

Agricultural REVIEW

Volume: 101 - No. 6

June 2026

Raleigh, N.C.

Celebrate dairy month with youth art contest

The N.C. Cooperative Extension is celebrating dairy month in June with a North Carolina Youth Dairy Art Contest.

The contest's theme is "Farm Fresh Creativity" and participants are encouraged to create artwork that highlights:

- Creative dairy foods and recipes
- Value-added dairy products such as cheese, yogurt, butter, ice cream, flavored milk, and specialty dairy products
- Unique ways dairy farmers and businesses transform milk into products people use and enjoy
- Dairy-inspired inventions, packaging, marketing ideas, or future dairy products
- Farm-to-table concepts and healthy living
- The creativity, innovation, and hard work behind the dairy industry

Youth Division: Ages 5-12, submit by June 12. Teen Division: Ages 13-18, submit June 8-26. \$25 gift card for winners. Email entries to authomps@ncsu.edu. Vote on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/NCDairyExt/>.

Farmland Preservation Advocacy Day held in Raleigh

Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler, NCDA&CS Farmland Preservation staff and stakeholders from across the state gathered in Raleigh recently to highlight the importance of farmland preservation and the need for increased funding to support land conservation.

On Farmland Preservation Advocacy Day, around 150 people came to show their support for North Carolina farmland and visit with their legislative representatives to share why protecting working lands matters — for the economy, food security, rural communities and future generations.

"The strong turnout today demonstrates broad, statewide support for investing in farmland preservation and ensuring that agricultural land remains available

for farming for years to come," Troxler said. "It's time for North Carolina to be visionary and not reactionary."

The Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund supports the farming, forestry and horticulture communities within the agriculture industry, purchasing agricultural conservation easements, funding public and private enterprise programs to promote profitable and sustainable family farms, and providing funding for conservation easements targeted at the active production of food, fiber



The group pictured at the Steve Troxler Agricultural Sciences Center.

Now is the time to vaccinate equine for EEE and WNV

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 was one case 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

and other agricultural products.

Since its inception in 2006, the program has invested \$118 million to permanently conserve more than 42,000 acres of farm and forestland.

The demand for such funding, however, far outweighs the program's recurring budget. In the most recent

(See Farmland, pg. 5)

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.

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

(See EEE vaccinations, pg. 5)

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From the tractor

by Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler

The deadline to apply for the \$221 million USDA block grant for certain ag losses from Hurricane Helene has been extended to June 12. The block grant applies to producers and landowners in 39 presidential or secretarial declared counties for Hurricane Helene damage. The disaster assistance will only cover losses associated with Hurricane Helene that were not covered under any other USDA programs.

We've extended the deadline to make one last big push to notify anyone who may qualify for this disaster assistance block grant.

Along with our partners, we have worked to make sure that everyone that might be eligible to apply for this assistance is aware of the program. If you have neighbors or know of farmers that might benefit from this block grant and might not know about it we encourage you to share this information with them.

The block grant covers four categories of loss, which includes:

- Farm Infrastructure — provides cost-share assistance for farm structure repair or replacement and farm road or bridge repair



Commissioner Troxler

and replacement

- Future Economic Loss — provides cost-share assistance for economic loss for perennial crops, poultry and aquaculture operations. All approved specialty crops will need to be replanted in 2025 or 2026.
- Market Loss Assistance for Commodities and Value-

(See Troxler, pg. 4)

Agricultural Review

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Livestock scholarship recipients recognized

Thirty-three North Carolina students have been selected recipients of 2026 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. The scholarship program has awarded \$677,500 since it started 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 2025 sale, 32 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:

- Alamance**
 - Kiya Kernodle of Graham to attend Elon University
 - Sage Robertson of Burlington to attend Alamance Community College



Eleven of the 33 Junior Livestock Scholarship recipients are pictured with Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler at a special ceremony during the Got to Be NC Festival.

- Anson**
 - Madalyn Carpenter of Wadesboro to attend N.C. State University
- Cabarrus**
 - Ana McAuley of Concord who attends Fort Scott Community College
- Chowan**
 - Lilah Byrum of Tyner who attends N.C. State University
- Craven**
 - Elizabeth Peluso of New Bern to attend Johnson University
 - Matthew Peluso of New Bern who attends the University of Mount Olive
- Cumberland**
 - Billie Faith Fulcher of Godwin to attend N.C. State University
- Edgecombe**
 - Emma Britt of Whitakers to attend N.C. State University
- Franklin**
 - Abigail Blankenship of Castalia to attend Judson College at Southeastern
 - Caleb Davis of Zebulon to attend Iowa State University
- Gaston**
 - Abigail Stephens of Gastonia to attend Lees McRae College
- Granville**
 - Abigail Shaeffer of Franklinton who attends East Carolina University
- Johnston**
 - Lydia Crocker of Selma to attend N.C. State University
 - Charlotte Wood of Willow Spring who attends N.C. State University – *Farm Credit Associations of NC Scholarship recipient - \$2,500*
- Lincoln**
 - Adelee Dillon of Vale who attends the University of Tennessee
 - Jordan Mitchem of Vale to attend N.C. State University
- Macon**
 - Caroline Deal of Franklin to attend N.C. State University
- Pasquotank**
 - Jacob Meads of Elizabeth City to attend N.C. State University
- Pitt**
 - Jamey Hall of Greenville to attend N.C. State University
- Randolph**
 - Shylee Brooks of Seagrove to attend Unity Environmental University

(See Scholarships, pg. 4)

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Horse Events

Southeastern Ag Center, Lumberton 910-618-5699

- June 1 Horse & Tack Auction. Contact Brad Stephens, 828-390-0878.
- June 5-7 Carolina Ranch Horse. Contact Holly Ball, 252-361-1305.

