

Agriculture Newsletter

February 2023



2023 Plant Sale Continues Until March 17th

NC Cooperative Extension of Yancey County is now taking pre-orders for plants and fruit trees to help gardeners get ready for the 2023 planting season. This year's offerings include a variety of heirloom apple trees, strawberry, blackberry, raspberry, blueberry plants and much more. Pre-orders must be in by the close of the business day on March 17, 2023. To access the order form, see the complete list of what is available and prices, or learn how you can order plants, visit our "2023 Plant Sale Webpage" at <http://go.ncsu.edu/readext?848809>.

NAP Coverage Deadline Approaching for Fruit & Vegetable Growers



Above: Local Vegetable Farm impacted by Tropical Storm Fred in 2021.

Below: Tomatoes are one of the crops that can be covered in the NAP program



The Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced the deadline of Tuesday, **February 28, 2023** for fruit and vegetable growers wanting to obtain coverage through the Non-insured Crop Disaster Program (NAP). NAP is a "sort of insurance" for crops not covered by traditional crop insurance. The program provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops to protect against natural disasters that prevent crop planting or result in low yields or crop losses. Basic coverage is \$325 per crop or \$825 for all crops in a county, not to exceed \$1925 per multi-county producer for all crops in all counties.

The upcoming deadline is for artichokes, asparagus, basil, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, cantaloupe, Chinese bitter melon, sweet & pop corn, cucumbers, eggplant, hemp, honeydew, kenaf, kohlrabi, Korean golden melon, leeks, millet, okra, peas, peppers, pumpkins, radishes, sorghum, sprite melon, squash, sunflowers, sweet potatoes, tomatillos, tomatoes, and watermelon.

Basic Nap coverage is available at no charge for new & beginning farmers (farmed less than 10 years), limited resource farmers, socially disadvantaged farmers (Alaskan Natives, African Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, Native Hawaiians, Hispanics, women), and qualifying veteran farmers. ***If you would like more information about NAP, please contact the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) center by calling (828) 682-0774.***

Winter School Session 2:
Considerations for a Successful Hay Harvest in
2023 !!!RESCHEDULED!!!



Tuesday, February 28, 2023

Starting @ 6:00 PM

Yancey County Senior Center
503 Medical Campus Dr
Burnsville, NC 28714



Our 2nd Winter School Session "Considerations for a Successful Hay Harvest in 2023" that was originally postponed due to illness has been rescheduled for Tuesday, February 28 starting at 6:00 PM. This meeting will be held at the Yancey County Senior Center.

Rising fuel, supplies, labor and other input costs are making it harder to have a productive hay harvest. Changing weather patterns also make it difficult to plan for a successful hay harvest. In this meeting we will cover recommended practices considering current weather and input costs that should help producers be successful in 2023. This program will be good for any hay producer. Whether they are producing hay for their own livestock or if they are producing it for sale, there should be valuable information presented to all types of hay producers. This meeting will provide 2.0 "X" pesticide credits for private pesticide applicators.

A meal will be provided. Pre-registration is preferred to help us with meal planning. If you would like more information or if you would like to register contact the NC Cooperative Extension Yancey County Extension Agent for Agriculture, David Davis (david_davis@ncsu.edu) by email or by contact the Yancey County Center by calling (828) 682-6186.

Winter School Session 3:
Vegetable Production
Update

Thursday, March 23

Yancey County Senior Center
 503 Medical Campus Dr
 Burnsville, NC 28714

For more information or to register
call (828) 682-6186

TOPICS:

Disease Management for Cucurbits & Brassicas

Presented by:

Inga Meadows

NC State Extension Associate

Plant Pathology

**Food Safety Updates for Vegetable Producers/
 GAP Audits Are Easier than You Think!**

Presented by:

Elena Rodgers,

NC State Extension

Area Specialized Agent

**Meal
 Provided!**

**X Pesticide
 Credits
 Available!**



Have You Heard About NC FarmLink?

NC FarmLink is a program of NC State Extension that connects farmers, landowners and service providers across North Carolina, helping to grow the state's agriculture industry. NC FarmLink maintains databases of available farmland, maintains a listing of farmers looking for land, works with landowners and farmers to ensure an appropriate and lasting match is made. In addition, NC FarmLink will help guide through considerations and assist in locating resources needed when negotiating a land tenure arrangement.

