

## Agriculture Newsletter

### 2017 Farm-City Breakfast Celebration

- WHEN** : November 28, 2017 @ 7:30 am
- WHERE** : East Carolina Agriculture & Education Center  
1175 Kingsboro Road  
Rocky Mount, NC
- WHO** : Dr. Sandy Stewart  
Director of Research Stations in North Carolina



The farming season has not been perfect this year, but is far better than the last few. Agriculture continues to be an important part of the overall economy of Edgecombe County. Please come help celebrate and be recognized for those agricultural contributions and the interdependence of agriculture and local businesses. We will be joined by Dr. Sandy Stewart, Director for the Research Stations in North Carolina. He will be discussing new and emerging crops for North Carolina with research being conducted on hemp and stevia in addition to other possibilities.

Agriculture and agribusiness is a \$321 million dollar industry in Edgecombe County and represents 19.7% of total county income employing 3,558 people.

Please join us! Call the Tarboro-Edgecombe Chamber of Commerce at 823-7241 to register by Tuesday, November 21<sup>st</sup>. There is no charge for farmers, so please identify yourself as a farmer when you call.

### AgVentures Grant Supports Farm Innovation

NC AgVentures provides grants to NC independent farmers for new and innovative agricultural project ideas that will increase farm profits. The program will award an average of \$5,000 to \$10,000.



NC AgVentures program will award a minimum of 20 grants to agriculturally dependent farm families in the following counties: Duplin, Edgecombe, Forsyth, Greene, Guilford, Harnett, Johnston, Lenoir, Martin, Nash, Pitt, Rockingham, Sampson, Stokes, Surry, Wayne, Wilson and Yadkin. The NC AgVentures program is funded by the NC Tobacco Trust Fund Commission.

The application deadline is January 5, 2018. To request an application form please visit our webpage: [www.ncagventures.org](http://www.ncagventures.org)

## Down East NC Farm School

NC Farm School Business Training is coming to Eastern North Carolina. NC Cooperative Extension Agents from Pitt and surrounding counties are hosting those who are interested in developing a business plan for a farm enterprise. This training program will expose farmers, new or experienced, to how to start or diversify a farming operation with classroom training and opportunities to visit local farms in the area.

Students of the program learn how to make a farming enterprise a profitable endeavor with eight classroom sessions that provide the support and templates students need. These classroom sessions are reinforced by successful farmers from the area providing tours of their operations. Local farmers explaining key production principles connected to learning in the classroom is a feature past students say is of key importance. NC Farm School graduate David Brown says, "I like these trips because you can actually see it....to see how people are making it work is really helpful."

Leigh Guth, Pitt County Extension Director, is excited about this new opportunity for Eastern North Carolina, "Whether they are transitioning from tobacco or beginning on their first acreage, farmers need to know how to make their endeavors profitable to be able to keep their land."

The NC Farm School Down East team invites you to join us for this unique opportunity. **Details and registration can be found online at:** <https://ncfarmschool.ces.ncsu.edu/>

## Certificate Redemption & Class Lawsuits Involving Flue-Cured Stabilization

Recently, current and former tobacco growers have received mailings about class action lawsuits against the U.S. Tobacco Cooperative (formerly Flue-Cured Tobacco Cooperative Stabilization Corporation). The *Speaks v. U.S. Tobacco Cooperative, Inc.* lawsuit has reached a \$24 million settlement (which awaits court approval on January 19, 2018). A claim form must be submitted by May 26, 2018. More info on this is available at: [www.fluecuredtobaccosettlement.com](http://www.fluecuredtobaccosettlement.com)

The other class action lawsuit is *Lewis, et al. v. Flue-Cured Tobacco Cooperative Stabilization Corp.* More information about this lawsuit can be found here: <http://www.fluecuredclassaction.com/>

This settlement is different and apart from the Redemption of Certificates of Interest in Capital Reserve issued to members who delivered tobacco to Stabilization for the years 1967 through and including 1973 crops. This redemption will likely be continued with an annual deadline of the last of February. See the website at the following address for information on this program: <http://tobaccocheck.com/> Amounts due to growers and their heirs who qualify can be determined by clicking on the Certificate Inquiry tab at the top of the site and entering either the Certificate Number, FC Member Number or Tax Identification Number (Social Security Number) of the participating grower.

*Art Bradley*

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County Extension Director

Disclaimer: The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services does not imply endorsement by North Carolina State University or discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Individuals who use agricultural chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. Be sure to obtain current information about usage regulations and examine a current product before applying any chemical. For assistance contact Edgecombe County Cooperative Extension Agent.