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

- June 6&7 NCHJA "C" Horse Show. Contact Emily Bates, 252-378-4474.
- June 12-14 Da Bomb Barrel Racing Big Summer Blowout. Contact 919-639-6387.
- June 20&21 ... Just Horsin' Round Open Horse Show. Contact www.justhorsinround.com.
- July 6-12 SERHA Main Event & North American Reining Stakes. Contact 252-792-5111.
- July 24-26 NCQHA - District 4 Little River Circuit. Contact 252-792-5111.

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

- June 4-7 NCQHA Tar Heel Summer Classic. Contact Shirley Lombardo, 919-362-4656.
- June 20&21 ... NCAHA Open Summer Extravaganza. Contact Jackie Daughton. 336-509-6113.
- July 8-12 State 4-H Horse Show. Contact Lori Stroud, 919-515-5788.
- July 17-19 Triangle Farms Summer Indoors I 'C'. Contact Joan Petty, 919-556-7321.
- Aug. 15&16 .. TWHA Beat the Heat Open Show (Barn E Ring). Contact Dana Coste, 919-390-8126.
- Aug. 21-23 Triangle Farms Summer Indoors II 'C'. Contact Joan Petty, 919-556-7321.

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

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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.

Madison Costa, Fowl Creek Farms

Madison Costa, owner of Fowl Creek Farms in Nashville, was recognized as the Got to Be NC Festival's Young Farmer of the Day on May 15. As a first-generation farmer, Madison is taking the industry by storm with her cow-calf operation in Eastern N.C. Since she was a little girl, Madison has dreamed of being a farmer, and she continues to work diligently every day to make that dream a reality.

Since the moment Madison could talk, she told her parents that she wanted to own and operate her own farm.

"It was always funny to my parents because neither of them were raised on or have worked on a farm," she said. "I just always knew that farming was the profession God was calling me to."

Even though Madison didn't grow up on a farm, she grew up riding horses and helping friends on their family farms.

"Growing up, I had a few friends that had cows, and I would go over to help them and see the cows quite

frequently," she said. "That's where my love for cattle began."

Today, she has 50 cow/calf pairs on her farm, mostly made up of Black Angus beef cattle with a few other breeds. Fowl Creek Farms was established in 2025 near Rocky Mount.

"The way that everything fell into my lap was truly a God thing," Madison said. "From the land to the cattle, I never thought that I would be as big into agriculture as I am today, and I look forward to seeing where it will continue to take me."

In addition to managing her own herd, she also helps manage 40 cow/calf pairs at Rose Hill Farms, a family that has supported and helped her start and grow her own farm.

"Her passion for agriculture shows in her work ethic," said Anna Costa, who nominated Madison for the Young Farmer of the Day Program. "Even after long days, she is discussing her plan of action to work on her future goals. At only 24 years old, she is one of the hardest working people I know."

Madison graduated from N.C. State University with a degree in Livestock

and Poultry, which has helped her not only start the farm, but sustain it.

From helping birth the calves to processing, Madison is a part of every step in the process for her cattle. In fact, this past year she recently began processing her own meat as she works to obtain her Meat Handlers License.

"I love seeing the calves grow into adult cattle," Madison said. "It's an honor to play a part in their lives through raising them and then bring that process full circle by feeding someone in the community. It generates a lot of pride that makes even the most challenging days worth it." As soon as Madison achieves her Meat Handlers License, she will begin to offer products direct to consumers.

In the future, Madison hopes to elevate her inventory of cattle and launch her processed meats online for customers across the state. She also dreams of growing her herd to 200 cattle in the years to come and adding hogs to her operation to process pork.

"Being both a woman and a first-generation farmer, my journey to where I am today hasn't been easy,"



Madison Costa

she said. "This recognition means the world to me, not only as an honor for how I got here, but as encouragement to keep moving forward."

Will Thomas, Buddy Waddell Farms

From the time he could walk, Will Thomas was playing and working on their family farm, Buddy Waddell Farm, alongside his grandfather, parents, aunts and uncles.

"My whole family farmed, and I've learned a lot through the years from each one of them," Will said. "As a kid, I always loved riding the tractor with my grandfather and fell in love at a young age with the lifestyle of farming."

Directly following his high school graduation, Will took over the farming operation from his father and grandfather. In fact, Will will attest that his senior year of high school was the longest year of his life because of how badly he simply wanted to farm.

"I just couldn't wait to get back here and do what I love to do full-time," he said. Today, the farm produces 650 to 700 acres of corn, soybeans and wheat for a local feed mill to use in livestock feed.

Although he loves producing every crop they grow at Buddy Waddell Farms, his favorite to work with is corn.

"Like the country song says, 'I watch my corn pop up in rows,'" he said. "I enjoy watching the corn grow throughout the season and harvesting it with our equipment here on the farm. It's rewarding to see all of our hard work pay off with a good crop."

Although he has faced many challenges through the years, including having to put a majority of his paycheck back into the farm each year, Will wouldn't trade a single thing for the joy and pride he fills in living out his childhood dream on the farm.

According to Will's nomination form, year-



Will Thomas

round he is constantly working to improve the farm by expanding the facilities, breaking new ground, or taking on new endeavors for revenue. He is so passionate about this farm and that's what fuels him every day to work hard and grow great crops for this community.

In the future, Will plans to continue to work hard to innovate on the farm and continue to grow good crops.

"It's very rewarding to see all the crops we grow come to fruition each year and full circle feed the community through the livestock our products feed," he said. "I hope to make my family proud through all that I am doing on the farm and encourage other young people to get involved with agriculture in any way that they can."

