From the Agent

Hi Folks!

This newsletter is mostly about the events that are coming up in the next few months.

The Putting Small Acreage to Work Series will be held on Mondays in October and November for those who are interested in new income-producing opportunities for their farms or, perhaps, learning how to better manage or market their farm.

Topics will include the Business Concept The Business Concept Model, Marketing for the Small Farm, Growing Grapes for the Fresh Market, Aquaculture Possibilities for the Piedmont, Grains for the Small Farm, and Growing Blackberries. Speakers will include personnel from North Carolina State University, NC Cooperative Extension, Randolph Community College, and one or more local farms.

Registration is requested. See the Upcoming Events section for more details on this opportunity, as well as others in Randolph County and the region.

Regards,

Mary Helen Ferguson
Horticulture Agent

Notes

pH/EC Meter
I now have a pH and electrical conductivity (used to measure soluble salts) meter so that, hopefully, I can be of more assistance to those who have greenhouse and nursery plants. Let me know if you need assistance.

Online Farm Listings
Here are another couple of websites where growers can list their farms:
www.eatwellguide.org and www.ruralbounty.com. Unlike some of the sites I’ve given you in the past, the second site charges for a listing. I’m not sure if the first does or not.

Ways to Grow Videos
North Carolina A&T State University has videos related to alternative farm enterprises (e.g., meat goats, blackberries, direct marketing, mushrooms) available. See the list of videos and ordering information (http://www.ag.ncat.edu/extension/programs/wtg/index.html) or call me.

Sale of cogongrass/Japanese bloodgrass (Imperata cylindrica) prohibited after Oct. 31
“[T]he propagation, nursery cultivation, sale and distribution of cogongrass” has been forbidden by NC Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services, due to its invasive qualities. According to the press release, “Nurseries with existing inventories of cogongrass, including Red Baron or Japanese blood grass cultivars, must sell or remove all plants from nurseries or garden centers by Oct. 31.”
Upcoming Events

Randolph Co.

**Pesticide Applicator Recertification Training**

**Greenhouse Management** (Randolph Community College)
Sept. 18 – Nov. 6. 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. Archdale. More info: 336-862-7980.

**Greenhouse Construction in the Backyard** (Randolph Community College)
Sept. 22 – Nov. 3. 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. Archdale. More info: 336-862-7980.

**Agricultural Pesticides License Prep** (Randolph Community College)
Sept. 23 – Nov. 25. 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. Asheboro. More info: 336-633-0268.

**Backyard Chicken Coops 202** (Randolph Community College)
Sept. 23 – Nov. 4. 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. Archdale. More info: 336-862-7980.

**Present and Future Pine and Hardwood Markets**
Sept. 30, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Randolph Co. Cooperative Extension office, 112 W. Walker Ave., Asheboro. Register by Sept. 29. More information or registration:

**Putting Small Acreage to Work Series**
Oct. 6 – The Business Concept Model
Oct. 13 – Marketing for the Small Farm
Oct. 20 – Growing Grapes for the Fresh Market
Nov. 3 – Aquaculture Possibilities for the Piedmont
Nov. 10 – Grains for the Small Farm
Nov. 17 – Growing Blackberries
All classes 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Randolph Co. Cooperative Extension office, 112 W. Walker Ave., Asheboro. Register by Oct. 1 for one or more classes. The charge for attending all classes is a one-time fee of $15 per individual or $20 per couple. Alternatively, individuals can pay $5 per class.
Registration: 336-318-6000.

**Raising Backyard Chickens 101** (Randolph Community College)
Oct. 27. 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. Archdale. More info: 336-862-7980. Note: This is applicable to pastured poultry production. Speakers will be from NC State University and NC Cooperative Extension.

**Gardening in Small Spaces: Big Ideas for Small Trees**
Oct. 21, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. Stedman Education Center, NC Zoo. Bryce Lane (NCSU Dept. of Horticultural Science) will be speaking. No registration necessary.

Note: Randolph Community College’s Small Business Center is holding a number of classes this fall that may help you improve the profitability of your farm, nursery, or landscaping business. See http://www.randolph.edu/continuinged/programs/ or call 336-633-0275 for more information.
Statewide and Regional

Rural Lands Update: Practical Tax and Legal Issues Facing Clients with Property Interests in Farm, Horticultural, and Forest Land
Sept. 24. Lexington. “…designed for attorneys, foresters, accountants, financial planners, appraisers and other professionals serving clients with interests in rural landholdings. Landowners are also encouraged to attend to learn more about the issues and the relationships with the professional advisors they need.” More information: http://randolph.ces.ncsu.edu/index.php?page=events or 919-732-7539.

Woody Biomass Workshop

Sweet Potato Field Day (NCSU)

Crop Diversification Classes

NC Greenhouse Vegetable Growers Association Annual Conference

NC Irrigation Society, Inc., Conference

Southeast Strawberry Expo

Carolinas Golf Course Superintendents Association Conference and Show

Southeast Vegetable & Fruit Expo

Some of the enterprises to be discussed during the Putting Small Acreage to Work Series: table grapes, grains, and blackberries. Aquaculture, business planning, and marketing will be addressed, as well. Photos from USDA ARS Image Gallery.
Don’t forget to sign up for the Randolph Growers e-mail listserv for more frequent updates related to horticultural crops production and the landscape industry.

E-mail Mary Helen (maryhelen_ferguson@ncsu.edu) to get on the mailing list.

A professor talks about Good Handling Practices (GHP) for farm market stands at NCA&T’s 2008 Small Farms Field Day. Some of the pointers given in this session were as follows: Toss damaged produce. Use clean containers at market (not harvest containers). Wash your hands 2 times after using the restroom or covering your mouth for a sneeze. Be aware that some people may be allergic to hand sanitizer residue on produce. Put only some of your produce out at once so that people don’t handle it as much. Samples may need to be prepared away from produce to prevent problems with flies, etc. I plan to hold training on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for food safety (safe use of manure, water quality, etc.) early next year. For now, I’ll mention this: Be sure to observe all restrictions on pesticide labels (e.g., pre-harvest intervals, use only on labeled crops)—it’s the law.