

Bucolic briefs

Many skills are required to start a successful farm: passion, clear goals, production experience, financial and marketing know-how, and more. The Farm Beginnings® class is a 12-month training session that uses holistic management to help beginning farmers clarify their goals and strengths, establish a strong enterprise plan and start building their operation. This training series has been restructured from in-person workshops to an online class, which includes a mixture of live virtual sessions, recorded videos, resources and hopefully an in person meet up. Farm Beginnings® is designed for new and prospective farmers who want to plan a profitable farm business. Students do not need to currently own land, but some farming or production experience is helpful to get the most out of the class. Scholarships available. It is hosted by the Organic Growers School. For more information, go to <https://www.facebook.com/events/660235458039397/>

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).

Beekeepers with bees for rent and growers interested in bee pollination services can post their information on the BeeLinked website at www.ncagr.com/beelinked. The site is hosted by the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the N.C. State University Apiculture Program. Anyone interested in listing their information can do so by filling out an online Submit Your Ad form on the BeeLinked page or by contacting NCDA&CS at 919-233-8214 or by email at NCHoneybee@ncagr.gov or call NCSU at 919-515-1660. The NCDA&CS Plant Industry Division regulates the movement of agricultural or related items capable of spreading harmful insects, diseases, and other pests. Beekeepers participating in this program will be required to comply with all honey and bee industry regulations.

The N.C. Ag Finance Authority provides credit to agriculture in areas where financing is not available at reasonable rates and terms. The agency originates, services and finances farm loans, rural business loans, disaster loans and cotton gin loans. It also offers tax-exempt ag development bonds for agribusiness processing, ag-related manufacturing or ag waste disposal. For more about Ag Finance Authority programs or to request a loan application, call 919-790-3949 or email at RequestLoanInfo@ncagr.gov.
