.
March 6 – Horse and Tack Auction. Contact Brad Stephens, 828-390-0878.
March 20 – Horse and Tack Auction. Contact Brad Stephens, 828-390-0878.
March 24 – Coggins Clinic. Contact Danny Sharp, 828-663-7387.
April 22 & 23 – Carolina Mountain Classic Horse Show. Contact All Merrit, 884-991-3004.
April 29 & 30 – Western District 4-H Horse Show. Contact Lisa Mackey, 828-403-6566.

*Show dates are subject to change. Call ahead to confirm.
Bees, Supplies & Services For Sale

NOTICE
NC L. requires a permit to sell bees. Please have a "Beekeeper Permit" on hand and be able to show it if requested. A permit is not required for: The sale of less than 10 bee hives, hive livestock, 3 lb. packages, and 5 lb. nuclei.

FARM EQUIPMENT


JD Mdl 694, runs good, $4,500. JD 1010 w/cult., $6,600; 1654 FC 4x4 w/580; 8000 Donald Cannon. Cat 2 3 pt. hitch, GC. $3,600. 3000 combine, new. $7,900. Paul Crowder, Pendel 336-388-2399.


FWR Cult Cab w/mower, show ready, $2,500. Ronnie Franklin, Morganton 828-217-1901.


JD 820, $6,500; 20 blade King disc, $500; 4 ft. Bush Hog, $1,000. C. Morris 814-618-7092.

Speedex 244 tractor w/planter & 5 ft. cultiv., GC, $3,200; AC 310 tractor w/hearder & mowing deck, $550. Curtis Oakley, Burlington 336-313-1380.

JD 2040 tractor, 40 hp, new tires, paint, hydr & pump, seat & 7,000 lb. JD 3055; Forage King, Norwood, NC, $4,500. Medlin, Marshville 704-774-5355.

RWB & tractors, $200-700; U & UC, $125.00. Bees, Supplies & Services, Parts & Tractors, Tom Thorne, Wilson 28492-289-6190.

Gleaner M3 combine, hydro, rains & 11 in. to 16 in. tires, $4,450. S. Strong, Good Coat, $6,500. Delta 524-5809 or 714-1132.

Bees, Supplies & Services Wanted

Bees equipment

JD Mdl 694, runs good, $4,500. JD 1010 w/cult., $6,600; 1654 FC 4x4 w/580; 8000 Donald Cannon. Cat 2 3 pt. hitch, GC. $3,600. 3000 combine, new. $7,900. Paul Crowder, Pendel 336-388-2399.


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Bees, Supplies & Services Wanted

Bees equipment

EARMARKS

1994 Ford 7740 tractor, cab heat/air, 2nd quickie hitch, 2350 hours, $8,000. Agent, Goldsboro 919-738-2803 x3445.

1997 Int'l 310 shop car, 20 ft box, 2 in. tandem, $6,500. Agent, Goodnight, China Grove 919-738-2803 x3445.

1997 Int'l Farmall 590, 2nd floor, $2,000. JD 9925 tractor, 600 hours, $5,000. McDavid, Ramseur 336-879-2966.

Log deck skid rolls for mounting on deck. Harlan Sawyer, Swannanoa 228-799-8583.

Tractors & attachments:


Tillage tool, front loader, nos JD hydr. housing, paint, decals, battery, starter, belts. Contact: E.J. McGuire, Farmville 919-964-1064 after 4 p.m.

J. Lloyd Mabe, Danbury 336-795-9175.

Used equipment:


NI 3033 stalk wagon, 100 hp Bagger & Gen. $6,000. John McCoy, Cove City 252-474-8255.

Backhoe w/pt attachment for 40-50 hp tractor. 911-907-4950. Wheel loader:

Side emblems for T-30 tractors, 911-918-3990. Hay conditioning:


Rear tractor tires, 15.5x38, need 2 GC. Tommy Wilmot, Pelham 910-332-7215.

