

June 2 for the July issue
 July 1 for the August issue
 Aug. 1 for the September issue
 Sept. 1 for the October issue
 Oct. 1 for the November issue
 Nov. 3 for the December issue
 Dec. 1 for the January 2026
 issue

**June 11 -- NCSU Sandhills
Turfgrass Field Day, 7:30
a.m. to 12:45 p.m., Sandhills
Research Station, Jackson
Springs**

July 31 -- Northeast Ag Expo Summer Field Day, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., James Brothers Inc., Elizabeth City

Aug. 14 -- Mountain Horticulture Field Day, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mountain Horticulture Research Station, Mills River

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has confirmed an established presence of the invasive spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) in Rockingham County.

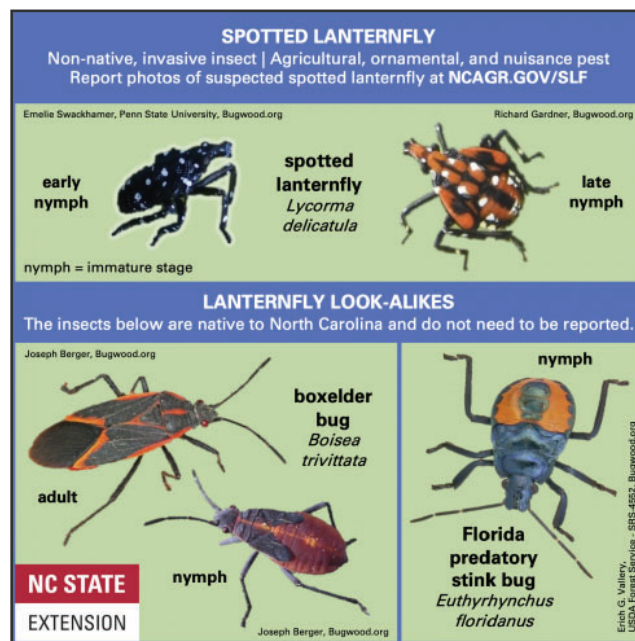
Initial surveys indicate that the distribution of the pest is concentrated in Reidsville within a 2-mile area. Survey efforts are ongoing.

“NCDA&CS has ramped up surveillance in the Triad area since this pest was detected in Kernersville in 2022,” said Dr. Bill Foote, director of the NCDA&CS Plant Industry Division. “Members of our Plant Industry team are moving quickly to assess and prevent the spread

of this brightly colored pest, and we ask members of the public to be on the lookout for more spotted lanternfly and report any finds by through a form found at www.ncagr.gov/SLF.”

Spotted lanternfly poses a serious threat to the state's wine and grape industries and can feed and cause damage to over 100 species of plants including roses, maples and other landscape plants. They lack effective natural enemies in the U.S. and populations of this pest grow quickly, often becoming a nuisance, he added.

When spotted lanternfly populations were found in Forsyth
(See Spotted Lanternfly , pg. 4)



Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler is encouraging equine owners to have their animals vaccinated against Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis and West Nile Virus.

“Mosquito-breeding season in North Carolina lasts from spring until the first frost and horses are at risk if not properly vaccinated,” Troxler said. “EEE is fatal 90 percent of the time in horses and WNV has a fatality rate of 30 percent. However, both diseases are preventable by vaccination.”

So far this year we have had no cases of EEE or WNV, but last year there were five cases of EEE and two cases of West Nile Virus, Troxler added.

State Veterinarian Dr. Mike Martin recommends that equine owners

talk to their veterinarians about an effective vaccination protocol to protect horses from mosquito-borne diseases. The combination vaccination initially requires multiple injections for horses, mules and donkeys that have no prior vaccination history.

Mosquitoes can breed in any puddle that lasts for more than four days, so removing any source of standing water can reduce the chance of exposing animals to WNV or EEE. Keeping horses in stalls at night, using insect screens and fans, and turning off lights after dusk can also help reduce exposure to mosquitoes. Insect repellants can be effective if used according to the manufacturer's instructions.

(See EEE vaccinations, pg. 2)

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*by Agriculture Commissioner
Steve Troxler*

I wanted to provide a brief update on the Agricultural Disaster Crop Loss program and where we are in the process because we have been getting a lot of questions about it.

The application deadline has now closed, and we have received over 8,500 applications statewide. Members of our review team have been going through the applications and following up on ones that are missing information and working to verify the information on completed applications.

We anticipate checks from the program will go out mid-summer, so we are working as quickly as possible to review and approve applications.

We understand the urgency in getting relief funds out to farmers so reviewing, approving and finalizing these applications is a high priority.

We are administering the statewide program as part of the



Commissioner Troxler

more than \$524 million disaster package approved by the N.C. General Assembly. A total of \$200 million was earmarked for farmers in Western N.C. and nearly \$111 million was approved for crop losses across the remainder of the state. All 100 counties are included in the disaster assistance coverage.

Agricultural Review

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Steve Troxler
Commissioner

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EEE vaccinations

(Continued from pg. 1)

Symptoms of EEE include impaired vision, aimless wandering, head pressing, circling, inability to swallow, irregular staggering gait, paralysis, convulsions and death. Once a horse has been bitten by an infected mosquito, it may take three to 10 days for symptoms to appear.

Symptoms of WNV include fever, weakness or paralysis of hind limbs, impaired vision, head pressing, seizures and aimless wandering.

People, horses and birds can become infected from a bite by a mosquito carrying these diseases, but there is no evidence that horses can transmit these viruses to other horses, birds or people through direct contact.

Equine care also includes keeping up to date on equine infectious anemia (EIA) testing, commonly referred to as the Cog-gins test. “It’s also a great time to make sure your animal is current on its rabies vaccination,” Troxler said. “We have had a positive case of rabies in livestock already this year. All live-stock are naturally curious animals, which puts them at risk for a bite if a rabid animal gets through their fence line.”

Keep up with the latest on the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services through the department’s blog at <https://blog.ncagr.gov/>

Livestock scholarship recipients recognized

Thirty-one North Carolina students have been selected recipients of 2025 N.C. State Fair Youth Livestock Scholarships, Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler announced.

The scholarships are designed for high school seniors and students currently enrolled in an institute of higher education who have participated in the junior livestock or market turkey shows at the N.C. State Fair. A total of \$611,000 has been awarded since the program began in 2015.

The scholarships are funded from a percentage of the total sales at the N.C. State Fair Sale of Champions. The number of scholarships awarded each year is based on qualified applicants and funds available from the previous year’s Sale of Champions. Because of strong support of the 2024 sale, 30 scholarships valued at \$2,000 each were awarded this year. One \$2,500 scholarship was also sponsored by Farm Credit Associations of North Carolina.

“This scholarship program continues to invest in the next generation of agricultural leaders and advocates, and I am proud that they all have a solid understanding of where their food comes from because of their experience showing livestock,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. “Congratulations to this year’s recipients.”

A selection committee evaluated applicants based on their involvement with N.C. State Fair junior livestock shows, academic achievement, extracurricular activities and an essay. Each application was assigned a number and identifying information was removed before evaluation.

