

Agricultural REVIEW

Volume: 101 - No. 4

April 2026

Raleigh, N.C.

2026 Got to Be NC Festival

What: Rides, food, games and a 50,000-square-foot building full of North Carolina products. The annual Got to Be NC Festival is a rain-or-shine event. Free admission.

When: May 15-17, 2026

Where: North Carolina State Fairgrounds, Raleigh

Upcoming Ag Review ad deadlines

The following are deadlines to submit ads for the Agricultural Review newspaper.

May 1 for the June issue

June 1 for the July issue

July 1 for the August issue

Reminder: Advertisements for the Ag Review may now be submitted through an online portal.

Sellers and buyers can visit <https://apps.ncagr.gov/agreview/Pages/SubmitAnAd> and fill out the form with the details of the item they are selling or seeking.

Sellers: Please continue to be mindful of potential scams. Be wary of out-of-state buyers and checks.

Flavors of Carolina sees high attendance, engagement



Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler greeted attendees at the 2026 Flavors of Carolina show. N.C. food vendors connected with buyers.

The 2026 Flavors of Carolina food show was one of the best-attended in the show's more than 35-year history. North Carolina's premier food and beverage sampling and networking event, Flavors of Carolina is an exclusive, invite-only event where the very best of our state's farms, waters and kitchens come together with key decision-makers from across the food industry.

Got to Be NC members showcase their finest products to top buyers from grocery chains, distributors, restaurants, foodservice, brokers and media. The 2026 event was held in February in Greensboro and garnered positive feedback from vendors and buyers. Roughly 75% of vendors reported making six or more buyer connections, and initial feedback anticipated over \$3 million in new and expanded sales growth through the event.

Seven N.C. counties to be treated for spongy moth

The N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has identified infestations of spongy moth in seven counties across North Carolina that it anticipates treating in 2026.

Residents within the impacted areas were notified by mail in February about these infestations as well as proposed treatments. Information sessions were held in March to collect public comments for consideration. Management activities will start as early as April and could continue through June.

The areas to be managed include parts of:

- Haywood County -Two blocks, 13,891 acres total. 2,656 male moths trapped in 2024; following treatment in 2025, the trapping count dropped to 637 male moths
- Watauga County -A 2,450-acre block. 64 male moths trapped in 2025

indicating a reproducing population

- Stokes County -Two blocks, 2,806 acres total. 2,373 male moths trapped in one block in 2025, 20 male moths trapped in the second block.
- Rowan County -A 1,404-acre block. 53 male moths trapped in 2025 indicating a reproducing population
- Warren County -A 1,069-acre block. 30 male moths trapped in 2025 indicating a reproducing population
- Franklin County -A 1,119-acre block. 64 male moths trapped in 2025 indicating a reproducing population
- Currituck County -a 1,506-acre block. 437 male moths trapped in

(See Spongy moth, pg. 5)

From the tractor



Commissioner Troxler

I am writing this column as we are finalizing the details about the \$221 million USDA Hurricane Helene disaster assistance block grant we secured in 2025. By the time you receive the newspaper, we anticipate the application period for **most** of the block grant program will be open for producers in the 39 counties declared a disaster by the President or designated a disaster by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

This block grant only applies to producers and landowners in those counties, with a focus on four specific categories of loss. Please note that

an application is required for each category and county a producer or landowner qualifies for.

The categories cover the following areas: timber loss for private timber landowners with 10 acres of timber loss or more; farm infrastructure to include cost-share assistance for farm structure repair or replacement and bridge repair or replacement; future economic loss which includes cost-share assistance for economic loss of perennial crops, poultry and aquaculture operations; and market loss for commodities and value-added products for harvested or unharvested commodities or select value-added products where the value was reduced or destroyed by a power outage.

The Timber Loss Relief Program component will be administered by the department's N.C. Forest Service. Details on this program's requirements, sign-up period, etc. will be available in the coming weeks with information posted on the NCDA&CS home page, the N.C. Forest Service website and through local County Ranger offices.

The federal block grant program is completely separate from the state

program, which is why there is a new application period. I would encourage producers and landowners who had losses in these categories to go online at www.ncagr.gov/agdisaster and click on the link to the Federal Block Grant Assistance Program to access the application and look for more details on the program. ‘

It is important that we reach as many farmers and landowners with ag and forestry losses as possible, so please share this information with anyone who may not have access to the internet or who may not have heard about the new application period. Local Cooperative Extension offices are ready to assist producers or landowners who need help with the applications.

We will also be operating a disaster assistance hotline Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. to answer questions about the program. That number is 1-866-747-9823.

I am proud of the work the department has already done with the state disaster assistance program, but we know as we launch this federal block grant program that we still have a lot more to do.

We have been working with USDA since the grant was announced in September to put together a plan for what would be covered and how we would distribute funds. We received final approval of that plan, which was required before we could move forward, in mid-March.

I continue to hear from many farmers, and I know how important these disaster funds are to them as they work to recover from this disaster amid a very challenging production time with low prices and increasing input costs. Distributing the remaining state funds and now processing applications for these federal funds will remain a top priority for the department.

To provide a brief update on the state crop disaster program as of press time on March 18, we have distributed \$285.48 million with another \$547,950 obligated. Over \$280 million through 7,745 payments have cleared. We are continuing to work on applications for infrastructure losses and have

(See Troxler, pg. 2)

Agricultural Review

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Steve Troxler
 Commissioner

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Troxler

(Continued from pg. 1)

sent out 6,977 crop payments, 660 nursery payments, 221 infrastructure payments and seven aquaculture payments.

We have a Crop Loss Disbursements Tracker for the state crop disaster program on the Ag Disaster website that highlights what has been distributed. You can search by counties also if you are interested.

I hope to share more details and updates in the future. Please follow the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services on Facebook and X (formerly Twitter) or Got to Be NC on Instagram for the latest updates. We will also post updated information on our website at www.ncagr.gov. We have an Agricultural Disaster Crop Loss Program link on the home page where you can search for the latest information.

NCFS: Use common sense, best practices this spring wildfire season

With North Carolina's spring wildfire season arriving at a time when most of the state is experiencing moderate to severe drought, the N.C. Forest Service is urging the public to apply best practices and common sense with all outdoor fire, especially yard debris burns.

"With the recent rainfall combined with multiple winter storms earlier this year, some folks may not realize that most of North Carolina is still experiencing very dry conditions," said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. "Our state's gradual descent into drought and prolonged dry conditions means wildfires can ignite more easily, burn more intensely and spread quicker. The best defense against wildfires will always be to prevent them from starting."

Escaped yard debris burns, largely due to carelessness, continue to be the leading cause of wildfires across the state, accounting for nearly half of all wildfires in North Carolina. In general, human activity is responsible for 99% of wildfires, and spring weather tends to draw people outdoors to work in their yards with many choosing to burn as a method to dispose of leaves, limbs and other yard debris.

"A fire can escape in a matter of seconds, especially on warm days when winds are gusty," Troxler added. "This means you never leave a fire unattended until it is completely out and cold."

Other forms of human caused wildfires stem from machine and vehicle use, dragging tow chains, arson and escaped campfires.

Western North Carolina counties that suffered substantial forest damage during Hurricane Helene remain especially vulnerable to wildfires due to dead and dying timber contributing to an excessive debris and fuel load.

Before starting an outdoor fire, contact your local NCFS county ranger's office. For safe burning practices to help prevent wildfire, the NCFS offers the following guidance:

Check local burning laws. Some communities allow burning only during specified hours. Others forbid it entirely.

Make sure you have a valid permit. You can obtain a burn permit at any N.C. Forest Service office or authorized permitting agent, or online at www.ncforests-service.gov/burnpermits.

Keep an eye on the weather. Don't burn on dry, windy days.

Local fire officials can recommend a safe way to burn debris. Don't pile vegetation on the ground. Instead, place it in a cleared area and contain it in a screened receptacle away from overhead branches and wires.

Be sure you are fully prepared before burning. To control the fire, you will need a hose, bucket, steel rake and a shovel for tossing dirt on the fire. Keep a phone nearby, too.

Never use kerosene, gasoline, diesel fuel or other flammable liquids to speed up debris burning.

