From the Agent

Hi Folks!

I’m pleased to let you know that we have several events coming up, including several for which pesticide credits can be earned. On April 2, from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m., I plan to teach an Introduction to Fresh Produce Safety for Farmers and Market Gardeners. This topic has been hot for several years, and I hope that this class will be of value to our local growers. Depending on your needs, we may schedule an additional meeting or meetings later in the year or expand on the topic next year. Call our office to register by April 1.

On May 4, from 10:00 a.m. – noon, we will have a Landscape Insects class, in which I will talk about fire ant management and Dr. Steven Frank, NC State’s new extension entomologist, will talk about “Managing Key Pests in the Landscape.” Two hours of credit in categories L, N, D, and X will be available (arrive on time if you want pesticide credits). Note that this event will be held at the NC Zoo, in the Stedman Education Center, which is next to the North America entrance. Call our office to register for the class.

Barry Foushee, our extension livestock agent, has scheduled a class titled Fire Ant Control in Pastures and Around the Farm on April 14. For more information, see the “Upcoming Events” section.

Our 2009 Forestry Field Day, scheduled for April 4, may be of interest to some of you, as

The Tastes of the Piedmont map, on which some of you chose to be included, has arrived! They’re available at our office, the Randolph County Tourism Development Authority office, the Asheboro/Randolph and Archdale-Trinity Chamber of Commerce buildings, and other local businesses and organizations. If you have suggestions of places where a lot of people who might be interested in buying local agricultural products would see the well. See the “Upcoming Events” section for more information.

Finally, note that the meeting for people interested in selling at the Asheboro Downtown Farmers Market is scheduled for March 31 at 4:00 p.m., at the Sunset Theatre in downtown Asheboro.

Regards,

Mary Helen Ferguson
Extension Agent
Granulate Ambrosia Beetle Monitoring Project
We have a new extension specialist in entomology, Dr. Steve Frank, who will work with nursery crops. He is starting a monitoring program for the granulate ambrosia beetle and plans to alert growers when the insect emerges in their area, so that they will know when to spray protective insecticides. You can get on the e-mail list by sending him an e-mail at sdfrank@ncsu.edu and writing “alert signup” on the subject line. You can also volunteer to monitor a granulate ambrosia beetle trap. In a recent issue of Nursery Notes, Frank wrote, "I will meet with each volunteer to provide them with equipment…and educational materials…necessary carry out trapping and identification of Granulate Ambrosia Beetle. You will of course be first to know when Granulate Ambrosia Beetles are active on your property. Finally you will be the hero of other growers and landscape professionals in your area that will be able to protect their trees with precision timing."

Soil Test Bar Codes
NCDA&CS has introduced a tool to let you know if and when your soil test has arrived at the lab. To sign up for the notification system and get bar codes for your soil boxes, go to http://www.ncagr.gov/agronomi/SampleTrack/.

Fresh Cuts Open to Local Meat
The owner of Fresh Cuts Butcher and Seafood said that he was open to buying more local products. They sell meat, vegetables, and other products. Contact information is as follows: 1528 S. Zoo Parkway, (336) 626-MEAT.

2009 Southeastern U.S. Vegetable Crop Handbooks Are Here
If you grow vegetables to sell and haven't gotten one of these, you can call me for a copy or get it online at http://www.aces.edu/pubs/docs/A/ANR-1344/.

New Farmers’ Markets
Several new farmers markets have sprung up over the last several years. Many are listed, between the following two websites: Debbie Roos has a number listed on her website: http://www.gogreentriad.com/content/2008/12/23/article/find_your_local_farmers_market and http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/chatham/ag/SustAg/otherareamarkets.html.

A representative from the Burlington Farmers Market recently contacted our office, soliciting participants. To learn about this market, go to www.burlingtonfarmersmarket.com (this will take you to the Burlington Outlet Village website). Click on "Events."