Will is a strong leader for the future of our state's agriculture industry and we hope that he, alongside other young farmers, will continue to advance the industry in the years to come!

"It's an honor to be chosen for this program," he said. "I am proud to keep my grandfather's legacy alive on the farm and look forward to seeing where our farm continues to grow in the future."

Josh Young, The Young-Outlaw Ranch

Josh Young, owner and operator of The Young-Outlaw Ranch in Dudley, was recognized as the Got to Be NC Festival's Young Farmer of the Day on May 17.

As a child, Young had two dreams: to be a Marine and be a cowboy or farmer. After serving in the Marine Corps for five years and the Army for three years, he began pursuing his second dream in early 2021 by establishing The Young-Outlaw Ranch in Wayne County.

Although he didn't grow up on a farm, Young was raised on Western movies and wanted to be a cowboy from a very young age.

"My grandpa and I would watch old Western movies together, which is where my love for that lifestyle really started," he said. "I remember watching the cowboys on screen ride horses or rope calves and thinking I wanted to do the same thing one day."

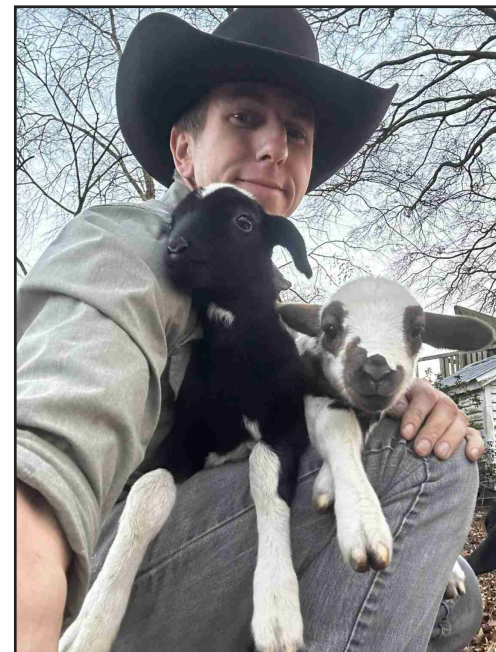
Today, he raises a variety of livestock animals at The Young-Outlaw Ranch including Texas longhorn cattle, pigs, chickens, hair sheep, fainting goats and deer. He wants to be the first USDA venison production ranch in North Carolina.

Josh is also one of the founders of the Carolina Deer Association where he promotes deer farming in North Carolina.

At The Young-Outlaw Ranch in Dudley, Josh produces local beef and pork products for his customers to enjoy.

"Our beef is grain-finished for 90 days from locally sourced grain from a partnership with R&R Brewery in Mount Olive using their distilled beer mash as an added mineral and protein benefit," he said. "Our meat products are NCDA and USDA certified, allowing us to ship orders across the nation as well as pickup points on the ranch and at Down East Armory in Goldsboro."

In addition to offering local products



Josh Young

to the community, Josh also hosts a variety of on-site events, like school group tours and Veterans in Ag classes, as well as travels to schools, fairs and other events across the state to advocate for N.C. Agriculture.

"Josh has been an advocate in agricultural operations in our state," said Patricia Cranmer, who nominated Josh for the Young Farmer of the Day Program. "He promotes agritourism with campus tours in the hopes that he will be able to inspire an interest in farming for younger generations."

During your visit to the ranch, be sure to check out the roping dummy, which is a nod to Josh's initial dream of becoming a cowboy, and meet his pet kangaroo, aka Buckaroo.

"I ended up with a kangaroo because I had adult money and nobody told me no," he said. "However, Buckaroo is a crowd favorite at the ranch, and I've been able to use him to teach kids about other parts of the world that they may never get to visit."

As a first-generation veteran rancher, Josh has worked hard to get to where he is today and has no plans of stopping anytime soon.

Crop This! Photo Contest — We all Scream for N.C. Ice Cream



This month's winning photo for the Crop This! Photo Contest comes from Katie Lee of Randolph County who is pictured satisfying her pregnancy craving with fresh North Carolina ice cream.

"Our favorite place to get ice cream from locally is Kalawi Farm and Ben's Ice Cream in Eagle Springs, NC," Katie said. "They have the best homemade ice cream around and you have to try their fresh strawberry and peach! It's a family favorite of ours!"

Our new monthly photo contest 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.

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!

July theme: Farmers Market Finds - Deadline for submission: June 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.

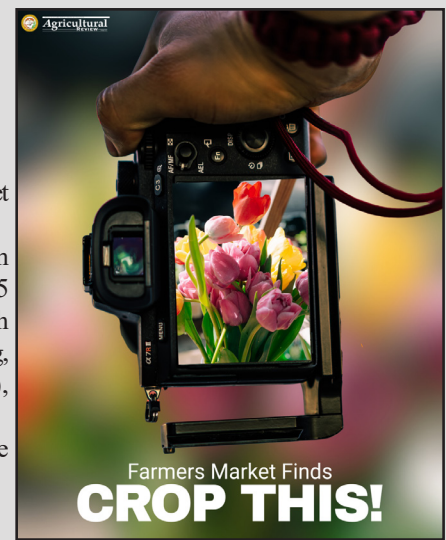
Looking ahead...