Stay with your fire until it is completely out. If it's too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave.

These same tips apply to campfires and grills as well. Douse burning charcoal briquettes or campfires

thoroughly with water. Drown all embers, not just the red ones. When soaked, stir the coals and soak them again. Make sure everything is wet and that embers are cold to the touch. If you do not have water, mix enough dirt or sand with the embers to extinguish the fire, being careful not to bury the fire. Never dump hot ashes or coals into a wooded area.

The public is reminded to never fly a drone near, around or over a wildfire. Firefighting aircraft that respond to wildfires fly low in support of ground personnel. Drones can pose a serious threat to pilots and public safety. A drone that disrupts air operations also puts firefighters, residents and property at risk of loss to wildfire.

Where there's fire, there's smoke, and if you live in an area where wildfire risk is high, staying smoke-ready can be critical to personal health and well-being. Take steps now to prepare for wildfire smoke. This is especially important for smoke sensitive individuals including children, active people, older adults and people with heart or lung disease such as asthma. Being prepared means knowing where to find information about air quality and utilizing the air quality index. Use resources like www.ncair.org, <https://airquality.climate.ncsu.edu/> and www.airnow.gov.

To learn more about preparing for and preventing wildfires, visit www.preventwildfire.nc.org.

Over 200 years of wheat production at Wester Farms

For over 200 years, the Wester family has been producing wheat, and other crops, in Louisburg. As a legacy crop in our state's agriculture industry, wheat plays an important role for consumers, farmers and food producers across the globe.

As a fourth-generation farmer, Natalie Wester Farmer has a strong passion for agriculture that was rooted in her at a young age. "Growing up on the farm, I was always passionate about agriculture and livestock," she said. "Agriculture was always a passion for me. My dad and I would spend lots of time together raising animals for me to show at competitions across the state, so I learned a lot from both him and my grandfather." Since 1779, Wester Farms has produced a variety of crops, including wheat, tobacco, cotton, corn and soybeans. Today, they continue to produce these crops alongside cucumbers and oats, as well as raise 500 head of cattle. "After graduating from N.C. State University with degrees in Agriculture Business and Livestock Management, I returned to the farm full-time and worked alongside my father until he passed away in 2020," Natalie said. "While in college I met my husband Jason, who is on the farm full-time as well managing our row crop operations and production." In addition to the farm, Natalie and Jason also operate a feed store and mercantile store on-site in Louisburg.

Wheat is typically started directly following the tobacco harvest at Wester Farms. "We usually plant and harvest anywhere from 250 to 300 acres of wheat each year," Jason said. "It's a great rotational crop with tobacco, which helps us utilize the same acre of land year-round." Once tobacco is harvested in the fall, Jason and his team will till the land in preparation for wheat planting. During that time, they also spread lime in the field(s) to raise the pH level of the soil and optimize growing conditions for the crop. Planting begins in late October once the fields are ready. From plant date until June harvest, Jason and his team monitor the fields to ensure the crop is receiving enough nutrition from the soil



Natalie Wester Farmer is the fourth-generation to farm her family's farm.

and apply a dose of nitrogen to encourage growth and provide extra nutrients. When it's ready for harvest, combines are used to gather the wheat and place it into bins for testing and production.

According to Jason, there are different levels of wheat production based on the quality of wheat harvested each year.

"Flour milling is what every farmer hopes for each year," he said. "Only the high-quality wheat is used to make flour, and it sells at a higher market price. However, the lower quality wheat, feed milling wheat, is used to make livestock feed and sells for a lower market price. Most farmers have some of both each year, depending on the weather and other factors throughout the growing season."

Throughout its history, Wester Farms has worked with many milling companies, feed companies, as well as produced their own livestock feed to sell at the feed store on-site. In fact, the family sold with Sanford Milling, now Buffalo Milling, for many years, and their wheat was made into flour that was used in several of their labeled products, some even sold to restaurants like Biscuitville. "We continue to produce our own livestock feed here at the farm,

but we also partner with other feed companies that purchase our wheat and make livestock feed," Jason said. "As homesteading has grown in popularity over the last five years, the demand for livestock feed has increased across the community."

Livestock feed can be purchased at the feed store on-site. All other farm products can be found at the mercantile store, which is open five days a week year-round. The mercantile store offers Wester Farms beef, produce and other local products from companies across the state. "We really try to chase quality in all of the products that we offer, whether ours from the farm or those that we purchase from surrounding farms and companies," Natalie said. The store also puts together gift baskets for holidays and special occasions, so be sure to stop by and see what you can find!

When it comes to wheat production, one of the biggest misconceptions Jason and his family face is that farmers spray their crops with chemicals that are harmful in human consumption. "I challenge people to turn off the news media and travel to meet the farmers in your area," Jason said. "Many farmers are more than willing to talk with you about their operation and tell you the truth about the crops they produce." Natalie echoes his sentiment in saying that the products produced on farms across our nation are not only produced for farm stand and grocery store customers, but farm families themselves. "We believe in what we do, and we do it with a passion," she said.

Wester Farms is a part of our Bicentennial Farm Family Program, which means the farm has been in family operation for over 200 years! "Our house is in the middle of the farm, so we get to look out at this land and the legacy that it holds every single day," Natalie said. "I always knew that our family loved agriculture, but to do it, and do it well, for over 200 years takes intention and sacrifice. I am proud of our family legacy on this farm and fully believe that farming is what we were meant to do."

Crop This! Photo Contest — First Sprout of Spring



Last month, we announced the launch of our new monthly photo contest, Crop This!, which looks to highlight agriculture across North Carolina. Through your images, we hope to tell the story of our state's diverse and rich agricultural roots.

In its first month, dozens of amateur photographers across the state submitted photos of newborn baby farm animals and some blooming flowers — the first sprouts of spring across the state. The winning photo is at left. Thank you so much for your participation, and we can't wait to see what snapshots we get next month!

Do you want to have your photo featured in the Ag Review? Each month, we announce a theme focusing on a scene you might find on a working farm, agritourism destination or agribusiness venture. We challenge you to find or take a photo that fits the theme and submit it!

The winning photo of the month will be featured in an upcoming issue of the Ag Review and on our NCDA&CS social media channels. Each month's winner will also be considered for the 2026 Crop This! Photo of the Year. The Photo of the Year winning photographer will receive a prize pack of NCDA&CS and Got to Be NC goodies!

May theme: Generations on the Farm **Deadline for submission:** April 15
Send your photos to us at ncdablog@gmail.com. Include your name, county and a brief description of your photo. Original, amateur photography only. Open to North Carolina residents. Full terms and conditions online at www.ncagr.gov/divisions/public-affairs/ag-review/CropThis.

By submitting a photo, you grant permission for the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to reproduce, publish and use your photo in department publications, online and on social media.



Looking ahead...

June theme: We all Scream for N.C. Ice Cream, deadline May 15
July theme: Farmers Market Finds, deadline June 15
August theme: Farm Weddings, deadline July 15

Generations on the Farm
CROP THIS!

At left: One-day-old purebred black angus bull calf pictured with his mom.
Sarah Cartwright, Perquimans County
R&S Angus Beef, LLC

N.C. Forest Service recognizes sustainability efforts

To commemorate the annual tree-planting holiday Arbor Day, the N.C. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry program announced that 73 communities, 12 campuses and five utilities have been awarded 2025 Tree City USA, 2025 Tree Campus Higher Education and 2026 Tree Line USA designations. North Carolina observes Arbor Day the first Friday following March 15, while National Arbor Day is held the last Friday in April each year.

“Planting trees to conserve and enhance the sustainable management of urban forests doesn’t have to only take place on Arbor Day,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. “Communities, higher education campuses and utility companies who maintain a tree board or committee, have a tree plan, practice quality tree care and hold an Arbor Day celebration are doing their part to contribute to the long list of benefits that human and wildlife habitats depend on. I would love to see more join in the effort.”

The communities of Concord, Davidson, Gastonia and Wilmington



A tree seedling begins to grow.

were also awarded the Tree City USA Growth Award for 2025. Communities that have been designated a Tree City in the past year are eligible to apply for the Tree City USA Growth Award. The Tree City USA Growth Award recognizes specific community efforts in strengthening their urban and community forestry programs.

