



# E-mail Update

MARCH 31, 2008

[WWW.NCADFP.ORG](http://WWW.NCADFP.ORG)

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 2

## Events

**4/3- Agritourism Networking Association Workshop** -4-7:30pm - Sen. Bob Martin Eastern Agricultural Center, Williamston. Registration deadline is April 1. Contact Peggy Edmondson at (252) 795-3192 in the evening, or e-mail at [peggyedmondson@earthlink.net](mailto:peggyedmondson@earthlink.net).

**4/8 – Agritourism Networking Association Workshop** -4-7:30pm- Orange County Cooperative Extension Office, Hillsborough. Registration deadline is April 4. Call Paul Marshall at (336) 727-5284 or e-mail at [riverbirchvineyards@triad.rr.com](mailto:riverbirchvineyards@triad.rr.com).

**4/17- Agritourism Networking Association Workshop** – 4-7:30pm - Iredell County Cooperative Extension Office, Statesville. Registration deadline is April 15. Call Wendy Wilson at (704) 819-7545 or e-mail at [lazy5ranch@aol.com](mailto:lazy5ranch@aol.com).

**4/24- Agritourism Networking Association Workshop** – 4-7:30pm - Tarkil Branch Farm's Homestead Museum, Beulaville. Registration deadline is April 22. Call Tami Thompson at (919) 934-1132 or e-mail at [dtdjthompson@sprintmail.com](mailto:dtdjthompson@sprintmail.com).

**5/1 – Agritourism Networking Association Workshop** – 4-7:30pm - Pleasant Valley Farm, Old Fort. Registration deadline is April 29. Call Marilyn Cade at (828) 675-4856 or e-mail at [marilyn@mountainfarm.com](mailto:marilyn@mountainfarm.com). Workshops run from 4 -7:30 p.m.

**5/1 - Putting Trees to Work in Your Community Workshop** – 9am-3pm – Forsyth County Center – Winston-Salem – Registration deadline is April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

## ADFP Trust Fund News

ADFP Trust Fund grant applications were due in December 14, 2007. Grant award recipients for the 2007-08 grant cycle will be announced in the summer of 2008. Thank you to everyone who submitted an application! If you have additional questions, please contact Lindsay Ballance, Environmental Programs Office Manager at 919-733-7125 or email [ncadfp@ncmail.net](mailto:ncadfp@ncmail.net).

## Voluntary Agricultural District News

**Jones & Scotland Counties** recently passed Voluntary Agricultural District ordinances! There are currently 59 Voluntary Agricultural Districts in the state.

## Events

### N.C. Agritourism Networking Association hosting series of statewide workshops

RALEIGH – Anyone interested in starting an agritourism farm business or who wants to learn more about the state's growing agritourism industry is welcome to attend any of the five upcoming workshops across the state. Following are workshop dates, locations and contact information:

--April 3, Sen. Bob Martin Eastern Agricultural Center, Williamston. Registration deadline is April 1. Contact Peggy Edmondson at (252) 795-3192 in the evening, or e-mail at [peggyedmondson@earthlink.net](mailto:peggyedmondson@earthlink.net).

--April 8, Orange County Cooperative Extension Office, Hillsborough. Registration deadline is April 4. Call Paul Marshall at (336) 727-5284 or e-mail at [riverbirchvineyards@triad.rr.com](mailto:riverbirchvineyards@triad.rr.com).

--April 17, Iredell County Cooperative Extension Office, Statesville. Registration deadline is April 15. Call Wendy Wilson at (704) 819-7545 or e-mail at [lazy5ranch@aol.com](mailto:lazy5ranch@aol.com).

--April 24, Tarkil Branch Farm's Homestead Museum, Beulaville. Registration deadline is April 22. Call Tami Thompson at (919) 934-1132 or e-mail at [dtdjthompson@sprintmail.com](mailto:dtdjthompson@sprintmail.com).