July theme: Farmers Market Finds, deadline June 15

August theme: Farm Weddings, deadline July 15

September theme: Catch of the Day (Eating, catching, cooking N.C. seafood), deadline August 15

October theme: Ag at the Fair, deadline Sept. 15



Scholarships

(Continued from pg. 2)

- Caroline Scarlett of Asheboro who attends N.C. State University
Rockingham
- Kinley Johnson of Summerfield to attend N.C. State University
Rowan
- Talton Correll of Cleveland who attends Mississippi State University
- Grayce Moore of Cleveland to attend N.C. State University
Sampson
- Shane Kendall of Magnolia to attend Kansas State University
Stokes
- Nate Bowman of Germanton to attend Forsyth Technical Community College
- Michelle Hartman of Walnut Cove who attends N.C. State University
- Erica Shutsky of Pinnacle to attend Wake Forest University
Wake
- Mazie Bunn of Zebulon to attend N.C. State University
Wayne
- Gideon Linton of Mount Olive who attends the University of Mount Olive
Wilson
- Logan Ballance of Lucama to attend N.C. State University
- Ross Hinnant of Kenly who attends N.C. State University

For more information on how individuals and organizations can support the 2025 Junior Livestock Sale of Champions or the scholarship program, contact Neil Bowman, director of N.C. State Fair livestock shows, at neil.bowman@ncagr.gov or 919-270-7094.

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/>

Troxler

(Continued from pg. 1)

Added Products – cost-share assistance for harvested or unharvested commodities or select value-added products in which value was reduced or destroyed by power outage.

- Timber Loss Relief Program – private landowners with at least 10 contiguous acres of moderate to catastrophic timber loss are eligible.

If you are reading this in early June, the window is shrinking quickly to apply and I urge you to take action now. Eligible farmers and landowners will find information and instructions at www.ncagr.gov/agdisaster. In addition, local county N.C. Cooperative Extension offices are offering application assistance for non-timber loss applications.

The Timber Loss Relief Program is being managed by the N.C. Forest Service, and more information can be found at <https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/nc-forest-service/managing-your-forest/tlrp>. To begin the timber loss application process, landowners should contact their local N.C. Forest Service county ranger's office.

Timber owners will find answers to frequently asked questions, a map of eligible counties, program application

forms and links to lists of private consulting foresters who may be able to assist landowners with completion and submission of the required TLRP timber damage assessment report.

It is important that anyone who thinks they qualify for the block grant to go online at one of the two links above and start the application process.

For clarity, this is not the state ag disaster program, this is a federal program. Each program requires its own application process, so if you applied for state disaster assistance, you would still need to apply for the federal block grant as well. Similar information is required on both applications, which we hope will make for a smoother application process.

We are continuing to work on the state disaster assistance program as of press time, and we will continue to evaluate losses for the state program and process payments to eligible farmers while we collect applications for the federal program.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who participated in our Farmland Preservation Advocacy Day at the N.C. General Assembly in May. We had great turnout and I am hopeful

your meetings and conversations with legislators will lead to increased awareness and funding for farmland preservation efforts.

In our most recent grant cycle, we received \$59 million in funding requests but only had \$3.1 million in new funding to award. Interest in farmland conservation is great, but we need additional funding now to help ensure we have the farmland resources we need going forward to continue to provide for ourselves, the nation and the world.

We asked our legislators to increase recurring funding to \$25 million, match \$11 million in federal dollars for partnership projects and secure \$1 million for the Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural Districts program.

North Carolina is the third fastest growing state according to the U.S. Census Bureau. We are experiencing development across the state, making it imperative we take action to protect farms and farmland. Please let your legislators know we need to invest in our future. It is time for North Carolina to be visionary and not reactionary.

Memories made at the 2026 Got to Be NC Festival!



'Peep' the hatching chicks.



Twisted tater? Yes, please!



Excavator fun in the NC 529 Kidz Corral.



Tasty samples in the Got to Be NC Pavilion.



Rides and games, all day!



All smiles at the Pig Jig!

EEE vaccinations

(Continued from pg. 1)

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 Coggins test. "It's also a great time to make sure your animal is current on its rabies vaccination," Troxler said. "We have had ONE positive case of rabies in livestock already this year, and we had four positive cases in livestock last year. All livestock are naturally curious animals, which puts them at risk for a bite if a rabid animal gets through their fence line."

Farmland

(Continued from pg. 1)



Farmers and advocates traveled from across the state.

grant cycle, requests for farmland preservation funding totaled \$59 million, yet only \$3.1 million in new funding was available for awards. That gap represents working farms and forests across North Carolina that remain unprotected despite willing landowners and local support.

Advocates for Farmland Preservation gathered in Raleigh Wednesday to ask their legislative representatives to increase the recurring funding for the program to \$25 million, match \$11 million in federal dollars for partnership projects, secure \$1 million for the Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural Districts program, and extend and expand the conservation tax credit.

For information about the Farmland Preservation Division, visit www.ncagr.gov/adfp.

Grants awarded to large animal vets



The grantees were recognized at the Got to Be NC Festival in May.

Twelve North Carolina veterinary practices were recently awarded grants to help support their large animal practice. The Large Animal Healthcare Enhancement Grant is a \$130,000 recurring fund created by the N.C. General Assembly in 2023 and is administered by the N.C. Ag Finance Authority.

This funding opportunity is available to veterinarians who practice in one of the 70 North Carolina counties with a population of 100,000 or fewer and that spend 30% or more of their patient care involved in large animal veterinary care.

"North Carolina's animal agriculture industry represents nearly 75% of total cash receipts, so we need the large animal vets who work to ensure the health of our livestock industry," Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler said. "We have a shortage of large animal vets in North Carolina, and we are awarding these grants to help encourage more large animal vets in the state."

