

CASWELL TOBACCO EXTENSION NOTES FALL 2015 SEASON

Hello again,

As I sit here writing this newsletter, tobacco growers in this region probably are definitely glad this season has come to an end. With the late rainfall of 14 inches over a straight consecutive eleven-day period after a drought obviously slowed harvesting down. This pushed some growers into not getting all of the leaf harvested before the past three-day frost. This year without question has been an unusual year for all crops, even vegetable gardens. I projected at least 25% of the crop was lost, and that is probably a conservative figure. I sent an email to our tobacco specialists at: NCSU, USDA, NCDA, and legislative key leaders requesting, if at all possible, some disaster monies be given to tobacco growers in Caswell County and surrounding counties, which is most certainly needed. I have farmed for several years myself; and I keep on farming hoping for a better crop next year. Also, I have set up our Regional Tobacco GAP Meeting for January 20, 2016, at the Caswell County Civic Center. I will be sending you out a notice the first week of January 2016. Here is some information that hopefully will be beneficial for your operation.

COUNTY TOBACCO RESEARCH REFERENDUM ANNOUNCEMENT

The Caswell County Tobacco Research Referendum will be held on Thursday, November 19, 2015 at the Caswell County Agriculture Building in the Caswell County Cooperative Extension Office.

There will be just one polling place established in Caswell County. The polling location is: Caswell County Ag Building, Extension Office, 126 Court Square, Yanceyville, North Carolina 27379. Our office hours are from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

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.

Without these funds North Carolina State University would not be able to conduct research on tobacco production. That is why it is important that each and every one of you come in the office to vote on Thursday, November 19, 2015.

The funds, about \$300,000 annually, are collected at buying stations by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and then allocated by the Tobacco Research Commission to research and extension projects for tobacco at NC State University.

For more information on the referendum please call me at our County Extension Office at 336-694-4158. Thank you for your attention to this matter and continual support toward tobacco research at NCSU.

USDA Offers Flood Impacted NC Farmers Disaster Assistance

I just received this information from the USDA Farm Service Agency and thought I would pass along the information that may be helpful to all of you. North Carolina Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers and ranchers across the state of federal farm program benefits that may be available to help eligible producers recover from recent heavy rains and flooding.

FSA offers disaster assistance and low-interest loan programs to assist agricultural producers in their recovery efforts following floods or similar qualifying natural disasters. Available programs and loans include:

- **Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)** - provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters (includes native grass for grazing). Eligible producers must have purchased NAP coverage for 2015 crops.
- **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)** - offers payments to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather. Eligible losses may include those determined by FSA to have been caused by hurricanes, floods, blizzards, wildfires, tropical storms, tornados lightening, extreme heat, and extreme cold. Producers will be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent.
- **Tree Assistance Program (TAP)** – provides assistance to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers for qualifying tree, shrub and vine losses due to natural disaster.

- Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)** - provides emergency relief for losses due to feed or water shortages, disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, which are not adequately addressed by other disaster programs. ELAP covers physically damaged or destroyed livestock feed that was purchased or mechanically harvested forage or feedstuffs intended for use as feed for the producer's eligible livestock. In order to be considered eligible, harvested forage must be baled; forage that is only cut, raked or windrowed is not eligible. Producers must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent. ELAP also covers up to 150 lost grazing days in instances when a producer has been forced to remove livestock from a grazing pasture due to floodwaters. For beekeepers, ELAP covers beehive losses (the physical structure) in instances where the hive has been destroyed by a natural disaster including flooding, high winds and tornadoes.

Emergency Loan Program – Available to producers with agriculture operations located in a county under a primary or contiguous Secretarial Disaster designation. These low interest loans help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding.
- Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)** - provides emergency funding for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate land severely damaged by natural disasters; includes fence loss.
- HayNet** - is an Internet-based Hay and Grazing Net Ad Service allowing farmers and ranchers to share 'Need Hay' ads and 'Have Hay' ads online. Farmers also can use another feature to post advertisements for grazing land, specifically ads announcing the availability of grazing land or ads requesting a need for land to graze. www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet.

To establish or retain FSA program eligibility, farmers and ranchers must report prevented planting and failed acres (crops and grasses). Prevented planting acreage must be reported on FSA form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and Risk Management Agency (RMA).

For more information on disaster assistance programs and loans visit www.fsa.usda.gov/ or contact Rodney Young, Caswell County FSA Director, for more information.

Tobacco Curing Information

Most of you already know this was a difficult crop to cure this season for multiple reasons. I had a few questions this year about curing the crop. Since curing is both science and an art, experience was definitely the best resource. I did some research and came across a chapter on bulk curing from an owner/operator manual from Powell Manufacturing. This is from the late 70s, but it has some really good information on curing, both science and a little on the art form. If you want a copy of this curing information, then give me a call and I will be glad to send it to you.

Frosted Soybeans

I just received some information from Dr. Jim Dunphy, NCSU Small Grains Specialists, concerning questions about just recently frosted soybeans. The soybean leaves that have been killed by frost, and were green when the frost hit, will not produce any more photosynthate but still have some photosynthate in them that will most likely still be translocated to the seeds. (Yes, it's possible for the first frost to be hard enough to disrupt the xylem and phloem cells and prevent that translocation, but that seldom happens with the first frost. Most, if not all, of the leaves would probably have been killed in that case.)

The leaves that are still green are probably still producing photosynthate, thus still contributing to additional yield. Plus, those lower leaves are now receiving more sunlight than they were when the top leaves were still green. If you kill those leaves with Gramoxone or sodium chlorate, yield will be reduced. If there are no green leaves left on the plant, you probably won't get much uptake of Gramoxone or sodium chlorate.

Wheat planting is drawing near and some folks have already started. For growers who are wondering what varieties to use I have taken the highly popular Variety performance fact sheet completed by Dr. Ron Heiniger, NCSU Crop Science Professor and Extension Specialist, and updated it based on the last two year's of OVT and county trial data. This includes the latest disease and pest ratings. Attached is the fact sheet that should be helpful to you when selecting varieties to plant.

Feel free to continue contacting me at 336-694-4158 (office) or 434-728-5980 (cell) for research-based information and Extension recommendations. Hope this information will be of value to you.

Sincerely,



Joey E. Knight, III
Caswell County Extension Director

IMPORTANT REMINDER: From ~ Thanksgiving through March, a peak-season fee of \$4 is charged for the processing of all soil samples.

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