Hello again,

It’s been since July when I sent out the last newsletter from my desk. As I sit here and think of the need for more rainfall, the first frost on October 18, 2009 and another frost expected for tonight. Everyone is harvesting corn, planting cool-season grasses and legumes, and planting small grains. I appreciate your patience as we are short staffed in our Extension County Centers, because of over 18 retirements in our North Central Extension District. We will definitely answer your needs if you contact us. Feel free to continue contacting our office for research-based information. Now, I’ve got some latest information and opportunities that I hope will help all of you in your farming enterprise.

The North Carolina and Virginia Cooperative Extension Service in conjunction with Leggett Town and Country will host a Beef Cattle Field Day on October 24, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Leggett Farm (Cloverdale Farm). This is located on Highway 58 just 10 miles East of Danville airport on the right (Look for signs).

There will be educational demonstrations or sessions conducted by Extension Specialists from North Carolina State University Extension as well as cattle industry representatives and several companies will be displaying various products and vehicles geared toward the farm and cattle industry. Registration for the Field Day will be from 10:00-10:30 a.m. Educational sessions for the day will include: Body Condition/Cow Appearance/Scoring and Evaluation for Optimum Results (Dr. Chris Forcherio, Purina, St. Louis, MO); Herd Health and Parasite Control (Joey Knight, Caswell County Extension Director); Current Market Conditions and How to Compete at Market (Robert Crabb-Owner operator of Carolina Stockyard); Pasture and Forage Management (Ben Chase, Rockingham/Guilford Counties Extension Livestock Agent); Construction of H-Braces and Troubleshooting an Actual Fence (Lewis Sapp and Billy White); and, Effective Ways to Prepare Areas for Fence Lines (Creek Ridge demo at the end of the day).

A sponsored lunch will be served at 12:00 noon at the Barn. The sponsor fee donated from participating companies will cover the cost of the meal for those individuals attending. You will need to register online (www.LTC2.com) or call 434-797-9300 by Friday, October 23, 2009 at 12:00 noon to pre-register, in order to help us better prepare for the planned meal. After 12:00 noon a $10.00 fee will be charged; therefore, pre-register before the deadline.

The sponsors will be presenting the newest cattle equipment, watering systems, fence systems, farm equipment, and other farm vehicles.

Hope to see all of you there!
As most of you know tobacco production was the major income for Caswell County farmers, but things have changed and we must search for new alternatives to keep agriculture profitable for farmers. With this in mind the Caswell County Cooperative Extension Center in conjunction with Atlantic Pacific Marine Farms, LLC will conduct an educational meeting on Thursday, November 12, 2009 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. in the Extension Office Kitchen in Yanceyville, North Carolina concerning the Abalone Farming Industry. By the way, Abalone Farming is clam production in a controlled environment. Several North Carolina Agencies (NCDA and Department of Commerce) and North Carolina State University is supporting this new farming venture.

Mr. Robert Bishop from New Zealand will be the guest speaker for the evening program. The evening program will include: Overview of the aquaculture/abalone industry (World of aquaculture industry, world of abalone industry, abalone biology); Abalone farming (Types of abalone farms, operating an abalone farm, production of an abalone farm); and, The business of abalone farming (Cost of setting up an abalone farm, NC state rules and regulations for abalone farming, selling/marketing abalone from the farm).

The marketing of abalone on the Eastern United States area is very profitable and revenues can be generated on a weekly basis. If you have any questions concerning this you can call me or e-mail Mr. Robert Bishop at rbapmf@gmail.com. Hope to see a lot of you at the meeting.

Most cattle producers have questioned whether or not their bulls were breeding all of their cows or heifers. About 20 percent of bulls examined will not be satisfactory breeders. Therefore, the Caswell County Extension Center in conjunction with Caswell County Cattlemen's Association will be conducting the breeding soundness evaluation (BSE) clinic on bulls on Wednesday, November 4, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on the Lawrence Bernard Farm located on the Mountain Hill Road off of Highway 57/62 North of Milton. Dr. Pete Fulper will be the veterinarian performing the BSE clinic.

Breeding soundness evaluation (BSE) is a method which has been developed to assess breeding potential of bulls for natural mating. A complete BSE consists of (1) physical examination, (2) measurement of scrotal size, and (3) semen evaluation for sperm motility (movement) and abnormal morphology (structure and shape).

