



Email Update

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ADFP Trust Fund News: 2009-2010 Grant Cycle Update

For the 2009-2010 Grant Cycle, the ADFP Trust Fund received 70 applications requesting \$15,698,319.50 in funds for projects with a combined total budget of \$49,118,639.00. The applications were for 14 agricultural plans, 9 agricultural development projects, and 47 agricultural conservation easements.

After a rigorous inspection of all 70 applicants, the ADFP staff and Advisory Committee have agreed upon which applicants shall be offered funding, as approved by the NC Commissioner of Agriculture, Steve Troxler. Below is the list of agricultural development projects and county agricultural plans that were selected for funding.

Applicant Organization	Application Type	County(s)	Funding Amount	Estimated Project Value
WNC Communities	Development	Western NC Region	\$50,000	\$100,000
Catawba County Planning Parks and Dev	Plan	Catawba	\$5,750	\$9,950
Lee County SWCD	Plan	Lee	\$8,212	\$16,420
Davidson County CE	Plan	Davidson	\$25,000	\$35,725
Rockingham County SWCD	Plan	Rockingham	\$30,000	\$39,700
Watauga County	Plan	Watauga	\$30,000	\$43,750
Wake SWCD	Plan	Wake	\$32,500	\$57,850

Franklin County CE	Plan	Franklin	\$34,000	\$50,800
Edgecombe County	Plan	Edgecombe	\$37,700	\$57,000
Duplin County	Plan	Duplin	\$39,530	\$72,250
NC Foundation for Soil and Water Conservation	Development	Statewide	\$50,000	\$100,100
Piedmont Farmers Market Inc.	Development	Cabarrus	\$50,000	\$66,000
Anson County	Plan	Anson	\$8,500	\$15,506
Pasquotank County CE	Plan	Pasquotank	\$11,000	\$14,500
Piedmont Conservation Council Incorporated	Plan	Guilford	\$31,200	\$41,600
Clay County SWCD	Plan	Clay	\$35,000	\$57,250
Appalachian Sustainable Agricultural Project	Development	Western NC Region	\$9,250	\$14,250
Polk County Farmland Preservation and Agricultural Economic Development Board	Development	Polk	\$34,000	\$66,925
NC Farm Center	Development	Cumberland, Bladen	\$48,900	\$71,300
Columbus SWCD	Plan	Columbus	\$3,000	\$4,000
North Carolina Farm Transition Network	Development	Statewide	\$35,500	\$49,000
Totals			\$609,042	\$983,876

The ADFP Trust Fund was also pleased to select the following applicants for the funding of term and perpetual easements:

Applicant Organization	County(s)	Funding Amount	Estimated Acres	Estimated Project Value
Transaction Costs Only				
Brunswick SWCD	Brunswick	\$17,000	104	\$1,337,500
North Carolina Coastal Land Trust	Greene	\$20,000	143	\$275,500
North Carolina Coastal Land Trust	Sampson	\$20,000	91	\$308,000
Subtotals		\$57,000	338	\$1,921,000

Perpetual Easements				
Buncombe County	Buncombe	\$345,206	109	\$539,873
Chatham SWCD	Chatham	\$321,000	265	\$1,206,900
Fishing Creek SWCD	Halifax	\$180,500	128	\$250,500
Hyde County SWCD	Hyde	\$254,595	250	\$363,150
Sandhills Area Land Trust	Scotland	\$250,000	115	\$363,705
Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy	Buncombe	\$200,000	500	\$6,063,600
The Land Trust for Central NC	Iredell	\$264,619	256	\$806,897
The Land Trust for Central NC	Rowan	\$347,600	260	\$1,354,700
Triangle Land Conservancy	Chatham	\$96,000	15	\$169,500
Triangle Land Conservancy	Johnston	\$372,500	289	\$970,000
Subtotals		\$2,632,020	2,187	\$12,088,825
Term Easements				
Haywood SWCD	Haywood	\$214,860	322	\$561,000
Haywood SWCD	Haywood	\$213,363	324	\$730,500
Subtotals		\$428,223	646	\$1,291,500
Totals		\$3,117,243	3,171	\$15,301,325

We are still eagerly waiting for the State to agree upon their budget for the new fiscal year. As soon as the budget is passed, the ADFP Trust Fund will be able to plan for our next grant cycle. Stay tuned to find out more!