The UNC Health Care’s Wellness Wednesday Farmer’s Market will take place in the Children’s Hospital Lobby from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. during a season running from May 6 – Oct. 28. They will allow “seasonal items, crafts, or prepared foods” but not “meat, dairy products, eggs, or live plants (cut flowers are ok).” Contact ethomas2@unch.unc.edu for information. A potential perk of this market is that vendors get to sell in an air-conditioned building.

Chef Survey Indicates Locally Grown Produce is HOT
Results of a recent chef survey indicated that locally grown produce was the #1 trend, of 208 items listed: http://www.restaurant.org/research/chef_survey_2008.cfm. Take a look to see what else is in there! For information about selling to restaurants, check out this site: http://chatham.ces.ncsu.edu/growingsmallfarms/marketingrestaurants.html
Upcoming Events

Randolph Co.

*Asheboro Downtown Farmers Market Prospective Growers Meeting*

*Introduction to Fresh Produce Safety for Farmers and Market Gardeners*
April 2 (7 – 9 p.m.), Asheboro (NCCE Randolph County Center). Call 336-318-6000 to register. See p. 1 for more information.

*2009 Forestry Field Day*
April 4 (9 a.m. – 1 p.m.), Asheboro (meet at McDowell Lumber, off Old NC Hwy 49, at 9 a.m.). More info: [http://randolph.ces.ncsu.edu/index.php?page=events&event_id=14422](http://randolph.ces.ncsu.edu/index.php?page=events&event_id=14422) or 336-318-6000.

*Fire Ant Control in Pastures and Around the Farm*

*NC Piedmont 2009 Woodland Steward Series: Managing Your Legacy in Central North Carolina*
- Discovering Your Land: Basic Land Management Skills—April 17 – 18, Lexington (Davidson Co. Agricultural Center).
- Woodscaping Your Woodlands and Firewise Management—May 1 – 2, Jordan Lake Educational State Forest.
- Native Landscaping and Water Management—May 15 – 16, Asheboro (NC Zoo).

*Landscape Insects: Managing Fire Ants and Other Key Pests*
May 4, Asheboro (NC Zoo, Stedman Education Center [by N. America entrance]). 2 hours of L, N, D, and X pesticide credits. Call 336-318-6000 to register by May 1. See p. 1 for more information.

Randolph Community College continues to offer a number of small business classes. They are also offering one on biofuels. Check out these on the following websites:

For NC Cooperative Extension, Randolph County Center, events: For accommodations for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact Wanda Howe by phone, fax, e-mail (wanda_howe@ncsu.edu), or in person, no later than ten business days before the event.

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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_bergerson@ncsu.edu](mailto:maryhelen_bergerson@ncsu.edu)) to get on the mailing list.
**Statewide and Regional**

*Show and Tell at the Central Carolina Community College Land Lab*
Mar. 30 (5:30 p.m.), Pittsboro (764 West Street). More info: 919-542-8202 (Debbie Roos).

*Hoop House Workshop*

*Hoop Houses for Season Extension*

*Strawberry/Conservation Field Day*
April 1 (10 a.m. – noon), Greensboro (Rudd Farm, 4021 Hicone Rd.). There will be a field walk with extension specialists, and discussions of methyl bromide alternatives and of cost-share for methyl bromide alternatives, VIF (virtually impermeable film) mulch, and row covers. More info: Debby Wechsler (info@ncstrawberry.com or 919-542-4037).

*ArborMaster Level 1 Tree Climbing Methods & Best Practice*
April 1 – 2, Asheville.
*ArborMaster Level 1 Precision Felling & Chainsaw Handling*
April 3 – 4, Asheville.
*ArborMaster Level 1 Arborist Rigging Applications*
April 5 – 6, Asheville.

*14th Annual Piedmont Farm Tour*
April 24 – 25. Here is a chance to learn what other farms in the Piedmont area are doing. More info: [http://www.carolinafarmstewards.org/events.shtml](http://www.carolinafarmstewards.org/events.shtml) or 919-542-2402.

*Putting Trees to Work in Your Community*