Including this most recent group of awards and recipients, around \$375,000 has been awarded to 23

veterinarians in the state since the program's start. A total of \$123,500 was awarded to 12 large animal veterinarians in the last grant cycle. They were recognized at the 2026 Got to Be NC Festival in May.

The following practices and veterinarians received grants from the last grant cycle:

- Bethanie Cooper, Wake County
- Farm and Field, Pasquotank County
- Heart Horse Mobile, Wake County
- Jason Smith, Chatham County
- John Parks II, Alamance County
- Lexington Large Animal, Davidson County
- Don Banks, Duplin County
- Nicholas Collier, Iredell County
- Pineview Vet, Columbus County
- Sullivan Vet Services, Lincoln County
- Whiskey River Large Animal Mobile Veterinary Services, Macon County
- Foggy Mountain Mobile Veterinary Services, Haywood County

Student artists featured in 2026-27 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.

"It's clear from this artwork that these students have a good understanding of farms and what agriculture looks like here in North Carolina," said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. "It was a very competitive year with over 3,500 entries from 58 counties. There is no denying the talent in this room. These students have a lot to be proud of."

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 15

Winning entrants are:

- Namya Singhal, a fifth grader from Morrisville Elementary in Wake County; Teacher: Jennifer Bracke, Cover
- Saylor Fulcher, a third grader from Tiller Charter School in Carteret County; Teacher: Sarah Harker Leary, August 2026
- Asher Hill, a fifth grader from Hopewell Elementary in Randolph County; Teacher: Cori Cagle, September 2026
- Esther De La Cruz Aureoles, a fourth grader from Shiloh Elementary in Union County; Teacher: Jill Ammons, October 2026
- Parker Stewart, a fifth grader from Kitty Hawk Elementary in Dare County; Teacher: Brandy Stewart, November 2026
- Isla Bost, a second grader from New Dimensions School in Burke County; Teacher: Jennifer Hudson, December 2026
- Olivia Medlin, a fifth grader from Union Elementary in Union County; Teacher: Michelle Johnson, January 2027
- Owen Seitzer, a kindergartener from Banks Elementary School in Lenoir County; Teacher: Gabriella Ham, February 2027
- Evelyn Hernandez, a fourth grader from Rodgers Elementary in Martin County; Teacher: Taylor Camp, March 2027
- Kevin Lucas Perez, a first grader from Peterson Elementary in Robeson County; Teacher: Tapanga Bullard, April 2027
- Montserrat Vega Lopez, a fifth grader from Lillington Shawtown Elementary in Harnett County; Teacher: Coleen Bartley, May 2027
- Ryan Openchowski, a fifth grader from Davis Drive Elementary in Wake County; Teacher: Benjamin Byron, June 2027
- Sadie Lews, a second grader from Cool Spring Elementary



Eleven of the 13 student artists were present at the reception at the State Fairgrounds in Raleigh on May 15. They are pictured above with Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler and N.C. Grange Board Chair Vinnie Duncan.

in Iredell County; Teacher: Jessica Kessler, July 2027

For 29 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 with over \$1.8 million worth of food products to schools across the state. 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 are North Carolina's leading industry with an economic impact of \$100 billion, employing a sixth of the 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.

"Agriculture in North Carolina is so diverse. We still get new community entries for the first time each year. We had a hydroponic system, cut flowers, and alpacas represented this year," Troxler said.

The North Carolina 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.

The North Carolina Grange is a nonprofit, grassroots organization dedicated to strengthening agriculture and rural communities across the state.



The cover of the 2026-27 Farm to School calendar.

First cattle enter new research barn at Umstead Beef Unit

After years of planning and construction, the new Vytelle barn at the Umstead Beef Unit in Butner has reached an important milestone. The first research project to utilize the barn is officially underway, meaning the barn now has cattle in it for the first time.

The cows were moved into the barn in late April. That moment marks the beginning of a new chapter for the station, and it highlights a broader push by the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to modernize research and bring advanced technology to its field operations.

Visually, the barn is more of an open-air shelter structure with a high metal roof, steel beams and corral areas leading to water and feeding troughs or "bunks," with a central concrete working space. At the heart of the barn is a Vytelle system designed to track how efficiently cattle convert feed into weight gain, which is a key factor in the future of livestock production.

"The whole design of this Vytelle barn is to measure animals' feed intake and then their weight gain," said Thomas Cobb, the station's superintendent. "Basically what we're ultimately looking at is feed efficiency data — how much feed did it take to put 'X' amount of pounds on this animal and who did it the most efficiently. That's the name of the game."

How the system works

The Vytelle system uses electronic ear tags and sensors built into feed bunks and water stations to monitor each animal individually.

"When an animal walks up [to the feed bunk] and sticks their head in, it has an electronic ear tag that measures what animal it is and how much feed is being taken out," explained Cobb. "So as that animal is consuming feed, [the system recognizes which] animal it is, this is how much they're

eating; this is how many times it's been to the bunk today — all this sort of stuff.

"The water system is very similar as well, except the water has the capability to weigh the animal. So Vytelle's getting constant weigh data on the animals as well as feed-intake data."

All of the data collection is automatic or "passive" as NCDA&CS Research Stations Division director Teresa Lambert said. Antennas transmit the data wirelessly to a central hub, which is a small on-site office inside a military surplus shipping crate.

"We don't have people out here with pencil and paper. The computers are collecting data 24 hours a day in real time," Lambert said.

That real-time, continuous data gives researchers a much clearer and more accurate picture of how animals perform.

Why efficiency matters

Feed is the single largest cost in livestock production, and not all animals convert feed into weight gain equally. Identifying those differences is critical, especially as agricultural resources become more limited.

