



Mountain Farms Update

Mitchell County Center

May 2018

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Upcoming Events

NRCS Outreach Meeting

Date: May 24th
Time: 10 am-1 pm
Place: Mayland Community College
Spruce Pine, NC
See flyer inside this issue

TRACTOR Summer Kick-off

Date: June 3rd
Time: 12:30 pm-2:30 pm
Place: 54 Ferguson Hill Rd.
Burnsville, NC

This is a fundraising event and open house for TRACTOR. There will be food, live music and facility tours. Cost is \$25.00 per ticket.

Pesticide Test

Date: June 4th

Test Preparation Update
Time: 10:00 am-12 noon

Pesticide Licensing Test
Time: 1:00 pm
Place: Yancey County Extension
Center
Burnsville, NC

Cold Storage Grants

NC Growing Together and Natural Capital Investment Fund are teaming up to provide financing and support to small, mid-scale and limited resource farmers to acquire portable or stationary cold storage units. A low interest loan from NCIF is paired with a NC Growing Together grant that "buys down" the cost of purchasing cold storage units.

Who's Eligible?
North Carolina farmers who:

- ◆ Earn at least 50% of their revenue from farming
- ◆ Currently sell vegetables, fruit or other products that require cold storage into wholesale markets (beyond direct-to-consumer).
- ◆ Currently have no on-farm or mobile cold storage
- ◆ Reported less than \$750,000 of gross revenue on their latest annual tax return.

For more information contact:
T.F. Congleton
Natural Capital Investment Fund
tcongleton@conservationfund.org or
(252) 916-5211



Mitchell County Farmers' Markets

There are multiple farmers' markets getting ready to begin over the next couple of weeks.

Each of these markets are looking for people to grow and sell fresh vegetables. This would be a great new market opportunity for farmers looking to diversify their operations. The most important step is to plan your planting ahead of time and to keep a variety of fresh produce coming on all summer long. Below is a list of the markets, day of sale, time and a contact if available.

Bakersville Main Street Farmers Market
Saturday's 8:00 am – 12:00 noon

Spruce Pine Farmers Market
Wednesday's 2:00 pm – 5:30 pm,
Main Street Central Park

The Farmers Market at Penland
Thursdays 2:00 pm, Megan Bell
(828) 260-7923

Parkway Market at Ya Ya Village
Saturdays 10:00 am – 3:00 pm,
(828) 467-7806

MANNA Foodbanks—Plant a Row Campaign

Initially launched by the Garden Writer's Association, **Plant a Row** is a program that encourages local gardeners and grower networks to either plant extra produce in their garden specifically designated to share with neighbors in the community experiencing food insecurity, or to reach out when there is excess harvest to share. MANNA's **Plant a Row** campaign will start at the beginning of the planting season and continues to welcome all harvested donations throughout the year.

Gardeners in MANNA's service region who sign up to participate as a Plant a Row donor will be directed either to MANNA or get connected directly with one of our partner agencies that are accepting donations, depending on the donor's preference and location. MANNA can accept PAR donations M-F from 8:00 am-12:00 pm and 1 pm-3:30 pm. We encourage you to reach out to Justine Redden at MANNA if you would like to participate as a Plant a Row garden donor and get connected with MANNA or a local agency that is accepting donations.

During the 2016/2017 year, 34% (4.2 million pounds) of the food MANNA distributed consisted of fresh produce. This is due to both our increased ability to safely store and handle the produce and the increasing efforts towards programming that promotes nutrition access. Participating as a PAR donor has potential to increase access to nutritious foods that are not always available to our clients and provides sustainable food sourcing.

If you would like to participate as a Plant a Row donor, donation recipient, or would like to learn more, please

contact the Food Drive Coordinator at: jredden@mannafoodbank.org or (828) 299-3663 ext. 1248

Pesticide Test

On Monday, June 4, 2018 the Mitchell and Yancey County Cooperative Extension Centers will be offering a private and commercial applicator pesticide licensing test. This test is for farmers needing to purchase restricted use pesticides to apply on their own or rented land, or for pesticide applicators applying any pesticide for pay. From 10:00 am until 12:00 noon there will be a refresher course covering material that may appear on the test. At 1:00 pm, a NCDA&CS Pesticide Inspector will be on hand to administer the test. The refresher class and test will be held at the Yancey County Extension Center in Burnsville. There will be a fee for taking the test depending upon which license category you test in.