--May 1, Pleasant Valley Farm, Old Fort. Registration deadline is April 29. Call Marilyn Cade at (828) 675-4856 or e-mail at [marilyn@mountainfarm.com](mailto:marilyn@mountainfarm.com).

Workshops run from 4 -7:30 p.m.

The program for each workshop will cover such topics as defining agritourism opportunities for a farm, hospitality hints and marketing tips, liability issues, agritourism success stories and information on how to form voluntary agricultural districts in your county. The program also offers farmers and others a chance to network and learn from one another.

Cost is \$12 and includes workshop materials and dinner. Walk-ins will be accommodated as space and dinner arrangements allow.

For more information, contact Martha Glass, manager of the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Agritourism Office, at (919) 733-7887 or [martha.glass@ncmail.net](mailto:martha.glass@ncmail.net). Agendas and registration forms are available at [www.ncagr.com/agritourism](http://www.ncagr.com/agritourism).

Agritourism refers to value-added agricultural activities on a farm, ranch or vineyard that provide entertaining, educational and recreational experiences. For example, some farms offer hayrides, barnyard animal exhibits, pond fishing, pick-your-own opportunities, summer camps, vineyards, special events and unique meeting spaces for business retreats.

## Web Links of Interest

Land Trust Alliance

<http://www.lta.org/farmersandranchers/index.html>

The Wilderness Society – New website called - Housing Sprawl in the Southeast - Our Vanishing Places. Watch the maps of the Southeast United States change colors from "green" to "red" between 1940 to 2030.

<http://www.tws.org/OurIssues/EasternForests/SprawlSE.cfm>

American Farmland Trust – PACE Survey -The 2007 state and local PACE survey results are now available. To view the tables, please select from the links provided above. The tables track the progress of farm and ranch land protection programs in 21 states and 56 localities that have acquired funding and/or easements. The data in this survey is current as of January 2007, unless otherwise indicated. We have also attached a map illustrating nationwide PACE activity by state. As of July 2007:

1. Thirty-two states have PACE activity at the state and/or local level;
2. Twenty-seven states have state-level PACE activity; and
3. Eighteen states have PACE activity at the local level.

PACE tables are available in PDF format on the Farmland Information Center Web site,

<http://www.farmlandinfo.org/>. Please feel free to copy and distribute these documents as necessary. These data are used by a variety of groups including: program managers, Natural Resources Conservation Service staff, elected officials, reporters and the general public.

## Putting Trees to Work in Your Community Workshop

N.C. Cooperative Extension Service is offering a workshop on tree protection, tree Ordinances, and working open space on May 1st and registration is now open. More information is available at

<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/nreos/forest/ordinance/new.html#workshop>.

Registration deadline is April 23rd and the topics we'll cover include the following:

- \*Urban and Community Forestry Grant program;
- \*Developing effective tree ordinances;
- \*Costs of Community Services studies: Comparing costs of land uses;
- \*Zoning and regulation of trees (Clarify regulation of forestry); and
- \*Regulation and protection of farm and forestland.

## News

### Troxler reminds livestock producers that Emergency Hay Program will end April 1

RALEIGH – Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler reminds livestock producers that the state's Emergency Hay Program will end April 1.

Since late December, the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has been selling hay at six locations across the state to help owners of cattle, horses, sheep and goats meet their animals' winter feeding needs. The department announced last month that the program would begin scaling back, with a goal of ending on April 1.

"With the recent rains across the state and warmer weather on its way, we are optimistic that this program won't be necessary anymore," Troxler said. "However, if something like a late snowstorm happens that causes a spike in hay demand, we will act quickly to help."

Hay is being sold on Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the following NCDA&CS locations: Mountain Research Station, Waynesville, (828) 456-3943; Upper Mountain Research Station, Laurel Springs, (336) 982-2501; Piedmont Research Station, Salisbury, (704) 278-2624; Piedmont Triad Farmers Market, Colfax, (336) 605-9157; Caswell Research Farm, Kinston, (252) 208-3361; and Oxford Tobacco Research Station, Oxford, (919) 693-2483.