Following is a list of scholarship recipients by county. All scholarships are for \$2,000 unless otherwise noted:



Eight of the 32 Junior Livestock Scholarship recipients are pictured with Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler at a special reception during the Got to Be NC Festival. Pictured on the front row, left to right, Abigail Shaeffer, Ashlyn Coxe, Commissioner Troxler, Lilah Byrum and Chesney Gibson. Back row left to right are Ana MacAuley, Clayton Ross Hinnant, Michelle Hartman and Jordan Mitchem.

- Buncombe**
-- Shelby Candler of Weaver-ville who attends Texas Tech University
- Burke**
-- Ellie Shuping of Morganton who is undecided
- Cabarrus**
-- Ana McAuley of Con-cord to attend Fort Scott Community College
- Catawba**
-- Hannah Vanhoy of Catawba who attends N.C. State University
- Chowan**
-- Lilah Byrum of Tyner to attend N.C. State University
- Cleveland**
-- Chesney Gibson of Grover to attend N.C. State University
- Craven**
-- Matthew Peluso of New Bern who attends the University of Mount Olive
- Davidson**
-- Salem Ward of Lexington who attends UNC-Greensboro
- Franklin**
-- Hope Latta of Zebulon who attends N.C. State University
- Granville**
-- Abigail Shaeffer of Frank-lin to attend the University of North Carolina or East Carolina University
- Haywood**
-- Addison Passmore of Waynesville who is undecided
- Johnston**
-- Erin Burns of Clayton to attend N.C. State University
- Jones**
-- Ann Taylor of Princeton who attends N.C. State University
- Kern**
-- Ava Wood of Wil-low Spring who attends N.C. State University
- Lenoir**
-- Charlotte Wood of Wil-low Spring who attends N.C. State University
- Lincoln**
-- Kaitlyn Crompton of Tren-ton to attend Virginia Tech
- (See Scholarships, pg. 4)

Bucolic briefs

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is expanding the Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops program to now include medium-sized businesses in addition to small businesses. Eligible specialty crop growers can apply for assistance for expenses related to obtaining or renewing a food safety certification.

Cost assistance can be used for developing a food safety plan for first-time food safety certification, maintaining or updating an existing food safety plan, a food safety certification, certification upload fees, microbiological testing for products, soil amendments and water, and training.

The program also now includes assistance for 2024 and 2025 expenses. For program year 2025, the application period will be Jan. 1, 2025, through Jan. 31, 2026.

Specialty crop producers can also call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a FSA employee ready to assist. Visit <https://www.farmers.gov/coronavirus/pandemic-assistance/food-safety> for additional program details, eligibility information and forms needed to apply.

The U.S. Small Business Administration announced the availability of low interest federal disaster loans to small businesses and private nonprofit (PNP) organizations in North Carolina who sustained economic losses caused by drought occurring March 4.

The disaster declaration covers Duplin, Jones, Lenoir, Onslow, Pender, Sampson and Wayne counties Under this declaration, the SBA’s Economic Injury Disaster Loan program is available to eligible small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, nurseries, and PNPs with financial losses directly related to this disaster. The SBA is unable to provide disaster loans to agricultural producers, farmers, or ranchers, except for aquaculture enterprises.

EIDLs are available for working capital needs caused by the disaster and are available even if the small business or PNP did not suffer any physical damage. The loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable, and other bills not paid due to the disaster.

Applicants may call SBA’s Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955 or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for more information.

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).

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Meet the Got to Be NC Festival’s Young Farmers of the Day

Each year the Got to Be NC Festival recognizes three young farmers between the ages of 18 and 40 through our Young Farmer of the Day Program, presented by AgCarolina Farm Credit and AgSouth Farm Credit. These young farmers work hard every single day to further the N.C. Agriculture industry and build upon it as the next generation of leaders. Congratulations to Phylicia Barker-Nelson, Stephen and Kayte Leatherwood and Stephanie Carter. Thank you to Young Farmer of Day sponsor AgCarolina Farm Credit and AgSouth Farm Credit!

Stephanie Carter, Ithika Acres Creamery

Stephanie Carter with Ithika Acres Creamery in Raeford was the Young Farmer of the Day recognized May 18 at the Got to Be NC Festival.

Stephanie and her family have owned goats for over 20 years. In 2005, Ithika Acres Creamery was started with a passion for something new in the dairy products industry.

“We found a need for an alternative to common dairy products,” Stephanie said, “and through our experience with goat farming, we launched Ithika Acres Creamery to educate the public on goat farming and provide unique goat products, including goat cheese, goat soap and goat milk lotion.”

Although the farm was established in 2005, their first products didn’t launch until 2018.

Located on 101-acres in Hoke County, Ithika Acres Creamery not only raises goats and provides a variety of goat milk products to customers, but they also offer agritourism events throughout the year to invite the community out to the farm.

“We love educating the public – old, new, and in between



Stephanie Carter

– about the integral part that agriculture plays in all of our lives,” Stephanie said. From goat yoga and farm tours to classes at the local extension office and tactile petting experiences through the Silver Lining Program, Stephanie is constantly providing opportunities for the public to learn about agriculture, specifically goat farming.

“Today, according to the U.S. Labor Department, the average farmer is 58 years old. We want to teach the younger generation about what a wonderful career and lifestyle farming can be,” she

said. “In the future, we hope to implement an internship program in which young, aspiring farmers can learn about what we do on a daily basis and what it takes to run a farm. By enriching future farmers with the knowledge we hold, our goal is to watch young farmers fall in love with the industry just as we did.”

Farm tours and goat yoga can be booked on the farm’s website.

Ithika Acres Creamery is home to three breeds of goats: Alpine, Saanen, and Anglo-Nubian.

“We chose these breeds strategically because we knew that

we wanted to make cheese from the start,” Stephanie said. “These goats also have a great personality, they will come right up to you and love on you, which makes them good for agritourism and community events.”

From Plain Jane Goat Cheese to specialty flavors like Cranberry Honey Walnut Goat Cheese and Raspberry Jalapeño Bacon Goat Cheese, Stephanie and her family work hard to produce a variety of products to appeal to everyone’s taste buds.

“One of our favorite things is visiting the local farmers mar-

ket, meeting with our customers, and seeing the fruit of our labors as people try the goat cheese and fall in love with the flavor,” Stephanie said.

In addition to their goat cheese, Ithika Acres Creamery also produces a variety of bath and beauty products, including Goat Milk soap and lotion. Products can be purchased online through their website, onsite at the farm in Raeford, or at local farmers markets, including the Holly Springs Farmers Market and the Moore County Farmers Market.



Phylicia Barker-Nelson, Oriyoomi Customized Beef

In 2022, Oriyoomi Customized Beef was established in the heart of Oxford.

Phylicia Barker-Nelson, the May 16 Got to Be NC Festival Young Farmer of the Day, and her husband Glenn both grew up on the farm and have a strong love for agriculture.

In fact, Phylicia has fond memories of running around the farm with her father at a young age and leading the farm tours.

Today, Phylicia works alongside her father to manage and operate Oriyoomi Customized beef. She also works alongside her husband Glenn to help manage her grandparents nonprofit organization, Operation Spring Plant.

