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Agricultural News From Craven County Extension

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EXTENSION

NC Cooperative Extension, Craven Center

Agricultural Update



November 22, 2023

Happy Thanksgiving!

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Important Note: *Registration deadline for events listed below will vary from as few as 24 hours prior the event to as much as 3-4 days prior the event so please register as much in advance as possible. Also, while attendance is open to anyone, meals, when served, will only be provided for those that register in advance.*

UPCOMING EVENTS

Note: Most events provide NCDA & CS pesticide credits as well as CCA credits. Check details of the events at the [NCSU Field Days Calendar](#) or local NC Cooperative Extension webpages

Eastern NC Certified Crop Advisor Training – This meeting offers 20 hours of recertification credits for those certified through the Certified Crop Advisor program. It will be held December 12-14, 2023 at the Johnston County Ag Center, [2736 NC Highway 210, Smithfield, NC](#). Registration and Agenda are found [HERE](#).

NC Joint Commodity Conference – This event will be held January 10-12, 2024 at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel Raleigh-Durham Airport at Research Triangle Park, Interstate 40 Durham, NC and will offer educational information regarding production of all major field crop commodities grown within NC. Other than educational events, concurrent session include awards of yield contest, poster, and association business session. This event is free. Registration information and agenda are found at [their webpage](#)

NCDA & CS Pesticide Exams - Exam dates and locations near us for 2023 are below. If you miss these dates, the nearest exam location will be Raleigh, NC. The exam is offered at least once a month in Raleigh. To register for the exam, call 919-733-3556

- 12/6/2023 in Greenville, NC beginning at 1:00 PM at the N.C. Cooperative Extension Center, [403 Government Circle](#)

For those wishing to take the NC Pesticide School prior to the exam, information for dates, location and fees for these classes is found at the [NCDA & CS Pesticide Division's website](#).

For individuals wishing immediate testing, [online exams](#) are an option.

If you desire other meetings or similar meetings in other counties, all meetings, field days, commodity events, etc. within the state are listed [HERE](#)

- If you would rather obtain NCDA & CS pesticide credits online, click [HERE](#)

Tentative Winter Meeting Schedule

We are diligently trying to finalize upcoming winter meeting schedules. Below are some TENTATIVE date of meetings:

Auxin Training is required for all that intend to apply auxin products to auxin tolerant crops. All meetings will begin at 8:30 am by Zoom. Advance registration is required. Meetings tentatively are scheduled for Jan 9, 16, 31; Feb 14, 27; and, March 12 & 16.

Regional Soybean Meetings: This year, an in-depth discussion of soybean production will be provided on a regional basis. This will allow greater discussion of production practices that increase yield and profit. These "Soybean Schools" will be offered at various locations. Those nearest us are

listed below. More details will be available in the upcoming months.

- Northeast Region Soybean School – January 18th Windsor, NC
- Blackland Soybean School – January 24th, Ponzer
- Lower Coastal Plain Soybean School – January 30th in Lumberton
- Southeast Region Soybean School – February 13th in Goldsboro

US Tobacco GAP Recertification – NC Extension will offer GAP training at limited events in 2024. Also, GAP Connections will provide independent training and online training. We are currently planning for a regional tobacco meeting that will include GAP recertification to be held in Kinston on February 6, 2024. As we finalize this effort, we will provide more details.

Local/Area Production Meetings – Currently we have the following dates scheduled for local production updates provided by NC State faculty and industry:

- Corn & Soybean Production – To be held the morning of February 1st and ending with lunch
- Cotton Production – Beginning with a noon meal on February 16, 2024

UMO AgPrime Grants

University of Mount Olive AgPrime provides grants to North Carolina farmers for new and innovative agricultural project ideas that will increase farm profits. This grant program, which is supported by the North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission, was designed to strengthen farms and communities that were negatively impacted by the downturn of the tobacco economy. Grants up to \$10,000 are available. Priority will be given to applicants that meet all or most of the criteria below:

- Benefits current or past tobacco growers
- Increase income
- Will increase or maintain employment opportunities
- Has been adequately researched
- Is realistic and budgeted appropriately
- Shows that the applicant has the skills to complete the project
- Demonstrated or identified technical assistance to help them implement a successful project
- Presents a new direction or innovative opportunity to diversify, expand or implement new entrepreneurial plans for their farm operations
- Will become self-supporting or enhance your ability to keep farming
- Maintains or increases the number of acres used for production

For more information or the application, visit the [UMO website](#).

Deadline for application is December 15, 2023 at 5 PM.

NC Farm School 2024

Anyone that has resources to begin an agricultural venture but has not yet developed a business plan or is seeking other alternative production systems to consider, should apply to attend the NC Farm School. This school will help one develop a written farm plan, provide access to one-on-one

consultations, introduce participants to a network of experienced Extension Agents, reveal key resources, and engage folks into a network of other established farmers. Cost of the program is \$300 per person or \$550 per double registration.