Livestock owners may purchase up to eight large bales and 60 small bales per day. Limits are subject to change depending on supply and demand.

In December, the Council of State unanimously authorized the department to use up to \$3.5 million to purchase and transport hay to North Carolina, where it could be resold to farmers for the cost of the hay and transportation.

As of mid-March, the Emergency Hay Program had spent about \$478,000 and brought more than 2,400 tons of hay into North Carolina from several states and Canada.

Troxler said the conclusion of the Emergency Hay Program will not affect the department's Ag and Equine Partners Program, which provides transportation cost-share assistance to N.C. livestock producers who purchase hay from outside the state. For information, contact the NCDA&CS Hay Alert hotline toll free at (866) 506-6222 or log on to [www.ncagr.com/hayalert](http://www.ncagr.com/hayalert).

### Waynesville Mountaineer

#### Preserving farmland

Bill Teague is a man on a mission. His quest: to preserve what could be the most pristine corner in Haywood County, complete with a log cabin, smoke house, corn crib and barn built sometime in the mid-1800s. Teague, who is the superintendent of the N.C. Department of Agriculture Mountain Research Station, also farms his grandparents' land in the Rabbit Skin community, just off I-40. The land now pegged for development is property he has driven by for years. "My place is four farms over, so what happens here won't affect me," Teague explained. "But I just couldn't sleep at night if I didn't try to do something to preserve this farmland. Other than the buildings put up about 150 years ago, this land is totally pristine." The 141 acres, known as the Penland property, has quite a history. It was given by a member of the Boyd family to two freed slaves and has been in the family ever since.

Tenant farmers in the McElroy family have tended the land for three generations. The site is seen by some as a microcosm of black history in the region. It was sold in August 2007 to Curt Crawford of Utah Mountain Properties, who has plans to sell more than 100 one-acre lots for modular home sites. Within two weeks, the first phase of the proposed development is set to begin, Crawford said. That includes bulldozing a road through the property — one that is now scheduled to run within three feet of the historic barn on the property. Teague has been working valiantly — with Crawford's help — to find an alternative to developing the land. ...

[http://www.themountaineer.com/cms/display/Top\\_Stories/pageDisplay.php?page2display=1205906400\\*19-Preserving%20farmland.php](http://www.themountaineer.com/cms/display/Top_Stories/pageDisplay.php?page2display=1205906400*19-Preserving%20farmland.php)

## Funding Opportunities

### REGISTRATION OPENS MONDAY FOR STATE'S METHANE CAPTURE PILOT PROGRAM

RALEIGH – Starting Monday, swine farmers can register for possible participation in a new state program that aims to convert the methane from swine waste into electricity. The N.C. Utilities Commission and the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources are administering the program. In 2007, the General Assembly created the Swine Farm Methane Capture Pilot Program through Senate Bill 1465. The program authorized the commission and department to select up to 50 registered swine farms to capture methane gas generated by their waste systems – either by full or partial lagoon covers – and use the gas to generate electricity. These methane conversion systems must be operational with electricity available for purchase on or before Sept. 1, 2010.

If a selected farm is served by Duke Energy, Progress Energy or Dominion, that electric utility must buy the generated electricity for seven years. The Utilities Commission has initiated a proceeding to set a suggested purchase price for electricity produced by farms selected for the pilot program. People or organizations that want to participate in that price-setting proceeding must intervene and file testimony by March 28. For more information, go to <http://www.ncuc.net> <<http://www.ncuc.net/>> and search for Docket No. E-100, Sub 115.

The Division of Soil and Water Conservation will oversee the pilot program's registration process. Swine farm owners or operators wishing to participate must complete a simple, online application in order to be considered for the program. There is no obligation to participate when registering. Once a farm is selected, the farm and its electric power supplier would determine the terms of power sale and interconnection agreements. Applications will be accepted on the Web-based registry starting at 9 a.m., on Monday, March 10.