Oriyoomi Customized Beef is a cattle and chicken farm that produces 100% grass fed Angus beef and brown eggs.

“My father is a second-generation farmer, so I have learned a lot from him through the years,” Phylicia said. “I’ve always had a strong love for the farm. I left and came back a few times in my younger years, but my passion for this way of life always kept bringing me back.”

The farm is currently home to around 40 beef cattle, including calves, and multiple chicken houses. From T-bone and Sirloin steak to stir fry and Beef Chuck roast, they offer a variety of beef products for customers in North Carolina, South Carolina and



Virginia to enjoy.

“We process all of the meat ourselves and sell it online as well as local farmers markets, like the Oxford Farmers Market and the Warren County Farmers Market,” Phylicia said. “At the end of the day, our number one goal is to provide high-quality products to our customers that they enjoy sharing with friends and family.”

In addition to the farming operation, Phylicia and her family also operate a nonprofit called Operation Spring Plant that seeks to help local farmers get started and stay efficient.

“We are passionate about helping farmers in our area be the best that they can be,” Phylicia said. “Starting out as a farmer is hard, especially that first year. My grandmother established the nonprofit to help them start out on the



Phylicia & Glenn

right foot and stay afloat in the future.”

Through Operation Spring Plant, young farmers can receive

(See Oriyoomi Beef, pg. 5)

Stephen & Kayte Leatherwood, Leatherwood Farms

Stephen and Kayte Leatherwood with Leatherwood Family Farms in Canton were the May 17 Got to Be NC Festival Young Farmers of the Day.

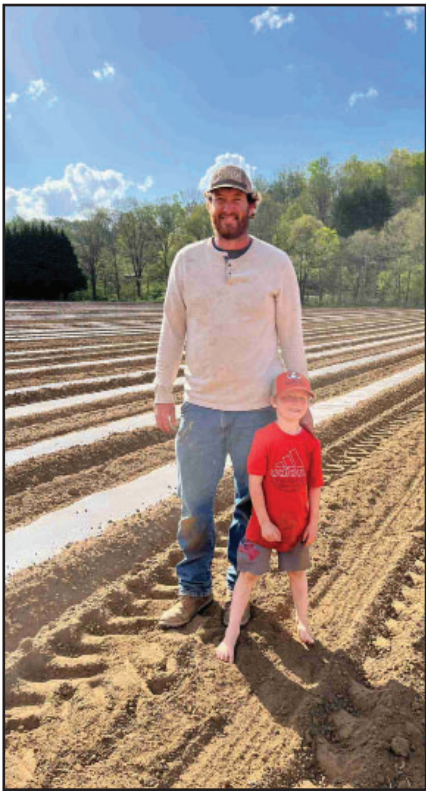
In 2024, many farmers were affected by Hurricane Helene, including the Leatherwoods. In fact, the couple lost their home in Fred due to the storm, but through it all they stayed positive and continued to persevere.

Growing up on the farm, Stephen learned a lot about how to grow produce and plants at the side of his father, John.

“My dad started farming around the age of 14 years old,” Stephen said. “He has grown a variety of things through the years, including tobacco, green house tomatoes, rhododendron’s, azalea’s, and a variety of vegetables. I grew up learning the ways of farming from him, and eventually started farming on my own in 2013 while I was attending Western Carolina University.”

After graduation in 2016, Stephen and his Kayte opened Leatherwood Family Farm.

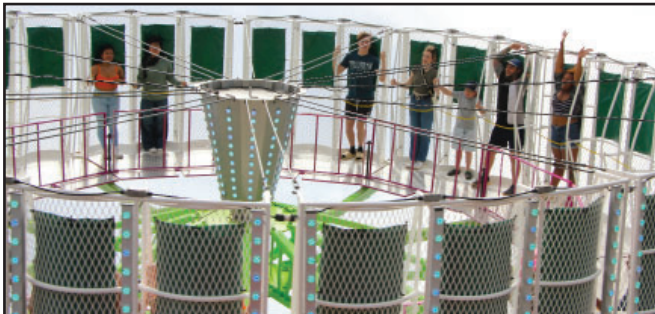
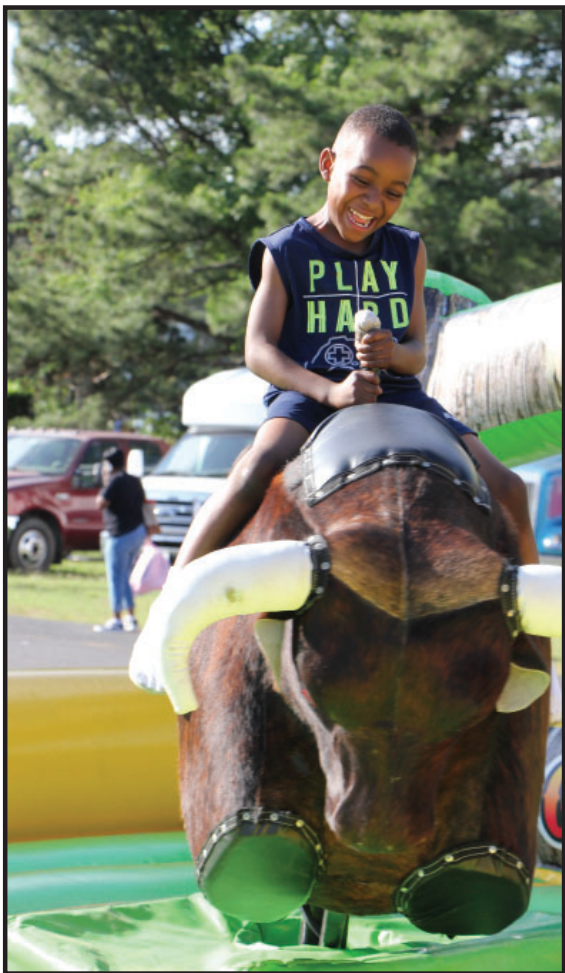
From beef and pork to fresh vegetables, eggs and honey, Leatherwood Family Farms offers a variety of homegrown items for



their customers to enjoy. The onsite farm stand, which is open seasonally from May through October, sells their products directly to members of the community. According to Danielle Smith, who nominated the couple for the Young Farmer of the Day program, “I purchase some of the best squash, tomatoes, cucumbers, potatoes and more from their farm stand. Not only do they produce amazing prod-

(See Leatherwood Farms pg. 5)

Looking back at the 2025 Got to Be NC Festival



Tractors, pork, local food products, rides and fun all added up to a great Got to Be NC Festival. Pictured are a young festivalgoer riding a mechanical bull, visitors sampling products at the Got to Be NC Pavilion, a participant in the daily tractor parade, members of Golden Star Lodge #150 - the top BBQ team in the annual Carolina Pig Jig - and daring riders on one of the exciting midway rides.

Spotted lanternfly

(Continued from pg. 1)

and Guilford counties in 2022, NCDA&CS directed teams to survey and treat for spotted lanternfly throughout the upper Piedmont to reduce the potential impact. This pest has been rapidly spreading since it was first identified in Pennsylvania in 2014. Rockingham County is the third North Carolina county to have an established population detected.

