

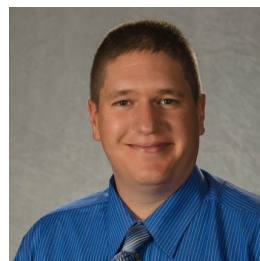
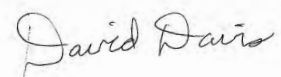
Agriculture Newsletter

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January is almost over! As we have come into a new year, we are continuing to experience, and deal with Covid-19. I have been seeing a lot of uncertainty in local agriculture. As inflation continues to rise prices of everything from food to the farm supplies, and in many cases it doesn't seem that markets are following suite, it brings about concern on my part for our farmers. As a farmer myself, I am currently in the process of trying to figure out what I am going to do this upcoming year. I have heard a lot of frustration as many have commented that all the farmers should just take a year off. It doesn't take long to realize that most farmers cannot do that. The bills still have to be paid. Animals can't be held in inventory. Markets for most of our crops have to be maintained for the future of our farms. This brings me to another point...the importance of management!

This is one of those years where it will be very important to get out the pencil and paper. As farmers, we must pay close attention to basics! Fertilizer is high, make sure to soil test! Markets are down and feed is high; it is time to be grass farmers instead of cattle, sheep, or goat farmers! And while you are considering decisions on your farm, make sure to remember that we are here for you in the good years, as well as the hard years. Give us a call, send us an email, or come by for a visit as you are making plans for the upcoming year and have questions.

**Follow us on Facebook:****@YanceyCes****-OR-****Checkout our website:****yancey.ces.ncsu.edu****Contact Us:****Phone:** 828.682.6186**Email:****David Davis****david_davis@ncsu.edu****Sara Runkel****sara_runkel@ncsu.edu****Adam McCurry****adam_mccurry@ncsu.edu****Sincerely****David Davis****County Extension Director
Yancey County Center**



Winter School 2022



It's almost time for the 2nd Annual Yancey County Extension Winter School! We hope that you will plan to join us as we focus on timely updates related to livestock, vegetable, and commercial nursery production. Here is a look at what we have planned so far!

Livestock Night- January 27, 2022, 6 PM, Yancey Senior Center

The first session of this year's winter school is livestock night. Livestock night will focus on two different areas of livestock production- small ruminants (sheep & goats), and beef cattle. **Small ruminant production** has been on the rise in Yancey County over the past couple of years due to strong markets, and ease of production in our area. Goat production in particular has greatly increased in Yancey County. Our first presenter, Andrew Weaver (NC State Extension Specialist, Small Ruminants), will present "Practical Considerations for Getting Started with Small Ruminants". This will be of particular interest to sheep and goat producers with less than 5 years of production experience. However, there will be something to learn for even the most experienced producer. **Beef cattle production**, by far, makes up the majority of livestock production in Yancey County. With rising inflation and costs of expenses, it is more important to manage with the "bottom line" in mind. The beef production portion of the program will focus on some of the major beef cattle management practices to consider in 2022. Speakers will include our very own Adam McCurry, NC A&T Ag Technician for Yancey County, and David Davis, Yancey County Extension Director. Visit our 2022 Winter School informational website to learn more about Livestock Night, or to find registration information.

Vegetable Production Night- February 3, 2022, 6 PM, Yancey Senior Center

New and experienced vegetable growers, get ready for the 2022 season by attending Vegetable Winter School! The program will be from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. A meal will be provided. Please register by Feb. 1st, 2022 to make sure we have a meal for you. Topics to be covered include: Managing Input Costs Through Good Soil Testing, Plasticulture Basics, Produce Safety Update, Yancey County Voluntary Ag. District Update, and Best Management Practices for Vegetable Transplant Production. Pesticide credits will be available pending approval.

Commercial Nursery Production- February 10, 2022, 10 AM, Yancey County Extension Center

Ornamental Winter School will include the following topics: "Herbicide Resistant Weeds, More Common Than You Think" presented by Dr. Joe Neal (NC State University, Professor of Weed Science and Extension Specialist), "Dieback Identification and Management of Ornamental Trees" by (Dr. Sara Villani, NC State Apple and Ornamental Plant Pathology Extension Specialist), and "New Pests and Diseases to Look Out For" presented by Tim Hartley (NCDA Plant Pest Specialist).