Farms find niche, sell directly to consumers

With fewer farms statewide, more farmers are trying to set their business apart and reach customers directly.

"We're finding our niche of customers who are more interested in exactly where their food came from, how it was raised," said Steve Mobley of Meadow Lane Farms, which specializes in beef cattle.

Ten years ago, Mobley said, he marketed his cattle mainly to wholesalers. Now, his prime business is farmers markets.

"You have to be able to go to the market. You have to talk to people. You have to market your product," he said.

Other farmers agree that selling directly to customers is a good way to succeed when many family farms are going out of business.

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<http://www.wral.com/news/local/story/5156530/>

Troxler: OLF would damage farm economy

CAMDEN - The state's top agriculture official said Camden and Currituck counties would pay a high price economically and that the loss of farmland could injure the nation's food supply if the Navy decides to build a practice landing field here.

"We're talking about an issue that would be a terrible blow to Camden, Currituck and the surrounding region," N.C. Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler said Monday at the Camden County Courthouse. "We know the value of the military, and no one doubts the patriotism of the people in this room, but we need to (choose a location) wisely (for an OLF) in a way that does not damage the local economy." Camden and Currituck officials met with Troxler to discuss what impact the U.S. Navy's proposed outlying landing field would have on the county's high yielding farmland and one of North Carolina's most valuable food supplies. Troxler also joined Camden Board of Commissioners Chairman Phil Faison and Currituck Commissioners Chairman Owen Etheridge for a panel discussion with a packed room of area farmers, residents and other citizens. Camden is one of two North Carolina counties - the other is Gates - currently being eyed by the Navy as a possible military jet training site for pilots to practice simulated aircraft carrier landings.

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<http://www.dailyadvance.com/news/troxler-olf-would-damage-farm-economy-612286.html>

Promoter of NC farm produce finds home on YouTube

KANNAPOLIS, N.C. -- North Carolina's produce farmers have a friend on YouTube. The new director for the North Carolina Cooperative Extension in Rockingham County is featured in a series of videos explaining the seasons for fresh fruits and vegetables, and what cooks can do with the food available at farmer's markets across the state. Brenda Sutton calls herself the Produce Lady, and she's visiting the North Carolina Research Campus Farmers Market in Kannapolis on Thursday. Her tips for finding and cooking eggplant, okra and greens are posted to YouTube. The Produce Lady debuted statewide on UNC-TV this spring. Sutton visits the farmers market in Reidsville on Saturday, then others in Eden, Davidson, Kannapolis and Raleigh throughout the summer.

<http://www.newsobserver.com/1565/story/1536595.html>

Farming remains WNC institution

On the surface, the picture looks grim: Farms continue to disappear in the mountains, as developers plant houses and families opt out of labor-intensive, low-paying agricultural work. But in Western North Carolina, the farming tradition remains strong, as resilient as the pioneers who eked out a living on subsistence farms. Some older growers are the end of the family line in farming, but a new generation of young, market-savvy growers has emerged. "I am optimistic now, but I wasn't a few years ago," said Tony Nesbitt, a Buncombe County dairy farmer. "I didn't encourage my children to get into the dairy business because of the regulations and the expense of

the land. I didn't see a future in it for them." Four years ago, Nesbitt and his wife, Celia, started a new farm partnership with their daughter, Amanda Sizemore, and her husband, Jeremy. Young and energetic, the Sizemores operate Cane Creek Valley Farm, a 25-acre organic operation that's keen on direct marketing and capitalizing on the region's hunger for local foods.

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<http://www.citizen-times.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20090531/NEWS01/905310336>

Keeping farming in the family

Linda Leach-Hughes, a retired community college administrator, jokes that she's been asking her husband, Stanley, about when he might retire from farming. His reply: He would probably keel over while driving a tractor. "It's in his blood and the flesh can't help it," says Leach-Hughes. Stanley Hughes, 61, runs Pine Knot Farm, about 80 acres along Hester Road in northern Orange County. At one time, the Hughes family farmed up and down this road. Now, Stanley is the only one who remains in farming. He is one of two certified organic farmers who sell at the Carrboro Farmers' Market. In the 1940s and 1950s, his maternal grandfather amassed 500 acres of farmland near Hurdle Mills. When his grandfather died, the land was split up; each child receiving about 50 acres. Hughes' mother and father built a two-story white farmhouse with a tin roof on their land, which sits across the road from the yellow house where Hughes now lives.

