

AG NEWS

**Field Crops****Pesticide Licensing for Farm Workers**

Due to new pesticide label requirements, a pesticide applicator is no longer allowed to apply certain pesticides under another person's chemical license. This label change would require some farmworkers to obtain their own chemical license. Nash County hosts approximately 3,000 farm workers every year and some farmworkers help growers apply pesticides.

Since the majority of the farmworkers primary language is Spanish, Cooperative Extension in Nash and Wilson Counties began piloting a pesticide school and exam in Spanish for farmworkers. To ensure farmworkers were prepared for the private applicator exam, Cooperative Extension and the NC State Pesticide School Division created a Spanish pesticide school equivalent to the pesticide school often taught in English. The pesticide school was shortened to accommodate the busy season with a one-day school and exam format. The NC State Pesticide School Division recruited Cesar Asuaje, Spanish speaking Extension Educator from University of Florida to teach the pesticide school. NCDA&CS administered the exam in Spanish.

Nash and Wilson County hosted a total of 63 participants throughout the two days. We are pleased to report that we had over 15 participants pass the exam and receive their private applicator license. We anticipate building this program in the near future.

Livestock**Supporting the Next Generation of Agriculture**

Despite ranking in the top 20 in Agriculture Production in North Carolina, youth in Nash County are, on average, three to four generations removed from the farm. This disconnect means that many of today's youth do not understand the process of raising livestock for food, leaving room for misinformation and misunderstandings. 4-H Livestock Programs have been combatting this issue by placing livestock in the hands of 4-Hers to raise as well as show.

In October alone:

Nash County was also well represented across all species at the NC State Fair with youth showing turkeys, goats, lambs, hogs, and cattle. In addition, 4-Hers showed poultry that they have been raising since April at the Nash County 4-H Poultry Show and Sale where participants earned on average \$23 per bird sold. Most memorably, the Grand Champion Barred Rock, laid an egg in the middle of the class!

After practicing for months, the Nash/Edgecombe Livestock Judging Team also competed against 86 4-Hers from across the state at the NC State Fair Livestock Judging and Skillathon in Raleigh, NC. After two grueling days, all participants placed in the top 10 overall in both Livestock Judging and Skillathon.

Lastly, thanks to a generous donation from one of our 4-H families, Nash County 4-H held a successful Livestock Equipment Auction - with buyers coming from as far as Alamance County - that raised \$3,000 to support future programming.

Horticulture Update - On Farm Research

Nash County Extension has been actively participating in several on-farm research projects in collaboration with the NCSU Sweetpotato cultural management program and three local farmers. There were a total of six on-farm research projects on these three farms, each with multiple harvest dates. The research projects have two primary areas of focus: 1) a comparison of varieties in both organic and conventional production settings, and a comparison of yield, size, and shape of sweet potatoes when planted vertically (the conventional method) vs. being planted horizontally.

On October 12th, a field tour was held at the location where three of these studies were conducted to highlight the research. Thirty growers from Nash and surrounding counties attended and feedback was overwhelmingly positive. The format allowed growers to visually see the differences between treatments and gave them the opportunity to ask questions. Data from these projects will be shared over the next several months at meetings/conferences, including the NC Vegetable Growers Association Ag Expo (Nov 29-Dec 1), the NC Sweetpotato Commission annual meeting (January 2022), and the NCSU regional sweetpotato production meeting (February 2022).



Local Foods

While visiting your local grocery store, you may have found a decrease in the food supply chain, however, that has not been the case at the market. Due to the robust local foods network and hard working farmers, the market has been in full swing meeting the demands of the increasing needs to purchase healthy, locally grown produce.

Although the market operates every Saturday and in the peak season June thru August, the market received several grants to support providing CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) boxes to seniors in Nash, Edgecombe, Wilson, Northampton and Wilson through the CARES Act administrated by Upper Coastal Council of Government. Weekly 250 boxes were packed with locally grown produce, meat, and dairy and delivered to seniors. In effort to meet the needs of home bound seniors, Upper Coastal Council of Government received additional CARES Act funds to support the continuation of this service. PEBT (Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer) and EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer), a food assistance program has seen an uptick at the market. Last year, the market paid out more than 27,000.00 in these funds and this year we are currently at over 46,000.00. Record breaking attendance has been seen throughout the summer with more than 70 vendors selling at the market throughout the season. As we move into the holiday season, plan to visit the Holiday Market on Saturday's from 9 am until 1 pm. Closing day will be December 18th.



Celebrating the 4-H SPARK

The first week of October was National 4-H Week and this year's theme brought an awareness of the importance of finding your spark in 4-H. In the world of positive youth development research, there is growing evidence of key developmental assets that help youth thrive rather than simply "get by." Dr. Peter Benson from the Search Institute describes this passion as one's "spark." Sparks are activities and interests that bring out a person's energy and joy, allowing them to express their personality and contribute to the world. This can be something you're good at (like playing the piano or painting), or something you care a lot about (like the environment), or a quality (like helping others). But how does someone find their spark? The path to finding one's spark starts with exploration – of projects, relationships, values. One can find their spark by spending time with other youth and adults, by immersing themselves in the community, and exploring a variety of interests. During National 4-H Week, Nash County 4-H captured video from 4-H alumni to learn about how 4-H led them to find their spark. One alumni featured was Mrs. Marilyn Fincher who also now serves as a 4-H volunteer. Marilyn's involvement in 4-H included participating in the presentation program, livestock program, exchange club and serving as a county council officer. She believes these experiences helped her find her spark to work hard, build relationships and give back by serving in her community. 4-H offers many opportunities for youth to explore and discover their sparks.

