

Station Facts

The Border Belt Tobacco Research Station was established in 1949 in Columbus County. In 1956 the station moved to its present location off State Road 1002, seven miles northwest of Whiteville.

The research facility is on 102 acres of fine, sandy, loam soil typical of the Coastal Plains region of North Carolina. Fifty-eight acres are allocated to crop research and production, with the remaining lands used in roads, buildings and woodlands.

The N.C. Department of Labor recently recognized the BBTRS for being a leader in safety and health by naming it a Public Sector Star work site.

Infrastructure

The facilities include two greenhouses used for hydroponics studies, an office, shop, employee dwelling, pesticide storage, packhouse used for processing and storing tobacco, several buildings for storing equipment and 15 curing units that can cure anywhere from 2 to 96 racks of tobacco. The newest building is a burley curing shed.

The NCDA&CS Plant Industry Division Witchweed Eradication Project operates a support shop from this facility along with the U.S. Department of Agriculture-APHIS Wildlife Services, and the U.S. Geological Survey "Department of Interior" Coastal Plains Invasive Species Field Office.

Events

In July of each year we host the North Carolina/South Carolina tobacco tour.

This year, an "Ag Wrap" field day was held to educate the public on baling corn stalks and soybeans in response to the hay shortage that we have due to the dry growing season.

Research Programs

Our current programs include research on corn, soybeans, peanuts, flue-cured and burley tobacco.



Field Crops The corn research program test over 90 different varieties for yield and quality in the SE region of the state through the OVT-Official Variety Program. In the OVT- Soybean trials tests were run on over 150 different varieties. Another test monitors for disease on soybeans. The peanut test conducted advanced yield trials on over 100 different varieties for yield and quality determinations. Another peanut trial looks at using different crops in a rotation to get the highest yields.

Tobacco The OVT-burley tobacco test was conducted to determine yield and quality in the border belt tobacco-growing region. Flue-cured tobacco trials were done mostly on testing up and coming varieties or released tobacco varieties. There are around 300 varieties that are being grown at this location. Work is being done on determining what varieties of tobacco will last the longest in the field without losing yield and quality.

Other We have a fertility study that test different types and rates of fertilizer. Another test determines the effects of leaching on yield and quality. One test looks at two fertilizer rates on various topping heights and harvest schemes and chemical topping on a non-flowering variety. There is a pesticide study that looks at using DNA's for sucker control to obtain MH free tobacco.

Future The future plans for this research station is to continue to look for new varieties in the various field crops grown in this part of the state, striving for higher yields, better quality, better disease and insect management, using the best in fertility and crop management procedures that is economical to the farmers with less impact on the environment. We have a plan in place that we will be looking at various oil seed crops to be used for bio-diesel production. This project will involve working with Southeastern Community College and the Cooperative Extension Service. The present and future impact of the work done at this research station has helped the farmers to produce higher yielding crops with better quality and safety than in any other time in history.



Community Partnership

Since 1949, research on field crops at the Border Belt Tobacco Research Station has produced many advances in agricultural production technology for growers in the world, nation, state and especially to our local production area in the Southeast.

New agricultural technologies continue to change the way crops are produced. BBTRS has remained at the forefront in developing these cutting edge agricultural technologies especially in variety trials and other areas, so that our producers can quickly adopt those that prove viable and economical, leading to greater profitability with less risk. It is our goal to develop these leading-edge technologies to make farming more efficient, productive and profitable, while maintaining a safe, sustainable environment, which leads to safe, high quality, affordable food, feed and fiber products for our customers.

The current research conducted at the BBTRS involves genetic studies on corn, soybeans, tobacco, and peanuts. There are rotation studies, fertility, chemical, crop management, and tobacco-holdability studies to name a few. The soils, climate, and southeastern location make this site unique in many ways. For this reason certain diseases, and plant pathogens can be studied better here.



Research Stations Division

Working together for one cause

Mission

To manage crop and livestock facilities that serve as a platform for agriculture research to make farming more efficient, productive, and profitable, while maintaining a sound environment and providing consumers with safe and affordable products.

Partnership

Agriculture research in North Carolina dates back to 1877, when state legislation established the N.C. Department of Agriculture along with “Experiment Stations” as a division of the department. Since that time, the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services’ Research Stations Division, in partnership with N.C. State University, has established 18 statewide locations. Each facility has unique climate and soil conditions, giving researchers a living laboratory in which to investigate a variety of regional crops, forestry concerns, livestock, poultry, and aquaculture. The Division supports these studies by providing land, water, equipment, buildings, and staff who work around the clock to help build a stronger foundation for the future of agriculture.

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Border Belt Tobacco

RESEARCH STATION

Columbus County