“Spotted lanternflies like to

feed high in the treetops, but they are not good at telling the difference between a truck tire and a tree trunk,” said Amy Michael, Entomological Programs manager. It is very likely this new population came from lanternflies hopping in with an unsuspecting commuter.”.

Spotted lanternfly often hitchhikes to new areas on vehicles and equipment stored outdoors and can be moved any time of year.

“Taking a moment to check

your clothing, shoes and vehicle for these insects and removing any you see goes a long way in preventing this pest from spreading any further,” Michael said.

Concentrated surveys are expected to continue year-round in Rockingham County to determine if the pest is in additional locations. Treatments for spotted lanternflies are conducted by licensed NCDA&CS operators from April through October each

year.

Sites offering a high likelihood of opportunities to spread the pest to new areas, such as commercial properties and lots under development, are prioritized for treatment. Residents seeking management recommendations are encouraged to reach out to their county’s Cooperative Extension Office at <https://rockingham.ces.ncsu.edu/>.

“Early detection and rapid re-

sponse are critical in the control of spotted lanternfly and having residents stay on the lookout for this pest helps us spot these pests early,” Foote said.

If you see a suspect spotted lanternfly in North Carolina, please submit a picture through the online reporting tool at <https://www.ncagr.gov/SLF>.

Don’t miss a single issue!

It is the annual renewal time for the newspaper. Clip the card from the front page of the June issue and return to the *Agricultural Review* offices or renew online at www.AgReview.org .

You will need the subscriber number above your name and address to renew online.

Scholarships

(Continued from pg. 2)

- Lenoir**
-- Kalen Barwick of Deep Run to attend N.C. State University
- Lincoln**
-- Adelee Dillon of Vale to attend the University of Tennessee
-- Jordan Mitchem of Vale to attend N.C. State University
- Onslow**
-- Travis Cox of Richlands who attends Hutchinson Community College
- Pasquotank**
-- Lane Markham of Elizabeth City who is undecided
- Pitt**
-- Ashlyn Cox of Greenville

- to attend N.C. State University or the University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Randolph**
-- Laura Jessup of Ramseur to attend Montgomery Community College
-- Caroline Scarlett of Asheboro to attend N.C. State University
-- Taylor Singleberry of Asheboro to attend N.C. State University
- Rowan**
-- Josie Correll of Cleveland who attends Oklahoma State University – *Farm Credit Associations of NC Scholarship recipient* - \$2,500

- Talton Correll of Cleveland to attend Mississippi State University
- Stokes**
-- Michelle Hartman of Walnut Cove who attends N.C. State University
- Wayne**
-- Gideon Linton of Mount Olive to attend the University of Mount Olive
-- Isaac Linton of Mount Olive who attends the University of Mount Olive
- Wilson**
-- Clayton Ross Hinnant of Kenly to attend Auburn University or N.C. State University

Oriyoomi Beef

(Continued from pg. 3)



grant money to purchase needed farm equipment, get advice from seasoned farmers for their own operations, obtain marketing materials, and more. “The world needs more farmers, which is why we are so passionate about helping those that want to enter the industry,” Phylicia said. “If our efforts can help a business get off the ground and give the farmer confidence

to keep pursuing it year after year, then our work is complete.” Phylicia and her husband Glenn also serve on the Young Farmers and Ranchers board with Farm Bureau, and the board of their local farmers market. Products from Oriyoomi Customized Beef can be purchased at the Oxford Farmers Market, the Warren County Farmers Market, or by con-

tacting the farm by phone or email, which can be found on their Facebook page. Be sure to keep an eye on their social media for updated event listings and market locations. Phylicia is also working to start her own farmers market onsite, so stay tuned for more information and ways to show your sup-

Horse Events

- Southeastern Ag Center, Lumberton 910-618-5699
- June 2 Horse and Tack Auction. Contact Brad Stephens, 828-390-0878.
June 7 Da Bomb Barrel Racing. Contact Josh Smith, 910-639-6387.
July 7 Horse and Tack Auction. Contact Brad Stephens, 828-390-0878.
Aug. 2 Carolina Paint Horse Association. Contact Lori Smith, 336-309-9470.
Aug. 4 Horse and Tack Auction. Contact Brad Stephens, 828-390-0878.
Aug. 16-17 Cowboy Mounted Shooting. Contact Pamela Lohery, 540-570-8785.
Aug. 30 Shaun McMillian Memorial Barrel. Contact D. McMillian, 910-374-1483.

- Sen. Bob Martin Agricultural Center, Williamston, 252-792-5111
- June 7-8 NCHJA “C” Horse Show. Contact Bethanna Perry, 252-675-3017.
June 21-22 Just Horsin’ Round Open Horse Show. Contact Elizabeth Tew, btew2@nc.rr.com.
July 7-13 SERHA Main Event Hosting the North America Reining Stakes. Contact Jesse Chase, 919-961-0440.
Aug. 16-17 Just Horsin’ Round Open Horse Show. Contact Elizabeth Tew, btew2@nc.rr.com.

- Gov. James B. Hunt Jr. Horse Complex, State Fairgrounds, Raleigh, 919-821-7400
- June 5-8 Tar Heel Summer Classic. Contact Shirley Lombardo, 919-362-4656.
June 21-22 NCAHA Open Summer Extravaganza. Contact Jackie Daughton, 336-509-6113.
July 10-14 State 4-H Horse Show. Contact Lori Stroud, 919-515-5788.
July 19-21 NCHJA “C” Indoors. Contact Joan Petty, 919-669-9877.
July 20 & 21 TWHA Show. Contact Dana Coste, 919-390-8126.
July 27 & 28 Summer Dressage Show. CNCHJA “C”ontact Kevin Bradbury, 734-426-2111.
Aug. 3&4 Finally Farm Horse Show series. Contact Lesley Jenks, 919-280-8087.

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

Spongy moth treatments postponed in Central and Eastern parts of the state

The N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is postponing proposed spring treatments for spongy moth infestations in Currituck, Stokes and Surry counties following delays in federal funding. The department will step up monitoring in these areas to track the potential population growth of this pest and complete some individual tree treatments in the most heavily infested areas. Postponed treatments were planned in the following:

- Carova Beach, Currituck County
- Pinnacle, Stokes County
- Glade Valley, Surry County

NCDA&CS has partnered with federal agencies to address spot introductions of spongy moth across North Carolina since the 1970s, said Sara Lalk, NCDA&CS Forest Health Research Operations manager.

“We remain committed to managing this invasive pest and will continue to explore all available state-level resources, including increased spongy moth monitoring in these areas to prepare for potential treatments in 2026,” Lalk said.

Spongy moths are a destructive invasive insect species that feeds on the leaves of more than 300 different species of trees and shrubs including oak, birch, willow and many others. When areas become heavily infested, trees may be completely stripped of leaves, leaving yard trees and entire forests more susceptible to attacks from other pests. Tree death can occur where established infestations exist.

Homeowners in the proposed treatment areas were notified about these infestations as well as proposed treatment options in January and February.

Proposed treatments, which would have involved the aerial application of the biological pesticide *Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki* (Btk), were intended to target newly hatched spongy moth caterpillars before they could mature into moths and lay eggs, increasing the population size of this pest and infested area. These treatments have proven highly effective in minimizing damage associated with this invasive pest, but they must be made within a short timeframe in the caterpillar stage.