"So when you think about finding animals that are more feed efficient, it's because we're starting to see the effects of fewer resources being allocated to farming, like fewer acres being devoted to agricultural production. So you've got to find those animals that can convert pounds of feed to pounds of meat more efficiently."

Water efficiency is also part of the equation. While shortages of water aren't common in the southeastern United States, it is a problem in other areas. So, finding animals that are more water-efficient is also extremely important when it comes to feeding a growing population.

Just as important is identifying animals that are not efficient.

Lambert also mentioned that the challenges of beef cattle efficiency research have put beef behind industries like poultry and pork. Those industries have long relied on this type of data,

and the beef industry is still catching up.

"The pork industry and the poultry industry, they figured this out decades ago," Lambert said. "So if you feed a chicken today in a commercial situation, they know exactly how many pounds of feed it takes to convert to a pound of gain. They figured it out a long time ago. Cattle folks [are] starting to see the importance of it now."

Better data with less labor and less stress on animals

Before systems like Vytelle, collecting feed efficiency data was a time-consuming and labor-intensive process. Historically, research staff had to measure how much feed was given, what was left behind and calculate what was consumed. Records were often written by hand because taking laptops or tablets into the barn proved impractical. Then the figures had to be entered into a computer spreadsheet and analyzed, Cobb said.

Now all of that is being done automatically. So the technology helps address labor challenges by allowing the station to use people in a different, more efficient way.

Accelerating and broadening research

The system also makes it possible to do shorter research projects, which could ultimately mean more research. In the past, feed trials might run 90 to 100 days to get accurate data across a larger span of time. When animals go into the Vytelle setup like at the Umstead station, researchers can run a trial in about 60 days — a two-week warm-up to ensure valid data collection, followed by a 45 day trial.

Umstead is one of four research stations across North Carolina equipped with Vytelle systems, alongside locations in Waynesville (Mountain Research Station), Laurel Springs (Upper Mountain Research Station) and Reidsville (Upper Piedmont Research Station). The Vytelle system is just one example of how NCDA&CS is updating its research stations with modern tools and technology.

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.

Ads will be published in one issue only. Ads that are to be repeated must be submitted for each issue.



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; complete deep 10-frame wooden hive, \$400. Sam Bolick, Concord 704-900-4580.

Bee frames & brood frames, clean, GC, \$1 ea. Andree Brown, Rockwell 704-279-2791.



Equipment For Sale

NH185L skid steer, 1,400 hrs., w/bucket, new tires, garage kept, cat grapple extra, \$24,000-\$25,000. Brian Sapp, High Point 336-870-7280, sappfamily83@gmail.com.

1976 IH 364 tractor w/rotary cutter, 2,747 hrs., live PTO, 35hp, good tires, \$2,000. Paul Walcheski, Mount Ulla 704-756-5633.

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

Vermeer 504C hay baler w/manual, \$1,800; MF pickup rake, \$400; 8' Gehl disc mower, \$1,000 obo. Junior Hicks, Thomasville 336-953-3471.

NH 450 sickle mower, 3pt, \$1,350. Keith Moore, Elon 336-516-8189.

MF 50E industrial tractor, w/loader, open cab; has fire damage, selling for parts or repair, \$1,500; MF 165 tractor, good sheet metal, needs eng repair, \$2,000. Brian Pool, Marion 828-442-7525.

(3) Gravely L8s, 7.6 hp eng & rotary mower deck for ea., \$900. David Honbarger, Salisbury 704-636-8208.

Farmall Cub cult set, also fits Farmall A & B, \$300. H. Reese, Taylorsville 828-635-1656.

JD 316, \$1,600; JD LX176, \$900; JD 175, \$700; JD 160, \$600. Kent Davis, Clemmons 336-766-7607.

Cat D3B LGP dozer, rebuilt motor, stopped pushing, needs trans work, can assist w/loading, \$5,000-\$6,500 cash. Roy Tripp, Chapel Hill 919-357-4030.

Hale 5x4 PTO pump, Ames 30' suction pipe, \$1,500; 3" Ames pipe, risers, slicks, sprinklers, fittings, \$10 ea.; 2840 JD, w/7 ft. bush hog \$6,800. Paul Myers, Blanch 336-459-6258.

MF 2705E, 1,200 hrs., 53hp, GC, 2 sets of hydr., 72 in. loader, \$25,000. Buck Linthicum, Greensboro 336-207-8599.

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

NH 311 sq baler, barn kept, \$3,500. Jay Lemmons, Kernersville 336-972-8708.

1985 Ford 550 backhoe, great eng & hydr., have trans for replacement, \$7,500-\$8,000. Anthony Ragland, Sanford 919-353-4988.

1745 MF rnd baler, auto-tie, 4x5 bales, \$5,000; NH LS170 skid steer w/bucket, new eng but won't run, has tires & tracks, \$12,000-\$15,000. Andy Marion, Pinnacle 336-655-7080.

Alum. nurse tank, 1,000 gal., \$2,000; 1986 Steiger CS 325 tractor, 3306 CAT eng, 3,000 hrs., \$25,000; JD 918 flex combine header, \$1,800. Leonard Keever, Lincolnton 704-913-0410, no texts.

Gibson tractor, some parts missing, \$700. Bobby Harkey, Albemarle 704-982-2494.

Frontier fert. spreader, \$1,500; 8 ft. pull disc harrow, \$1,200; 2-disc Ford plow, 3pt, \$450. H. Davis, Elon 336-260-7606.

Woods belly mower, 6 ft. wide, \$250. DS Knox, Huntersville 704-677-2612 or 677-4408.

