

Efforts continue statewide to boost vaccination rates for COVID-19. Simply put, please get your shot if you have not already done so. Across the United States, there are an increasing number of cases being reported that are linked to the Delta variant. Unvaccinated Americans are especially at risk and examples of new cases are popping up across the country every day in places with low vaccination rates. I encourage you to get the shot for everyone you love and care about.

I also wanted to mention some information I came across recently regarding cost-share and support resources offered by the N.C. Agromedicine Institute. I thought many farmers may find this information useful.

The Agromedicine Institute has cost-share funds available for migrant housing internet connectivity, and for transportation and sanitation equipment and supplies.

A cost-share of up to \$1,000 per migrant housing unit is available for the purchase of hot spots, routers, modems, antennae's, set-up fees and service payments.

The goal with internet connectivity is to allow farmers to have an easy way to communicate with workers about outbreaks and emergencies, with the added benefit of workers being able to access telemedicine and health resources.

Farmers can also purchase PPE for pesticide application through the institute at 50 percent of the state contract rate. Additionally, the institute can assist with counseling sessions for farmers, farm family members and farmworkers who are uninsured or underinsured.

I have talked before about farm stress and I don't know that 2020 provided any relief as farmers have had to adapt during the COVID pandemic and have dealt with added worries.

The Agromedicine Institute works with individuals to identify a counselor if they don't already have one and then will pay the counselor directly for services.

This is available for farmers, farm family members and farmworkers who are either uninsured or under insured.

These are all great resources for farmers, ag workers and farm families and speak to the core mission of the institute, which is to promote the health and safety of farmers, fishermen, foresters, their workers and their families. Its primary goals are reducing injury and illness and to make farming, logging and fishing workplaces safe and healthy for all.

The Agromedicine Institute is based in Greenville, but it provides services to farmers, fishermen and foresters in all 100 counties. Institute partners include East Carolina University, N.C. State University and N.C. A&T State University. We are fortunate to have this resource available to farmers, fishermen and foresters.

To learn more about the Agromedicine Institute's programs and services, go online to [www.ncagromedicine.org](http://www.ncagromedicine.org) or call 252-744-1008.