The Tree City USA program is a national program that provides the framework for community forestry management for cities and towns with Tree City USA status achieved by meeting four core standards of sound urban forestry management.

Similarly, two and four-year accredited colleges and universities can

earn Tree Campus Higher Education accolades for engaging their students and community in tree care efforts. Utility companies who demonstrate that they meet utility tree management standards and engage communities in their service areas are eligible for Tree Line USA honors.

The NCFS Urban and Community Forestry program oversees the application and award process for Tree City USA, Tree Campus Higher Education and Tree Line USA. NCFS staff are available to help landowners manage their woods, communities manage their urban forest, and to assist with developing Arbor Day celebrations.

NCAMPI dollars available

Applications are now being accepted through April 13 for the N.C. Agriculture Manufacturing and Processing Initiative, which was created to fund and promote the establishment of value-added agricultural manufacturing and food processing facilities in North Carolina. The program includes \$4.3 million in available funding to support eligible projects.

“This program opens new doors for farmers and agribusiness owners while providing consumers with more locally produced foods and products,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. “By supporting value-added opportunities, farmers can earn greater returns from their raw commodities, plus this initiative strengthens our ongoing efforts to expand local food production capacity.”

This initiative was established by the N.C. General Assembly in the 2023 session and is administered by the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Potential applicants are invited to contact NCDA&CS to discuss proposals prior to applying to determine fitness and for other guidance. Potential applicants are asked to email the Marketing office at ncampi@ncagr.gov.

The program is intended to:

- Provide support for agricultural processing opportunities that increase jobs and local tax bases across the state and/or reduce costs and increase profit options for N.C. farmers and growers.
- Identify and assess opportunities to increase value-added processing of commodities produced in the state and fill geographic and commodity gaps in North Carolina.
- Market and recruit facilities to fill such gaps and meet such opportunities.
- Support selected entities with funding for eligible costs necessary to create or expand North Carolina agricultural manufacturing facilities and projects related to increased demand for agricultural products.

The guidelines, application and supporting documents for NCAMPI can be found at <https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/marketing/ncampi>.

NCA&CS employees recognized with teamwork awards

For each quarter of the year, the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services recognizes a group of employees with an Excellence in Team Accomplishment Award. The award honors employees who demonstrate service-oriented teamwork while working together on projects that improve efficiency, make good use of taxpayer resources and benefit the citizens of North Carolina.

Teams are recognized during the department's regular meeting of division directors. Over the past year, four groups of employees from across the department were selected for the award. Their work ranges from improving facilities for public events to responding to natural disasters and strengthening programs that support farmers and agricultural markets.

The following is a look at the four teams recognized for their accomplishments.

Southeastern Agricultural and Events Center Team

The Southeastern Agricultural and Events Center team was recognized for a year of record activity at the Robeson County facility along with numerous improvements that enhanced the property and expanded its role in the community. The team members were honored with the 1st Quarter of 2025 Excellence in Team Accomplishment award during a presentation in March 2025.

In 2024, the center saw three-and-a-half times more rentals than in previous years. That surge in activity kept staff busy hosting events, but the team also found time to tackle projects around the facility and develop new partnerships that highlighted agriculture in the region.

Thirteen employees were honored with the award: Jacquelin Corona-Hernandez, receptionist; Kenny Graham, general utility worker; Terra Jacobs, administrative associate; Tim Graham, general utility worker; Mario Jones, heavy equipment operator; Wayne Revels, maintenance supervisor; Laurie Woods, temporary marketing representative; Tyler Seago, maintenance and construction technician; Cody Scott, temporary maintenance and facilities worker; Robert Oxendine, temporary maintenance and facilities worker; Ted Locklear, temporary maintenance and facilities worker; Josh Revels, temporary staff member; and Michelle Shooter, manager.

During the year, the team installed new parking lot and pavilion lighting, constructed a shavings shed and created a trail through the woods on the property. They also partnered with the Robeson County Arts Council on an agriculture-themed mural in the horse pavilion and worked with the Horse Council to obtain new jumps and equipment for horse shows.

Staff also worked with local Master Gardeners to add native plants to flower boxes and roadside areas, and they planted sunflowers along with peach and plum trees and blueberry bushes to highlight agriculture on the grounds.

"Site manager Michelle Shooter is obviously open to lots of possibilities, and she's passed along that willingness to do just about anything," Commissioner Steve Troxler said during the award presentation.

The team's willingness to handle projects themselves saved significant money. Employees painted the center's 10,000-square-foot meeting building, saving about \$7,500. Staff members with mechanical, welding and construction backgrounds also helped each other complete repairs and improvements across the property.

Beyond facility upgrades, the team also helped organize the inaugural Robeson County Ag Awareness Day, where about 1,500 third-grade students visited the center to learn about local agriculture. The event was held in partnership with Robeson

County Extension, Farm Bureau and AgCarolina Farm Credit.

Customers who rent the facility regularly praise the staff for their willingness to help make events successful, Troxler said.

"Because of their teamwork, the Southeastern Ag Center shines as a place for the community to come together," he said.

N.C. Forest Service GIS Hurricane Helene Response Team

In July, five members of the N.C. Forest Service were recognized with the 2nd Quarter of 2025 Team Accomplishment Award. They earned the award for their work providing mapping and data support during the response to Hurricane Helene, one of the most destructive natural disasters to affect North Carolina.

The GIS Hurricane Helene Response Team deployed to the N.C. Emergency Management western branch in Newton, where they worked long hours to provide critical information for emergency responders, National Guard troops and local governments.

Employees honored with the award were: Moriah VanVoorhis, forest water quality specialist; Matthew Haunsperger, water quality forester; Dakota Paris, service forester; Clell Britt, district forester; and Matthew Bishop, assistant district forester.

In the storm's aftermath, infrastructure across western North Carolina was heavily damaged. Roads were impassable, communication systems were disrupted and many communities were temporarily cut off.

The GIS team helped bridge those communication gaps by creating and updating maps showing shelters, food and water distribution sites, damaged roads and bridges, landslides, fuel depots and other critical resources. Those maps were used directly by first responders working in affected areas.

When counties lacked equipment to produce large maps, the team printed them in Newton and arranged delivery so emergency crews would have the information they needed.

"They worked long hours in stressful conditions, providing timely, accurate and highly technical information that helped save lives," Troxler said.

The team also helped restore internet access by deploying Starlink satellite systems where communication infrastructure had failed. In addition, they created onboarding resources that helped incoming GIS responders quickly begin assisting with the disaster response.

"Sean Brogan, who is the division director of Forest Management and Development, nominated this team," Troxler explained. "As he put it, 'regardless of the challenges, the N.C. Forest Service's GIS Specialists worked long hours in stressful situations away from their families and homes. N.C. Emergency Management GIS staff can say without any hesitation that the Helene response would not have been possible without this team.'"

Agricultural Disaster Crop Loss Team

A large group of employees from the Agronomic Division and the Plant Industry Division were recognized for their work helping administer the Agricultural Disaster Crop Loss Program (ADCLP) following multiple severe weather events in 2024.

The program provided financial assistance to producers who suffered losses to nursery crops, Christmas trees, sod, fruit trees, hemp and other specialty crops following disasters including Hurricane Helene, drought conditions and Tropical Storm Debby.

Thirty-two employees were honored with the team award.

Agronomic Division: Bert James, Georgia Love, Anna-Beth Williams, Clark Adams, Willie Howell, Steve Dillon, Chris Leek, Jeb Smith, Spencer Thomas, Bright Ofori, Joe Hudyncia, Daniel Overcash and



The N.C. Forest Service GIS Hurricane Helene Response team.



The Agricultural Disaster Crop Loss team pictured in November.

Brad Thompson.

Plant Industry Division: Phil Wilson, Bonnie Faulkner, Derreck Long, Juliet Whitehurst, April Bauder, Cassandra Dolce, Chris Carter, Ginger Hemmings, Samuel Harris, John Eaton, Chad Taylor, Sue Dial, Ryan Holquist, Joy Goforth, Michelle Kordecki, Dianne Farrer, David Guy, Kathryn Loughran and Jonathan Bass.