For more information, updates or to register, go to: [http://www.enr.state.nc.us/DSWC/pages/animal\\_waste.html](http://www.enr.state.nc.us/DSWC/pages/animal_waste.html). For questions about the registration process, please contact Vernon Cox, chief of the Technical Services Section with the N.C. Division of Soil and Water Conservation, at (919) 715-6109 or [vernon.cox@ncmail.net](mailto:vernon.cox@ncmail.net) <<mailto:Vernon.Cox@ncmail.net>>. For questions related to the Utilities Commission process, please contact Kimberly J. Jones, public utilities industry analyst with the State Utilities Commission, at (919) 733-0846 or [kjones@ncuc.net](mailto:kjones@ncuc.net) <<mailto:kjones@ncuc.net>>.

## WRAL-- 3/21

### 8 N.C. Counties Among Nation's Fastest-Growing

Census numbers released Thursday show eight North Carolina counties are among the nation's fastest-growing. Union County near Charlotte is 7th on the list. Brunswick on the coast is 17th. Cabarrus County was 29th. Wake County is the 33rd fastest-growing county among those with populations over 10,000 people. Johnston County came in at 58, while Pender County was 71st. Mecklenburg County, at 82, and Iredell County, at 90, rounded out the Tar Heel counties on the list. Other highlights of the study, which was conducted in 2006-2007, showed that 70 of the 100 fastest-growing counties were in the South, 22 in the West and eight in the Midwest.

<http://www.wral.com/news/local/story/2606977/>

## Greensboro News & Record, 3/23

### Guilford adds 84 acres to open-space program By Taft Wireback

GREENSBORO — Guilford County's open-space program continues to expand in new directions, including the imminent purchase of two properties at 60 percent of their value. The purchase of 64 acres near Oak Ridge and 20 acres east of Bryan Park would be the third and fourth land deals shepherded by a volunteer committee that monitors the relatively new program. The county has agreed to pay \$378,000 for the two tracts worth \$642,000, a bargain offered by owners who want to make sure their land is preserved. "We think this is judiciously spending the taxpayers' money. It's just a win-win-win for everybody involved," committee Chairman Craig Wagoner said in a recent interview. Meanwhile, the committee also is working with state officials on a project to connect watershed trails north of Greensboro with the new Haw River State Park on the Rockingham County line. "It would bring up to \$3 million in state funds," Jack Jezorek, a veteran member of the committee, said of money the state would devote to the trail plan. The open-space program was authorized in 2004 when voters approved \$10 million in bonds. ...

<http://www.news-record.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080323/NRSTAFF/499755017/-1/NEWS>

## SENATOR INTRODUCES BEGINNING FARMERS TAX INCENTIVE ACT

Sen. Chuck Hagel (R-Neb.) recently re-introduced legislation (S.2637) to provide an incentive for active agricultural producers to sell their farmland to beginning farmers and ranchers. Rep. Lee Terry (R-Neb.) has introduced companion legislation (H.R. 5134) in the House.

Hagel said the legislation is critical to the future of agriculture because more than half of the nation's producers will reach retirement age in the next ten to fifteen years. The legislation would provide three tiers of tax breaks according to type of sale. Under tier one, active farmers and ranchers selling their land to a beginning farmer or rancher would benefit from a 100% reduction in the capital gains tax rate, up to \$500,000 of a single sale. Tier two would allow active farmers and ranchers selling land to someone keeping the land in agricultural production to receive a 50% reduction in the capital gains tax rate. Finally, tier three provides that active farmers and ranchers selling land to anyone would receive a 25% reduction in the capital gains tax rate. (NASDA - Charlie Ingram)

