



RANDOLPH COUNTY

N.C. COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

2021 REVIEW



+1 336-318-6000

N.C. Cooperative
Extension is an equal
opportunity provider.

1003 S. Fayetteville St.
Asheboro, NC 27203

FIELD CROPS



On-farm research and demonstration trials are critical for the creation and adoption of unbiased best management practices for farmers. We have worked hard to expand on-farm trials in 2021 and were able to set up four on-farm trials, four field days, and seven yield contest entries. Which share valuable data about what production practices are working or not working in some cases. Having data directly from the county makes the conclusions that much more valuable to Randolph County growers.

In 2013, North Carolina had its highest average corn yields on record, with 142 bushels per acre. While the numbers from 2021 are not finalized, surveys say this year will be the new record year! Corn yields in Randolph County were spectacular this year, and from what I've seen, we were above the state average. Soybeans yields will likely be close to record-breaking as well, with prediction being around an average of 40 bushels per acre across the state.

Submitted: Blake Szilvay, Agent,
Agriculture - Field Crops / Forestry

LIVESTOCK



Demonstration field days, educational workshops, and one-on-one farm visits are important for livestock producers. This helps producers to gain more knowledge on livestock production. It also helps them figure out solutions to issues they may be facing.

In 2021, Randolph County Cooperative Extension held a field day demonstration on broadcasting fire ant bait. We educated producers on managing and controlling fire ants in their pastures and hayfields with our new specialty broadcast spreader. This spreader is available for producers to rent out. We held in-person workshops on grazing management, forages, livestock health, and vaccines.

We also provided solutions to over 1,200 direct contacts with forages and livestock in Randolph County. Randolph County still strives to be one of the top livestock producing counties in the state ranking 1st in beef cattle, 2nd in dairy cattle, 2nd in all cattle combined, 2nd in goats, and 7th in hay production.

Submitted: Adam Lawing, Agent,
Agriculture - Livestock

HORTICULTURE



Many activities and gatherings were deemed unsafe due to Covid-19 in 2021, sparking a renewed interest in home landscaping and producing food at home, thus inspiring the Randolph County Backyard Gardener Classes. This series (taught by the Randolph County Horticulture Agent) reached a total of 459 North Carolinians locally and across the state. The series consisted of six two-hour Zoom classes and sharing research-based resources focused on: lawn care, fruit and vegetable production, culinary herbs, pollinator gardens, and native plants. These classes also served as a prerequisite for students interested in training to become a certified North Carolina Master Gardener Volunteer in Randolph County.

Randolph County now has 12 newly trained Master Gardener interns completing their volunteer hours for their initial certification. These individuals will assist with extension events and service projects focused on horticulture education in Randolph County.

In addition to a renewed interest in gardening, the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated a host of issues related to mental health and wellbeing and made work in high-stress fields even more difficult. To address this, the Randolph County Horticulture Agent coordinated with the Randolph County Wellness Administrator to organize a program to lower stress among county employees. (continued on next page)

HORTICULTURE



(cont.) Two houseplant classes were developed and led by Master Gardener Volunteers. Attendees were taught how to care for several common houseplants, the health benefits associated with plants, and provided several different types of houseplants for their office. Overall, the houseplant wellness program has been the most successful of all the county's wellness classes with a total of 60 participants overall. The evaluations from the program were also overwhelmingly positive. We will continue this partnership by offering two houseplant wellness classes each year going forward, and replicating the classes for the public.

In 2021 the Horticulture Program assisted over 240 homeowners with consultations regarding insect pests, weeds, diseases, gardening and pond maintenance questions. Over 130 soil samples were submitted to the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and 36 samples to the Pest, Disease, and Insect Clinic at NC State. Over 100 in-person visits were also made to commercial farms, market gardens, and community gardens for consultations regarding farm business, pest management, farmers market certifications and production questions.

Submitted: Annie Mills, Agent,
Agriculture - Horticulture

FAMILY CONSUMER SCIENCE



When one thinks of agriculture, crops and farm animals are first to come to mind, but a hidden gem of agriculture is learning the skills of food safety and preservation. Our FCS agent made videos and held online classes for the public instructing how to safely put away the garden spoils to enjoy throughout the year. You can learn more about canning and preserving foods by visiting our YouTube channel.