Rear wheel spacers

D10 & CA for parts/restore, 1953 & 1947 Farmall A.

CAT 955L loader

NI 323 hay dancer, 2 in. tandem, $1,800. Roger Holt, Mocksvile 704-640-3953.


Haylage & Grain

Outdoor hay:


Mixed grass hay, 4x6 rolls, no rain, dry stored, $45/ea. L. Danlup, Robbins 910-648-2680.


Mixed feed:


Boats, water sports:

Sheffield 225-753-3450 or 717-8092.

Fescue hay, 4x6 bales, no rain, dry stored, wrapped in baled, combine can deliver, 42x64 rolls, $10, 42x56 rolls, $9. L. Brown & Associates, Greensville 228-489-0991.

Tobacco:

Grass hay


Hay, baled hay:


Hay, quality:

Baled hay:


Feed, hay:


Hay, quality, $35/roll.

Good grass:


Barns, quality hay, bales, 2016, cut 4x4, 4x5 bales, horse quality, $35/roll.

Grass hay

Greensboro 336-674-7477.

Baled hay:


Hay, quality:

Baled hay, 4x6 bales, no rain, dry stored under shed on wood pallets & plastic wrap, horse quality, 2 ton/tonne, $30/ea. Larry Hagan, Morganton 228-484-0991.


Grass hay:

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HAY & GRAIN


**Mixed hay, cut, bale, fed, hay bale, quality hay, **stored, dry & never wet, good quality, delivered, for extra, $35-45/ea. David Carpenter, Menafie, Elland 919-563-6760.

**2016 Coastal Bermuda hay, quality hay, bale, delivered, for sale, 4x5 bales, $45 ea.** Steve Jones, Thomasville 336-475-6359.

**Mixed hay, quality hay, bale, quality hay, bale, delivered, for sale, 40 bales, approx. 500 lb, $30/ea.** Cliff Ford, Statesville 704-808-6571.


**2012 Adams hose/stock trailer, 2 horse, LNC, #200 Robert Sell, Wilmington 336-416-2520.**

**Rocking R Ranch big horn saddle, tack, boots, 16 in. seat, $700. Ronnie Franklin, Morganton 828-217-1901.**

**Barn horse & pasture for lease in Walburg & Midway area, $250-300. W.L. Clodfelter, Salisbury 336-769-2324 or 407-3282.**

**Large horse barn for rent, 180 b, 12 ft, lounge room, horse wash room, riding ring & 4 ac pasture, water, $100/horse/wk minimum, $450/barn & pasture. David Watterson, Lexington 319-498-8054.**

**Horse corral panels, 12 ft, great for riding ring, round pen arena, etc., pin connectors, loop legs, welded corners, delivery, bale, $5 per panel, delivered.** For availability, please check in advance. Adam Moore, Monroe 704-361-2435.

**2016 alfalfa hay, horse quality, no rain, no square, southeastern Catawba co, $950. David Bean, Claremont 704-622-6667.**

**Timothy/hoar/hay, sq. bale, delivered, for sale, $45/bale.** Donna Clayton, Roxboro 336-592-1300.

**Mixed grasses, mostly fescue & orchard grass, sq. bales, 2016 crop, no rain, at bARN, dry, $45-50/bale. Sylvia Reider, Welcome 336-731-4015.**

**Mixed grasses, quality hay, bale, quality hay, bale, delivered for sale, available for smaller amounts, $35/ea. David Moore, summerfield 336-908-6051.**

**Hay, sq. bale, 1st cut, stored in dry, $5/ea. Donald Wall, Statesville 704-947-0624.**

**Hay, sq. bale, goat/ cow/ goat, $4.25/ea. horse quality, all types, wire tied, delivered, for sale, $5/ea.**For availability, please check in advance. Adam Moore, Monroe 704-361-2435.

