



Mountain Farms Update

Mitchell County Center

March 2018

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Contact Us

Mitchell County
10 South Mitchell Ave.
Bakersville, NC 28705

(828) 688-4811 Phone
(828) 688-2051 Fax

mitchell.ces.ncsu.edu

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Upcoming Events

Fecal Parasite Evaluation

Mitchell County Livestock Agent, Michelle South, will be hosting a fecal parasite evaluation and deworming workshop on Thursday, March 15th, 6pm at the Mitchell County Cooperative Extension Center in Bakersville. Participants will learn the importance of deworming animals and how to evaluate their animals fecal samples.

Respirator Fit Test Day

The Avery and Mitchell County Extension Centers will be holding a respirator fit test day on Monday, March 19th. The fit testing will take place at the N.C. Forest Service Linville River Nursery in Crossnore, N.C. Pesticide applicators that apply any pesticide that the label requires you to use a respirator of any type must be fit tested each year. This is an opportunity to have this done on a local level. You must call in and register for a block of time to have this completed. To register call (828) 688-4811.

Pesticide Licensing Review and Test

Anyone who buys and uses pesticides bearing the label statement, Restricted-Use Pesticide, in producing agricultural commodities on their own or rented land must be certified as a private pesticide applicator.

On Wednesday and Thursday, April 11 & 12, the Avery and Mitchell

County Extension Centers will be offering a Pesticide Class to prepare those interested in taking the private pesticide applicators test. On Thursday, April 12, at 1pm, the NCDA&CS Pesticide Inspector will be available to administer the test needed to obtain the license. The class and test will be held at the Avery County Campus of Mayland Community College in Newland.

Anyone interested in getting a license as a commercial applicator will also be able to take the test to obtain the license in any commercial category.

Those with questions can contact Jeff Vance at the Mitchell County Extension Center. If interested in taking the test, you must call and register at (828) 688-4811.

Preparing for the Growing Season

No matter what product you grow spring is always a busy time for farmers. As you get ready for planting, here are a few things you should prepare for this time of year.

- ◆ Winter is a great time to check out all of your equipment and make sure it is in good working order to prevent doing repairs later in the year when you need to be operating the equipment.
- ◆ If you are using a greenhouse for any reason now is a great time to check your heaters to make sure they are in working order.



- ◆ Clean and disinfect the greenhouse.
- ◆ Clean and disinfect equipment.
- ◆ Check and replace worn equipment such as pesticide spray tips (nozzles), spray hoses, hydraulic hoses.
- ◆ Change motor oil, hydraulic fluid, gas and fuel

TRACTOR Grower Outlook

TRACTOR (Toe River Aggregation Center Training Organization Regional, Inc.) is a partnership between Yancey and Mitchell Counties, led by Yancey and Mitchell County Extension. Additional partners include: the Yancey and Mitchell County EDCs, Mayland Community College, ASAP, the Town of Burnsville, and multiple foundations, including the Tobacco Trust Commission, the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, the Yancey and Mitchell Foundations and more. TRACTOR is a produce aggregation and training organization designed to help the small farms in the two counties (and region) access larger wholesalers.

TRACTOR provides a large pool of shared use equipment to help producers increase production or save on labor cost. It has four separate refrigeration areas to handle a variety of produce post-harvest, and two sort, pack and wash lines. To help sustain TRACTOR, a 20% marketing fee is charged for marketing and handling produce.

TRACTOR has assembled a list of produce that is wanted by their markets and will be working with growers to increase their produc-

tion. Cooperative Extension has provided crop production and GAPS training for the growers. The thing that is needed is more farmers to grow product to meet this increased demand. Farmers interested in growing produce for TRACTOR should contact the Mitchell or Yancey County Extension Centers to discuss products that are needed.

New Plants for N.C. Nurserymen

Below are plants released by N.C. State University researcher's that might be good varieties to learn about and to begin producing here in Mitchell County. You can find out more about these plants at the following website:

<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/fletcher/mcilab/introductions/index.html>

'Scarlet Storm' Flowering Quince
'Pink Storm' Flowering Quince
'Orange Storm' Flowering Quince
'Double Take Peach' Flowering Quince "new"
'Blue Chip' Butterfly Bush **
'Purple Haze' Butterfly Bush **
'Blue Chip Jr' Butterfly Bush **
'Pink Micro Chip' Butterfly Bush **
'Miss Ruby' Butterfly Bush
'Miss Molly' Butterfly Bush
'Lilac Chip' Butterfly Bush
'Ice Chip' Butterfly Bush **
'Invincibelle Spirit II' Hydrangea
'Incrediball Blush' Hydrangea
'Invincibelle Ruby' Hydrangea
'Invincibelle Mini Mauvett' Hydrangea "new"
'Invincibelle Wee White' Hydrangea "new"
'Invincibelle Limetta' Hydrangea "new"
'Blizzard' Pearl Bush
'Scorpio' Illicium "new"
'Orion' Illicium "new"
'Golden Rule' Hypericum
'Double Play Candy Corn' Spi-

raea "new"
'Double Play Doozie' Spiraea "new"
'Crystalina' Clethra
'Pearl Glam' Beautyberry "new"
'Mercury' Magnolia "new"
'Merlot' Redbud
'Pink Pom Pom' Redbud "new"
'Carolina Sweetheart' Redbud "new"
'Ruby Falls' Redbud
'Whitewater' Redbud
'Aphrodite' Sweet Shrub
'Little Ruby' Dogwood

** denotes Budleja that is seedless

EPA Restrictions on Paraquat Use

Paraquat dichloride, commonly referred to as "paraquat," is one of the most widely used herbicides registered in the United States. Paraquat is also often referred to as Gramoxone (a popular end-use product).