Our FCS program also held a series of Cooking 101 classes that focused on eating healthy, while also being busy or using small kitchen appliances, like your microwave to prepare foods.

In a collaborative effort with other counties the "Med Instead of Meds" was offered to our community via Zoom. This program focuses on The Mediterranean-style eating pattern which incorporates the basics of healthy eating that are traditionally practiced in countries that border the Mediterranean Sea.

New kitchen gadgets such as the air fryer and electric pressure cooker are becoming staples in households everywhere. We offered Zoom classes to discuss safe and proper usage as well as some healthy and tasty recipes.

(continued on next page)

FAMILY CONSUMER SCIENCE



(cont.) As older adults' time at home lengthened (due to safety and health regulations related to the pandemic) their loneliness and isolation could increase. Which in turn, could lead to a multitude of adverse health outcomes. Agents from multiple counties teamed together in 2021 to host a monthly virtual training "New Year, New Way with ECA". This served as a means to provide programming to current ECA members, including more members of the community in ECA programming, and create a social outlet for all. A variety of topics were offered, from exercise to simple meals, nutrition, food safety, and family resource management.

A silver lining of a more safety cautious digital approach is an increase in the variety of participants who may attend. This program served older adults from homes in North Carolina and reached as far as Vancouver, British Columbia.

Participants reported utilizing resources to save money in new ways such as "using my old blouses to make pillow covers". Learning how to exercise at home including, "alternative exercises that can be done seated". Learning new ways to prepare foods at home through bread making and air frying.

(continued on next page)

FAMILY CONSUMER SCIENCE



(cont.) Being thrust into a worldwide pandemic has brought about many challenges. As Extension professionals, we turn challenges into opportunities.

We are a society of instant gratification and with the availability of the internet, the world is always just a few keystrokes or swipes away. To join the ranks of the "always available", we utilized "On-Demand" programming videos through our Eventbrite system and YouTube.

By offering our programs in this way, participants could learn the tips and tricks of how to best utilize their new kitchen appliance or new recipes for an in-season fruit or vegetable on their own schedules and from their homes.

This, like the ECA program, saw an influx of participants from all over. One could say that N.C. Cooperative Extension, Randolph County Center, went global!

Due to the success of this delivery mode, we will continue to offer "On-Demand" programming throughout 2022.

Another valuable resource our FCS program offers is free testing of your personal pressure canning/cooker lids. All that is required is a quick call to our office to set up an appointment time and to bring your lid when you come for your appointment.

Submitted: Jeannie Leonard, Agent, -
Family and Consumer Science

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



Since the onset of the pandemic there has been a new spark of people wanting to get back to their roots. One of the interests that really took a boost was people of all ages wanting to know more about gardening and growing their own food. To answer this need, 4-H agent Allison Walker and Horticulture agent Annie Mills, partnered together and developed 1,500 Garden Kits in May 2021. The pre-boxed kits were available at every Randolph County Public Library as well as the Cooperative Extension Office. Each garden box contained tomato seeds, cucumber seeds, lettuce seeds, zinnia seeds, peat pots, ziffy expandable pellets, soil, a 4-H Gardening brochure, and a packet with resources and growing instructions.

Participants were also given a link to instructional videos on our YouTube page. In addition to the community kits, every student at Balfour Elementary School received a garden box.

The Randolph County 4-H program is used to planning and hosting a robust and exciting summer opportunity for the youth in our community, but of course, the effects of the pandemic left us back at the drawing board for yet another summer. The program offered some premade hands-on learning experiences for youth and their families throughout the summer. (continued on next page)



4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



(cont.) Some of our offerings included: Butterfly kits, where participants could experience the entire life cycle of the butterfly. Pinewood Derby kits, which allowed the youth to use their creativity and imagination on how to build the best and fastest car. As well as our “More Than Ag. In A Bag” opportunity which included everything from bread making to growing your own jewelry!

Embryology is a program offered through 4-H that gives the youth involved a hands-on look at the life cycle of a chicken and an opportunity to partner with our local schools. It teaches valuable lessons such as life skills related to science processes, teamwork, keeping records, and planning and organizing.