## Leland Tribune

### State Officials Develop Maps to Inform Conservation Funding Decisions

RALEIGH – State environment officials have developed a series of maps of North Carolina's natural features that will be used to help prioritize conservation funding decisions and inform land use planning efforts. The series of maps, known as the One N.C. Naturally Conservation Planning Tool, is designed to streamline the state's process of identifying and prioritizing the areas of North Carolina's landscape that are essential for conservation. Examples include areas near other environmentally-significant land that the state is protecting, as well as farms, forests or habitat for rare plant and animal species. ... The Conservation Planning Tool and its related assessments will be updated every six months so that the most recent available data is included. Also, new partners and continuing collaboration will provide new information and data layers vital during the land conservation decision-making process. While the N.C. Natural Heritage Program is taking the lead on developing the maps for the state Department of Environment and Natural Resources, many partners are involved. The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, Audubon Society of North Carolina and The Nature Conservancy also contributed data to create the maps, and the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is developing the agricultural map. Planning tool development was paid for with a grant from the Natural Heritage Trust Fund. ...

<http://www.lelandtribune.com/politicsgovt.asp?dismode=article&artid=967>

## **GOVERNOR KAINE ANNOUNCES \$4.25 MILLION IN FARMLAND PRESERVATION GRANTS**

~ Fourteen localities receive funding to place lands under permanent conservation easement ~

Governor Timothy M. Kaine has announced the distribution of \$4,250,002 dollars to fourteen Virginia localities to preserve farmland within their boundaries through local Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs. PDR programs compensate landowners who permanently preserve their land by voluntarily placing a perpetual conservation easement on it. "For the past several years, we have lost valuable farmlands to development at an alarming rate," Governor Kaine said. "Today we have taken an historic step to ensure that well-managed farmland around the Commonwealth will be preserved and available for continued agricultural use, now and into the future. These funds will benefit Virginia's farmers, the local economies and the environment."

Twenty-one local PDR programs exist in Virginia, seventeen of which have some level of local funding currently available. This is the first time that the Commonwealth of Virginia provided state matching funds for certified local PDR programs.

Eight localities received \$403,220 each: The counties of Albemarle, Clark, Fauquier, Goochland, Isle of Wight, and James City plus the cities of Chesapeake and Virginia Beach. Stafford County received \$299,242; Frederick County \$265,000; Rappahannock \$165,000; New Kent County \$150,000; Cumberland County \$100,000; and Northampton County \$45,000. Grant applicants had to report how much funding was available for their local PDR programs as of July 2, 2007, and the state funds matched that amount up to \$403,220 per locality. "Preserving farmland is not just a theoretical exercise for me," said Virginia Agriculture Commissioner Todd P. Haymore. "I grew up on a farm in Pittsylvania County, which fortunately is still in the family. As farmers approach retirement, I see the appeal of turning land-based assets into a more liquid form that will support them as they age. PDR programs have the potential to allow farmers to have it both preservation and financial support, and I encourage all localities to consider carefully a PDR approach to farmland preservation."

Localities interested in future rounds of grant applications for PDR matching funds should contact the Office of Farmland Preservation, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, 102 Governor St., Richmond VA 23219 or call 804/786-1346. Or they may e-mail Kevin Schmidt, the Program Coordinator, at [kevin.schmidt@vdacs.virginia.gov](mailto:kevin.schmidt@vdacs.virginia.gov). (Contact: Elaine Lidholm, 804/225-4260)

### **Durham Herald-Sun**

#### **Nonprofit Biofuels Center sets May date for grand opening**

OXFORD -- A May 9 grand opening has been set for the Biofuels Center of North Carolina. The Biofuels Center is a nonprofit organization the General Assembly created to provide statewide technical expertise in alternative fuels.

Plans have called for converting the once-world-class 1970 federal tobacco research building, located just off Providence Road, into the Biofuels Center.

After the federal government pulled out, the building in 2005 became part of the state agricultural station next door, where experts continue to conduct tobacco research.

The Biofuels Center opened in early January in a yellow metal building on the tobacco station grounds. The goal is that, by 2017, at least 10 percent of liquid fuels sold in the Tar Heel state will come from North Carolina-grown-and-produced sources.

