

Station Facts

Established in the 1940s, this research station was originally part of the John Umstead Hospital and was known as the Umstead State Farm. The initial two-fold mission of this farm was to provide food for the hospital and opportunities for some of the patients to work. At that time the farm included agriculture enterprises related to poultry production of eggs and broilers, vegetable production, beef production and a dairy operation. The dairy herd became part of the N.C. State University research program in 1949. During the 1970s the beef operation was transferred to NCSU when around 1,000 acres of land was given to the university for what is now the Butner Beef Field Lab. The farm continued to participate in dairy research until the summer of 2004 when dairy research program was consolidated to other research locations.

Infrastructure

The farm currently consists of more than 4,000 acres with about 190 acres of cropland, 200 acres of pastureland and 3,600 acres of timber.

Buildings on this station are consistent with a farm that has been established for several decades and include a centrally located office/shop; a multi-purpose building; numerous storage sheds for equipment and crops; old tenant houses; a warehouse; chicken houses; storage buildings; and a feed mill with grain storage bins.

Events

Umstead is the site of the N.C. Meat Goat Performance Test and Field Day. The Field Day is usually held at the end of August each year.

Research Programs

Since transitioning from a focus on dairy research the farm has shifted into a more diverse type of research that utilizes the unique nature of the available resources. Buildings and pastures that were previously used for the dairy are now being used for small rudimentary animal research. The centerpiece of this research is the annual state Boer goat buck and doe study.



Other cropland and pastures are in research plots used to study invasive weeds and the efficacy of related herbicides. These types of herbicide studies have even extended from cropland to cut over forestry land and aquatic weeds in some of the ponds located on the station.

Previous pastures that were once grazed are now being used to produce hay for other outlying research stations including the NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine, the NCSU Butner Beef Unit, and the N.C. A&T University beef operation.

Wildflowers Umstead has been one of several sites that has been used to evaluate the efficacy of herbicides used by the DOT in their roadside wild flower program. In addition to research plots, the NC Department of Transportation is utilizing approximately 40 acres to produce wildflower seeds for their wildflower program.

Conservation To promote the effort to preserve land and green space, two sites at the Umstead Farm have been set aside for conservation. One site is about 300 acres for protection of the federally endangered smooth coneflower. The other site is a 1,600 acre area around Lake Holt, the water supply source for the town of Butner. This tract is under a conservation easement.



Forestry Two tracts of forestry land are being used in a comparative study to determine Best Management Practices related to surface runoff following logging. Another tract of the farm's forestry land was recently dedicated for the protection of the endangered North Carolina native cornflower.

Community Partnership

This station is located at this site because its original proximity to the John Umstead Hospital. The site represents the rolling hills found in the piedmont area of the state but also includes fields adjacent to streams that are occasionally flooded. Forestry lands include both pines and hardwoods.

In addition to continuing to provide resources for agriculture research, the station is also utilized by educational and community groups that have encompassed such things as a test site for an autonomous vehicles; a location of a regional field trial for tracking dogs; to a campsite for a statewide bow hunters' club

The potential for the future of this research farm is unlimited. As research into the cellulosic production of ethanol moves ahead, the proximity of this farm to the Bio-fuels Campus in Oxford and the availability of cropland, makes this an ideal location to grow various feed stocks for the production of ethanol.

Another future contribution is related to the availability of water for both development and agriculture. With the demand for water constantly increasing, fields located adjacent creeks are ideal for studying plastic-culture on various specialty crops.



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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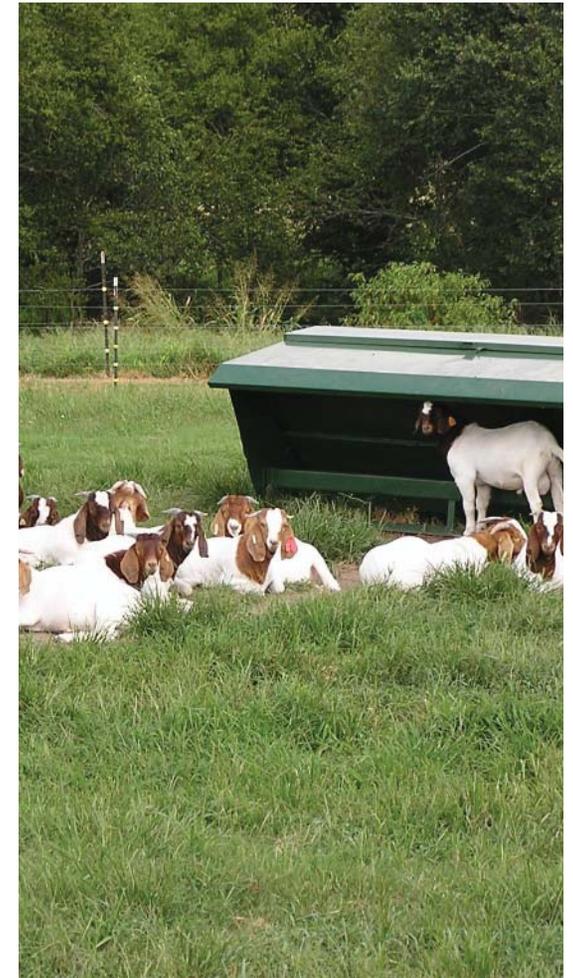
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Umstead

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