"I should also acknowledge the division directors for supporting their staff in this work – Dr. David Hardy in Agronomics and Bill Foot in Plant Industry who nominated this team," Troxler said during the presentation for the 3rd Quarter 2025 team award this past November.

The program received more than 8,600 applications from producers across the state. Once applications opened, the team had only 75 days to review and verify claims.

Their work included more than 500 phone interviews, 250 in-person interviews, over 225 farm visits and the review of thousands of documents and photographs submitted by producers.

"What stands out most is how this group came together," Troxler said.

Many employees took on the work in addition to their regular duties, traveling to farms across the state to document losses and help producers navigate the application process.

Because many of the staff members already had relationships with farmers in their regions, they were able to begin work quickly and build trust with producers seeking assistance.

"Every single person who was asked stepped up," Troxler said. "There were no complaints, no hesitation — just a sincere willingness to help farmers who had been hit hard by disaster."

"Beyond financial relief, they also helped restore morale for families facing profound losses," he said. "They provided not just support, but hope."

Western North Carolina Farmers Market Commodity Tracking and Reporting Team

Employees at the Western North Carolina Farmers Market in Asheville were recognized in February 2026. They earned the 4th Quarter 2025 Excellence in Team Accomplishment award for developing a system that measures the economic value of agricultural products moving through the facility.

The Commodity Tracking and Reporting Team created a process to collect delivery information at the market gate and translate it into monthly and annual reports showing the value of commodities entering the market.

Employees honored with the award were:

Gatehouse associates: Jeff Higgins, Link Russell, Jim Walling, Buddy Metcalf, Briana Branch, Scott Eavenson, Nancy Howard, Margie Alvey; Kristen Rhinehart, assistant front office manager; Brian Roberts, vendor operations and safety coordinator; Sonya Robinson, office manager; Dibe Duckett,

(See Awards, pg. 5)



Commissioner Steve Troxler, second from left, with the Southeastern Agricultural and Events Center team.

Awards

(Continued from pg. 4)



Phil Jacobus, left, with Troxler.

assistant market manager; and Phil Jacobus, market manager.

Before the system was created, the market could track visitors and vehicle traffic but had no reliable way to measure the value of the agricultural products being sold through the facility. Phil Jacobus, who manages the market, pointed out in his nomination that prior to 2022, it was a significant challenge to truly show the economic value delivered by the WNC Farmers Market.

“Today, with the implementation of [our] Commodity Tracking program, we can present important economic data across three critical dimensions – annual commodity sales, total economic impact, including supported employment and return on public investment,” Jacobus said.

That’s because, beginning in 2022, the team developed a daily process for gathering commodity information from vendors and truck drivers entering the market. Office staff then verify and compile the data into monthly and annual reports.

The system requires coordination every day as gatehouse staff collect data while management and office personnel review and analyze the information.

“It is a true team effort that depends on communication, accountability and trust,” Troxler said.

The results have helped demonstrate the economic impact of the market. In 2025 alone, more than \$38 million in commodities moved through the facility, representing about a 16 percent increase from the previous year.

The data has also strengthened the market’s national profile. Because of the consistency and reliability of its reporting, the market was approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Marketing Service to operate as a designated terminal market. That designation allows it to contribute weekly commodity information alongside major markets across the country.

Troxler said the initiative demonstrates how employees can strengthen programs by identifying opportunities and working together to implement solutions.

“Perhaps most impressive is how this effort began,” he said. “It wasn’t a requirement, but an idea. A group of employees saw an opportunity to make their organization better, so they worked together to develop a practical system and committed themselves to sustaining it year after year.”

Horse Events

Southeastern Ag Center, Lumberton 910-618-5699

April 6..... Horse and Tack Auction. Contact Brad Stephens, 828-390-0878.

April 10&11 .. Four Beats for Pleasure. Contact Roey Mobley, 910-540-8785.

April 17-19.... Cowboy Mounted Shooting. Contact 540-570-8765.

Sen. Bob Martin Agricultural Center, Williamston, 252-792-5111

April 2-5 Martinganza Quarter Horse Show & Futurity. Contact Susan Daniels, 919-894-0600.

April 11&12... NCHJA "C" Horse Show. Contact Emily Bates, 252-378-4474.

April 17-19.... East Coast Miniature Horse Club's Spring Fling Miniature Horse Show. More info at facebook.com/ECMHC.

April 25&26... April's Just Horsin' Round Open Show. Contact Beth Tew, btew@nc.rr.com.

Gov. James B. Hunt Jr. Horse Complex, State Fairgrounds, Raleigh, 919-821-7400

April 3-5 Tar Heel Celebration Horse Show. Contact Jackie Daughton, 336-509-6113.

April 4&5..... TWHA Youth Benefit Open Horse Show. Contact Dana Coste, 919-390-8126.

April 10-12.... Spring Extreme Barrel Race. Contact Katie Reaves, 252-903-6768.

April 17-19.... Spring Holiday Classic. Contact Richard Isley, 336-908-3022.

April 17-19.... Spring Fling 'C' Outdoors. Contact Joan Petty, 919-556-7321.

April 24&25 .. N.C. Pro Rodeo. Contact 540-521-3959.

WNC Ag Center, Fletcher 828-687-1414

April 24-26.... 4-H Horse Show. Contact WNC Ag Center, 828-687-1414.

***Show dates are subject to change. Call ahead to confirm.**

Spongy moth

(Continued from pg. 1)

2024. Treatment did not happen in 2025 and trapping captured 850 male moths that year.

“We have a total of nine blocks involving 28,766 acres to manage,” said Emma Schoeppner, NCDA&CS Spongy Moth program manager. “Haywood and Stokes counties each have two blocks that will receive two treatment types. We plan to start Btk treatment during April in Currituck, Stokes, Haywood and Watauga counties. We will then start mating disruption treatment of Haywood, Stokes, Rowan, Warren and Franklin counties in early June, adding or subtracting a few days to cover possible weather delays.”

For more heavily infested areas, low altitude helicopters will disperse *Bacillus thuringiensis kurstakii* (Btk), a naturally occurring bacteria used to control high populations of spongy moth caterpillars. For areas with smaller infestations, mating disruption will be conducted by low-altitude fixed-wing aircraft dispersing SPLAT Gypsy Moth-Organic infused with the naturally occurring spongy moth pheromone. The pheromone will only affect the spongy moth species and Btk applications will be precisely timed to avoid non-target caterpillar species. These management tactics will not harm humans, plants or pets.

The presence of the pheromone makes male spongy moths unable to follow the natural pheromone scent

trails released by the females. This causes a decrease in mating success and reduces the spongy moth population. High-density populations require Btk treatment to be effectively managed. Btk applied to host trees is consumed by the spongy moth caterpillars, activating a caterpillar-specific gut protein that disrupts their ability to feed, ultimately reducing their survival.

Spongy moths feed on the leaves of more than 300 different species of trees and shrubs, predominantly oaks and hardwoods. When areas become heavily infested, trees may be completely stripped of foliage, leaving yard trees and entire forests more susceptible to attacks from other pests and severe weather disruptions. Severe infestations often lead to tree death. Spongy moth caterpillars can also pose public health concerns for people with respiratory problems. In areas with high-density spongy moth populations, the caterpillar hairs and droppings may cause severe allergic reactions.

NCDA&CS has addressed spot introductions of the spongy moth across North Carolina since the 1970s. These treatments will be done in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Forest Service.

For more information or to request treatment notification via text or email, visit: <https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/plant-industry/plant-protection/entomological-services/Proposed-Spongy-Moth-Management> or contact NCDA&CS toll-free at 800-206-9333.

Bucolic Briefs

The N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is announcing a rebranded and streamlined grant program – NCAIR – that supports agricultural research and the state’s agricultural economy.

The program previously awarded funding through three areas of focus – the Bioenergy Research Initiative, the New and Emerging Crops Program and Innovations to Advance the Agriculture Economy. Those initiatives are now known solely as North Carolina Agriculture Innovations & Research or NCAIR.

This grant program was established in 2013 by the North Carolina legislature to support the research and development of agricultural and forestry-based feedstock for bioenergy production within the state. In 2018, the program expanded to include new and emerging crop research and promotion. Most recently, in 2024, the General Assembly again expanded the scope of the program to include projects that support agriculture innovation and technologies.

