

Yancey County Cooperative Extension

Agriculture Newsletter

April 2022

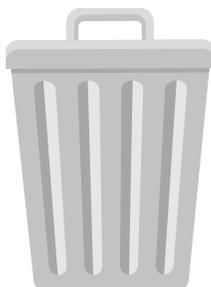
Happy Spring! I hope you find the weather to be favorable in the next few weeks for pastures and hay to grow, and for fixing ground. I know that it is a very busy time of the year for many! In this month's newsletter we have a big focus on pesticide handling and safety. We have our annual pesticide collection day coming up. NCDA will be coming to the county to collect both farm or home use pesticides. This month, we also remind you of the pesticide container recycling service provided at no cost. I hope you have a great month, and please remember that we are here when you needs us!

Sincerely,



David Davis
County Director
NC Cooperative Extension
Yancey County

Pesticide Collection and Disposal Day



Wednesday, April 20, 2022

10 AM to 2 PM

East Yancey Recycling Center

130 Burnsville School Rd.

If you have any unwanted pesticides that you would like to dispose of, please plan to bring them to the East Yancey Recycling Center, located at 130 Burnsville School Rd. on Wednesday April 20, 2022. Pesticides will be collected for disposal between 10 am and 2 pm. Almost all pesticides, including home and garden pesticides, will be accepted for disposal at this event with the exception of pressurized gas cylinders or containers greater than 5 gallons. Paints, oils, stains, medicines, and other household hazardous wastes except for pesticides will not be accepted for disposal.

If you would like more information on the upcoming collection day, or if you have questions about how to transport pesticides to the disposal site please contact NC Cooperative Extension of Yancey County by calling 828.862-6186. You can also send and email to David David Davis (davis_davis@ncsu.edu).

Stay Connected!

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What Is Your Plan to Fertilize Your Hay Fields This Year?

Without a doubt, fertilize costs are on every farmers' mind this year! With most fertilizer prices doubling or even more over what they were last year, many farmers may be tempted to cut fertilizer application as much as possible. However, before you cut, make sure you consider the cost and implications of those decisions. Here are a few thoughts that may help you in this upcoming year.

Consider Your Biggest Fertilizer Needs

Cutting fertilizer application rates may not be the best decision for every single situation. Before you omit, or drastically decrease fertilizer application to your hay fields you should consider your field history. The first question I would ask you on a farm visit would be have you soil tested? If so, what were the fertilize needs. The soil pH is the first thing to look at. If your soil pH is drastically low, this may be the place to focus your improvement this year if finances are limited. A low soil pH can drastically diminish the benefit of a fertilizer application. The same can be said for hay fields that are very low in phosphorous or potash. These fields will still need the lowest recommended application rates if they are to be productive this year. If P and K levels are too low, they may limit the benefit of an N only application.

What If You Didn't Soil Test?

Well, that is a problem! I would recommend soil testing as soon as possible if you haven't already! Soil testing is the cheapest, easiest, and most accurate way to determine your soil nutrient needs. Don't have to time to wait on the soil test results? As a last resort consider your fertilizer application history. In productive hay fields that have been fertilized with a complete fertilizer ever year (such as 17-17-17 or 19-19-19), and if a field has some lime applied each year, this may be a good year to put out nitrogen (N) only. Typically a minimum of 50 lbs per acre of actual N (110 lbs of urea, 500 lbs of 10-10-10, or 150 lbs of ammonia nitrate) is recommended to meet the annual nitrogen need of a tall fescue hay field. Applying 75 lbs of actual N per acre is recommended for a "normal" spring hay field application assuming phosphate, and potash needs have been met. This also assumes that an additional 50 to 75 lbs per acre of actual N will be applied in mid-August. One other factor to consider that would impact a N application on hay fields would be the presence of nitrogen fixing legumes such as clover. However, to decrease N application recommendation by 25% would require the hay field to be made up of at least 35% legumes. I have not seen too many hay fields in Yancey County that have this much clover or another legume species.

What About Using Cheaper Fertilizer?

