

Bucolic briefs

The cooperative extension offices of Person County and Granville County will host a Beginning Farmer Workshop Feb. 7. The event will be held at the Person County Office Building Auditorium at 304 S. Morgan St. in Roxboro. Registration begins at 9 a.m., followed by the program from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. This educational opportunity is for anyone interested in starting a farming operation. No experience necessary. Topics will include basic needs for crops and livestock, terminology of farming, economics of farming, equipment, risks and more. This fast-paced program will hit the highlights of several areas related to farming and agriculture. Registration fee covers speakers, materials and lunch. Cost is \$25 per person or \$40 for two people from the same farm. Pre-registration deadline is Jan. 31. After that, the fee increases to \$35 for a single person and \$50 for two from the same farm. For information or to request a registration form, contact Kim Woods at kim_woods@ncsu.edu or at the Person County office 336-599-1195 or the Granville County office at 919-603-1350.

Franklin County Cooperative Extension will host its annual Successful Small Farms Opportunities Conference Feb. 17 from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Louisburg College in Louisburg. Topics covered during the conference include industrial hemp, shiitake mushroom production, farmstead commercial kitchens, sheep and goat production, backyard poultry nutrition, soil health, what's new in farm social media, nut tree production and marketing, growing herbs/cut flowers for production and marketing, hi-tunnel greenhouse season extensions, and brambles and berry production. The cost is \$50 per person and includes a resource notebook and lunch. There will also be a free seed exchange. For more information and to register, contact the Franklin County Cooperative Extension Service at 919-496-3344 or email Martha Mobley at Martha.mobley@ncsu.edu.

The N.C. Pork Council will host its annual meeting March 8 at the Stateview Hotel on N.C. State University's Centennial Campus. The conference will include opportunities to earn Operator in Charge (OIC) credits and hear updates from state officials and national representatives. For more information and to register, go to www.ncpork.org.

The N.C. Aquaculture Development Conference will be held

The Cape Fear Farm Heritage Association will host Southern Farm Days March 16-18 in Lake Waccamaw to benefit the Boys and Girls Homes of North Carolina. The event features antique tractors, engines and autos, and will include an antique swap meet, kids games, farm animals, farm life activities, food vendors, a homestead village, horse and mule demonstrations, Native American demonstrations, music, wagon rides, a Wild West show and more. For more information, contact Robert Mills, president, at 910-655-3638 or Shannon Gore, vice president, at 910-640-9522.

The Equestrian Exchange Spring Tack Consignment Sale will be held March 22-25 at the Holshouser Building at the State Fairgrounds in Raleigh. Participants can buy and consign anything related to equestrian sports, including tack, driving equipment, show clothing for all disciplines, bran supplies, carts, horse trailers for a representation fee, etc. Consignors drop off tagged items March 20 from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and March 21 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. A special premier shopping night will be held March 22 from 5 to 10 p.m. Cost is \$10 cash. Free open shopping will be March 23 and March 24 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. and March 25 from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Consignors earn 70 percent, and have the option to donate unsold items to a nonprofit equestrian organization. Volunteers wanted.

Volunteers shop before consignors, consignors shop before the public. For more information, contact Lynn Beeson at 336-362-6248 or Tanya Wright at 540-977-1950 or go to www.EquestrianExchange.com.

The 71st Forsyth Fowl Fanciers Poultry Show will be held March 31 at the Dixie Classic Fairgrounds in Winston-Salem. The entry fee per bird is \$3 and the entry deadline is March 25. For more information contact James Eaton Jr., 336-992-3598 or email at jfeatonjrkw@aol.com.

As a way to help farmers and agricultural workers stay safe at work, the N.C. Department of Labor offers safety videos on a variety of topics through its YouTube channel. Video topics include: preventing green tobacco sickness, hazard communication, tobacco harvester safety, heat stress, migrant housing requirements, forklift safety, and information about the NCDOL's Gold Star Growers program. The videos are in English and Spanish to increase understanding of safety hazards and preventing accidents. To learn more about the NCDOL and the Agricultural Safety and Health Bureau, go to www.nclabor.com or call 1-800-NC-LABOR (800-625-2267). NCDOL is also on Facebook and Twitter (@NCDOL).

Beekeepers with bees for rent and growers interested in bee pollination services can post their information on the BeeLinked website at www.ncagr.com/beelinked. The site is hosted by the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the N.C. State University Apiculture Program. Anyone interested in listing their information can do so by filling out an online Submit Your Ad form on the BeeLinked page or by contacting NCDA&CS at 919-233-8214 or by email at NCHoneybee@ncagr.gov or call NCSU at 919-515-1660. The NCDA&CS Plant Industry Division regulates the movement of agricultural or related items capable of spreading harmful insects, diseases, and other pests. Beekeepers participating in this program will be required to comply with all honey and bee industry regulations.

The N.C. Ag Finance Authority provides credit to agriculture in areas where financing is not available at reasonable rates and terms. The agency originates, services and finances farm loans, rural business loans, disaster loans and cotton gin loans. It also offers tax-exempt ag development bonds for agribusiness processing, ag-related manufacturing or ag waste disposal. For more about Ag Finance Authority programs or to request a loan application, call 919-790-3949 or email at RequestLoanInfo@ncagr.gov.