**Large horse & pasture for lease in Walburg & Midway area, $250-300. W.L. Clodfelter, Salisbury 336-769-2324 or 407-3282.**

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**Hay, sq. bale, goat/ cow/ goat, $4.25/ea. horse quality, all types, wire tied, delivered, for sale, $5/ea.**For availability, please check in advance. Adam Moore, Monroe 704-361-2435.
Snow Blue Scale, Mexican Speckled, ton 252-717-8411. w/o, will start laying any time, 463-4687. approx. 1 y/o, $10-12/ea.; $75/rock hen & brown sex link maran chicks & khaki campbell orpington, black australorpe, 859-5960. bison, Denton 336-250-5960 or 2016 hatch, $35. Jo Ellen Roch chickens & 1,100 quail eggs, 980-777-0290. 963-8727 or 622-2386. 2-500,000 btu, $300/ea.; other feed auger system, $800; cable Marion 828-738-8533.

**For Sale**

**LIVESTOCK**

**Commercial Angus steers & heifers,** $1,300; commercial Angus, 15-30 lbs. 2016 born, 20 lbs. on ground, $2,200. Brian Payne, Madison 336-423-2882.


**Poultry & Supplies Wanted**

Bantams, 1-2. cock/chins, 1-2 mottled hens. Wade Shelton, Mt. Airy 336-774-2254. diamond, several colors, molted pairs, 50 & up; single birds, $10 & up. Brian Purdy, Mocksville, old timey little white chicken, 75¢ & up, 262-2386. old timey small white chicken, $5/25 & up; other breeds, var. 50¢ & up. Larry Hayes, Eden 336-627-4952.

**Supplies**

Chicken feed trio, 20 lb., $4.50 & up. Randy White, Stuart 336-963-8727 or 622-2386.


Bik Americanica tri, 2 pullets. 8 m., cocked. 8 m., 60¢. Lynn Hahn, Eden 336-423-2882.

Light & weather condition Bobwhite quail, 54¢. 301-, $1; 336-1425 or 682-2252, Lumberton 910-374-8176.

Old English game ban-\( \times \)s, barred rock hens & black sex link hens, approx. 1 y/o, do 10-12¢ & up; rampy White, 336-361-6497.


Angus heifers, born 9 y/o, 10-2016, white face cows, all blk. Angus, good disposi-\( \times \)on & temperament. $450/ea.; 700-385-2206, Shuford, Lexington 336-406-5886.


HELPERD HEREFORDS


For Sale

**LIVESTOCK**

Birmingham roller pigeons, performance bred, great spinners, 10, 919-563-6585.

Boer x kiko. Add your name here.

Ded, $500 & up. Tony Evans, Glad Valley 336-657-2050.


Berkshire x. white, hair, red, black, 54. 35-110 $52. Dory Van Duzer, Durham 336-419-9646.

Blk. Angus herd bulls, steers & heifers, Traveler, GT Maximum & 727 Executive Bloodlines, $700 & up. Jim Gross, 336-376-3773 between 5-11 p.m.

Nubian doe, born 2013, can milk & produce, $600 & up. Nancy McKnight, State Road 336-874-9454. Milk & produce, up to 8280.

Blk. Angus bull, out of sire Tiz Traveler, all vacc. & testing, ready for breeding, do 03-28-15, $2,000 OBO. Barry Liddle, Jeffersonville 336-973-1106.


**LIVESTOCK**

**Livestock For Sale**

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Blk. Angus bull, out of sire Tiz Traveler, all vacc. & testing, ready for breeding, do 03-28-15, $2,000 OBO. Barry Liddle, Jeffersonville 336-973-1106.


Many varieties, disc. w/lg. or/y/o, early, mid & late season, Spring 919-795-9755.

Clemson, disc w/lg. or/y/o, early, mid, & late season, 803-767-7156.


Sorghum cane seed, $0.99, $5/bushel; Ozark, $7.50/bushel; Bulk barn, $4,800. Donnie Clayton, Albemarle 704-213-1145.

