Hey Folks,

We have several events coming up this summer and fall in Randolph County and many outside of the county. On Aug. 6, we will have the **Piedmont Strawberry Pre-plant Meeting** in Archdale, with Extension Specialist Barclay Poling and several other speakers from NC State [and a sponsored dinner, and pesticide credits]. Then, on September 30, we will have a forestry meeting about **Timber Markets** with NC State’s Bob Bardon and Dan Edwards, a consulting forester.

In October and November, we will have a **Putting Small Acreage to Work Series**, with talks on business planning, marketing, table/fresh market grape production, blackberry production, and, probably, specialty melon production and small scale aquaculture. Small grain production for small growers may be discussed, as well. Randolph Community College will be having a related backyard/pastured poultry talk during this time, with speakers from NC State.

If you’re in the landscape industry and want to hear Bryce Lane (of UNC-TV’s *In the Garden with Bryce Lane*) speak about “**Gardening in Small Spaces: Big Ideas for Small Trees**,” you can come to his presentation at the NC Zoo on Oct. 21. I expect that there will be a pesticide class for landscapers this fall, as well.

NC A&T University is holding their **2008 Small Farms Field Day** on Aug. 7, with topics to include colored bell pepper production, GPS use on the farm, good handling practices for farmers selling at tailgate markets, and no-till organic vegetable production, among others.

In other news, I was out doing a growers certificate the other day and stopped by Samson and the Lion Natural Foods to check on the owner’s efforts to get local produce. He had some, but not much. It’s a market that you might explore, if you’re interested. After I stopped by there, I ate lunch at Something Different and, while I was paying, mentioned to the owner that he could let me know if he was interested in getting some local produce. He expressed a need for growers who would stand behind their product and supply safe food and said that people could contact him if they were interested in selling to him.

Have a good rest of the summer, and let me know if I can help you.

Regards,

Mary Helen Ferguson
Horticulture Agent
Tissue Sampling

Most of you are probably familiar with soil sampling, but how many of you have utilized the tool of tissue sampling? In tissue sampling, one takes a certain part of a plant at a certain stage of growth and has it analyzed for its nutrient (nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium, calcium, etc., etc.) content. (The plant part(s) and growth stage needed are dependent on what crop is being sampled.) This allows you to find out what levels of nutrients have actually gotten up into the plant.

Why is this information of any benefit beyond what you could learn from soil sampling? Plants cannot always take up nutrients that are in the soil. Soil pH that is too low or too high can prevent certain nutrients from being available to the plant, and an excess of one nutrient in the soil can cause a lack of another one in the plant. Or, a plant’s ability to take up nutrients may be restricted by damage to its root system by nematodes (microscopic worms), for example. If a nutrient has been applied by foliar spray, there may be enough of it in the plant even though the level of it in the soil is low.

Taking both soil and tissue samples allows a person to get a more comprehensive idea of what a plant has and what it needs. This service may be especially useful if one is trying to determine a fertility regime for a certain crop or diagnose a problem that doesn’t seem to be related to an insect or disease. Unlike soil samples, there is a fee for tissue samples. For NC samples, the cost is $12 or $14, depending on the plant. You can pick up tissue sampling information and forms at our office or get them online (http://www.ncagr.com/agronomi/uyrpws.htm - note that tissue sampling is referred to as plant analysis on this website). Be sure to find out what part of the plant should be sampled and at what growth stage it should be done before taking samples.

New Publications

Tips on Writing Turf Contracts and Landscape Maintenance Specifications (AG-679)
www.turffiles.ncsu.edu/PDFFiles/004513/Tips_on_Writing_Turf_Contracts_and_Landscape_Maintenance_Specifications_AG679.pdf

Propagating Muscadine Grapes (AG-698W)
http://www4.ncsu.edu/~clfisk/propagating_muscadines.pdf
Farmer to Farmer Program

The Moore and Richmond County Centers of NC Cooperative Extension are hosting a series of farm visits this summer. These are opportunities to learn from experienced growers in Chatham and Moore Counties. Remaining visits are to the farms of Billy Carter (Aug. 5, organic sweet potato production), Bill Dow (Aug. 20, organic vegetable production & selling to restaurants), and Doug Jones (Sept. 9, season extension). Call Moore Co. Horticulture Agent Taylor Williams for more information at 910-947-3188.

Notes and Resources

Correction to Fire Ant Quarantine Boundary
In the spring newsletter, I mentioned that the fire ant quarantine boundaries in Randolph Co. had changed, but I made a mistake in describing where they were. Where I wrote, “… parts of the county west of Hwy. 220, and the part east of Hwy. 220 but south of Hwy. 49 are under fire ant quarantine,” it should have been “…parts of the county EAST of Hwy. 220, and the part east of Hwy. 220 but south of Hwy. 49 are under fire ant quarantine.”

Online Carolina Guide to Local & Organic Food
This is another place where growers can list their farms online. There is a charge for people who are not members of Carolina Farm Stewardship Assoc. See the "Add your listing" link at the bottom of this page: http://www.carolinafarmstewards.org/advanced.shtml.