In 2021 we were able to bring this program to over 1,200 young people through 56 classrooms.

New this year, Randolph County 4-H created a rabbit chain program to bring awareness to the importance of preserving threatened or endangered breeds of livestock. This program also gives urban and city youth the opportunity to participate in raising and showing Silver Fox Rabbits since rabbits do not need the space or other costly expenses that are needed in raising cattle, goats, sheep or even chickens. Twenty students from Uwharrie Ridge 6-12 have been caring for and raising the 4-H Silver Fox Rabbits in their Animal Science 1 class. (cont. on next page)



4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



Photo: 4-H Farm Credit Showmanship Circuit Participant.

(cont.) The Randolph County 4-H Youth Livestock show was held in person, after the previous year being virtual, the first weekend in August. The event featured 68 competitors showing cattle and goats from Randolph, Guilford, Chatham, Stanly, Cabarrus, Johnston, Rockingham, Richmond, Anson, Cumberland, Wake, Person, Moore, Montgomery, and Stokes counties. Scarlett Farms in Snow Camp hosted the event. Brandon Hartman served as judge and the Trinity High School FFA served concessions.

In November, Henry and Bambi Craven welcomed 4-H and FFA youth to their farm for our annual livestock judging competition.

This year 55 youth with ages ranging from 9 to 18 put their bovine knowledge to the test. Livestock judging is evaluating livestock based on their characteristics by comparing each animal in a class to the ideal standard of each species. Livestock judging not only helps youth learn more about evaluating livestock but helps improve their critical thinking, quick decision skills, and improves their confidence.

The year also brought a new face to the 4-H team with the addition of McKenna Gardner as the Program Assistant. Starting a new position amidst a pandemic is limiting, but she has hit the ground running with program and outreach ideas. (cont. on next page)



4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



(cont.) McKenna has been building partnerships with community organizations and providing character education and hands-on science lessons.

As the year came winding down she challenged our community by equipping them with the materials they would need to assemble "no-sew fleece blankets". The community responded enthusiastically and the event sold out within 24 hours. Participants picked up their materials, assembled their blankets and returned them to our office. On December 21st the blankets were donated to Randolph Health to go to children receiving medical care.

Submitted: Allison Walker Agent, - 4-H Youth Development



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



FARM FOOD FAMILY

RANDOLPH COUNTY
EDUCATION CENTER

In November 2021, the N.C. Cooperative Extension Center in Randolph County learned the funding requested by Representative Allen McNeill and supported by Senator Dave Craven was successfully awarded in the state budget bill. The \$16 Million plus additional support will help fund the construction of the Randolph County Farm, Food, and Family Education Center.

- **Mission Statement:**

The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center is a dynamic, innovative, and collaborative place for people and organizations to build Farm, Food, and Family systems that strengthens economies, enhances resiliency and builds community.

Resiliency must be intentional and planned. This Educational facility will serve as a "hub" for innovative and collaborative sharing of resources and ideas. The Educational theme will allow us to focus on collaboration, practicum, creativity, modeling, and innovation. The "spokes" of this hub will center around the themes of "Farm, Food, and Family." We feel this communicates in a clear and concise manner what the purpose of the facility is and creates a message that everyone in Randolph County and the surrounding region can connect in some way to these collaborations.

(cont. on next page)