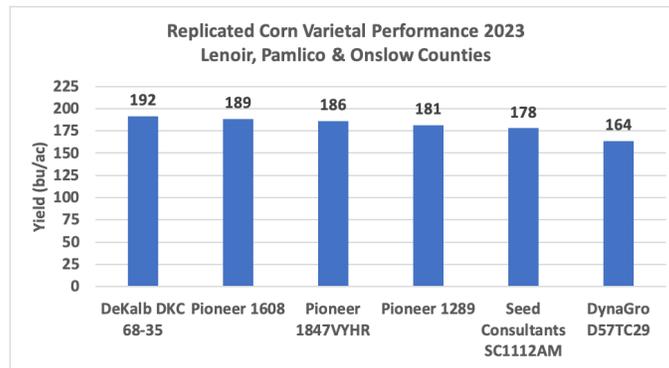
Classroom sessions will be held at the Johnston County Extension Center from 6 pm - 9 pm on February 12th and 26th; March 11th and 25th; April 8th and 22nd; May 6th and 21st. Snacks, drinks, course material, and online resources will be provided.

Field Tours will be from 8:30 am.- 3 pm., with lunch provided, on February 21st: Wayne County; March 20th: Lee County; April 17th: Harnett County; May 15th: Wilson County; and May 29th: Johnston County.

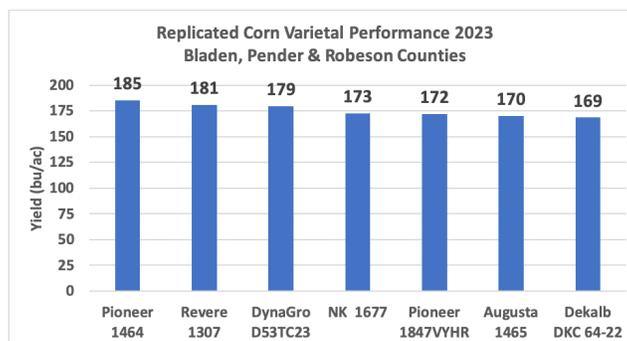
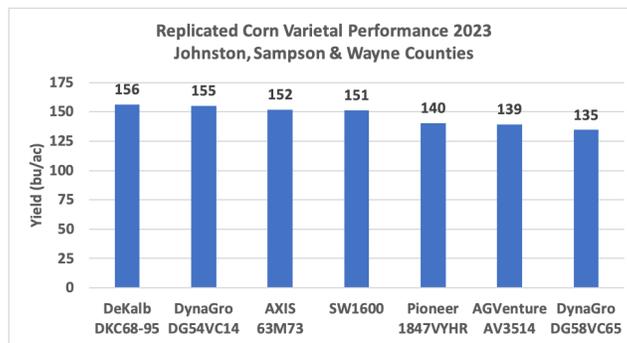
For more information or to register, visit [NC Farm School's webpage](#).

Replicated Corn Variety Trials

This year Extension Agents collaborated with NCSU faculty to replicate corn performance trials so that better data could be obtained. While this provides a greater confidence in the data, it also means fewer varieties are planted at each trial. Below are preliminary data by locations.



* Only two replications at this site



Tobacco Agent Updates

Recently we Extension Agents had the opportunity to review tobacco outlook, economic situation, and production updates from NC State and Georgia State University faculty members. Below are a few things to consider as you plan 2024 tobacco production.

- In 2023, most experienced slightly increased yield along with increased price. Several factors need to be examined as to whether or not this will remain the same. The obvious increase in demand resulted from purchases of China. Whether this remains depends upon many factors, including political views. Secondly, examine whether you can continue to pay the higher H2A wage rate and still grow tobacco. This is a great uncertainty. While these two factors can influence prices downward, demand and higher prices can increase as a result of a rapid decline in the number of tobacco producers. There is a very small number of tobacco producers 40 years or younger. A lack of new growers and supporting new equipment will increase demand. Simply keep these factors in mind and be alert to how any updates will impact your farm.
- As world population increases there is greater demand for resources. This includes inputs such as fertilizer as well as equipment. As such, equipment cost will be expensive! Similarly, fertilizer is becoming more scarce and shipment costs increasing. Neither equipment nor fertilizer cost is anticipated to drop dramatically. Thus, examine the feasibility of both. And yes, one does need both but one cannot afford excess or luxury purchase of either! One should begin to examine whether the luxury of excessive fertilizer (or equipment) is profitable. (Note: While it may not occur this year, there is great concern regarding future availability of fertilizer, especially phosphorous due to cost and limited resources. Too, shipping is becoming a problem due to record low levels of the Mississippi and Amazon Rivers. The point is, apply what is needed, but not more or one will simply be reducing profit).
- A lack of support to repair existing barns or heat-exchangers is increasingly adding cost and non-compliance issues. While we realize this as a great concern, there is apparently no real answer available for the near future. One may need to repair their own heat exchangers. We have no answer to the limited number of individuals with knowledge/experience working with tobacco curing barns.
- Tobacco Spotted Wilt (TSW) is caused by a virus (TSWV) and is likely to increase. Simply put, our climate is indeed warming. Warmer winters have always been a strong indicator that TSW will be greater. Extensive research in Georgia has shown that historically, the use of Admire Pro + Actigard as greenhouse treatment is the best means of reducing TSW. When coupled with planting dates that are prior to the thrip migration from winter weeds to other crops, this strategy worked. However, increasingly we find thrips resistant to Admire Pro. Too, sporadic weather patterns of very warm days followed by colder days has recently proven that our predictive model for thrip migration not to be as reliable. As such, we are limited in our efforts to manage this disease. As such, expect to have some years with very little TSW yet other years it may be severe. One should probably assume that long-term TSW loss will be 10-15% when budgeting and planning. If we follow the trend of Georgia, this could increase to 20-30% annually.