The pandemic sparked a greater interest in serving our community which led to the two additions at the Nash County Agriculture Center. The Teen Clovers developed a 4-H Blessing Box and worked with each of the Nash County 4-H clubs to take on a month to keep the box stocked for anyone in need. Local churches, community groups, public service organizations have been notified so when they encounter anyone in need they can lead them to our box filled with toiletries, non perishable items, and canned foods. The other addition is the 4-H Library where children can take a book or leave a book. A variety of books for children in the grades of K - 5th were donated by 4-H club members.

Summer was a little different than most past, but we were thankful to offer face to face programming on site. Camps and workshops ranged from sewing, arts and crafts, science to agriculture. We had more than 150 youth participate in our 4-H summer program. Another popular opportunity was a return to overnight 4-H camp. Twenty-one youth attended camp at Betsy Jeff Penn 4-H Center and all was made possible by a generous donor who believed in the importance of the 4-H camping experience. Students made applications based on needs and their costs were either reduced or fully covered. While the overnight camping experience brings different learning goals for students, most learn that they are able to build self confidence, improve team building skills, develop a greater appreciation of their environment and self responsibility.

Agriculture & Food



4-H Youth Development



Health & Nutrition



Community Development

We Grow Nash County through Education and Research



Family & Consumer Sciences Home Food Preservation Classes Go Virtual

Home food preservation classes looked a little different this year thanks to the pandemic. In-person food programs have not been allowed since the start of the pandemic and all Family & Consumer Sciences programs shifted to a virtual platform. Home food preservation classes are always a popular program. This year we were able to offer 10 classes in the Home Food Preservation series. The classes were taught by FCS agents in Nash & Edgecombe, Martin, and Bertie Counties. Each class consisted of a live canning demonstration and the participants were encouraged to can along with the Agents. The classes started in April with an Introduction to Home Food Preservation. Participants learned all about equipment needed for home food preservation, importance of following a tested recipe, and the different types of home food preservation. The series included classes on preserving jams and jellies, fermentation, water bath, and pressure canning. During the fermentation class, participants learned how to make kimchi. A tomato canning demonstration was presented in the water bath canning class and a string bean canning demonstration was presented during the pressure canning class. We had over 450 people in attendance with the virtual program and we even had attendees from England, Germany, and Canada. We had one group join us who were growing a community garden and they were all taking the classes together so they could learn to preserve the produce they were growing in their community garden.

This fall we are offering a Freeze Up a Budget program and will once again bring back the Holiday Food Challenge so we can maintain and not gain weight over the holiday season.



Community and Rural Development Be Prepared: Disaster Preparedness

North Carolina ranks fifth in the country for the number of homes that are at high risk or very high risk of dealing with a natural disaster event. Unfortunately, limited-resource families and communities often suffer disproportionately from disasters. This is often due to families living in vulnerable places (e.g., floodplains), lack of planning, and the inability to evaluate before or after a disaster, which raises significant life safety concerns. They often lack adequate resources and information to prepare for and recover from disasters.

The best way to survive a disaster and recover quickly is to be prepared. It is important that families have information, resources, and the opportunity to plan for natural disasters before they happen.

Three virtual disaster preparedness sessions were held by our Community and Rural Development (CRD) Agent in collaboration with agents in both Edgecombe and Harnett counties to present, "Be Prepared: Disaster Preparedness."

This virtual session covered:

- 4 Steps to disaster planning
- Identify your family and community needs
- Easy, free and low-cost disaster preparation
- Mitigation planning
- How to protect your home and assets
- Disaster preparedness resource list

In total 95 people participated in either the three virtual sessions (two general public sessions, or the session held for the Twin Counties Partnership for Healthier Communities which is composed of several health, non-profit, and community agencies serving both Nash and Edgecombe counties.) In addition, an in-person session was held for a Nash 4-H club to discuss disaster preparedness for families and pets. Agents also ensured that materials were disseminated throughout the three counties on disaster preparedness and mitigation practices.

NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

 NASH COUNTY CENTER

 Sandy Hall

 County Extension Director | County Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development

 Traci Dixon County Extension Agent Community and Rural Development

 Kelsey Lichtenwalner Area Extension Agent Livestock

 Regina Moseley Area Extension Agent Family & Consumer Sciences

 Matt Stevens County Extension Agent Horticulture

 Maryanna Waters County Extension Agent Plant Crops

 NC Cooperative Extension, Nash County Center | 252.459.9810 | www.Nash.CES.NCSU.edu