“We encourage residents in affected areas to be vigilant and report any visible spongy moth activity to the NCDA&CS by email at newpest@ncagr.gov,” Lalk said. “While there will be no aerial treatments in these areas this year, understanding any increases in the infestations will be critical for future management strategies.”

Leatherwood Farms

(Continued from pg. 3)



Stephen and Kayte and family



ucts, but they also both serve as a strong voice for the N.C. Agriculture community.”

The farm also offers Meat Days in the winter where customers can come out to the farm to pick up

fresh meat products, including steaks, pork chops, beef ribs and sirloin tips.

Although Hurricane Helene and Tropical Storm Fred brought damage to both the farm and their personal home, Stephen and Kayte persevered through the struggle to continue bringing products to customers.

“It would have been easy to give in and give up during this time,” Danielle said, “however, Stephen and Kate didn’t. It was inspiring to watch them push harder, as well as encourage other farmers across the community, to continue providing products to customers and making a difference in the industry.”

In addition to farming, Stephen and Kayte also serve on several boards within their community to help educate others about the importance of our state’s agriculture industry and influence the next generation of leaders.

“I am passionate about young farmers because I know how challenging it is to breakthrough in this industry,” Stephen said. “However, I speak from experience that it is doable and worth the struggle. So, I enjoy encouraging future ag leaders as much as I can.”

First generation farmers growing 14 varieties of mushrooms

Discovering NC Agriculture is a year-long series focusing on 12 N.C. grown, raised, caught, and made commodities. 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

Mushrooms are an interesting and diverse crop farmed and foraged across North Carolina. Laura and Ches Stewart, owners of Haw River Mushrooms in Saxapahaw, surprised themselves when they fell in love with mushroom farming in 2013. Since then, they have been on a business journey to grow a variety of mushrooms, as well as create delicious value-added products with them.

As a young adult, Ches was involved in agriculture and developed a passion to operate his own farm. “Originally, he wanted to focus on regenerative agriculture with livestock,” Laura said. “However, after researching the market and taking a Mushroom Growing class, we both decided to explore a product many farmers



Laura and Ches Stewart and family

hadn’t at that time.” As first-generation farmers, Laura and Ches not only took a leap of faith by purchasing farmland in Graham, but also by diving into a crop that takes lots of time, attention and labor. “A lot of people don’t understand how much labor goes into mushroom

farming,” Laura said. “We grow 14 varieties of mushrooms throughout the year, which means we are working every day, 365 days a year. While mushrooms are fast growers, they are labor intensive and you have to be on top of all stages in the growing process, a bottle neck in one can lead to a crop shortage in the weeks ahead.” From Italian Oyster, Blue Oyster and Shi-take to Pink Oyster and Lions Mane, Laura and Ches work hard to bring a variety of mushrooms to the market, as well as educate people on how to use them.

When grown in the wild, mushrooms take root and flourish in hard wood, such as trees and fallen limbs. At Haw River Mushroom, Laura and Ches emulate that characteristic on their farm by using fresh

sawdust from local mills. “All of our mushroom varieties are placed in a mixture of 50% sawdust, 50% soybean hull, and 6% water to grow inside bags,” Laura said. “We heat the mixture to 195 degrees Fahrenheit to sterilize it before moving the bags to our lab where they

(See Mushrooms pg. 8)

Don’t forget to renew your Agricultural Review

The renewal card is on the front page of the this issue. Just cut it out and mail it in, or go online to www.agreview.org.

June AgroTips

Prepare for a fall vegetable garden by soil testing.

Now is the best time to submit your soil samples for planning a fall vegetable garden. Soil samples submitted have faster turnaround times as the lab is less busy. This will allow for plenty of time to plan for liming and fertilizing. There is a belief among some gardeners that lime cannot be over-applied. Well, it can be. Soil pH that is too high from its over-application can adversely affect plant growth by potentially causing problems with micronutrient availability. Lime also works best if incorporated several months prior to planting since its reaction time is not immediate. Unlike fertilizer, however, it can be applied at any time when its recommended. For N-P-K fertilizers as recommended by soil test, their application needs to be timed near the time of planting and during the actual growing season, depending on the plant’s needs. Additional information about timing of fertilizer application can be found at www.ncagr.gov/agronomi/pdffiles/stnote4.pdf.

Test source water for irrigation systems.

Before you turn on a drip or overhead irrigation system, it is a good idea to collect samples of your source water and have it tested by the NCDA&CS Agronomic Division. Chemical problems with source water can affect plant growth and quality. By testing water now, you can correct any problems before you start irrigating your crops.

The solution analysis service measures the chemical properties of water that affect plants. In Eastern North Carolina, high alkalinity is a potential water problem. Irrigating with highly alkaline water can lead to an increase in soil pH that can limit availability of some essential plant nutrients, especially micronutrients.

The solution report indicates whether alkalinity is a potential problem and, if so, provides helpful advice to correct it. Other potential source water problems include high soluble salts, iron, boron, sodium or chloride. Once identified, these problems can either be corrected or effectively managed to prevent plant growth problems.

If crop plants are stunted and/or discolored, check for nematodes.

The best way to find out if nematodes are responsible for an area of poor crop growth is to collect and submit two sets of soil samples: one for nematode assay and one for fertility analysis. An accurate diagnosis of nematode populations during the growing season provides a sound basis for effective management in the future. Knowing the species and numbers present facilitates informed selection of resistant varieties and crop rotation strategies.

Fertilize centipede grass lawns in June.

June is the month to fertilize centipede grass, which differs in rate and schedule of fertilization from other warm season grasses. Centipede requires only 0.5 pound of nitrogen each year. Higher than desired soil pH and phosphorus or inadequate potassium may result in centipede growth problems. If soil sampling was not done in the previous 2-3 years, now is an excellent time to submit samples to determine the rate and best fertilizer to use. Lime will also be recommended if needed.

Important Reminder: Do not fertilize cool-season lawn grasses—fescue, ryegrass and bluegrass—during the summer. Wait until September.

Summer is a good time to submit soil samples from lawns and gardens.

Summer is when the soil testing lab can process samples most quickly—usually 10 days or less. Homeowners and landscapers are urged to submit samples at this time and avoid the peak-season fee (late November through March). Farmers who are maintaining cool-season pastures can also submit soil samples now so they will be ready to apply phosphorus and potassium in late summer or fall.

Classified Advertising

Ads are run free for N.C. residents & can be submitted by mail to 1001 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-1001; by e-mail at www.AgReview.org; or by fax to 919-733-5047. Ads **must** include name, address including zip code, phone number including area code, and **price or price range for every item** being sold.

The deadline for each issue is noon on the first working day of the month prior to publication. Limit is 30 words, editor reserves right to edit or reject ads. Limit 2 ads/person in different categories.



Bees, Supplies & Services For Sale

NOTICE

N.C. law requires a permit to sell honey bees in the state, with the following exceptions: sale of less than 10 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 to gather honey. Contact Don Hopkins, state apiarist, NCDA&CS, 1060 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1001.