- Not only do rising interest rates increase loan repayment, it also increases machinery values, land values, and other real property values. All of this adds up to increase fixed costs! Make sure to calculate this when budgeting! If you don't have an exact figure for this, assume a value between 5-10% increase for 2024 for older equipment and 15-20% for newer equipment.
- Plenum turning vents and variable frequency fan drives are two means to increase leaf quality and reduce curing cost. Essentially the plenum turn involves a curved metal piece about 14-17 inches tall that simply reduces air pressure loss. Variable rate fans reduce electrical demand based on the curing stage. Combined, these two items can reduce 15-20% energy demand per cure (about \$30-40/barn). If interested, contact us or contact Dr. Grant Ellington at NCSU directly (grant_ellington@ncsu.edu or 919-515-6793.)

Local 4-H Youth WIN National Competition!

Please help us congratulate our youth team for taking multiple awards at the National Poultry Judging Competition in Kentucky! The team, Matthew Peluso, Elizabeth Peluso, Connor Howard, and Tessa Darnell won 1st Place Overall! Additionally, individual awards include:

Production Hens: 1st Individual - Matthew

Market Poultry: 3rd Individual – Elizabeth Peluso; 7th Individual – Tessa Darnell

Market Eggs: 5th Individual – Matthew Peluso; 6th Individual Connor Howard

Overall Judging: 4th Individual – Matthew Peluso; 6th Individual- Elizabeth Peluso;
19th Individual - Tessa

TEAM - 1st Place National Winner!!

We also wish to thank Ashley Brooks, our 4-H Agent, for working diligently with our youth over the past years!

Congratulations to everyone! Great job!



Missing People: Tom's Retirement & Vacant Administration Support

If you have not heard, we've been operating for a few months without support staff and Tom Glasgow, our County Director, is retiring in December. Both positions have been advertised but it is not likely that either will be filled prior to 2024. Please keep this in mind should you need us. There may be times that nobody is at the office due to meetings and events. If so, please email or leave a voicemail for us with your questions or concerns. Thank you in advance!

Tom has worked with NC Cooperative Extension within Craven County since 1987. In the past 36 years, he began landscaping Craven County Agricultural Building with J. C. Raulston Arboretum(1980) and initiated the Master Gardener Program (1989). He has since involved hundreds of volunteers with up to 50 of those working weekly on the landscape! Some continue to meet weekly to grow vegetables at our office to donate to various charities. Tom has also served as a member of the New Bern Farmer's Market and advisory role since 1988, established *Green Thumb* column in New Bern Sun Journal (1988) began the live *Coastal Gardener* radio with WTKF 107.1 FM program (about 2000) and recently established a community vegetable garden at Craven Terrace. He has served as the Clean Sweep Coordinator, led three youth to National Junior Horticultural Association contest winning national awards, and has documented several images and videos regarding native plants, especially carnivorous plants. Lastly, Tom has served to support our office and Extension efforts. We will miss his management and leadership (not to mention his style of humor)!

Sesame Production Outlook

Market outlook for sesame is still good. As stated in past newsletters and web posts, this crop has the potential to provide us a crop that is profitable, deer do not eat, and is a good rotational crop, especially if the goal is to reduce root knot nematodes.

Our recent trail planted about ½ an acre yielding 1927 lbs/ac. Sold at \$.60/lb., This results in gross sale of \$1154/ac for a net profit slightly above soybean average profit but below this year's corn profit. Read more in the article, [Evaluation of Sesame Production Within Craven County, North Carolina](#), to determine whether this crop has a fit for your farm.

Soybean Yield Contest

The deadline for entry into the NC Soybean Yield Contest is December 10th. Observation while driving reveals that most will not have the high soybean yield as last year. However, there are indeed some high yields within the county. To date, 64 bu/ac is the target to beat! Contact us if interested. We will need a minimum of 3 acres to harvest to enter into the contest.

Podcast

Two podcast that are released regularly by Extension regarding crop production within this area are listed below:

CropSense: Jacob Morgan, Director of Jones County Extension, produces weekly podcast with NCSU faculty and industry. If you would like to listen to these podcast, visit,

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/1780395/12734496> or email him directly.

Corn Kernels - Dr. Ron Heiniger will post information regularly. See details in this newsletter under the section, "[Corn News](#)".

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NC Cooperative Extension, Craven Center

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