Recently I have talked with some farmers that have considered deviating from applying 17-17-17 or 19-19-19 on their hay fields to applying 10-10-10 or another "cheaper" alternative. The only thing that I say to this is to consider if the alternate product really is "cheaper". The only way to do that is to price it by unit of nutrient (Nitrogen-Phosphorous-Potash). In many cases, I have found that the product is not actually cheaper per unit of Nitrogen, Phosphorous, or Potash. Depending upon what nutrient you are focusing on, even tho the price per ton may be less, you may be able to get more out of the higher priced product.

If you would like to discuss your particular hay field fertilization plans, I welcome you to contact Adam McCurry (adam_mccurry@ncsu.edu) or myself (david_davis@ncsu.edu) by email or by calling the Yancey County Center at 828.682.6186.



TRACTOR Food & Farms is Looking For Growers in 2022!

Tractor is welcoming new growers for 2022! If you would like to consider becoming a grower for the upcoming season, contact Sierra Bryant by calling **828-536-0126**. You can also find out more about becoming grower for TRACTOR by going to <https://tractorfoodandfarms.com/grow-with-us>.

Growers with TRACTOR not only benefit from the sale of their produce, but also contribute to the community by supporting great programs including:

If you would like to find out more go to:
<https://tractorfoodandfarms.com>

- **Clinical Referral**
- **Healthy Harvest**
- **Farefield**

TRACTOR is also now hiring for the position of Warehouse Associate/Driver. To find out more call 828.536-0126!



**As you empty your pesticide containers, don't trash them!
Properly prepare them, then place them in empty pesticide container recycling!**

This Service is provided for Homeowners OR Farmers at NO COST!



**Yancey County Pesticide Container Recycling Bin
(pictured left) is located at the Riverside Recycling Center
just off of US 19E across from the Riverside BP and
Cooper's Trading Post!**

To learn about how to properly prepare emptied pesticide containers for recycling, contact the Yancey County Extension Center by calling 828.682.6186, or send an email to David Davis (david_davis@ncsu.edu).

Spotlight On Pesticide Safety:

Storing Pesticides Safely

By: David Davis, CED, NC Cooperative Extension Yancey County



I love the fact that my child gets to grow up on the farm. I really enjoy the fact that my son likes to ride the tractor with Papaw, and he loves to be outside. As a parent though, I think much more today about my child's safety on the farm than I ever did as a kid. I think one of the biggest areas of concern that we often overlook on the farm when it comes to safety is considering how we store pesticides. Have you considered how you can store pesticides more safely on your farm?

Don't Store Pesticides in Food or Beverage Containers

In the pesticide re-certification "V" class, pictures that always stick out to me are the pictures with the pesticides stored in food containers. One of those pictures includes pesticides stored in a peanut butter container, and in soda bottles. I know that it may seem more cost effective to take whatever container is on hand to store pesticides, especially if it is to "borrow" some chemical from a neighbor, but really consider the impact that this decision may have should a child get their hands on it. Remember that pesticides should only be stored in approved containers, and this is usually the container that pesticide is purchased in. In the event that you do use a different container, such as if the original container is damaged, make sure to avoid the use of a food or beverage container. It is also important to make sure that the container is labeled appropriately.

Store Pesticides in a Safe Location

It is important to consider where pesticides are stored on the farm. Make sure to store them in an area where children do not have easy access to them. Ideally, pesticides should be stored in a well-ventilated area. It is also best to store them behind a locked door. Repurposed metal storage cabinets are great for this purpose. Not only is this safer for restricting access to children, but metal storage cabinets could help contain pesticides should a container leak or even in the event of a fire. Make sure pesticides are stored away in the safe location when not being used. It is best to return pesticides to secured storage even if you are just finishing applications for the evening, and plan to return to finish the next day. It is not a bad idea to also keep an inventory, along with copies of pesticide labels and MSDS sheets somewhere near the storage location.

Regularly Inspect Containers and Secure Lids

Before placing pesticides back into storage inspect containers each time. Make sure that lids are secure, and that the container does not have any punctures or holes in it. If you notice damage to the container, try to store that pesticide in such a way to minimize any spillage. Should a container need replacement, if you do not have an approved replacement pesticide container on hand, store it as best as you can to minimize spillage until an approved replacement container can be purchased.

If you would like to discuss how to store pesticides safely on your farm in more detail, please feel free to contact the Yancey County Center by calling 828.682.6186.