Hi Folks,

I expect that this newsletter will find you in the midst of the holiday season, on the verge of 2010. I’m planning to pack my bags and head to Louisiana for a couple of weeks, shortly after I finish this newsletter.

A couple of events are already scheduled for the new year: NC State University’s Dr. Mike Parker will return for a Fruit Tree Pruning Demonstration in Trinity, on Jan. 23. We have also been working on planning a Tree Worker Training in May. While this event is still a ways in the future, those who plan to take the International Society of Arboriculture Tree Worker/Climber Specialist exam, which we’ll offer after the training, should register early to get the study book for that exam.

Please contact me to let me know what’s important to you, as we plan for 2010, and don’t forget to let us know if you want to stay on the mailing list for the paper version of this newsletter, since, at the beginning of 2010, we’ll be removing those who haven’t responded.

Happy New Year!

Mary Helen Ferguson
Extension Agent

NC MarketReady Website and Growers Information Portals

The NC MarketReady website (http://www.ncmarketready.org/) provides access to a number of resources for growers and potential growers. One relatively new component is the “Growers Information Portals” area, which currently contains strawberry and blackberry/raspberry sections. These Growers Information Portals address various aspects of production of the respective crops. I expect that sections for additional crops will be added. Other components of the NC MarketReady website include sections related to marketing, budgets, grants, food safety, and more.
Upcoming Events

Randolph Co.

Fruit Tree Pruning Demonstration
Jan. 23 (10:00 a.m. – noon), Hill’s Orchard and Vineyard (3452 Marvin Hill Place, Trinity). NCSU’s Dr. Mike Parker will be back to demonstrate apple and peach tree pruning. Pre-registration (336-318-6000) is requested, so that we can contact you if plans change due to weather.

Beekeeping Course
TBA, Asheboro. The Randolph County Beekeepers Association is planning a beekeeping course for 2010. Call our office after Jan. 4 for more information.

Tree Worker Training and ISA Tree Worker/Climber Specialist Certification Exam
May 10 – 12, NC Zoo. This training will address climbing, pruning, cabling, tree health, and other topics. A limited number of people will be allowed to take the International Society of Arboriculture Tree Worker/Climber Specialist certification exam after the training (likely on May 12). Call Mary Helen (336-318-6000) for more information. Those who want to take the exam should pre-register and pay the $40 fee by March 30 (registering earlier will allow you to get the book to study for the exam earlier). Others are asked to pre-register, as well. The training is limited to 50 people. Exam study materials are available in English and Spanish. This event is funded in part by a North Carolina Urban and Community Forestry Grant.

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.

Statewide and Regional

NC Nursery and Landscape Association Green and Growin’ Show

2010 Bunch Grape Pruning Demonstrations
Jan. 12 (2:00 - 3:30 p.m.), Buckshoals Winery, (6121 Vintner Way, Hamptonville)
Jan. 14 (2:30 - 4:00 p.m.), Winery at Iron Gate Farm (2540 Lynch Store Road, Mebane)
Jan. 22 (1:30-3:00 p.m.), Junius Lindsay Vineyards (385 Dr. Zimmerman Road, Lexington)
More info: sara_spayd@ncsu.edu or 919-513-0772.

Food Marketing in the Real World
Jan. 12, Asheville. This is for people interested expanding their food (cooked/processed products) business. More info: http://www.ncagr.gov/markets/agbizmarketing.htm or 919-733-7887 x 257.

2010 Commercial Organic Production Conference

Bunch Grape Pruning Demonstration and Disease Control Program
Upcoming Events - Statewide and Regional (cont.)

Mid-Atlantic Horticultural Short Course

2010 NC Turfgrass Conference

NC Winegrowers Association Annual Conference

Winter Vegetable Conference and Trade Show

2010 North Carolina State University Turfgrass Short Course

Northern Piedmont Specialty Crops School
Mar. 5, Roxboro. Topics to be covered include using high tunnels to produce various horticultural crops and the results of table grape and asparagus trials. More info: http://granville.ces.ncsu.edu/index.php?page=events&event_id=16668 or 919-603-1350.

17th Annual Organic Growers School Spring Conference

Contact Mary Helen if you want to remain on the mailing list for the paper version of the newsletter. The addresses of those who do not respond will be deleted from the list at the beginning of 2010. The e-mail list will not be affected.

Please also contact M.H. (maryhelen_ferguson@ncsu.edu) if you would like to be on the Randolph Growers e-mail list, by which you can get the newsletter and more frequent updates.