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**N. C. Tobacco Trust Fund Commission  
Awards Over \$4.5 Million in Grants Awarded**

RALEIGH – The N.C. Tobacco Trust Fund Commission (N.C. TTFC) awarded more than \$4.5 million through 18 grants for agricultural and economic initiatives across the state. These grants place a high priority on projects that stimulate the agricultural economy, train current and future farmers and help farmers execute innovative ideas.

“North Carolina has a strong agriculture history, and we are proud to offer opportunities to strengthen agriculture for the future. These grants will assist producers of livestock, field crops and specialty crops in every part of the state.” said Bill Teague, Chairman of the N.C. TTFC.

The \$4.5 million supports projects that assist with commodity and livestock facilities, FFA instructional equipment and training, food distribution, and farmers with operations improvements and diversification.

Many of the awarded projects are to improve agricultural programs and facilities at high school, community colleges and universities. One such project involves the creation of a facility to improve the Fraser Fir breeding program through a partnership with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and North Carolina State University. Another anticipated project will see the completions of the new Vet Tech facility at Central Carolina Community College.

The Town of Princeville received a grant to help build a new farmer’s market, allowing for fresh fruits and vegetables to be purchased from local farmers without leaving town.

In addition to these grants, the N.C. TTFC has renewed its partnership with The North Carolina Agricultural Foundation - AgVentures program. This program’s purpose is to provide small grants directly to on-farm projects that support increasing farm profitability.

The N.C. General Assembly created the N.C. Tobacco Trust Fund Commission in 2000 to lessen the financial impact to farmers and tobacco-related businesses caused by the sharp decline of tobacco in the agricultural economy. The commission’s original funding was established through tobacco industry annual payments as a result of the Master Settlement Agreement. Its current funding comes from a set appropriation of funds. Since 2002, the N.C. TTFC has awarded more than 390 grants to public and nonprofit agencies that meet the goals of strengthening the rural and tobacco-dependent economies of North Carolina.

For more information and a list of grant recipients, visit the N.C. TTFC website at [www.tobacotrufund.org](http://www.tobacotrufund.org).