Do you have unused farmland that you would like to keep in farm production? Would you like for someone to purchase or lease your farmland to someone that has a passion for and desires a future in farming? NC FarmLink is looking for landowners to participate in their programs. On the other hand, are you someone that would like to farm but just do not have access to farmland? NC FarmLink is also looking for farmers that are good candidates for their programs. They would like to connect future new and beginning farmers to farmland owners. From assisting with the farm lease agreements, to assisting with lease to own or other farm ownership programs, NC FarmLink exists to help current connect farmland owners and farmers looking for access to land.

If you would like to know more about NC FarmLink, I would like to welcome you to contact NC Cooperative Extension of Yancey County by calling (828) 682-6186.

Yancey County Cattlemen Association Meetings Set for 2023

The Yancey County Cattlemen Association has set meetings for the remainder of 2023. Presenters and topics will be announced prior to each meeting. Most of the upcoming meetings will be held at the Yancey County Senior Center which is located at 503 Medical Campus Dr. in Burnnsville. Remember, you can become a member of the Yancey County Cattlemen Association and take advantage of all of the upcoming programs by paying the annual dues (\$15 per person OR \$25 per farm). Here are the meeting dates for the remainder of 2023:



- **April 18, 2023**- Regular Meeting, Yancey County Senior Center (**6:30 PM**)
- **June 20, 2023**- Regular Meeting, Location TBA (**6:30 PM**)
- **August 15, 2023**- Regular Meeting, Location TBA (**6:30 PM**)
- **October 17, 2023**- Regular Meeting, Yancey County Senior Center (**6:30 PM**)
- **December 20, 2023**- Business Meeting/Christmas Dinner, Yancey Senior Center (**6:30 PM**)

To keep up with any updates or changes, make sure to follow the Yancey County Cattlemen Association Facebook page. If you would like to know more about the association, please contact **Adam McCurry** (adam_mccurry@ncsu.edu) at the NC Cooperative Extension Yancey County Center by calling (828) 682-6186).

Time for Frost Seeding with Clover

We have experienced some unusual temperatures for February so far. However, I don't believe that we are out of winter just yet and I believe that we still have time to establish clover in pastures and hayfields using "frost seeding".

Frost Seeding clover is done by broadcasting clover seed over top of the soil and taking advantage of the freezing/thawing cycle from fluctuating hot/cold temperatures in the spring or late winter to work the seed into the soil. The spherical shape of the clover seed makes it ideal for frost seeding. Grass seed which is boat or oval shaped will often "float" on the soil surface if something is not done to initiate seed to soil contact such as using a no-till drill, dragging in, lightly disking or aerating. The shape of clover seed, however, makes it ideal for frost seeding because the seed works into the soil fairly easy using this method. When frost seeding clover, seed should be broad-casted onto pastures between Feb 15 and March 15, if possible, in most years.

Adding clover to pastures or hayfields has many benefits. Clover is a legume and is great at "fixing" nitrogen (N) or converting atmospheric nitrogen into a form that is available in the soil for plants. Maintaining a stand of 25% clover in a pasture or hayfield is the equivalent of applying at least 50 lbs of actual N per acre each year. Maintaining a 25% stand of clover can eliminate the need to apply annual N applications. However, keep in mind that maintaining a clover stand will not eliminate the need to apply phosphate or potash. With N fertilizer prices currently running more than \$800 per ton, getting a 25% stand of clover can save more than \$43 per acre of hay or pasture per year by eliminating the need to apply annual N.

Adding clover to pasture or hay can greatly increase forage quality and sometimes can increase forage yield. Keep in mind that it is important to plant the right type and varieties of clover on your pastures or hayfields though. Not every variety and type fit every need. Varieties of red clover or ladino white clover are recommended for most hayfields because they will produce more yield. I also like ladino clover varieties in beef cattle pastures that will be rotationally grazed. For continuously grazed pastures, sheep or goat pastures though, I recommend dutch or intermediate type varieties of white clover as they will persist better under high grazing pressure. Although adding red clover is very popular among some farmers for pastures, red clover is actually better suited to hay production. It is very difficult to maintain a 25% stand of red clover in fields that are even rotationally grazed and near impossible to maintain a stand in pastures that are continuously grazed. In my experience, I have seen that red clover varieties just do not persist under grazing pressure.

For a listing of the best performing varieties of clover, check out the performance of several varieties and how the varieties performed over the years as reported in the University of Kentucky Long Term Summary forage test report. If you would like assistance in choosing a variety of clover for your farm, contact NC Cooperative Extension of Yancey County.

Adding clover to your pastures and hayfields makes much sense! If you would like to learn more about this practice contact David Davis (david_davis@ncsu.edu), Agriculture Extension Agent, at NC Cooperative Extension of Yancey County by calling (828) 682-6186.