The May 9 program will begin at 10:30 a.m. and be followed by a noon luncheon and an early afternoon open house.

[http://www.heraldsun.com/granville/11-934343.cfm?](http://www.heraldsun.com/granville/11-934343.cfm)

### **Leland Tribune**

#### **Shelton Herb Farm recognized at Century Farms Celebration**

The packed dining room of the Silver Coast Winery was steeped with nostalgia and old-fashioned American pride on Friday afternoon, March 15. Martha Warner, the area Agriculture Extension Agent, organized the special event, in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, to honor the Century Farms in Brunswick County. Before her efforts, the area had five Century Farm Families on the rolls. Friday, 32 new members were added to this exclusive group, in large part due to Warner's efforts. A Century Farm is one that has been in the family for 100 or more years. Brunswick County holds the dubious distinction of leading the state in lost farms two years in a row – a fact that makes this group of 37 families ever more important. Of an estimated 48,000 farms in North Carolina, only 1,600 are recognized as Century Farms. State Representative Dewey Hill, one of the speakers at the event, reminded everyone that preservation of our farms is a necessity. He fears that losing our local farms will make us dependent on foreign growers for our most basic of necessities. He equated loss of farms and farm land to the dependency we are now facing for foreign oil. Other speakers included Brunswick County Commissioner Bill Sue, N.C. Commissioner of Agriculture Steve Troxler and Al Hight, County Extension Director. Each extended their respect and support for these Century Farm families. ...

<http://www.lelandtribune.com/default.asp?dismode=article&artid=955>

### **Concord & Kannapolis Independent Tribune**

#### **Agriculture incubator part of plan for hopeful farmers to get started**

CONCORD - Cabarrus County is planning an agricultural incubator as part of an initiative to make Cabarrus more of a "sustainable county." When completed, the 32-acre Atando Road Park incubator farm, near U.S. 601 and N.C. 49, will be a breeding ground for hopeful farmers, helping them get a foothold in the industry - or at least test their green thumbs. Incubator farms give next-generation farmers of any age access to land, equipment and instruction of all aspects of the agriculture industry. Debbie Bost, director of the North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension, said the farm will give interested farmers hands-on experience before deciding whether to make a much larger investment into the industry. "The county provides these things for a nominal fee. (Participants) are not investing a lot of money just yet," Bost said. "They can decide, 'Yes, I want to do this for a living.'" The farm is one component of a five-part plan for which the county is seeking a \$3.6 million matching grant from the North Carolina Agricultural & Farmland Trust Fund. Bost presented the plan to grant officials last week, but county leaders have decided to move forward with the incubator farm whether or not the grant is awarded. Each participant in the incubator farm program signs a 12-month lease for the use of 1-2 acres of land for an individual farm, equipment, greenhouse space, utilities and water. A concept paper for the estimated \$900,000 incubator farm stated that each participant will stay with the farm for 1-5 years, depending on how each person's particular plan develops. After that time, participants should be equipped to take their businesses into Cabarrus County and onto their own farms. ...

[http://www.independenttribune.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=CIT%2FMGArticle%2FCIT\\_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1173355002662](http://www.independenttribune.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=CIT%2FMGArticle%2FCIT_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1173355002662)

### **WRAL**

#### **Study: Southwest NC Lost 100 Acres Daily to Development Since '76**

CHARLOTTE -- A new study suggests that southwest North Carolina has lost more than 100 acres daily for the past 30 years to urban development.

Researchers at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte used satellite imaging to study 24 counties between the Blue Ridge Mountains and Rockingham. They found that between 1976 and 2006, development increased by 850 percent. And it isn't slowing down. The Charlotte Observer reported Wednesday that Mecklenburg County is on pace to see all of its available land developed within 25 years. The study was funded by the Open Space Protection Collaborative, a group of six regional land-preservation organizations. Group officials are using the study to raise awareness in areas where their efforts to save open space could have the largest effect.