A complete BSE for a bull will only cost approximately $45.00 versus paying $95.00 for a vet to come to your place and complete a BSE on your bull. Bulls should have not been breeding cattle for at least 30 days prior to a BSE test. Also, bulls need to be held in good trailers before unloading. After the bulls are tested we will load them directly back into their trailers.

If you plan on bringing bull(s), we would appreciate it if you would call me at 336-694-4158 to let me know how many bulls and the approximate time of arrival. This way we can better schedule the testing.

If you have any questions, feel free to call me. Just remember, one bad bull or poor breeder will lose you more than $45.00 in one calving season. Let's have another successful BSE clinic for the seventh year in-a-row here in Caswell County.
Rural Development, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture, provides homeownership opportunities to low and moderate-income Americans through several loan, grant, and guarantee programs. The program also makes funding available to individuals to finance vital improvements necessary to make their homes decent, safe, and sanitary.

Homeowners 62 years and older are eligible for home improvements grants if grant funds are available. Other low income families and individuals receive loans at a 1% interest rate.

If you are interested or for further information, you may contact the Yanceyville Office at 336-694-4162, extension 4 for an application for Caswell, Alamance and Person Counties. For Orange and Durham Counties, please contact the Hillsborough office at 919-732-9388, extension 4 in order to obtain an application.

**Project Skill-Up**

Do you reside in either Person or Caswell County? Have you been affected by the decline in the Tobacco Industry? If you are interested in pursing a career in the healthcare field, you may be eligible to receive help with training costs. With this in mind, recently Piedmont Community College, Person and Caswell Cooperative Extension Services, and the North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund are working together in providing educational opportunities for individuals at reduced costs. For more information contact Kelly Schelin at 336-599-1181, extension 273 about this exciting opportunity. See the attached flyer. By the way, this was made available with a $50,000 grant from the Tobacco Trust Fund Commissioner. We appreciate their continued support toward economic development for our farmers and their families.

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The North Carolina Cooperative Extension—Caswell County Center has released the polling place for the vote on November 19, 2009 NC Tobacco Research Check-Off Referendum. Tobacco growers can come to the Extension Office here in Yanceyville between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on November 19, 2009 to vote on the Tobacco Research Referendum.

The referendum is being held to let tobacco growers decide if they wish to continue the self-assessment program. This program has been in place since 1991, and the law requires that a new referendum be held every six years. A 2/3 favorable vote will mean that growers are willing to continue to assess themselves to support tobacco research and education. The assessment is ten cents per hundred pounds of tobacco produced in North Carolina.

The check-off funds, about $300,000 annually, is collected at buying stations by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and then allocated by the NC Tobacco Research Commission to support research and extension projects for tobacco at NC State University. For more information on the referendum and projects funded by the check-off, please go to the following website: [http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/advancement/09TobaccoReferendum.htm](http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/advancement/09TobaccoReferendum.htm).

If you have any questions concerning the referendum, feel free to contact me. Thanks for the past support given for tobacco research and education!
Spring Calving Herds

- Work calves prior to weaning, administer pre-weaning vaccinations.
- Wean calves this month or early next month.
- Market calves to your best advantage.
- Make arrangements for back grounding calves.
- Feed replacement heifers to gain 1.5 – 1.75 lbs per day or use the target weight method to calculate the rate of gain.
- Pregnancy check cows.
- Body condition score cows at weaning and separate thin cows.
- Cull open, old and very thin cows; check feet and legs, udders and eyes.
- Switch to high magnesium minerals to prevent grass tetany.
- Finalize winter feeding strategies and inventory feed supplies, and secure feed for winter.

Fall Calving Herds

- Continue calving
- Move pregnant heifers and early calving cows to calving area about 2 weeks before due date.
- Check cows 3 to 4 times per day, heifers more often – assist early if needed.
- Keep calving area clean and move healthy pairs out to large pastures 3 days after calving.
- Body condition score cows at calving; plan nutrition/grazing program based on BCS.
- Ear tag and dehorn all calves at birth; castrate male calves in commercial herds.
- Give selenium plus vitamin E and vitamin A & D injections to newborn calves.
- Feed cows extra energy after calving; protein supplementation may be needed if good pasture is not available. Cows calving at BCS < 5 should receive special nutritional attention.
- Keep high quality, high magnesium, high selenium minerals available.
- Reproductive tract score and measure pelvic areas on yearling replacement heifers; RTS should be 3 or better and pelvic areas should be >150 sq. cm.
- Plan estrous synchronization program; line-up AI technician and supplies.

Sincerely,

Joey E. Knight, III
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County Extension Director
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