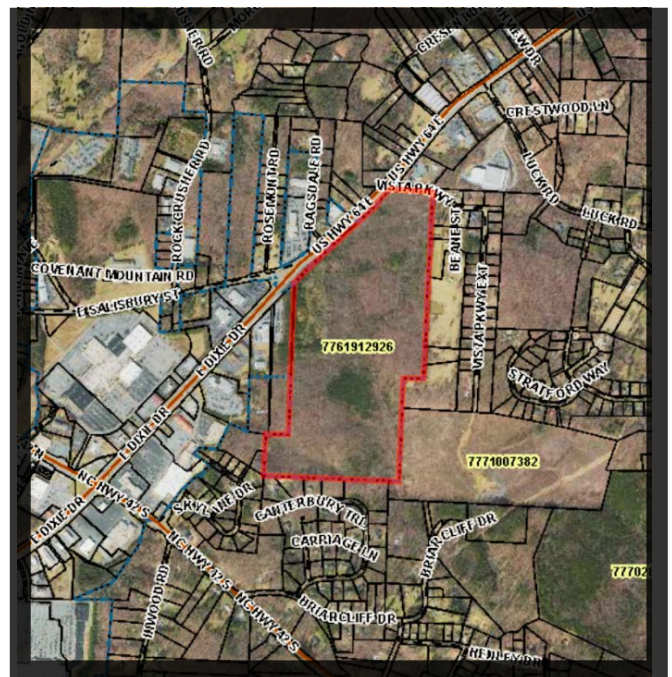
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



FARM FOOD FAMILY

RANDOLPH COUNTY
EDUCATION CENTER

The pandemic has helped to enhance many people's desire to know more and collaborate around the issues of farm, food, and family. The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center will bring knowledge and innovation to how Randolph County and area residents provide for their essential needs in the future. The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center will accomplish this task by creating a dynamic, innovative, and collaborative place for learning and skill-building.



Submitted: Kenneth Sherin - Broadband
Access and Education Coordinator and
County Extension Director

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Scan me with your
smartphone camera

Track our progress at: go.ncsu.edu/broadbandsurveyprogress

Slow/No Internet? We need to know!



broadband map in the state

The N.C. Broadband Survey is designed to gather information on locations without adequate internet access and speeds in our community.

The Cooperative Extension Center in Randolph County was instrumental in forming the Randolph County Digital Alliance (RCDA). In support of the RCDA, Cooperative Extension hired Laura LeGlue in the Digital Ambassador role. The guiding principles of the Randolph County Digital Alliance are captured in the Vision and Mission Statements.

- **Vision Statement**

In Randolph County, every household and business will have the opportunity to EARN, LEARN, and BE WELL by accessing needed digital resources.


- **Mission Statement**

The Randolph County Digital Alliance will work with organizations to eliminate the digital divide by helping improve access, adoption, and utilization of digital resources.

Currently, much of the work in the county is centered on encouraging more people to participate in the N.C. Broadband Survey. The N.C. Broadband survey is designed to gather information on locations without adequate internet access and speeds in our community.

If you have not already, you can take the survey two ways: for those WITH internet, visit **NCBroadband.gov/survey** using your home or business internet, and for those without internet, call 919-750-0553. If the gaps in internet access are supported by the data provided from the survey, resources can be allocated to fill those gaps with the broadband infrastructure.

Submitted: Kenneth Sherin - Broadband Access and Education Coordinator and County Extension Director



RANDOLPH AGRICULTURE IN NUMBERS

Agriculture is a vital wheel in the economy of Randolph County, more than some may realize.

434,496
TOTAL ACRES

Is dedicated to farm and forestry land in Randolph County. Which is 86% of the total acres in the county (503,162).

229,914,506
CASH RECEIPTS

Received from all agriculture in Randolph county, ranking us 11th in the state.