1974 Intl Farmall 140, key start, cults, fert. attach., 1pt bush hog, \$4,500; 1971 MF 135, GC, \$4,500. Alvin Hunter, Wendell 919-612-2658.

Edmiston sawmill, for short logs, \$2,000. Jeff Bolick, Lenoir 828-406-8864.

Ford 8N tractor, new tires, runs great, showroom cond., \$3,500. William Brock, Mocksville 336-998-3621.

(2) new tractor tires, 750-16, \$150; Kohler eng., 8-16 hp, \$100 & up. Randall Adams, Stanley 704-747-0062.

JD pallet forks for 5000 quick attach loader, \$775; Ford 101 3-16 bottom plow, \$550; 7 ft. Woods scrape blade, \$900. Randy Davis, Elon 336-263-8163.

NH 275 sq baler, rebuilt, GC, \$2,500; 7 ft. disc cutter, \$3,000; NH rake, \$800; (2) basket rakes, \$500 & \$400. David Tevepaugh, Taylorsville 828-632-4429.

Reddick pull-type sprayer, 300 gal., 40' boom, ground fill, elect. valves, \$1,950; gravity wagon, w/brakes & movable hydr. unloading auger, \$1,950. C.S. York, Staley 336-824-2085.

JD X380 lawn tractor w/bagger, 23hp, 48 in. deck, hys drive, 135 hrs., well kept, \$4,000-\$4,500. Daniel McLean, Lenoir 828-244-2560.

Backhoe for skid steer, \$3,750 obo; wagon, used for hayrides/farm tours, \$3,500 obo. Dave Blackwood, Greensboro 336-317-0831.



Equipment Wanted

MF 300 combine, running or not, reasonable price. Jeff Creech, Zebulon 919-404-1167.

JD 215 silage wagon for parts. Norris McConnell, Mount Ulla 704-431-9321, before 8 p.m.

Skid steer auger attachment that fits a Case 85XT. Sharon Kapeluk, Chapel Hill 984-261-6886.

MF T035 power adjust spin out rim, 11x28, in serviceable cond; will take tire on it if decent. Charles Bohlis, Kernersville 336-682-2600.

Left fender for Fordson Dexta or Super Dexta tractor. Jackie Brown, Denton 336-953-6027.



Farm Labor For Sale

Energizer repair, \$20. Bobby Nichols, N. Wilkesboro 336-927-2850.

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.



Hay & Grain For Sale

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

6/26 coastal bermuda hay, horse quality, we load, out of barn/shelter, \$8; out of field, \$7.50. Gary White, Sanford 919-775-9769.

Coastal bermuda hay, rnd bales, no rain, sheltered, around 800+ lbs., \$35-\$65. David Smith, Fayetteville 910-850-8715.

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

Orchard grass/fescue, horse quality, rnd bales, \$50/bale; sq bales, \$7/bale; rnd bales cow hay, \$35/bale. 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 older 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.



Horses & Supplies Wanted

Round pen. Kathy Myers, Lexington 336-225-4194.



Livestock For Sale

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

Reg. Hereford bull & heifer calves, polled, all vaccs & wormed, \$2,500. Danny Payne, Lexington 336-247-2922.

Fainting goats, healthy; tri-colored buck, born 8/24, very tame; younger bucks & does; bucks, \$100; does, \$125. Dodd Linker, Clemmons 336-712-2484.

St. Croix rams, \$350 ea. Valerie Cockerham, Yadkinville 336-416-2240.

Belted Galloway bull, 2 y/o, blk w/red gene, nice temperament, will register, \$2,500. A. Furr, Rockwell 704-798-3460, text.

Mini belted Galloway cross w/ Panda, (2) heifers & (1) bull, not related, 1.5 y/o, \$3,800. Steven Lane, Goldsboro 252-289-7097.

ND goat kids, ADGA & AGS, females & males, blue or brown eyes, naturally polled/horned, various colors, some bottle babies, \$300-\$550. Larry Shoaf, Lexington 336-225-1291.

(9) bred Hereford heifers, reg., due Sept/Nov '26, (7) AI safe, sell by choice or total pkg., \$6,000-\$7,500. James Davis, Lexington 336-247-1554.

F1 Wagyu yearling bulls & heifers, \$2,500; reg. full blood Wagyu bull yearling, Yasatani genetics, \$5,400. Charles Hursey, Elon 336-260-0709.

Pair of breeding pigs, purebred American Spotted sow, purebred Hampshire Boar sow's 1st litter 15 piglets, \$1/lb. George Silvia, Salisbury 980-892-3262.

10 calves, Blk Angus & blk blades, males & females, \$20,000. Andy Marion, Pinnacle 336-655-7080.

Boer bucklings, born 3/26, \$350 ea. Cindy Tucker, Browns Summit 336-580-0984.

Reg. mini Hereford bull, 6 m/o, naturally polled, \$2,500. Steve Tucker, Browns Summit 336-580-1032.



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.

Wooden hen house for sm backyard flock, exterior access egg collection, walk-in door, chicken access door, interior roosting, rubber mats on floor, metal roofing, \$675. Cathy Frank, Rougemont 919-491-9743, catherine.g.frank@gmail.com.

Peacock chicks, \$30 & up. Richard Simmons, Tabor City 910-640-7114.

2 male ostrich, 3 y/o, \$3,000/both or \$2,500 ea. Andy Marion, Pinnacle 336-655-7080.

Chicks, RI Red x Cornish White Rock, 4 w/o, \$4; 6 w/o, \$6. Ron Ray, Whiteville 910-625-6710.

POULTRY & SUPPLIES

French Blk Copper Maran hens & roosters, \$50 ea. Scott Loflin, Yadkinville 336-480-4348, text.