Those that would like to learn more about the 2022 Yancey County Extension Winter School, or would like to find out how to register online can visit the 2022 Yancey County Extension Winter School informational webpage found at <https://yancey.ces.ncsu.edu/2022-yancey-county-winter-school/>. Alternatively you can learn more or register by emailing David Davis (david_davis@ncsu.edu), Sara Runkel (sara_runkel@ncsu.edu), or Adam McCurry (adam_mccurry@ncsu.edu) or by calling the Yancey County Extension Center at **828-682-6186**.

Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop



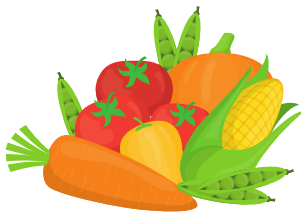
February 12, 2022
1:00-3:00 PM

Shady Lane Farm
311 Arbuckle Rd.
Burnsville, NC



Contact the Yancey County Extension Center by
calling 828-682-6186 to reserve your spot

54th Annual Winter Vegetable Conference & Trade Show



Wed, February 23
Thurs., February 24



Registration for the 54th Annual WNC Winter Vegetable Conference and Trade Show is now open. This is the largest commercial vegetable grower event in the region with a high quality educational program put together by extension specialists and agents of the NC Cooperative Extension. This year's conference program reflects many growers' needs covering many different aspects of production including pest management, tomato breeding, and food safety just to name a few. NC Pesticide credits (D, N, O, and X) will be available for attendees. Pre-registration is required for this conference.

Pre-register online, or register by mail. Find out more about how to register, or about the conference agenda by going to:

www.nctomatoes.com

NC Cooperative Extension Yancey County Center Annual Plant Sale Fundraiser Update

It is almost time again to begin making orders for our annual plant sale! Our annual plant sale helps to financially support our programming efforts and service related to Agriculture, 4-H & Youth Development, Family and Consumer Sciences, and Community Resource Development conducted throughout the year. The funds raised from our annual plant sale may be used to assist youth that cannot overcome financial barriers that keep them from being able to go to 4-H Camp or participate in other 4-H programs, they may be used to develop new 4-H clubs or opportunities for Yancey County Youth, help support an on-farm demonstration, field day, or other agriculture workshop, and much more. The plant sale also provides the opportunity for you to purchase fruit trees, small fruiting, and other garden food plants that are not available from local suppliers. This year we again will have various varieties of plants including apple, strawberry, blackberry, raspberry, blueberry, asparagus, grapevine, and horseradish. We are also planning a series of classes designed to help home gardeners in producing the various types of plants that we will be selling in the months leading up to the conclusion of the plant sale.

Our order form is not quite ready yet, but will be soon. Make sure to bookmark and check the webpage we have created on our Yancey County Extension Center website dedicated to the 2022 Plant Sale Information. This webpage can be accessed at:

<https://yancey.ces.ncsu.edu/yancey-county-agriculture/>.



*Blueberry Pruning &
Production On-Farm Workshop*
February 9th, 2022 1-3:30 PM
\$12 per person

Blue Ridge Blueberry Farm, Spruce Pine, NC

Register online: https://go.ncsu.edu/blueberry_pruning
or by calling 828-682-6186

Space is limited, pre-registration encouraged.

For more information, contact Sara Runkel (sara_runkel@ncsu.edu),
Extension Agent for Horticulture, by calling (828) 682.6186.



Register Now for Greenhouse and Nursery Virtual Programs

Greenhouse Grower Update: February 3, 9 am-Noon



Please join us Thursday, February 3rd for the 2022 Greenhouse Grower Update, presented via Zoom by NC State Extension. Topics include disease management, coleus production, and must-have gadgets for greenhouse production. 2.5 NC pesticide applicator credits (categories L, N, O, D, X) are available.