Lumber, pine & oak, good for barns & sheds, $0.50/bd. ft & up; generator, 8000 w, 3 pt. hitch; 1995 Ford F350, 4x4, used, $1,050. Don Edwards, Albemarle 828-336-9755.

Tools & Equipment


Wanted

For Sale

White or yellow nest, $150. Alexis Thompson, Chapel Hill 336-372-1043.


Lumber, must be disassembled & overhauled elec. brakes, new tires, 2011 F250 Super Duty, v6, needs service body avail., $6,400. Debbie Muller, Liberty 336-622-1199.


Sorghum cane seed, $0.99, $5/bushel; Ozark, $7.50/bushel; Bulk barn, $4,800. Donnie Clayton, Albemarle 704-213-1145.

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Tools & Equipment


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White or yellow nest, $150. Alexis Thompson, Chapel Hill 336-372-1043.
are grateful to be able to reinvest in it in much needed upgrades," Hudak-Wise said. "We depend on it to replace aging equipment and to hire more highly technical temporary staff.

"Prior to these new purchases, the last ICP unit we replaced was purchased in 1994. It is hard to deal with something that was just worn out," she said. "You can’t operate the lab hoping for a good day when all necessary instruments are functional."

"Moving the lab forward with automated equipment has allowed management to more efficiently use staff, shifting workers to areas where the process can get backlogged, and planning surge weeks with longer hours during peak times to push more samples through the lab."

Automatic has also allowed the lab to almost double the volume it processes daily, said Dr. David Hardy, Soil Testing Section chief. "The addition of automation is not to replace people, but to improve the efficiency and capacity, he said.

"During the years in the early 2000s, we could process 60 sets with 36 samples per set in an eight-hour day," Hardy said. Replacement and addition of equipment with automation have boosted that to 120 sets a day on surge weeks for a nine-hour day, he said, adding the goal is 100 sets during a normal eight-hour day. Hardy also credits having a creative and motivated staff to help identify critical needs where efficiencies and automation in ergonomics can be made.

Before the peak-season fee went into effect, the price of equipment limited the ability of the lab to replace it or add additional pieces, Hudak-Wise said. New equipment additions have ranged in price from $60,000 to $110,000.

The automated dispensing unit was specifically designed for the lab to both dispense extractants needed to determine soil humic matter and analysis of plant requirements, forklift safety, and information about the NCDOL’s Gold Star Growers program. The lab also offers shippers to growers typically submitting lots of samples. Each shipper holds 36 samples per box, Hardy said, and more easily stacks on pallets for processing. The shippers are free, and can be requested by calling the lab at 919-733-2655.

The Equestrian Exchange Tack Consignment Spring Sale will be held March 23-26 at the Holshouser Building at the State Fairgrounds in Raleigh. This sale is an opportunity to buy and consign anything related to equestrian sport, tack and show clothing for all disciplines of riding, including barn supplies and other equestrian equipment. Bar code tagging on day one allows consignors to drop off items March 21 from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and March 22 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. A special生怕 season night open to the public will be March 23 from 5 to 10 p.m. Cost for the special night is $10 cash for adults, free for ages 12 and under. Open shopping with free admission will be March 24 and 25 from 10 a.m. and 10 p.m., and March 26 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Some items will be discounted on the final day. Customers will pick from unissued items March 28 first come, first serve.

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Bucolic briefs

The Cape Fear Poultry Association will hold APA/ABA-sanctioned open and junior shows March 11 at the Johnston County Livestock Arena in Smithfield. Entries are being accepted for bantams, large fowl, waterfowl, turkeys, guineas and all breeds listed in the APA/ABA standards. The entry deadline is March 5. For more information, contact Wilbur Haney, show director, at 919-766-2936 or email at langshanman@gmail.com. The show catalog and entry form can be found at www.capefearpoultryassociation.com.

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