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<http://www.newsobserver.com/105/story/1552413.html>

Access Widens to Farmers Markets

In a move that addresses equity issues for access to fresh fruits and vegetables, the NC Department of Agriculture is supporting the 21st Century Farmers' Markets Program, equipping markets with readers for food stamp recipients EBT cards. NC Department of Agriculture and Leaflight Inc., a Chapel Hill non-profit agency that promotes community development, are making it possible for farmers markets in 12 NC counties to accept Electronic Benefits Transfer card payments from consumers who are in the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as food stamps. "This program will provide citizens with increased access to NC's abundance of nutritious, farm-fresh seasonal produce," said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. "Customers will have added convenience at local farmers markets, and farmers can look forward to providing this convenience while gaining new customers."

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<http://eatinginraleigh.wordpress.com/2009/06/03/access-widens-to-farmers-markets/>

How a Cabarrus farm is growing the next generation of farmers

CONCORD -- As squash, okra and Swiss chard bask on a sunny slope outside town, another crop is also taking root: budding farmers.

Cabarrus County's answer to consumers clamoring for locally grown foods - a demand undercut by aging growers - is to teach a new generation how to work the land. The Elma C. Lomax Incubator Farm Park, which opened this year, works like most programs for beginning entrepreneurs. Except that, besides class work, its students learn to drive a tractor, lay out straight rows and combat produce-gnawing bugs. For a \$100 yearly fee, participants get their own half-acre to work, use of a tractor and other equipment. Those who stick it out for three to five years should be ready to make it on their own and, like rotating crops, will be replaced by a new class.

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<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/597/story/779137.html>

Fresh produce nutritious, eco-friendly

There's nothing like a tomato right off the vine or a ripe peach just picked from the tree. Fresh fruits and vegetables always taste better and it's been proven that they're usually better for you.

Produce that is transported long distances is often picked just before it's ripe to

maximize shelf life. This means the produce hasn't reached its full maturity or its full nutritional value.

Eating locally grown produce is not only more nutritious, it also will help you lower your eco-footprint by reducing the pollution created by the number of miles traveled to bring the produce from the farm to your table.

Locally grown produce includes the vegetables you grow in your own garden. If you'd love to have a garden but don't have the space or ample sunshine, seek out a community garden. You can rent a small plot and tend to your own garden. Irrigation is often included in a community garden or at least access is provided to a water hose. You'll also get to meet other green thumbs that share your interest.

Or, if you don't have the time or enthusiasm to tend a garden, you can bypass the work and visit a farmers market. Many farmers markets offer only locally grown produce and you can often meet the farmer who grew it.

Farmers markets are also a good source for organic produce that's been grown using little or no chemical fertilizer or pesticides.

Remember to take along a basket or reusable shopping bag so you can avoid taking home a bunch of plastic bags that will require energy to recycle.

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<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/terribennett/story/775477.html>

Hops may become WNC's next hot crop

The next time you pick up a pint of locally brewed beer, it might contain local ingredients. In conjunction with North Carolina Cooperative Extension, mountain farmers are being encouraged to try something new - grow hops. Jeanine Davis, associate professor and extension specialist at the Mountain Horticulture Crops Research and Extension Center in Mills River, said the extension is encouraging farmers to develop alternative crops in North Carolina. Previously, the agency has helped farmers grow Christmas trees and tomatoes - two crops that have done exceptionally well in the state. "This is just continuing our tradition," Davis said. "Opportunity arose with hops a few years ago" she added. "People became interested because of the worldwide shortage of hops."

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<http://www.blueridgenow.com/article/20090615/NEWS/906149934?Title=Hops-may-become-WNC-s-next-hot-crop->

Money available to help farmers get rid of hog lagoons

RALEIGH -- An initiative announced Monday between state and federal officials makes money available to swine farmers who switch from hog lagoons to a more environmentally friendly and innovative waste management system. The five-year program will make more than \$1.1million in federal money available for lagoon conversion projects in its first year, according to the state Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The program is a partnership between the state Division of Soil and Water Conservation and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service.