Paraquat is used to control weeds in many agricultural and non-agricultural use sites. It is also used as a defoliant on crops, like cotton, prior to harvest.

There are no homeowner uses and no products registered for application in residential areas.

All paraquat products registered for use in the United States are Restricted Use Pesticides (RUPs), which can only be sold to and used by certified applicators.

Paraquat is highly toxic to humans. One small sip can be fatal and there is no antidote.

Illegally transferring paraquat to beverage containers and later mistaking it for a drink has resulted in the accidental ingestion of the pesticide and caused 17 deaths since 2000 – three involving children.

New packaging requirements would prevent the illegal transfer of paraquat to beverage containers.

Data also suggest that paraquat is corrosive to the skin and eyes. Since 2000, three deaths and a high number of severe injuries have been caused by paraquat getting onto the skin or into the eyes of workers handling paraquat.

To better prevent paraquat accidental ingestions and to reduce exposure to workers who mix, load and apply paraquat, EPA is requiring:

- ◆ New closed-system packaging designed to prevent transfer or removal of the pesticide except directly into proper application equipment. This will prevent spills, mixing, pouring the pesticide into other containers or other actions that could lead to paraquat exposure.
- ◆ Specialized training for certified applicators who use paraquat to emphasize that the chemical should not be transferred to or stored in improper containers.
- ◆ Changes to the pesticide label and distribution of supplemental warning materials to highlight the toxicity and risks associated with paraquat products.

Restricting the use of paraquat to certified pesticide applicators only. Individuals working under the supervision of a certified applicator are prohibited from using paraquat. Implementation of these restriction will be done in stages.

Boxwood Blight Quarantine and Compliance Program

Effective February 4, 2018, Tennessee is establishing an external quarantine against the boxwood blight pathogen, *Calonectria pseudonaviculata*. North Carolina grower's wishing to send *Buxus* sp. and/or *Sarcococca* sp. to Tennessee will need to be NCDA&CS boxwood blight compliance program participants and will need to have each shipment inspected by an NCDA&CS field representative and an accompanying phytosanitary certificate issued. Christmas wreaths or other greenery containing boxwood are also subject to these new regulations. The full regulations can be found at, <http://www.ncagr.gov/plantindustry/Plant/disease/documents/Boxwoodrule2.4pdf.pdf>. Growers should contact their field representative to arrange inspections and contact Leah Roberts, Plant Pathologist, with general inquiries at (919) 707-3754.

Pennsylvania also enforces a quarantine against the boxwood blight pathogen, *Calonectria pseudonaviculata*. To meet shipping requirements into Pennsylvania growers should either be boxwood blight compliance program participants or send a phytosanitary certificate with each shipment. Wreaths and greenery are not subject to Pennsylvania's quarantine. Those regulations can be read in full <http://www.ncagr.gov/plantindustry/Plant/disease/documents/PennsylvaniaBoxBlightFullQuarantine.pdf>

Compliance program participants agree to follow best management practices specifically developed to prevent and control this very damaging disease. When entering into a

boxwood blight compliance agreement, growers are agreeing to:

- ◆ Require *outside* workers who enter their fields to dig plants, take cuttings for greenery, or for any other purpose, to follow sanitation procedures. Workers' clothes, shoes, tools, vehicles, equipment and anything else which may have come into contact with boxwood plants should be properly sanitized before entering a nursery. This is especially relevant for field-grown boxwood nurseries who sell plants to other nurseries on a piecemeal basis.
- ◆ Notify NCDA&CS field representative when buy-ins are received. Receipt date, source, number and type of buy-ins should be recorded in a format that can be examined upon request.
- ◆ Isolate buy-ins from other regulated articles in the nursery (including landscape plants) by a minimum of thirty (30) feet for a minimum of (30) days. This time may be extended at the discretion of the NCDA&CS field representative if daily temperatures are not conducive for disease expression. Buy-ins may not be treated with fungicides during this holding period.
- ◆ Inspect buy-ins for symptoms weekly during the holding period and record inspection results on a form that can be examined upon request.
- ◆ Keep records of all out-going shipments of boxwood blight host plants (*Buxus*,

- ◆ Train nursery personnel to recognize and scout for boxwood blight symptoms. Contact a NCDA&CS field representative if symptoms are detected at any time.
- ◆ Become familiar with best management practices (BMPs) for boxwood blight and incorporate BMPs into nursery practices when possible.

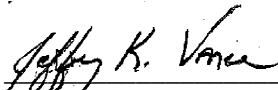
is important to note that the disinfectants referenced at the link are effective for cleaning tools, equipment, and shoes, but these are not effective at sterilizing organic surfaces, such as soil, leaf litter, or plants themselves.


Information concerning preventive fungicide treatments, resistant varieties and more is available from NCSU Plant Pathology

SPRING BERRY PLANT SALE

The Mitchell County Center of North Carolina Cooperative Extension will again be taking orders for strawberry, blueberry, raspberry, blackberry, grapes and asparagus plants. We also have various heirloom apple varieties. Orders can be placed until March 23rd. by calling the Mitchell County Extension Center at (828)688 - 4811.

The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services does not imply endorsement by the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned.

FROM: 
Jeffery K. Vance
County Extension Director
Mitchell County

FROM: 
Michelle C. South
Assistant Area Agent
Agriculture—Livestock
Avery & Mitchell Counties

To participate in the boxwood blight compliance program please contact:

Leah Roberts, NCDA&CS Plant Pathologist, (919) 707-3754 or Leah.Roberts@ncagr.gov.

The best defense against boxwood blight is the use of good sanitation practices. Researchers at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station have compiled a table useful for selecting and applying disinfectants. It

Or Current Resident

Mitchell County Center
P.O. Box 366
Bakersville, NC 28705