5-frame nucs in waxed cardboard nuc box, \$200. Sam Bolick, Concord 704-900-4580.

9-frame shallow supers, \$10 ea. Charles Winesett, Pinnacle 336-368-2519.

5-frame nucs, \$180 + box deposit; 10-frame colonies in your equip., \$240; state inspected. Rick Brown, Mooresville 704-310-6553, no texts.

BEES

5-frame nucs, new frames full of bees/honey, ready for larger box, treated for mites, transfer to your box, \$170. Ken Medlin, Hurdle Mills 336-364-1915.



Equipment For Sale

Bush Hog 2400 QT front loader, GC, \$4,799. Wess Pittman, Hillsborough 919-812-2566.

Caroni TM 1900-73 flail mower, LNC, \$2,900. Vic Goodman, Rockingham 910-995-4740.

Used Yetter 71 planter, LN, new hoppers, EC, manual, \$4,500. Martin Grinstead, Hurdle Mills 919-971-5149.

Sm feed bin, 6 ft. dia., holds around 2.7 tons, ladder, side opening for filling 5-gal. buckets, non-working auger incld, GC, \$1,000. Glenn Cawthorne, Henderson 252-432-7524, text/call.

FARM EQUIPMENT

80" disc harrow, 20x18 iron knuckles w/mods, \$1,600; carry all w/removable Rubbermaid dump cart, \$1,500; Craftsman integral single plow, \$200; 9-shank tillage tool, \$800; other equip. Steve Yarborough, Lexington 336-225-1301.

Truax 10 ft. no-till grain drill, w/all 3 seed size boxes for planting cover crops, grasses & wildflowers, \$10,000. Johnny Gregory, Madison 336-541-0421.

3 pt hitch cult, \$325. Charles Trotter, Bear Creek 919-837-5252.

Balers for parts, NH-850/363776, \$500; NH-BR7080/YCN171809, \$2,000; mowers for parts, NH-489/476362, \$350; NH-469/220348, \$300. Melanie Overcash, Concord 704-782-0202.

Case grain drill, older model, age unknown, GC, 6 ft. wide hoppers, drills 9 rows, hoppers EC, \$1,200-\$1,500. Doug Shoffner, Burlington 336-260-2260.

Tires & wheels w/ballast, off JD 790 tractor, ag tread R-1, 6-lug, (2) 11. 2-24, (2) 7-14, GC, \$1,000. James Gardner, Willow Spring 919-480-0050.

Mower deck for Gravely 812-816, 52 in., will need new belt & blades, \$125. Dodd Linker, Clemmons 336-712-2484.

AC-B belly plow, GC, painted AC orange, \$50. Brandon Taylor, Archdale 336-848-7777.

Ford 420 industrial loader tractor, w/litter bucket & box blade, \$5,000. David Gwaltney, Taylorsville 828-850-9543.

Hay spike, 3 pt, GC, \$150; 3 pt scoop pan, GC, \$200; (2) spring tooth harrows, GC, \$200; (6) new plow shares, \$80. Lloyd Mabe, Danbury 336-703-8232.

Tricycle tractor, fair cond., been sitting, \$2,000 obo; JD D170 riding mower, 25 hp, 54 in. cut, 185 hrs., \$2,500. Jeff Brittain, Hickory 828-327-4782.

Spike tooth drag harrow, 3 pt, 10 ft., \$750; feed sleds, 8x10x4, hvy duty, tubular steel frames, pine floors, \$1,550/both. R. Hanes, Glendale Springs 828-406-6365.

NH 411 discbine, GC, \$3,200. Benny Livengood, Salisbury 704-640-8461.

Farmall Cub, w/cults, planter, disc; good eng, hyd lift doesn't work, \$1,500/all. Vardell Bullard, Maxton 910-844-5752.

Volta tobacco stringer, assorted cult points, JD pull combine, IH drill, \$200-\$900. N. Lee, Advance 336-998-8922, nights.

M&W 4500 rnd hay baler, GC, \$2,900. Randy Parkins, Clyde 828-508-9350.

Roanoke auto tobacco harvester for parts, \$2,000; (4) Roanoke 126 rack barns, \$1,000 ea.; used tractor tire, 15.5 x 38, \$100; tobacco trailers, \$200. David Pace, Archer Lodge 919-553-7593.

IH Case cultipacker/mulcher/clod buster, 25 ft., hyd fold, hyd shank feet, hvy duty, \$12,500. M. Jackson, Rougemont 919-417-0026.

FARM EQUIPMENT

Long sq baler, \$2,500; NH 472 haybine, \$1,000; JD hay rake, \$300. Garry Austin, Albemarle 704-322-0656.

Wood saw for Cub tractor, 28 in. blade, \$300; JD box blade, 5.5 ft., \$550. Gerald Dyson, Statesville 704-880-7632.

1948 Co-op tractor, tricycle type, rear wheel wghts, not running, shelter kept, \$2,600. W.S. Chandler Jr., Asheboro 910-690-6953.

NI 5407 disc mower, GC, \$4,000 obo. George Truitt, Browns Summit 336-312-8789.

1 set ag tires & wheels for 4 Series compact utility tractor, from 50 hp tractor, VGC, \$1,800. Call/text Craig Poole, Raleigh 919-801-3661.

Subsoiler, 3-shank, hvy duty, GC, \$1,100 obo. Todd Brown, Ramseur 336-318-5131.

NI 4854 rnd baler, GC, \$5,000 obo. John Castor, Ronda 336-928-0686.

David Brown 770A, 4,200 orig. hrs., \$3,500-\$4,000. Ryan Shue, Climax 336-382-4181.

Old AC-M, needs restoring, \$5,500-\$7,500; JD 3010, not started in several yrs., motor overhauled several yrs. ago, needs hoses, steering wheel, other restoring, \$8,500. Jim Little, Wadesboro 704-465-0007.

Scoop pan, 3 pt, used on Ford 8N tractor, GC, \$150. Henry Lambeth, Gibsonville 336-697-0510.



Equipment Wanted

JD 120 corn picker parts machine, or similar models. John Hilliard, Siler City 919-200-8146.

Sm hammer mill in working cond, for daily use feeding cattle. Bob Nunnery, Clarkton 910-685-3051.

JD 4-row corn header. Jim Sides, Asheboro 336-963-0165.

Drop lime spreader, pull type; must be 8 to 10 ft. & in working cond. Keith Hyatt, Canton 828-648-7538.

Used 10 ft. offset disc harrow for 100hp tractor; used NH silage cutter w/grass head; used seed drill w/sm seed box, pull type, doub disc, GC. Blair Burrage, Concord 704-606-2040.

Jubilee 3 pt hitch arms. JC Johnson, Burlington 336-212-5943 or 214-4505.

(2) rear tractor tires, 15.5 x 38; 16 ft. & 12 ft. corral. M. Jackson, Rougemont 919-417-0026.

Belt-driven tobacco stick saw. Randy Hall, Elizabeth City 252-330-2294.

Suitcase wghts for JD 950. E. Morrison, Charlotte 704-517-9282.