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<http://www.newsobserver.com/news/story/1570601.html>

Locally grown produce options growing on us

You can't get it any fresher than these ears of corn.

At Millers' Produce stand in downtown Concord last week, Laura Miller was selling Silver King corn, which she proclaimed as bigger and sweeter than Silver Queen. The crop was hand-transplanted from the greenhouse to the Rowan County field and produced an early crop.

"It was picked at 5:30 or 6 a.m. today, and I started shucking it at 7," Miller said at lunchtime Wednesday. "You don't get it fresher than coming from the (local) farmers' market. I think people are starting to get scared of stuff brought in from other places."

The "buy local food" movement is fueling farmers' markets, which are expanding days and locations, inventory and programs to meet the tastes and demands of consumers.

There are more opportunities for people to "buy local" and programs and special events to draw in all ages.

Under the umbrella of Piedmont Farmers' Market Inc., a new market is now open from 3 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays in the employee parking deck at Carolinas Medical Center-NorthEast. The market is mainly for hospital employees but is open to the public. Consumers can find a market nearly every day of the week, and the Saturday market on Winecoff School Road in Concord has been extended from the end of October to Dec. 19 this year.

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<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/local/story/789436.html>

To save farms, you must save the farmers
Cabarrus shows innovative leadership in local foods.

Three trends are on a collision course:

A rapidly growing regional interest in and market for, locally grown foods: vegetables and fruits, meats and even dairy products.

Rapid disappearance of farmland in the fast-sprawling Charlotte region.

An aging farming community.

Together, they raise the question: If more and more people want foods grown close to home, who's going to grow them, if farmland disappears and farmers can't make a living?

Cabarrus County, northeast of Charlotte, has embarked on an innovative program to try to nurture its own agricultural future.

As reporter Bruce Henderson outlined in a recent article, Cabarrus has opened an incubator farm park on land bequeathed to the county for a park. For a \$100 yearly fee, would-be farmers can use a half-acre, a tractor and other equipment, and see if they truly want to farm. The idea is a bit like student teaching: a real-world experience so you can decide if you're really cut out for this. They get more than land; they get training not only in soils, but in insurance, finances and other such business topics.

But Cabarrus has done even more. It worked with UNC Charlotte's Urban Institute to study the foods produced in Cabarrus. The study found that while beef cattle are the county's biggest agricultural product, the county has no facility to slaughter livestock. Farmers must truck their animals elsewhere.

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<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/opinion/story/792884.html>

NC warns farmers about high levels of wheat toxin

RALEIGH - North Carolina agriculture leaders urged farmers Monday to have their wheat tested after officials found high levels of a toxin in wheat samples from parts of the state.

Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler said vomitoxin has been found in samples from central and northeastern North Carolina. The toxin is a byproduct of a fungus often caused by wet weather during the early April pollination stage.

Troxler said testing is urgent because farmers harvesting their wheat now may not know the fungus is on their crop, so he warned it may continue contaminating wheat as it moves storage bins. He said the state will provide free testing.

Dan Weathington of the North Carolina Small Grain Growers Association said farmers are always watching for vomitoxin, but he said samples this year show very high levels.

"Where it's bad, it's pretty bad," he said.

Weathington said he's confident there are enough protections in place to prevent harmful grain from entering the food supply.

North Carolina wheat brought in more than \$100 million in 2007, according to state statistics.

<http://www2.journalnow.com/content/2009/jun/22/nc-warns-farmers-about-high-levels-wheat-toxin/>

Farmland is important in Buncombe County - even if we don't live on a farm

According to the latest Census of Agriculture, farm acreage decreased 24% in Buncombe County between 2002-2007. This rate is much faster than the 9% loss of farmland acreage that occurred between the previous 15 year period (1987-2002). This loss of farmland is not only changing our landscapes, but also changing the quality of life of county residents. Results recently released from the Farmland Values Project confirm that many residents of Buncombe County are concerned about the loss of farmland, and would like to see their community do more to protect farmland. The Farmland Values Project (www.unca.edu/farmlandvalues) conducted a survey of residents of and visitors to Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, and Madison counties. The results clearly indicate that farmland provides many benefits such as scenic beauty, local food production, and natural services such as habitat and flood control. When Buncombe County respondents were asked how farmland affects their quality of life, the most popular responses were that farmland allowed them to buy local food and that farmland is attractive and makes the area more beautiful (both selected by 86% of respondents from Buncombe County). Only 3% of respondents indicated that farmland did not affect their quality of life. In our study, 86% of respondents who were residents of Buncombe County indicated they are concerned about the loss of farmland. Most (80%) also believe Buncombe County needs to do more to preserve farmland.