For further information concerning the location, class or test, please feel free to contact Jeff Vance at (828) 688-4811.

Bee Swarms



Protecting pollinators is a very important topic for farmers. A lot is being written about pesticide safety and planting crops that can attract pollinators. This time of year, one of our most beneficial pollinators, the honey bee, is beginning to get out and work all of the plants that are starting to bloom. With this activity many hives get crowded and bees start swarming or moving to find a location with more space. If you find a swarm what should you do? The best advice is to call your local Cooperative Extension Center and they can put you in touch with a local beekeeper than would be interested in collecting the swarm. In our area the ToeCane Beekeepers Association has

put out a list of their members that will come and collect swarms in Avery, Mitchell or Yancey County. Feel free to contact the Mitchell County Extension Center (828) 688-4811 to get this information.

Boxwood Nematodes

Nematodes in boxwoods here in Mitchell County have typically not been a major pest. Increasingly though I am seeing more cases of nematode problems on boxwoods. What are nematodes? Nematodes are microscopic worms that cause plant disease. They live as a parasite on the plant and can multiply when living on a host plant. There are thousands of nematodes, but usually only the Lesion and Root Knot nematodes are problems on boxwoods in the Southeast.

Lesion nematodes, *Pratylenchus vulnus*, are found mainly on *Buxus sempervirens* cultivars. These nematodes feed on small roots, which has a root pruning effect. Sometimes because of this feeding the roots can then be attacked by other pathogens causing a root rot. Damage usually appears as plants with small leaves that are yellow or reddish and much of the foliage may fall off.

Root knot nematodes, *Meloidogyne* species, prefer *Buxus microphylla* var. *japonica* (Japanese boxwood). These nematodes feed in the root causing a gall or knot to form on the root. The gall stops root growth, which reduces nutrients and water uptake to the plant. The plant will be stunted and the leaves will be yellowish or bronze colored. Root symptoms include swollen galls throughout the root system.

Controlling nematodes in field operations is a hard task. The best control is to know your liner source. If you get nematodes, there are a few nematicides that are recommended, so please consult your county extension agent for recommendations.

NRCS Outreach Workshop

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Mayland Community College
Sam's Center Auditorium
200 Mayland Lane
Spruce Pine, NC 28777

Thursday, May 24, 2018
10 AM - 1 PM

Please join us to learn about **NRCS** (Natural Resource Conservation Service) and how their **cost share programs** can improve your farm business and conserve your farm land for future generations. The Southwestern NC and Carolina Land & Lakes RC&D Councils will discuss the following conservation initiatives and how to apply:

- **Organic Initiative** including the **Transitioning to Organics CAP 138**
- **High Tunnel Initiative**
- **On-Farm Energy Initiative**

Plus, your area **FSA** (Farm Service Agency) and **NRCS** agents will be present to introduce themselves and field any questions you may have.

Speakers

Christina Newhouse - Agriculture & High Tunnel Specialist, Southwestern NC RC&D
Melissa Patton - Executive Director, Carolina Land and Lakes RC&D

This is a no cost workshop and lunch is included!

Please RSVP with Jeff Vance
(828) 688-4811 or email: jeffery_vance@ncsu.edu



Pest Alerts

As we head into summer it is important to stay ahead of the diseases and insects that can affect your crops. There are many types of tracking programs that can be used to identify where pests are occurring and how they may be damaging the different crops that are growing. Examples of these programs include Downy Mildew Alerts, Pest News, Late Blight Alert, Cucurbit Alert and Pepper Alert. Go to the following website and look under the Disease Alerts tab.

<https://plantpathology.ces.ncsu.edu/>

These alerts also have recommendations for controls and treatments. Many of our diseases do not overwinter here and move into our area sometime during the summer dependent upon host plantings, time of year and weather patterns. Hopefully these alerts will give you a chance to stay ahead of the disease pressure.

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