This rebranding aims to alleviate the confusion around the acronyms of the program. A new name also more clearly conveys the broad scope of NCAIR – to support all innovations and research in agriculture throughout North Carolina.

Sandhills Wheat Production Field Day to be held April 14 at Sandhills Research Station, 2148 Windblow Road in Jackson Springs from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Speakers include NC State Extension Area Specialized Agent Jenny Carleo, NC State Small Grain Extension Specialist Dr. Angela Post, Conservation Agriculture Extension Associate Austin Menker and NC State Extension Fields Crops Agent Emi Bigford.

Lunch will be served at 12:30 p.m. Contact Emi Bigford for more information at 910-576-6011 or Emi_Bigford@ncsu.edu. Register online at go.ncsu.edu/sandhillswheatproductionfieldday.

The Hand Clutch Tractor Association of Moore County to hold its Antique Tractor Show June 19 & 20 at the Carthage Fairgrounds. Antique tractors, lawnmowers, antique cars and trucks. Bring your antique. Pedal pull for all ages. Under 12, free admission. \$5 admission, 12 and older. Food vendors on site. Contact Misty Atkinson, 910-340-5455, or Jamie McKenzie, 910-528-2293.

The 2026 N.C. Mountain State Fair is accepting applications for food and commercial vendors, heritage crafters, wholesale vendor suppliers and Got to Be NC members for the annual fair which runs Sept. 11-20 in Fletcher.

The deadlines to submit applications range from April 28 for outside food vendors to July 24 for outside and inside vendor spaces, outside and inside Got to Be NC food vendors, inside Got to Be NC non-food vendors and wholesale vendor suppliers. The deadline to apply to be an inside food vendor or a heritage crafter is June 26. Applications can be found at www.eventeny.com/events/north-carolina-mountain-state-fair-2026-22260/.

Donate your farm and/or farm equipment to The Veteran’s Farm of NC, to use in teaching veterans how to farm. All donations are tax deductible. Contact Robin Tutor at 919-721-2039 or robin@vfnc.org.

Shelton Herb Farm

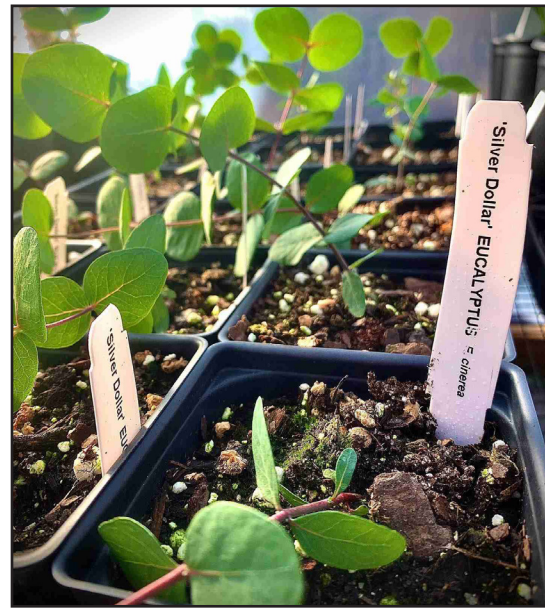
(Continued from pg. 8)

do here on the farm, for all of our plants and herbs. Just like a hospital, we have to check each room and determine what each patient needs (ie: water, disease control, etc.).” Once the basil has grown in the greenhouse and is ready for harvest, it is then transferred to the outdoor garden to finish growing and be sold. All products at Shelton Herb Farm are seeded by hand in small batches with organic fertilizer.

Products from Shelton Herb Farm can be purchased every weekend at the Farmers Market at Tidal Creek in Wilmington or on-site at the farm in Leland.

“I have many favorites here at the farm, and they all vary by season,” Alex said. “My top three are Salad Burnet (a cool season, perennial), Borage (a flowering spring plant), and Garlic Chives (herbs blooming in the heat of August).” Although the top sellers can vary based on seasonality and trends in the media, African Blue Basil, Hearty Celery and Edible Flowers are always popular products at Shelton Herb Farm.

In addition to producing herbs and plants, Shelton Herb Farm offers a variety of agritourism events throughout the year to educate the community on the importance of culinary/ medicinal herbs and allow them to experience life on the farm. “Our Salad Bowl Class, which takes place October



At right, silver dollar eucalyptus grows in the greenhouse.

through February each year, is perhaps our most popular class because it teaches participants how to plant their very own salad bowl to take home, including winter greens and seasonal herbs,” Alex said. “We also offer farm tours, cool season gardening talks, and more throughout the year.” In fact, the old farmhouse on-site at Shelton Herb Farm is currently being renovated as an agritourism space for future events. Follow along on their social media channels for the latest information, updates and events! Tickets can be purchased for all events through their website.

America in celebrating the Herb of the Year each year, and we are really excited to showcase turmeric all of 2026,” Alex said. “We grow a lot of turmeric here at the farm, including black turmeric, and look forward to showcasing its properties all year long.” There’s no better time than now to start growing your own herbs, ornamentals and edible flowers, and there’s no better place to start than at Shelton Herb Farm!

Whether purchasing specific herbs for teas and spices or looking to start your own herb garden, Shelton Herb Farm is the perfect place to learn about herbs grown in our state and how to use them. “Growing your own herbs is a great way to learn where your food comes from and start producing your own ingredients,” Alex said. “Even if you have a small space, like an apartment or condo, herbs will grow and function well if you care for them properly.” We are so proud of all that Shelton Herb Farm is doing to further the specialty crop industry in our state! Follow along on their social media channels and website to engage with them throughout the year and learn all about the Herb of the Year – Turmeric.

“We follow the Herb Society of

Classified Advertising

General rules for advertising in the Ag Review

- Advertising is a free service to North Carolina residents only. A North Carolina address and phone number are required for submitting ads.
- The editor or advertising manager reserves the right to accept or reject any ad and to edit ads to meet requirements or space limitations.
- Priority will be given to ads that are strictly related to agriculture.
- Advertisements are limited to 30 words or less. This includes first & last name of advertiser (NOT farm name), complete address and phone number w/area code.
- Ads will be published in one issue only. Ads that are to be repeated must be submitted for each issue.
- Only two ads per family per issue will be accepted. Family refers to all individual sharing the same residence, mailing address or home telephone number. These ads must be under separate classifications.
- All "For Sale" and "For Rent" ads must have a price or price range. Stud service must also include a fee.
- The ad deadline is the first working day of the month prior to publication at noon.



Bees, Supplies & Services For Sale

NOTICE

N.C. law requires a permit to sell honey bees in the state. A permit is not required for: The sale of less than 10 bee hives in a calendar year, a one-time going-out-of-business sale of less than 50 hives, or the renting of bees for pollination purposes or their movement to gather honey.

Contact Don Hopkins, state apiarist, NCDA&CS, 1060 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1001 for information.

Radial extractor, 8-frame shallow or med., 100% stainless, 120v variable speed, ball bearings top & bottom, all welded & EC, \$900. Ned Benson, Roxboro 336-504-8288.

Beehives w/disease resistant bees, no treatment in 7 yrs., \$350; 5-frame nucs, \$185. Tony Parker, Bolton 910-386-7725.

BEEES

8 complete beehives, 6 w/ foundation installed, some w/ new components, clean, no bees; other misc. units avail., \$125-\$150. Jerry Austin, Granite Quarry 704-279-5061.



Equipment For Sale

(2) Van Dale liquid waste tanks, 3,000 gal., 1 pto, 1 hyd, \$3,000 ea. or \$5,000 for both. Dale Blackwelder, Mocksville 336-655-9154.

Brinly PA-402 BH lawn aerator, 40 in., plug-type, pull-behind, \$200. Duane Kirschenman, Winston-Salem 704 528-9369, call/text.

Intl tricycle tractor, been sitting, \$1,800 or trade; JD D170 riding mower, 25hp, 190 hrs., \$2,000; JD L100 riding mower, 5-spd, 17.5hp, \$800. Jeff Brittain, Hickory 828-327-4782.