9:00-9:30 Boosting Roots And Up and Down Strategies of Utilizing PGRs, Dr. Brian Whipker, NCSU Floriculture Extension Specialist

9:30-10:00 Must Have Greenhouse Gadgets and Apps, Dr. Garrett Owen, University of Kentucky Floriculture Extension Specialist

10:00-10:45 Integrated Pest Management of European Pepper Moth, Dr. Steve Frank, NC State University Entomology Extension Specialist

10:45-11:15 Coleus Diagnostics and Production, Dr. Brian Whipker, NCSU Floriculture Extension Specialist

11:15-Noon A Survey of Greenhouse Diseases in NC: Identification and Management, Inga Meadows, NC State University Pathology Extension Associate

\$25 per business, unlimited attendees

Deadline to register is February 2nd at 5 pm. Register here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2022-greenhouse-grower-update-tickets-243219264367>



Nursery Conference: February 7, 9 am-Noon



Register for the virtual nursery conference on Monday, February 7th, presented via Zoom by NC State Extension. Three NC pesticide applicator credits (categories L, N, O, D, X) are available.

9:00-10:00 am: Spotted Lanternfly in Pennsylvania Nurseries- What They Have Done and How They Have Been Managed, Brian Walsh, Penn State Extension

10:00-11:00 am: Managing Hard to Control Weeds (Moss, Liverwort, and Nostoc), Dr. Joseph C. Neal, NC State University

11:00-12:00 am: Flatheaded Appletree Borers Best Management Practices to Prevent Infestation and Tree Decline, Dr. Anthony LeBude, NC State University

3 NC Pesticide Applicator Credits Available (categories L, N, O, D, X)

\$25 per company, unlimited participants

Deadline to register is February 6th at 5 pm.

Register here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2022-virtual-nursery-conference-tickets-243985074927>

Beef Cattle Focus: Why a Timed Calving Season is Important!

When it comes to managing herd reproduction, a standard practice on most cow-calf beef cattle operations in Yancey County is to simply leave the bull in with the cows all year long. This eliminates the need to "tie up" grazing land just for 1 or 2 bulls. Since most of our cattle farms are very small in size, with grazing land being very limited on most farms, I understand the thought behind the practice.

However, not doing anything to control the breeding season comes at a cost that most producers probably don't even realize. Here are a few thoughts to consider as you plan the next breeding season for your cow herd.

When Calves are Born Matters

Leaving the bull in the herd 365 days per year means that you have no control over the timing of your calving season. It really does make a difference when calves are born. It is very much not ideal for calves to be born in January-early February, or even July-early September due to the weather extremes that we encounter. Very cold temperatures most commonly prevalent in January and February increase the risk of weather losses, and greatly increase nutritional needs of both the momma cow and calf since grass is not typically growing this time of year. The summer months of July-early September are the time referred to as the "summer slump" for cool season pasture growth. Having calves born this time of year means that the producer will have to work harder, supplementing with feed and/or hay due to a lack of quality forage growth, to make sure the nutritional needs of the momma cow and calf are being met. Not to mention flies and heat stress that also negatively impact calf growth and development.

Breeding Cows Back at the Right Time Post Calving

One of the greatest unseen costs experienced by cow-calf producers is the cost of not breeding back quickly enough. To get the greatest productivity out of a cow in her lifetime, it is important that she conceives another calf within 3-4 months of calving. This will allow her to have a calf as close to possible within a 12 month window. Maintaining calving records is an article for a different day, but ideally looking back at the records for an individual cow, calving as close to a 12 month interval as possible should be the goal. While I was an agent in Kentucky, I worked with producers in my county and with the beef cattle reproduction specialists toward maximizing the productivity and efficiency of small cow herd in Clark County. Almost every case where a bull was in the herd for 365 days a year, we found on average that calving would actually be delayed. In some of the worst cases, we found that cows would actually be losing a calf once every 5 years simply because those cows would not breed until 4 or 5 months post-calving. Poor nutrition and unfavorable weather during the breeding season were believed to be the biggest contributor to the problem. In the 3-4 years that we implemented a timed and strategically planned breeding season in those herds, we were able to lower the calving window to 12 or 13 months.

We observed many other benefits such as shorter calving windows, more uniform calf crops (which greatly benefitted marketing), greater ease of herd management with a timed breeding/calving season, and much more.

We could cover many more benefits of a timed calving season, and I would love to cover how to transition from a year-round breeding season to a timed breeding season. However, there is just not enough room in this newsletter. If you would like to learn more, I would like to encourage you to attend the upcoming Winter School Livestock Night. See page 2 of this newsletter for more information about this upcoming opportunity!