



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**MONDAY, MAY 15, 2018**

CONTACT: *Dexter Hill, marketing specialist*  
*NCDA&CS Marketing Division*  
*252-527-7125; dexter.hill@ncagr.gov*

## **NCDA&CS expects good blueberry crop through July**

RALEIGH – Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler says the 2018 blueberry season is shaping up to be a good one despite unusually cold weather in the first quarter of the year.

“Our blueberry growers have become accustomed to dealing with unusual weather,” Troxler said. “They have done an excellent job protecting the crop from frost this year, and overall, it is in very good condition. Consumers should expect fresh, N.C. blueberries from now through July.”

To celebrate the season, the department will host two Blueberry Days in June. The State Farmers Market in Raleigh will host Blueberry Day on June 21. From 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., visitors can enjoy free blueberry dessert samples, fresh blueberries and recipes. On June 22, the Robert G. Shaw Piedmont Triad Farmers Market in Colfax will host its Blueberry Day from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Market staff will be serving up free scoops of blueberry ice cream, recipes and more.

Blueberry lovers also can celebrate the season during the annual N.C. Blueberry Festival in Burgaw June 15 and 16. The weekend features blueberry cooking contests, a bike ride, barbecue cookoff, scholarship pageant and more. Details are available at [www.ncblueberryfestival.com](http://www.ncblueberryfestival.com).

North Carolina is the sixth-largest producer of blueberries in the nation. About 8,000 acres of blueberries are grown in the state. In 2016, blueberry production was valued at \$66.9 million. Most of the blueberries grown in the state are sold to retail stores. When buying blueberries, the department encourages consumers to look for “North Carolina” on the label. The department also offers an online directory of you-pick-blueberry farms at [www.ncfarmfresh.com](http://www.ncfarmfresh.com).

Consumers can find more information about N.C. blueberries, as well as a wide variety of recipes on the N.C. Blueberry Council website at [www.northcarolinablueberries.com](http://www.northcarolinablueberries.com).