Kubota L2350 tractor, 4wd, 770 hrs., good paint, no dents/rust, sheltered; 5 ft. King Cutter bush hog, \$7,000/both. Lewis Townsend, Goldston 919-548-2504.

FARM EQUIPMENT

Angle blade, 6 ft., LN, \$500. Mike Crosby, Olin 704-546-2434.

Brinly plow w/hitch for IH Cub Cadet, \$225; bolster for IH 424, \$200. Jerry Taylor, Clemmons 336-766-9409, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

3pt fast hitch, \$100; 1-bottom plows, \$200; JD plows, \$250; 8 ft. scrape, \$250; cross draw bars, \$30 ea.; boom poles, \$130; rev. scoop pans, \$200. James Isley, Julian 336-263-1958.

Fella disc mower; Gehl pull-behind, 2-basket tedder; JD side deliv. rake; NH 648 auto-tie baler, 5/4; all VGC, \$12,500. Loyd Cox, Asheboro 336-879-5182.

Aerator spiker & aerator plugger for riding mower; spiker, 36 in., fill w/water, \$200; plugger, 48 in., w/wgt for top, \$220. G. Stowe, Graham 336-675-0466.

2017 NH Workmaster 50, w/2018 621 loader & 6' bucket & forks, 690 hrs., EC, \$27,500. George Truitt, Browns Summit 336-312-8789.

Johnson pull-type sprayer, 500 gal. capacity, ground driven pump, \$2,500. Kevin Carland, Mills River 828-691-6397.

FARM EQUIPMENT

Woods DS-10.40 bush hog, LN, \$10,500; Hitachi mini excavator, ZAX50U, \$15,000. Billy Hardin, Siler City 336-202-9855, billy@billyhardin.com.

Hay grapple, picks up 10 sq bales, used 1 yr., quick attach pickup, EC, \$5,000. Philip Hood, Goldsboro 919-689-9798.

NH 175 super boom, wheeled model, 1,400 hrs., greased & maintained, new computer 2023, w/track, new tires, new battery, hyd equip. coupling for box, \$24,000-\$25,000. Brian Sapp, High Point 336-870-7280.

Cub Cadet 882 diesel tractor, w/custom 6' mower & 8hp trac vac, new battery 12/20/25, 6" hose, 765 hrs., Kubota eng 660cc, 15hp, \$3,200. Ana Carroll, Mocksville 336-422-1088.

GP planter, 12-row, 22" lift & rotate no-till coulters, row cleaners & seed firmers, Surefire fert system, \$26,000. Mark Hardy, Browns Summit 336-339-0626.

IH flywheel gas eng, 1.5hp, \$700; 1947 Gibson tractor, \$1,000. Bobby Harkey, Albemarle 704-982-2494.

FARM EQUIPMENT

Case 1085 B rubber tire excavator, last used 15 yrs. ago, for parts or restore, \$6,500. John Sherron, Rougemont 252-724-5030.

12 box Roanoke & DeCloet barns, \$900; Roanoke 1-row tobacco harvester, doesn't run, \$500; Roanoke even loader for parts, \$200; 6 Roanoke tobacco trailers, \$100 ea. Will McCallum, Rowland 910-740-3267.

140 Farmall, GC, many attach., seeder 5' 10 drops, 8" spacing, LNC, \$6,000. Gerald Cashwell, Fayetteville 910-850-1870.

6' box scrape, GC, \$350-\$450. Thomas Ledbetter, New London 704-984-0715.

2013 105U Case tractor, trans not working/fixable, good motor, 3,300 hrs., \$7,000- \$10,000; pallet forks, bale spear, bucket/loader for 105U Case, \$6,000-\$9,000. Debra Williams, East Bend 336-469-3889.

NH 67 hay baler, GC, field ready, \$800. Yates Reep, Denver 704-572-5845.

FARM EQUIPMENT

1952 AC-CA tractor, GC, new tires, ft. doub disc Athens plow, ripper & hitch, \$2,500 obo. James Sharpe, Statesville 704-682-1663.

NH BR740 md baler, \$10,000; IH 15 rake, \$500; MF pickup rake, \$400. Sam Anders, Oak Ridge 336-708-5176.

Hay ring, GC; feed trough, used once, \$350 for both. Wayne Dickerson, Ruffin 336-552-6284.

JD 318, ps, hys trans, \$2,500. Kent Davis, Clemmons 336-391-4801.

JD combine motor; JD 9500, 1995 model; JD 6076 235hp 3-spd pump, 3,000 hrs., \$1,100. Michael Brady, Shelby 704-477-4834.

Farmall Cub, \$2,500; 1951 Ford 8N, \$1,800; cult set for Farmall Cub, \$375; 2 wheels for Ford 800 tractor, \$200. D. Yountz, Clemmons 336-764-0748.

(2) clamp on duals, 18.4 x 34, \$800 for both. Roy Watts, Trinity 336-382-2744.

Nitrogen barrel, 6,000 gal., \$6,500; JD 7180 planter, 8-row, pull-type, \$8,500. John Bass, Fairmont 910-740-6789.

King 28-disc harrow, 3pt, 9 ft., \$1,850; 3pt KM field cult, 12.5 ft., rolling basket, \$1,975; 3pt 2-disc plow, \$275. Randy Davis, Elon 336-263-8163.

NH 273 baler, \$2,000; NH 56 rake, \$900; BH 216 bush hog, 6 ft., \$1,800. Harold Wright, Shelby 864-838-4763.

Farmall 130, full set of cults, 1pt, (6) pieces of equip., runs well, \$3,200. Francis Menius, Kannapolis 980-521-1216.


Farmall Cub, new paint/tires, fast hitch, cults, turn plow, scrape blade, \$2,400. Jimmy Frye, Carthage 910-947-5910.

Snapper zero-turn mower, 21hp, 50 in. cut, \$600. Wayne Jones, Walstonburg 252-236-6090.


Farm Labor For Sale

Vert & horiz mowing, ponds, dams, shooting lanes, reclaiming property, fence lines, drainage control, \$85/hr. + deliv. of equip. Roger McKenzie, Jackson Springs 910-528-2293.

Elect. fence box repair, parmak, ssc, \$20. Bobby Nichols, N. Wilkesboro 336-927-2850.


Equipment Wanted

Belly mower for 140 Farmall tractor. Wayne Floyd, Hurdle Mills 336-592-4320.

Feed grinder/mixer, Gehl, JD or NH. Ben Bridgers, Wendell 919-795-9421.

Intl 715 combine, decent shape, can haul away. Brian Owens, Pittsboro 919-200-5931.

Fordson Super Dexta diesel tractor, '60s model, prefer running, not restored, in fair cond. Jackie Brown, Denton 336-953-6027.

FARM LABOR

Side-mount sickle-bar mower, gas portable welder, welding cables any cond., single-phase 60amp or less AC stick welder. Philip Jones, Richlands 910-324-3201.

Combine tire for Gleaner F, 23.1x26; 10' cultipacker; 4- or 6-row corn planter. Jefferson Smith, Asheboro 336-736-4205.

Manual headgate or squeeze chute for cattle. Butch Chandler, Asheboro 910-690-6953.


Farmland Wanted

Turkey hunting access, statewide, responsible hunter, willing to compensate landowner, \$500. Mark Hoeman, Charlotte 314-630-4659.


Hay & Grain For Sale

Fescue/orchard grass mix, rnd bales, net wrapped, dry storage, horse & cow quality, \$35-\$50/bale. William Moffitt, Asheboro 336-381-3875.

'25 coastal bermuda, horse quality, sheltered, 900 lbs. of 4x5 rnd, \$90/bale; 20x35 sm, \$12/bale. David Gillis, Fayetteville 910-867-6600, Thurs. & Fri.

Horse quality mixed grass hay, stnd size sq bales, no deliv., \$8/bale cash only. Ardie Peters, Vale 828-290-4560.

Rye straw, \$5.25/bale. Martin Moss, Concord 704-783-8366.

Fescue mix, no rain, dry storage, on pallets, mesh wrapped, 4x5 rnd, \$45/bale. Richard Ingram, Greensboro 336-420-9253.

Horse quality hay, deliv. avail, \$40/rl. H. Davis, Elon 336-260-7606.