Farm Labor For Sale

Will trap or kill groundhogs in crops or other farm settings; trapping requires depredation permit, must be w/in 30 mi of Asheboro, \$20/trip. Roger Wilson, Asheboro 336-465-3457, farm243@outlook.com.

Energizer repair, afw, zareba, tsc, ssc, parmak, \$20. Bobby Nichols, N. Wilkesboro 336-927-2850.



Farmland Wanted

Land to lease to run rabbits w/ beagles, around Mecklenburg, Stanley, Union, Cabarrus & Anson co. Matthew Clontz, Charlotte 704-309-5798, call/text.



Hay & Grain For Sale

Peanut hay, 4x5 rnd, net wrapped, can deliv 42 bales/load, no rain, sheltered, \$25/bale. Larry Bullock, Greenville 252-883-4748.

2024 mixed grass hay, sq bales, has some sm seeds Johnson grass, tight bales, \$5/bale. John Hilliard, Siler City 919-200-8146.

Mixed grass hay, 4x4 rnd, stored inside, \$30/bale. Roger Tuttle, Monroe 704-753-3333.

Oat hay, sq bales, excel. quality, p/u in field, \$8/bale; deliv avail, \$9/bale. Robin Mason, Mocksville 704-682-1156.

Coastal Bermuda hay, 4x4 & 4x5 rnd, horse quality, stored under shelter, \$45 & \$50/bale. Dan Lancaster, Pikeville 919-222-6853.

2025 Coastal Bermuda hay, horse quality, \$8/bale. Gary White, Sanford 919-775-9769.

Horse quality hay, orchard grass/fescue, rnd bales, \$50/bale; orchard grass, sq bales, \$7/bale. Johnny Sowers, Lexington 336-239-3020.

Wheat straw, \$4/bale. G.T. Underwood, Elon 336-380-5984.

2024 mixed hay, no rain, min. purchase 25 bales, \$6/bale. Vernon Hill, Mt. Pleasant 980-621-5091.



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.

Lrg horse barn for rent, w/6 ac pasture, riding rink, new fencing, 2 bdrm/2 bath mobile home; 4 horses max in pasture, \$1,000/mo. David Watterson, Lexington 336-989-8829.

Pony cart & complete pony harness, \$350. Jan Sawyer, Winston-Salem 336-816-6248.



Livestock For Sale

ND goats, (2) bucks, \$125 ea.; doe, \$300. Yvonne Petty, Bear Creek 919-548-4679.

Boer goats, healthy & stocky, \$200-\$300. Heather Davis, Greensboro 336-420-7470.

Fainting goats, multi colors, healthy & tame, bucks, dob 12/21/23 & younger, \$100; does, dob 12/29/24, \$125. Dodd Linker, Clemmons 336-712-2484.

LIVESTOCK

Reg Angus bull, good herd bull, \$3,500. Sherwood Mackey, Penrose 828-577-3646.

Simmental & SimAngus herd bulls, blk & polled, bred for calving ease, muscle, growth & disposition, \$3,500-\$4,000. William Pyle, Franklinton 919-215-5677.

(3) Katahdin rams, pure bred, born 1/25, sire on farm, ready to breed fall, \$500 ea.; Katahdin ram, proven, pure bred, 4 y/o, reg, \$750. Karla Godfrey, Wingate 704-606-5325, risingtidefarm1715@gmail.com.

Kunekune barrow pair, pets only, 8 y/o & 4 y/o, castrated, very used to people & chickens, gentle, food oriented, free. Bill Mundt, Pittsboro 919-815-0993.

Santa Gertrudis heifer, 12 m/o, pure bred, \$2,000; Santa Gertrudis bull, 12 m/o, pure bred, \$2,500. Chad Holloway, Statesville 704-746-7094.

Santa Gertrudis cattle, 6 m/o, \$1,000 & up; breeding bulls, \$2,000 & up; pairs, \$3,000 & up. Charles O'Bryant, Reidsville 336-908-0276.

ND goats, bred for being great milkers & friendly pets, spring bams, \$125; yearlings, bucks & reg avail. Karey Brindle, Mt. Pleasant 704-960-7342.

Reg Angus bulls, ready for service, bred for calving ease & efficiency, good feet & disposition, recent breeding soundness exam, \$4,000; others avail. Steve McPherson, Snow Camp 919-444-5307.



Livestock Wanted

(2) polled dairy heifers, bottle or weaned, prefer Brown Swiss, will consider Jersey or Guernsey. Dave George, Pittsboro 919-605-0239.



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.

Coolair fans from chicken house, 48 in., w/motors, \$200. David Gwaltney, Taylorsville 828-850-9543.

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

Peacock chicks & 1 y/o males, \$25 ea. & up. Richard Simmons, Tabor City 910-640-7114, call/text.

(4) Choretime feed lines, 300 ft., GC, \$1,600 obo; Ziggity drinkers, \$200/line. Todd Brown, Ramseur 336-318-5131.



Poultry & Supplies Wanted

Lubing nipple drinkers, poultry house feed lines. Dave Welch, Spring Hope 919-369-3580.



Seeds & Plants For Sale

PLEASE NOTE: Anyone offering nursery stock for sale in N.C. is required to obtain either a nursery or nursery dealer license. For more, contact the NCDA&CS Plant Industry Division at 800-206-9333 or 919-707-3730.

Heirloom pea seeds, tastes like a cross between crowder pea & black-eyed pea, SASE & \$5 for 35-40 seeds. S. Dorsey, PO Box 305, Advance, NC 27006.

SEEDS & PLANTS

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

Muscadine plants, healthy, potted, 5-6 ft., fert & planting instr. incld, \$25. Bob Whitaker, Mocksville 336-469-4822, do not text.

Plant variety, \$12-\$25. Ken Key, Carthage 910-783-5178, text.



Seeds & Plants Wanted

Ledmon watermelon seeds. JC Johnson, Burlington 336-212-5943 or 214-4505.



Supplies For Sale

4 stall doors for barn, hvy duty, 10 ft. wide, 5 ft. high, \$600. Charles Mode, Lexington 336-480-5668.

Water totes, \$75; metal & plastic drums, \$10; feed barrels, \$20; burning barrels, \$10; other items. Jeff Brittain, Hickory 828-327-4782.

New & used water pumps, \$200; water barrel, GC, \$200. Lloyd Mabe, Danbury 336-703-8232.

Myers shallow well pump, 1 hp, w/regulator, EC, \$175; cast iron wash pot, 20-gal., EC, \$125. Jack Matthews, Charlotte 704-846-1903.

Fuel tank, 250-gal.; grain scale; corn sheller; pair of 12 ft. alum. ramps, \$150-\$900. N. Lee, Advance 336-998-8922, nights.

200+ NOS sprinkler heads & controller, Rainbird, Optima, Water Whiz, \$100. Duane Kirschenman, Winston-Salem 704-528-9369.

Cedar bluebird houses, handmade, \$12. Bob Whitaker, Mocksville 336-469-4822, do not text.



Supplies Wanted

Fisher wood stove. JC Johnson, Burlington 336-212-5943 or 214-4505.



Trucks & Trailers For Sale

Field Gymmy water/fert injection truck, 2,000 gal., 6,800 mi, discs open soil & pump injects, \$15,000. Johnny Gregory, Madison 336-541-0421.