<http://www.wral.com/news/state/story/2631151/>

### **Carolina-Virginia Farmer**

#### **"Dairy Advantage" Seeks to Save N.C. Dairy Industry**

North Carolina dairies have had a difficult economic go of it for a long time, at least since the mid-1970s. The problems continue today. In fact, dairy farms have lost over one-third of their numbers in the last decade. Now a plan from the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, N.C. State University Cooperative Extension, N.C. Farm Bureau and the N.C. Dairy Producers Association hopes to turn the situation around. According to an NCDA press release the "Dairy Advantage" plan will attempt "to reduce the current deficit in milk production and provide more local milk to consumers." "We hope the Dairy Advantage program will help farmers operate more efficiently and effectively to help keep them in business," says N.C. Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. The four major goals of Dairy Advantage are: 1. To enhance the value of milk and dairy products produced in the state, 2. Enhance the dairy farm family quality of life, 3. Increase the volume of milk produced in North Carolina, and 4. Support the number of dairy farms in the state. ...

<http://carolina-virginiafarmer.com/index.aspx?ascxid=fpStory&fpsid=32913&fpstid=2>

### **Farmland protection grants awarded**

#### **Mid-Hudson News - Newburgh, NY, USA**

NEW PALTZ – Six towns in the Hudson Valley will receive \$25000 each to develop local agricultural and farmland protection plans. The grants were announced ...

[http://www.midhudsonnews.com/News/Farmland\\_protect-27Feb08.htm](http://www.midhudsonnews.com/News/Farmland_protect-27Feb08.htm)

### **Officials examine future of farmland**

#### **Goldsboro News Argus - Goldsboro, NC, USA**

"Farmland preservation is so, so important," he said. "We've got to start right now on this or else there won't be any farming in Wayne County.

[http://www.newsargus.com/news/archives/2008/02/29/officials\\_examine\\_future\\_of\\_farmland/index.shtml](http://www.newsargus.com/news/archives/2008/02/29/officials_examine_future_of_farmland/index.shtml)

**Virginia -- Saving Farmland, One Acre At a Time  
Farmers Show Agriculture, Conservation Can Coexist**

By [Hannah Northey](#)

**MOUNT CRAWFORD** - The landscape is changing for Valley farmers like Ray Showalter in west Rockingham County. Residential and commercial development is squeezing farmers into smaller areas as feed, fuel and equipment prices rise, they say. That pressure's being compounded with growing environmental regulations and degrading water and soil quality in some areas. But there's a unique twist to the story in the Valley.

At a conference on Tuesday, "Protecting Farmland, Protecting Water Quality," farmers, conservationists, lawmakers and developers discussed pooling resources to protect and preserve scenic Valley farmland - one acre at a time. Residents spoke of forming a group to protect Rockingham County's farmland, and Sen. Emmett Hanger, R-Mount Solon, said he's seeking more funding for conservation easements. The legal agreements forbid commercial development and aim to conserve natural or man-made resources.

That makes a difference for Showalter, who put his 117-acre farm into a conservation easement two years ago. The legal agreement allows him to retain ownership, but ensures the land will never be commercially developed, he said. "[I] know my kids and grandchildren will have the opportunity to farm if they want to," Showalter said. At the conference, Luke Brubaker, a dairy farmer from East Donegal, Pa., explained that conservation and agriculture thrive side by side on his 1,000-acre dairy agribusiness. Brubaker is also Pennsylvania's milk marketing commissioner. Brubaker's farm is one of almost 1,000 farms in easements as part of Lancaster County's Farmland Preservation Program. The program, developed 18 years ago to slow the loss of prime farmland to nonagricultural uses, enables state, county and local governments to buy development rights from farmers and forbid development, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. Now, Brubaker says his farm is protected for his children and grandchildren. Brubaker said he's also increased revenue through environmental practices such as creating surplus electricity from methane, which he sells to the area power grid. "If I looked out my back window, I really feel like I have something left that's going to be good for my family in the future," Brubaker said to an applauding audience. A group of Rockingham farmers hopes to create a similar farmland protection program in the Valley, they said at the event. Currently, farmers like Showalter are independently putting land into conservation easements to protect the environment and preserve their farms.