Hay, in barn, horse quality, 4x5, \$45/bale; cow quality, \$30/bale. David Lomax, Denton 336-688-5313.

Orchard grass/fescue, rnd bales, \$50; sq bales, \$7; rnd bales cow hay, \$35; lrg qty discount. Johnny Sowers, Lexington 336-239-3020.


Horses & Supplies For Sale

PLEASE NOTE: All equine 6 mos. or older must have a current negative Coggins test. Advertisers must supply the accession number of test, the name of lab doing the test, the date of test and results for each equine advertised. The following advertisers have provided proof of a negative Coggins test.

Pasture board, suitable for sr. horses, barn w/sheltered paddocks, run-in, rnd pen, 2 feedings/day, up nightly, quality pasture, ref. avail., owner/mgr. on premises, \$325/mo. Mary Ann Harville, Siler City 919-545-4239.

HAY & GRAIN

Tucker-Cheyenne western trail saddle, w/matching breast collar, EC, \$1,450. Perry Arant, Monroe 704-290-8758.

Bay mare, 16 y/o, cannot be ridden nor bred, healthy feet, no shoes needed, no meds/supplements needed, companion animal or solo, free to good home. Kathy Irvin, Concord 704-363-7602, text.


Livestock For Sale

Bull calves, Angus/Charolais cross, blk, white, smoky, \$2,000 & up. Bud Eanes, Lexington 336-472-2395.

Reg Angus bull, dob 8/11/24, stout & correct, good carcass & growth EPD's, recent BSE, \$4,500. Steve McPherson, Snow Camp 919-444-5307.

SimAngus herd bulls, blk & polled, bred for calving ease, muscle, growth & disposition, \$3,500-\$4,500. William Pyle, Franklinton 919-215-5677.

Fainting buck, dob 8/25, brown, blk & white, tame, healthy, \$100. Dodd Linker, Clemmons 336-712-2484.

Blk Baldy bulls, dob 4/25, \$2,200, ea. Danny Payne, Lexington 336-247-2922.

Belted Galloway, reg, (2) cow/calf pairs avail., \$2,500 ea. A. Furr, Rockwell 704-798-3460, text.

Feeder pigs, mostly purebred Ossabaw Island hogs; some heritage breed crosses w/ lots of Hereford & Red Wattle in them, \$3/lb. Eliza MacLean, Snow Camp 919-218-4361.

Savanna/Kiko buck, kidded 3/2024, proven, quality bloodline, solid breed stock, \$300. David Ward, Burlington 336-266-1457.

5/8 Kiko, 3/8 Savanna, buckling, 1 y/o; doelings, 12-24 m/o, \$225-\$250. Mark Walton, Mocksville 336-477-4389.


Poultry & Supplies For Sale

California, Silver California, bluescales, Gambel's, 8 varieties of bobwhites; partridge, Philby, chukar, Hungarians, \$6 & up. Jimmy Furr, Stanfield 704-351-5654.

Australian Blk swans & Mute swans, \$600 & up; Cape Barren geese, \$600 & up; Ruddy shelducks, \$150 & up. Jim Simpson, Indian Trail 704-361-6497.

Bantam Buff Cochin hens, hatched spring '24, proven mothers, very tame, \$25 ea. John Thornburg, Raleigh 336-302-3838.

Heritage breed turkey poults, hatched 12/24/25, healthy, hardy, mix of Blue Slate & Narragansett; must purchase in groups of 2, 3 or 5, \$25. Elizabeth Osborne, Graham 336-214-5262.

POULTRY

Bobwhite quail, flight cond., 20 bird min., \$5. Paxton Hix, Olin 704-902-2427.


Poultry & Supplies Wanted

Poultry houses in Wilkes, Iredell, Surry, Caldwell, Catawba, Yadkin, Alexander co. Mitchell Cottrell, Granite Falls 828-212-3532.

Toulouse geese, need female or will take several of both sex for right price; can pick up if not too far away. Greg Moore, Pittsboro 919-200-8995, prefer email greg.moore@mindspring.com.

Silver Auburn turkeys & Modena & Budapest short-faced pigeons. Jeffrey Haynes, Thurmond 336-466-4993, text or call.


Seeds & Plants For Sale

PLEASE NOTE: Individuals or business selling seed in North Carolina are required to obtain a Seed License (Retail or Wholesale).

For more information contact NCDA&CS Plant Industry Division at 800-206-9333 or 919-707-3739.

Potted muscadine & scuppernong plants, 5-6 ft., healthy, \$25. Bob Whitaker, Mocksville 336-469-4822, do not text.

Rabbiteye blueberry plants, 2 y/o, healthy Tifblue, Premier, Climax, Powderblue, & Brightwell, \$12 ea. or \$10 ea. for 10 or more. Michael Roberson, Trinity 336-862-3488.

Sunflower seeds, huge 12-14 lb. flower, 15-18 in. diameter, SASE & \$5 cash for 50 seeds. N. Smoot, 6227 Welborn Rd, Trinity, NC 27370, 336-338-8726.

Cockscomb seeds, huge blossom head, rich crimson color, sturdy 18" stalk, about 250 seeds, SASE + \$5 cash. Barry Cox, 6225 Welborn Rd, Trinity, NC 27370, 336-434-4662.

Liriope, must pick up, \$2/ container. Kristen Altamirano, Kannapolis 704-223-0600.


Seeds & Plants Wanted

Multiplier onion bulbs, the kind where sm bulbs grow lrg onions & lrg bulbs grow clusters of sm onions. J. Fine, Chapel Hill 984-484- 8277.

Ledmon watermelon seeds. Arron Lamar, Snow Camp 336-214-4505.

Tennessee limber cob seed corn. Todd Campbell, Maiden 803-417-0899.


Supplies For Sale

Sprinkler heads & controller, 200+ Rainbird, Optima & Water Whiz, \$80. Duane Kirschenman, Winston-Salem 704-528-9369 call/text.

SUPPLIES

Used galvanized roof panels, around 400 pieces, 8 & 10 ft., 5V, \$1/ft. Russ Hanes, Glendale Springs 828-406-6365.

Burning barrels, \$10; feed barrels, w/lids & rings, \$25; 275-gal. water totes, \$100. Jeff Brittain, Hickory 828-327-4782.

Firewood, mixed hardwood, farm cut, pickup load under 6 ft., no deliv., \$40. G. Stowe, Graham 336-675-0466.

Birdhouse gourds, several sizes, \$10; cedar bluebird houses, mite resistant, \$12. Bob Whitaker, Mocksville 336-469-4822, do not text.

3-panel cement fence, +/- 200 ft., \$3/ft. Tommy Sink, Lexington 336-250-4234, do not text.


Trucks & Trailers For Sale

Willys Jeep pickup, 3/4-ton; 1975 CJ5, w/hardtop, Ramsey 8K winch, both barn-stored, \$27,000/both. Russ Hanes, Glendale Springs 828-406-6365.

1982 Ford F-350 dump truck, 12 ft. hyd dump bed, 38,500 mi, \$8,500. Steve McCauley, Mebane 336-263-2823.

1995 Featherlite 3-horse trailer, alum., dressing room, bath, bed, water heater, ac/heat, generator, new tires, EC, \$16,500. Perry Arant, Monroe 704-290-8758.

Miller 20-ton tilt top trailer, w/lights, air brakes, \$8,500. Tommy Sink, Lexington 336-250-4234, do not text.

1989 Ford F-150, 4wd, 160,000 mi, w/towing pkg, \$3,800. Wayne Dickerson, Ruffin 336-552-6284.

Landscape trailer, 12 ft. \$2,350; Calico stock trailer, gooseneck, \$9,650. H. Davis, Elon 336-260-7606.

Farm trailer, 8 x 16 ft., wood floor, \$400. Roy Watts, Trinity 336-382-2744.

1997 flatbed trailer, 16 ft., ramps, (2) 3,500 lb. tandem axles, VGC, \$1,800. Diane Rainey, Salisbury 704-633-6035.

2025 Calico stock trailer, bumper pull, 16 ft., \$8,950. YD Saul, Elon 336-213-6292.

2006 Ford F-150, 5.4 eng, 2wd, red, cloth seats, clear coat peeling off hood, 213,000 mi, \$7,000. Barney Arthur, Reidsville 336-932-0210.