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<http://www.citizen-times.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20090623/OPINION07/90619081/1006>

Farm to Fork to full

In some circles, the Farm to Fork picnic is a saliva-inducing phrase. The event earlier this month, sponsored by Triangle Slow Food, paired local chefs and artisan cooks with local farmers. More than two dozen chefs turned out such dishes as Tuscan-style porchetta; grilled pizza with kale, feta and a poached duck egg; and strawberry, honey and marshmallow snow balls. For the adventurous eaters in the crowd, of which there were many, there were barbecued pig tails, tacos made with pig hearts and tongues, and hog head cheese on focaccia bread with pickled kohlrabi. Four hundred people bought the \$50 tickets, which raised money for farm-apprentice programs via the Center for Environmental Farming Systems and the People Learning Agriculture Now for Tomorrow (PLANT) program at the W.C. Breeze farm in northern Orange County. Tickets sold out 10 days before the event. Some resorted to craigslist to buy tickets; one person offered to pay \$75 more than two tickets cost.

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<http://www.newsobserver.com/105/story/1580648.html>

Farmers markets on the increase

Mountain residents are demanding locally grown food. In response, two farmers markets have opened in Henderson County within the last year and another is scheduled to open next month. : Henderson County is not just apples," Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project Director Peter Marks told members of the Henderson County Agriculture Advisory Board Wednesday. Over the last several decades, Western North Carolina has lost hundreds of farms, and the state has one of the fastest rates of farm loss in the country. Markets are one way for farms to remain viable. "There is a strong campaign to drive people to local markets," Marks said. Nationally, 20,000 farms only sell to farmers markets.

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<http://www.blueridgenow.com/article/20090626/NEWS/906259950/1151?Title=Farmers-markets-on-the-increase>

House OKs OLF-amended bill

A defense authorization bill amended to prohibit the US Navy from building an outlying landing field in Camden or Gates counties overwhelmingly passed the US House on Thursday. The House voted 389-22 for the \$672 billion National Defense Authorization Act, which authorizes spending on the U.S. Departments of Defense and Energy. The bill, which now goes to the Senate, includes an amendment offered by U.S. Rep. Walter Jones, R-N.C., that removes two sites in northeastern North Carolina -

Hale's Lake in Camden and Sandbanks in Gates - from consideration for the Navy's proposed OLF.

<http://www.dailyadvance.com/news/house-oks-olf-amended-bill-686243.html>

Night clinic to open for farm workers

DOBSON - Migrant farm workers will soon have an inexpensive way to get health care at a night clinic to be offered by the Surry County Health and Nutrition Center starting in July. Lisa Carroll, a medical intern, is spearheading the effort to establish the clinic as her summer project. She said having a night clinic is important because the farm workers aren't able to come during the day because they are busy working on the farms. "The North Carolina Farm Workers Health Program is a branch of the state Department of Health and Human Services, which is funding the program. Any health department or clinic across the state can apply to North Carolina Farm Workers Health Program to get funding if they have a significant patient population of farm workers. Once they apply, and get the funding, they have to meet certain standards in terms of accessibility, services and health education," said Carroll. Surry County won the bid to have the clinic, she said.

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http://www.mtairynews.com/pages/full_story/push?article-Night+clinic+to+open+for+farm+workers%20&id=2850684-Night+clinic+to+open+for+farm+workers&instance=secondary_news_left_column

Farming continues to decline statewide

TRIAD - While still a leader in farming, North Carolina's footprint is shrinking. There are fewer farms, and farmland acreage continues to decrease statewide. The state lost more than 600,000 acres of farmland from 2002 to 2007. In 2007, North Carolina had 52,900 farms, compared with 53,900 in 2002, the census showed. "When you lose that many acres, it means not just small farms are losing land, the large farms are shedding land, too," Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler said. "To put 600,000 acres in perspective, it's like taking Sampson County off the map."

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<http://hpe.southernheadlines.com/app/printstory.cfm?section=6&story=20206>