Helping Workers Avoid Heat Stress

Farmers’ Legal Action Group, Inc.
This organization has publications about legal issues related to farmers—two examples are Farmers’ Guide to Disaster Assistance and Understanding Farmers’ Rights to be Paid for Fruit and Vegetable Crops—on their website (www.flaginc.org).

2008 Gilmer L. and Clara Y. Dudley Small Farmers of the Year
Read about this year’s winners, Nelson and Mary James, at http://www.ag.ncat.edu/sfy08/index.html.
Upcoming Events

Randolph Co.

Piedmont Pre-plant Strawberry Meeting
Aug. 6, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. Carter Brothers BBQ, Chicken, and Ribs; 10210 N. Main Street, Archdale. Speakers from NC State will be Barclay Poling (Dept. of Horticultural Science), Hannah Burrack (Dept. of Entomology), and Mahfuzur Rahman & Rob Welker (Dept. of Plant Pathology). Dinner is sponsored by Carolina Farm Credit, Industrial Container Corporation, Johnson & Company, and Sawyer Farms. Pesticide credits are available (1.5 hrs N O D X). Call our office to register by Aug. 5.

Forestry Meeting: Timber Markets
Sept. 30, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. NCCE Randolph Co. Center. Speakers will be Bob Bardon (NCSU Dept. of Forestry and Environmental Resources) and Dan Edwards (consulting forester). Call by Sept. 26 to register.

Putting Small Acreage to Work Series
More details will follow, in fall newsletter. Classes will be in the evening. Tentative schedule:
Oct. 6: The Business Concept Model
Oct. 13: Marketing
Oct. 20: Grape Production for the Fresh Market
Oct. 27: Melon Production or Blackberries
Nov. 3: Small Scale Aquaculture
[Nov. 4: Backyard/Pastured Poultry (RCC event with NCSU/NCCE speakers)]
Nov. 10: Blackberries or Small Grains for the Small Farm

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.

Randolph Community College is offering several horticulture-related courses this fall. Classes start on or after Sept. 9. Contact RCC at 336-862-7980 for more information about these:
Landscaping (Archdale)
Ag. Pesticides (Asheboro)
Flower Arranging and Design (Archdale; there may also be one in Asheboro, too)
Fall Market Gardening (Archdale)
Greenhouse Management (Archdale)

Persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency may request accommodations to participate [in events sponsored by the Randolph Co. Center of North Carolina Cooperative Extension] by contacting Mary Helen Ferguson, Horticulture Agent, at 336-318-6000, or maryhelen_ferguson@ncsu.edu or 336-318-6011, or in person at the County Extension Office at least 14 days prior to the event.

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.
Statewide

There are several NCSU Field Days coming up in August. For more information on these, go to http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/agcomm/writing/Field_Days/ or call Mary Helen:
Sweet Potato Field Day – Oct. 8, Clinton, Horticultural Crops Research Station.

The Center for Environmental Farming Systems is hosting several horticulture-related events in the next few months in Goldsboro. To learn more about any of these, or to register (required), go to http://www.cefs.ncsu.edu/calendar2008.htm or call 919-513-0954:
Making Use of Beneficial Insects for Crop Pest Management & Pollination, July 30 (5 hrs NODX pesticide credits)
Twilight Tour: Irrigation & Water Use, Aug. 13
Organic Certification Course, Aug. 20
Developing Community Based Food Systems, Aug. 25
Twilight Tour: Winter Cover Crops, Sept. 10
Twilight Tour: Bio-intensive Agriculture, Sept. 15
Season Extension & High Tunnel Production, Oct. 9

Wild Herb Weekend (NC Herb Assoc.)

NC Muscadine Grape Association Annual Meeting, Trade Show, and Bus Tour

Hands On Workshop: Midas Fumigant Application with Methyl Bromide Equipment

Starting a Commercial Bunch Vineyard Workshop

2008 A&T Small Farms Field Day
Aug. 7, Greensboro. http://www.ag.ncat.edu/docs/Field%20Day%202008%20Web.pdf or 336-334-7957. A few of the topics to be addressed are colored bell pepper production, GPS use on the farm, good handling practices for farmers selling at tailgate markets, and no-till organic vegetable production.

Summer Green Show (NC Nursery and Landscape Assoc.)

Asparagus Twilight Meeting
Aug. 14, Roxboro. carl_cantaluppi@ncsu.edu or 919-603-1350.

Invasive Plant Ecology and Management Workshop
Upcoming Events (cont.)

Statewide (cont.)

*Juice and Wine Analysis Short Course*

*The Up and Coming Organic Landscape & Lawncare Industry*
Asheville, Aug. 26. [Meredith@organiccapersschool.org](mailto:Meredith@organiccapersschool.org) or 828-450-2026.

Sept. 9 – 11, Greensboro. [http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/nreos/forest/feop/urbanforest/conference.html](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/nreos/forest/feop/urbanforest/conference.html) or 919-515-9563  ISA, AFA, ASLA, and APA credits available

*Politics of Food (Environmental Leadership Program)*

*Carolinas Golf Course Superintendents Association Conference & Show*
Nov. 17 – 20, Myrtle Beach, SC. [http://www.cgcsa.org/](http://www.cgcsa.org/) or (800) 476-4272