Flatbed gooseneck trailer, 20 ft., 14,000# GVW, low profile, spare tire on rim, compartment btwn gooseneck, toolbox, EC, \$6,400. Craig Poole, Raleigh 919-801-3661, call/text.

Farm trailer, 8x16, wood floor, \$250; (2) clamp-on dual rims, 18.4 x 34, \$700. Roy Watts, Trinity 336-382-2744.

2024 Calico stock trailer, 16 ft., bumper pull, cut gate, \$8,750. YD Saul, Elon 336-213-6292.



Trucks & Trailers Wanted

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

Used Carry-On utility trailer, 5x8 ft. or 5x9 ft., w/steel mesh, ramp gate. Stanley Cockman, Robbins 910-948-3627.

To keep up with the latest on the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, check out the department's blog at www.ncagr.gov/blog, and social media links.

Don't miss a single issue!

It is the annual renewal time for the newspaper. Clip the card from the front page of the June issue and return to the *Agricultural Review* offices or renew online at www.AgReview.org. You will need the subscriber number above your name and address to renew online.

13 youth recognized in Farm to School calendar

Thirteen budding student artists were recently chosen as winners in the annual Farm to School Calendar Contest, sponsored by the North Carolina Grange. Each month depicts the art of a student and represents a different commodity. The calendar also includes daily facts about agriculture, giving students an understanding of agriculture’s role in food production.

“The calendar art contest is a popular part of our Farm to School program. This year we had more than 4,500 entries from students across 58 counties,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. “What I see from their artwork is that they have a good understanding of farms and what agriculture looks like here in North Carolina.”

Prizes for student winners from kindergarten through fifth grade include gift cards from the N.C. Farm to School Cooperative and the School Nutrition Association of North Carolina. They were awarded at the Got to Be N.C. Festival in Raleigh on May 16.

Winning entrants are:

- Lucy Freeman, a third grader at Huntersville Elementary School in Mecklenburg County; Teacher: Elizabeth Nicastro
- Adweth Chipilla, a first grader at W.R. Odell Primary School in Cabarrus County; Teacher: Arianna Sondrini
- Georgiana Occhiato, a kindergartener at Elkin Elementary School in Surry County; Teacher Savanna Snow Wilkins
- Oliver Vester, a second grader at Rock Ridge Elementary School in Wilson County; Teacher LaNicha Richardson
- Everly Swift, a fifth grader at Richlands Elementary School in Onslow County; Teacher: Victoria Lee Good
- Abigail Van Order, a fifth grader at Long Mill Elementary School in Franklin County; Teacher: Emily Yando
- Cole Downs, a fourth grader at Bethel Elementary School in Haywood County; Teacher: Mae-Anna Norris
- Aleaha Pearson; a fifth grader at Robbins Elementary School in Moore County; Teacher: Kylie Edwards
- Mackenzie Hernandez, a fifth grader at Scurlock Elementary in Hoke County; Teacher: Gail Bowen
- Jose Siquin Ixpertay, a fifth grader at Spring Creek Middle School in Wayne County; Teacher: Jacqueline DeMatteo
- Faith Stewart, a fifth grader at Kitty Hawk Elementary School in Dare County; Teacher: Brandy Stewart
- Kelani Herrera, a fourth grader at Lillington-Shawtown Elementary in Harnett County; Teacher: Coleen Bartley
- Mia Borjigin, a third grader at Davis Drive Elementary in Wake County; Teacher: Benjamin Diaz

For 28 years, the N.C. Farm to School Program has helped place products from North Carolina farms into the state’s school cafeterias. This year, the program provided North Carolina over \$2.2 million worth of food products to schools across the state, with \$600,000 of these sales being funded by a Local Foods for Schools Grant. This program is a collaboration of the Food Distribution and Marketing divisions in the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Agriculture and agribusiness is the state’s leading industry with an economic impact of \$111.1 billion, employing a sixth of the



Above, 11 of the 13 winners in the annual Farm to School calendar contest were recognized during the Got to Be NC Festival for their artwork. At left, the cover for this year’s calendar was created by Mia Borjigin of Wake County. Not pictured are Faith Stewart of Dare County and Aleaha Pearson of Moore County

state’s workforce. The Farm to School Program provides farmers with market opportunities and encourages students to take an interest in the state agriculture industry.

“I hope some of the young people sitting in this room today will pursue a career in agriculture,” Troxler said at the reception.

The N.C. Grange sponsors the competition and ensures that schools and students receive calendars free of charge. If needed, more copies can be obtained through NCDA&CS while supplies last and a printable calendar is available online at www.ncfarmtoschool.com.

Mushrooms

(Continued from pg. 6)

will be placed into cultures in the form of grain spawn and given time to colonize.” The time it takes for mushrooms to colonize is highly dependent on the variety but typically averages anywhere from two to eight weeks. “Once our mushrooms are colonized, we take them to our grow rooms and break open each bag. This is that mushrooms first burst of oxygen,” Laura said. “Typically, in nature, this process is done by a woodpecker or some other circumstance that breaks open the wood.” Once oxygen is taken in by the mushroom, the growth process begins, and mushrooms start to flourish. “Mushrooms are really like apples on an apple tree,” Laura said. “They are the fruit that allows reproduction to continue.”

Throughout the year, 14 varieties of mushrooms are grown at Haw River. Some of their most popular varieties, like oyster and lion’s mane, are grown year-round, while others, like the pink oyster, are seasonal. “We grow mushrooms all year long, but some are only available during specific times of the year,” Laura said. “Another factor we must consider is the cultivation time for different varieties. For example, the Cinnamon Cap and Reishi varieties are grown year-round, but since they take four times as long as the Oyster varieties to cultivate, they aren’t always as readily available.” Although she loves the flavor profiles of all mushroom varieties grown on the farm, Laura’s favorites are the oyster mushrooms because they are easy and versatile.

When harvest time approaches at Haw River Mushroom, Laura and Ches look at the mushroom caps to ensure they are ready for harvest. “A mushroom that’s ready to be harvested will have a slightly curvy cap, but won’t be reverse umbrella,” Laura said. Harvested mushrooms are then stored in a 35-degree Fahrenheit cooler until used. “The biggest factor to remember with mushrooms is that they have a very short shelf life, so they have to be used quickly,” Laura said. “Typically mushrooms are in peak condition for just 5-7 days once harvested, unless



Haw River Mushrooms was at the 2025 Got to Be NC Festival sampling and selling .

used in a value-added product.” In addition to their raw mushrooms, Haw River also sells several products that incorporate their mushrooms, including mushroom coffee, umami salt and an award winning mushroom jerky.

All products from Haw River Mushrooms can be purchased at the Durham Farmers’ Market, the Carrboro Farmers’ Market, the Chapel Hill Farmers’ Market, the Eno River Farmers Market, all four Weaver Street Market locations, The Eddy Pub, the Saxapahaw General Store, Swamp Rabbit Cafe and Grocery, and on their website. In fact, Haw River Mushrooms currently ships their products nationwide! If you’re interested in visiting the farm, check their website and social media pages for upcoming farm tours and log inoculation classes.