43,000
HEAD OF CATTLE

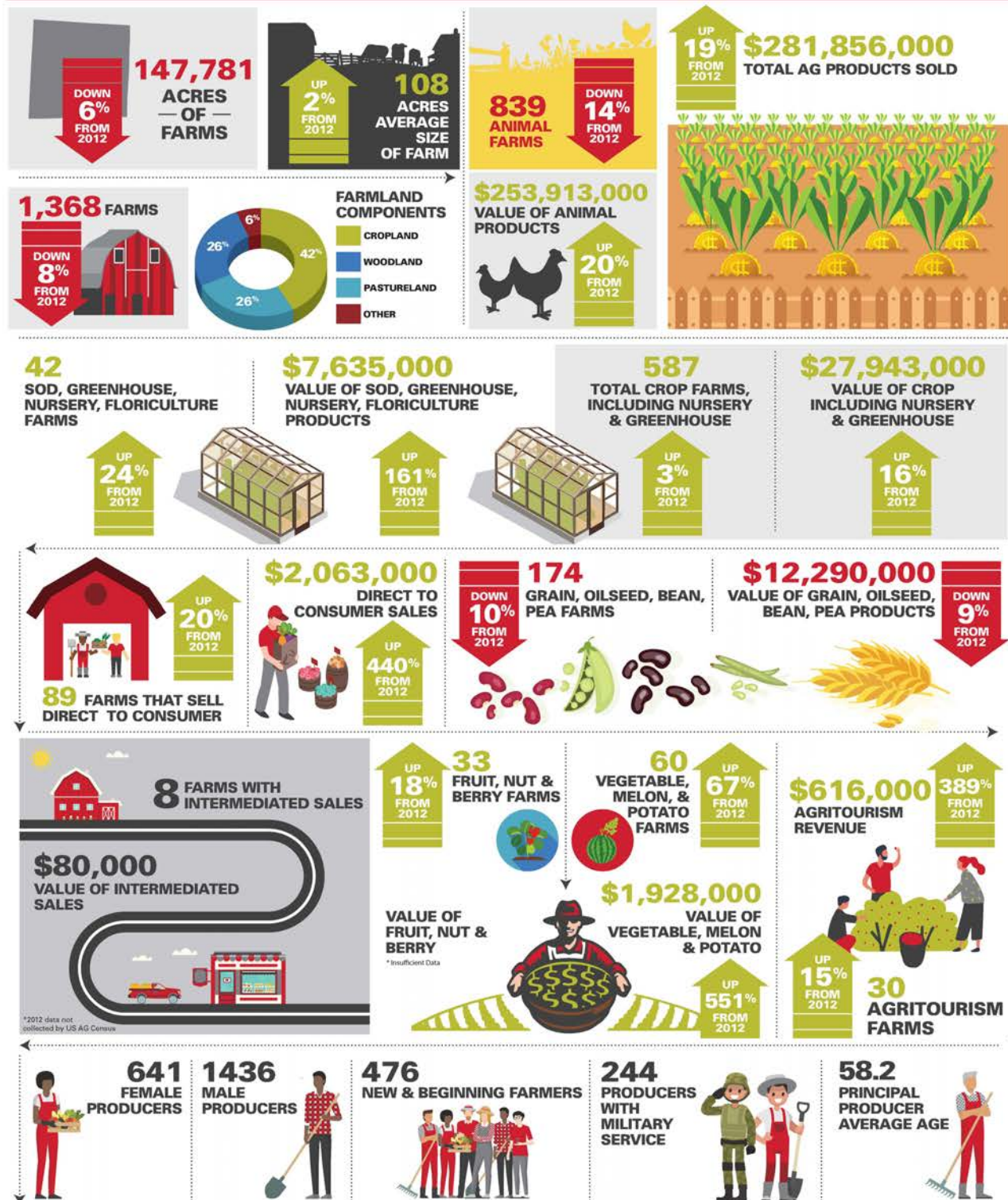
Consisting of beef and dairy reside in Randolph County. We are 2nd in the state with 10,000 more than 3rd place which our neighboring county Chatham.

Data for 2021 has not yet been released. These numbers reflect 2020 data.

Randolph County

LOCAL FARMS AND FOOD PROFILE

DATA FROM 2017 & 2012 USDA CENSUS. MORE INFO AT GO.NCSU.EDU/AGCENSUS



NC FarmLink



NC Local Food

STAY CONNECTED

At N.C Cooperative Extension, Randolph County we offer an array of avenues to stay connected to our educational program offerings for the entire family.



FACEBOOK

- facebook.com/RandolphNCCE
- facebook.com/randolph4h
- facebook.com/RandolphCountyFieldCrops
- facebook.com/Jeannies-Kitchen-at-Randolph-County-Cooperative-Extension
- facebook.com/Randolph-County-Extension-Master-Gardener-Volunteers



YOUTUBE

- youtube.com/channel/UCEEEnCRT2z_FPEARM2svK1Mg
- youtube.com/channel/UC1apZamXyNm8GY54E6TEvTQ



EVENTBRITE

Register for our programs or watch on-demand videos from your preferred digital device.

- eventbrite.com/o/nc-cooperative-extension-randolph-county-20130386171