1984 Chevy truck, C-60 series, 366 eng, 5-spd trans, high/low range, 20 ft. metal flat bed, \$2,000. Ronnie Brogden, Creedmoor 919-528-1767.


Trucks & Trailers Wanted

WW2 Halftrack truck, complete or parts, made by White, Diamond T, Autocar or Intl; used postwar in ag & forestry. Robert Harrison, Salisbury 704-202-3301.

Discovering N.C. Agriculture: A new generation of wheat farmers

Discovering NC Agriculture is a social media series focusing on N.C. grown, raised, caught, and made commodities. Originally started in 2025, this series has been renewed to run for another year! Tune in each month to see how an N.C. commodity is grown, harvested, packed for consumer use and more. Learn nutritional value, find fun recipes to try, hear from local chefs who use that product, and other unique commodity facts throughout the series. We look forward to helping you better understand some of our N.C. commodities and how they impact your everyday lives!

Wheat has been grown on farms across our state for many years, but that doesn't diminish its importance on the farm today. First-generation farmer Will Brinkley, owner of Double S Farm in Lexington, has always seen wheat as a valuable crop to our state's agriculture industry and is honored to continue its legacy on his farm.

Will Brinkley grew up surrounded by agriculture but not immersed in it. "My father worked for R.J. Reynolds

for many years, so we knew a lot about agriculture but didn't operate a family farm," he said. "However, from the time I first rode a tractor, I've known that I wanted to be a farmer." In 2009, Will and his wife, Madison, established Double S Farm on family land with corn as their first crop. "We started off with three acres of corn and a one row planter," Will said. Today, they farm several hundred acres of land, producing corn, wheat and soybeans each year. "We started growing wheat in 2019 as a solid rotational crop for our corn and soybeans," Will said. "It's a very versatile crop that is relatively easy to produce." Double S Farms produces 50 acres of wheat each year that is used in a variety of ways throughout the community.

Wheat is planted each winter after corn is harvested at Double S Farms. "As soon as our corn is harvested, we start preparing the field for wheat planting," Will said. "Through the winter, the seed grows in the field until around February when we start applying fungicides and herbicides to encourage health and further growth."

Like many other crops grown across our state, wheat is directly impacted by the weather each year. According to Will, the snow this year was good for his wheat crop because it provided nitrogen and insulation. If our state receives too much rain, however, it can lessen the quality of the wheat harvest in June. "The requirement for wheat quality has gone up through the years," he said. "Typically, wheat is broken down into two categories, milling wheat and feed wheat. The difference between the two is quality and market price." Milling



The Brinkley Family

wheat is used for flour production, which requires the best quality grain possible, and sells for a higher price at market. Feed wheat, however, is lower quality grain that is often used for animal feed and is sold for a lower market price.

All wheat is harvested at Double S Farm in June with a combine. "Depending on the year, we either allow the combine to blow straw and chaff onto the ground during harvest or we don't," Will said. "It depends on if we plan to bale and sell wheat straw that year or not." Once the wheat is harvested, it is sold on the farm to interested customers. "We have a farm stand on-site that is open 365 days a year," Will said. "I have customers come purchase our wheat for a variety of reasons, including animal feed, bread making and grain merchants who use it for milling and brewing." The farm



Harvesting corn on the farm.

stand is operated by Will and his wife, Madison. If they are not on-site at the time of arrival, there is an honor system in place for customers to purchase what they need and leave the money in a secure location. "I am really proud of our wheat because it's something that people use, whether in their food or for their animals," Will said. "It's rewarding to know that it helps people across the state care for their families."

Although Will takes a lot of pride in producing wheat, he does face challenges with the crop each year, including the weather.

"The weather plays a big factor when it comes to the end result of our wheat crop because it can make or break the market price we get for the majority," he said. "Harvest time is also our busiest time of year on the farm, so it can get quite hectic trying to get everything done." Even with the challenges, Will is proud to grow wheat on his farm and enjoys the flexibility and versatility it brings to the farm. "Our wheat breaks up the season and gives us something to harvest in June, before our corn and

soybeans," he said. "There is also a high demand for wheat in our area, so it's beneficial to us as well as our customers. I wouldn't change growing it for anything else."

For anyone interested in growing wheat on their farm, Will recommends starting small and growing into it.

"Wheat is not a crop that's going to make or break you, so start small and figure out if you like it," he said. "If you do, grow a little more each year and find what works best for you." We are so proud of Will and his family for all that they do to further the wheat industry in our state. If you find yourself near Lexington, be sure to stop by the farm and talk with Will and Madison, as well as purchase some of their products at the farm stand.

"We love meeting and talking with customers at the farm," Will said. "It gives us a chance to educate people on farming, where their food comes from, and so much more." Also be sure to check Will out on TikTok, where he has become quite the phenomenon for his hilarious farm videos, educational content and more!



Hay bales at Double S Farm in Lexington.

A step back to our medicinal heritage at Shelton Herb Farm

Culinary and medicinal herbs are a large part of our state's specialty crop industry. From basil and cilantro to hearty celery and edible flowers, Shelton Herb Farm in Leland produces a variety of products each year for customers to enjoy in the kitchen, in the yard, in the garden and more.

Shelton Herb Farm is a Century Family Farm that has been in operation since the mid-1800's. Although the farm's focus has changed over the years, the Shelton family has always tended an herb and veggie garden for themselves. "About 40 years ago, Margaret Shelton, the current owner of Shelton Herb Farm, saw a real opening in the specialty crop market for culinary and medicinal herbs," said Alex Modly, Farm Manager at Shelton Herb Farm. "She originally started with 10 herb varieties, and has grown to over 1,000 varieties of herbs, native plants, ornamentals and edible flowers." Today, Shelton Herb Farm consists of 16 greenhouses, a 9,000 square foot yard, and a 4-5,000 square foot outdoor garden. "Margaret is known as the 'godmother of farming' because she truly is a pioneer in the culinary and medicinal herb industry of our state," Alex said. "In fact, many local

farmers got their start here at Shelton Herb Farm, learning from Margaret, before starting their own operations." Although she is over 70 years old, Margaret is still a key figure on the farm today and can be seen nearly every weekend at the Farmers Market at Tidal Creek in Wilmington, where she sells products from the farm and serves on the board.

Production takes place year-round at Shelton Herb Farm, although availability will vary based on growing season and climate. "We grow with the seasons and climate of North Carolina," Alex said. "All herbs, flowers, and plants have a specific time of year that they grow, much like other commodities grown across the state. For example, cilantro grows best from October to April each year, which means that we will have cilantro available during those months, but not outside those months." Many herbs grown at the farm can be used as both culinary and medicinal herbs, like turmeric and oregano. Not only do these herbs add unique flavors to a variety of dishes, but they also contain lots of health benefits for consumers. "We often say 'a marinade is nothing but a multivitamin,'" said Alex, "because many herbs have properties that benefit



Shelton Herb Farm is located in Leland and has been in the family for more than a century.

the human body, but are not always used for that purpose." Historically, herbs were used by grandmothers and doctors alike to create medicines and tinctures. At Shelton Herb Farm, they aim to bring people back to their roots by providing them with the ingredients to rediscover some of our first medicines. "A great example of one that we have seen recently is wormwood," Alex said. "Wormwood has historically been used by families in herbal teas and is making a comeback through the generations today." From

seed to plant, Shelton Herb Farm produces everything on-site, providing a high-quality product for customers across the state.

During the winter months, all plants and herbs are grown in greenhouses at Shelton Herb Farm. These plants are then transferred outside when the weather turns warmer in spring and summer. "We get plugs for a few things, specifically when high volume production is required, but mostly produce our own seed here at the farm," Alex said. "This means

that each step of the process, from seed to customer, is controlled on our farm." The growth process is different for each herb and plant variety at Shelton Herb Farm, but to give us an overview, Alex shared their seed to customer process for basil. "Our seedlings start in the greenhouse in late February each year, where they are watered and cared for each day," she said. "Watering is the most important thing that we



(See Shelton Herb Farm, pg. 6)