Bantam dark Cornish, from exhibition stock, hatched spring '26, cockerels, \$40; pullets, \$60. John Thornburg, Raleigh 336-302-3838.



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.

Sunflower seeds, 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.

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

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.



Supplies For Sale

(2) generators for parts, 10. kw military, \$500. Charlie Morgan, Zebulon 252-740-4547.

3-panel cement fence, +/- 200 ft., \$3/ft. Tommy Sink, Lexington 336-250-4234.

6" irrig. pipe, 20' joints, Akron & Rainbow, 100+ joints, \$20 ea. Ken Chappell, Eagle Springs 910-690-0422.



Supplies Wanted

Old bear traps, other old steel traps. Daniel Carawan, Edenton 252-945-6493.



Trucks & Trailers For Sale

Calico horse/cow trailer, \$9,250. H. Davis, Elon 336-260-7606.

2-horse trailer, 6.6 high, needs paint, \$400. DS Knox, Huntersville 704-677-2612 or 677-4408.

1973 Chevy C-65 tandem, Miller 13.5 contractor bed w/telescopic dump, air brakes, \$2,300. C.S. York, Staley 336-824-2085.

1988 GMC C7000 flatbed, hydr. dump bed, 8.2-liter Detroit diesel, 144,000 mi, 12 ft. bed, 2-spnd axle, heat/ac, no air brakes, \$8,500. Bobby Huneycutt, Oakboro 704-485-8434.

Miller tilt-top trailer, 20-ton, light, brakes, \$8,500. Tommy Sink, Lexington 336-250-4234.

1987 Ford L8000, CAT 3280 eng, Fuller trans, 8LL, 18 ft. dump flatbed, \$15,000. Richard Burrage, Concord 704-791-3434.

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.

Randolph County NCFS office dedicated to longtime ranger



N.C. Forest Service personnel stand with the newly unveiled road sign.



This metal sign adorning the building details Cross's nearly 37-year career.



Family, officials, N.C. Forest Service personnel, firefighters and community members attended the dedication ceremony.



The Cross Family pictured with Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler and N.C. Forest Service personnel.

In May, the N.C. Forest Service dedicated its Randolph County facilities in honor of longtime Randolph County ranger Walter Cross and renamed the site as the "Walter Cross Randolph County Headquarters."

Cross began his career with the N.C. Forest Service in 1988. He worked in Rockingham and Montgomery counties but returned to his native Randolph County for the majority of his career.

Cross had a heart for public service and a passion for land management. Every day, Cross showed up with an eagerness to work and to protect forestland. Cross dedicated himself to being a supervisor and coworker that freely shared his vast knowledge and experience.

On May 27, 2025, Cross passed away after a short, unexpected illness. At the time, he was the longest-serving active employee of the N.C. Forest Service at 36 years and 7 months.

"Walter was a beloved and respected Randolph County ranger who exemplified selfless sacrifice and commitment to serving others. As he has faithfully served the citizens of Randolph County and the state, it is fitting that the Randolph County headquarters bear his name as an acknowledgement of his dedication," Agriculture Commissioner Steve

Troxler said. "Walter's impact lives on in every Forest Service employee and firefighter he mentored throughout his career and through his three children who continue his legacy of public service through their own careers."

At the dedication ceremony, firefighters, forest service staff and other community members gathered to unveil the sign and remember Cross and his legacy. His son spoke of his father's impact in the county.

"If it was alive in Randolph County, it was cared about and looked after by Walter Cross," said Ben Cross, Walter's son and Rockingham County Ranger. "We have to salute the man who put his heart and soul into being the best forest ranger you could ask for. It means so much to our family for the N.C. Forest Service to honor our dad's work and remarkable career by dedicating these facilities to him."

As part of the building dedication ceremony, a sign detailing Cross's career was added to the Randolph County office building. Additionally, a large sign was installed at the headquarter's entrance displaying the facility's new name.

The Walter Cross Randolph County Headquarters is located on Old Cox Road in Asheboro.

Sen. Bob Martin Eastern Ag Center wins national award

The Senator Bob Martin Eastern Agricultural Center located in Williamston was awarded The Facility of the Year Award (Less than 500 Permanent Horse Stalls) by The League of Agricultural & Equine Centers (LAEC).

The LAEC serves as a national association for agricultural and equine centers across the country and Canada. Senator Bob Martin Eastern Agricultural Center has been a member of this association for nearly 16 years; this was the first time the facility has ever been nominated for the award. Criteria for nomination is based on number of events held, community involvement, quality customer service testimonials, agricultural education to consumers, and facility projects.

The facility encompasses 168 acres including a coliseum housing permanent seating for 2,286 people, a meeting center having the capacity to hold around 1,000 people, six horse barns with 456 permanent equine stalls, three practice riding pens, a covered ring riding area attached to the coliseum, and a 100-foot by 240-foot multi-purpose East Building for rental needs.

Events varying from horse shows, livestock shows, motorcross, monster truck shows, truck and tractor pulls, video and movie filming, go-cart races, craft fairs, weddings, banquets, graduations, proms, meetings, and much more take place at the facility every year.

The staff at the facility is very proud of their hard work and excited to have been awarded such an honor.



Sen. Bob Martin Eastern Ag Center staff -- Back row, from left: John Sillers, Trip Sexton, Josh Edgerton, Brooks McCombs, Major Burroughs, Brandon Chesson, Tom Fagan and Zach Cowan. Front row, from left: Chris Buzzard, Samantha Keel, Michael Seabrooks, Danielle Alligood, Susan Vick-Tyre, LeAnn Rogerson, Michael Lee and Phil Williams.