"We care for the land for the next generation," Showalter said. Kevin Craun, a farmer in Mount Crawford, said a group is forming to protect local farmland from encroaching development. The group also will call on the county to offer incentives for farming, money that's already being offered to new businesses eyeing the area, Craun said. Forming a committee or group, he said, also would help farmers take part in discussions about development in the Valley and could bring funding to area programs. For example, last summer Gov. Timothy M. Kaine distributed \$4.2 million for preserving farmland through conservation easements. In spite of the importance of agriculture to Rockingham, the county didn't receive any of those funds. That's because Valley farmers hadn't organized or applied for the grants, something that would change by forming a group, Craun said.

In the future, a farmland protection group could have a presence at county planning and development meetings, and call for promotion of agribusiness and farm education, he said. "Farmers should be a part of the discussion," he said. "Rockingham County and the Shenandoah Valley have a lot to lose." Contact Hannah Northey at 574-6274 or [hnorthey@dnronline.com](mailto:hnorthey@dnronline.com)

**Durham Herald-Sun**

**NC bans outdoor burning amid dry, windy conditions**

RALEIGH, N.C. -- North Carolina wildfire officials have banned all outdoor burning and canceled all burning permits because of dry and windy conditions across the state. The North Carolina Division of Forest Resources said the ban on burning took effect at noon Thursday. It will remain in effect until conditions improve. A wildfire on Sauratown Mountain in Stokes County had burned more than 200 acres as of Thursday night. The National Weather Service issued a red flag warning Thursday for all counties east of the North Carolina mountains. Forecasters said humidity levels will fall to less than 25 percent and sustained winds will reach at least 20 mph. Those conditions can quickly fan and spread outdoor fires. The Division of Forest Resources said more than 1,800 wildfires have already burned 18,248 acres in 2008.

<http://www.heraldsun.com/state/6-937227.cfm>

**For more information regarding the NC Agricultural Development & Farmland Preservation Trust Fund, please visit [www.ncadfp.org](http://www.ncadfp.org) or contact us at [ncadfp@ncmail.net](mailto:ncadfp@ncmail.net) or 919-733-7125.**

**Hendersonville Times News**

**Farmers awarded grants from North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund**

Dale Robertson wanted to expand a summer youth camp last year. He runs an agriculture program at the camp and needed a machine to milk a few goats and a dairy cow. His local extension agent mentioned a grant program aimed at improving agricultural operations in Western North Carolina. Robertson had never applied for a grant before, but he sat down and filled out the application. The work paid off. The Gwynn Valley Camp in Brevard was awarded \$2,500 from the North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund. "It definitely is going to be good, because our farm program is one of the attractions to come to the camp," Robertson said. The Western North Carolina Agricultural Options Program managed Robertson's grant application and awarded the tobacco funds. The organization awarded 37 grants to 14 area farmers. The money will be used to diversify their operations. ...

<http://www.blueridgenow.com/article/20080331/NEWS/803310304>

**Winston-Salem Journal**

**Undeveloped land in Cabarrus is disappearing**

**Study shows accelerated development**

CHARLOTTE - More than half of the land now unprotected and undeveloped in Cabarrus County will be developed by 2020, according to a new study conducted by researchers at UNC Charlotte. In 1976, only 2 percent of such land in the county was developed - or made up of impervious surfaces, such as buildings and roads. By 2030, the research indicates, that figure will jump to 68 percent. Many residents have already sensed the pace of development accelerating, said Dave Cable, the leader of the Open Space Protection Collaborative, a group that commissioned the research and consists of six regional land-preservation groups spanning 24 counties. This study, Cable said, is the first to so clearly show how fast the region is consuming land. "We're kind of like a frog in a pot that's heating up," said Cable, who is also the executive director of the Catawba Lands Conservancy. ...

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