

in this issue >>>



Fall Newsletter

Director's Note

Livestock Update

4-H Gingerbread Contest

Holiday Food Safety Tips

New Horticulture Agent



Cooperative Extension Caswell County

Director's Note

I would like to take a moment and thank those who participated in the hiring process for the New County Director of Caswell County. I am honored that the committee chose me to lead the County Extension Center and I look forward to working with the residents of Caswell County to meet the individual and community needs through research-based education. I bring with me from Colorado, over 25 years of agriculture education experience with the last eight years in extension education as a county director and agriculture agent in Grand County, Colorado. The county staff and community has helped make the transition smooth for me.

Since starting full time in the middle of August, I have been working to support and fill the new agriculture agents positions in Caswell County. Clint Carty is our new Livestock agent that started the first of August. Clint brings a strong depth of knowledge with him in range and livestock management as well as a strong background in crop production. Daniel Ostrowski joins the office as our crop and horticulture agent on October 28. Over the last several years, Daniel has worked in several different capacities on a large organic vegetable production operation in California. His strong knowledge in plant production and management in both organic and traditional production settings, paired with his passion for planting and caring for all types of gardens will help meet the need of all aspects of horticulture in Caswell County. We are currently in the process and hope to have the small farms and natural resource agent hired by the end of the year. Once all the team is in place, we will be working on programming in areas of need in the agriculture community.

Along with the changes to the staff at the Extension Center, the office is getting some needed changes as well. The staff is working collaboratively to give the office a new look to help service the community needs from the Agriculture Center building. Feel free to stop by and check out the changes and meet any of the new staff.

Through the end of the year, all Extension staff will be working on planning and programs for the upcoming year and will give me input on developing the plan of work for the County Office to be implemented in the 2020 year. We will be working closely with the advisory committees for the Extension program to seek input of needs to be addressed from the community. If you would like to serve in an advisory role to the extension office, please contact me to discuss the process for serving on advisory committees. The Cooperative Extension Service is a community driven resource for Research based information and I look forward to helping the community of Caswell County in the years to come.

****If you are looking for hay or selling hay check out NCDA&CS Hay Alert to buy or sell****

WE HAVE A HAY PROBE IN OUR OFFICE, CALL CLINT TO HELP YOU TAKE CORE SAMPLES OF YOUR BALES!!!!!! 336-694-4158

Clint is shooting for January or early February to have a quick one-day tour around the county of handling facilities for producers to get ideas to build or improve their own facilities. No facility is too small or big to look at, ideas can be pulled from even the smallest piece to improve someone else's operation and how they handle cattle. We need to share ideas and mistakes alike to help each other improve our amount of time working cattle and keep our animal's stress levels down. Happy cows make for higher profits!

Just a reminder we will be collecting and delivering soil samples at our office on Thursday afternoon please get your samples to us by noon. **After November 27th there will be a \$5.00 charge for all soil samples** please ensure that you have correct change and that the payment is enclosed with sample prior to drop off. **we will not accept without payment**
Thank you!!

Small Ruminant Winter Time Thoughts

- Do you know the value of your hay? Do you have mineral blocks?
- Feed your higher quality hay later in ewe/doe gestation and leading into lactation
- Does your shelter have adequate ventilation to prevent moisture build up? Moisture is what causes respiratory issues during winter.
- What is the body condition of your animals and have you wormed them? Parasite activity is low during the winter but if animals are parasitic heading into winter their body condition will fail quickly.
- Animals require more water in the winter months.

Winter Tips



Equine Winter Management Tips

- Dry lots are your best friend during wet and muddy winter spells.
- When is the last time you have done a fecal egg count on your horses?
- Worming and vaccinating heading into winter is helpful for your animals.
- Hoof abscesses are normal during temperature changes and when the ground freezes but still be on the lookout for them and contact your vet and/or farrier.
- Do you have plenty of hay and what is the value of what you are feeding?
- When is the last time you have floated your horses' teeth? Feeding more hay and grain requires more mastication and your horses' teeth are their biggest advocate in keeping proper weight on in the cold.
- Does your shelter have proper ventilation to prevent moisture build up? Moisture is a respiratory nightmare in the winter.
- Pastures are 60% moisture which makes up for a lot of your horses' water intake in the spring and summer months. Feeding dried hay in the winter means your horses water requirements are larger. Also, proper water intake is what helps prevent colic.

Backyard Poultry Winter Management

- Molting in the winter months is normal for your birds when the hours of light are the least during the year.
- Does your coop have proper ventilation?
- Can your birds access small pebbles or oyster shells? Periods of frozen ground can make it hard for birds to find things to use in the gizzard for grinding up food.
- Birds clean themselves with a dust bath, frozen ground can make that difficult for them. Put a pan with about 3-4 inches of sand in it in your coop for your hens to use as a dust bath.
- Be conscious of predator pressure, as other natural game dwindles predators are looking for different sources for food.
- Make sure your birds always have fresh clean water!

4-H Gingerbread and Cookie Competition



When Tuesday, December 3rd at 6:30 pm at the Agricultural Building, Assembly Room (Lower Level) 126 Court Square, Yanceyville!

Caswell County youth are invited to compete in the 4-H Gingerbread Structure decorating Competition. You do not have to be a current Caswell County 4-Her to compete.

Youth ages 5 - 18 are asked to bring in their pre-made Gingerbread Structures/Cookies and display them for judges to score on Tuesday, December 3rd at 6:30 pm.

YOU MUST RSVP the number of entries and the amount of people from your family/group/club that will be attending by November 27th at 5:00 pm.

OFFICIAL RULES

All participants have to be between 5 - 18 years old.

Youth can compete as an individual or a team of up to 3.

The structure can be anything however the youth must complete the structure themselves.

Cookies need to be decorated by the youth.

All parts must be edible.

Doors will open at 6:15 pm and competition will begin at 6:30 pm. Please make sure all displays are complete by 6:30 pm.

Youth will receive ribbons for first - third places and their picture in the 4-H newsletter!

Cookie Rules:

Homemade gingerbread cookies in any shape (youth appropriate) and decorated.

You must have three (3) cookies or more on your plate.

Cookies do not have to be the same shape. Ex. You can have 1 snowman, 1 gingerbread, 1 reindeer or 3 gingerbread people...the possibilities are endless.

Two categories for structures:

Homemade - You make the gingerbread yourself and decorate yourself.

*May use sheets of homemade gingerbread or gingerbread cake mold

Store bought kit - You purchase a kit and construct the kit as you like!

Gingerbread structures can be anything appropriate including house, barn, train, castle, etc. If you have a question about this event please contact Brandi 336-694-4158.

Holiday Food Safety Tips

Tips to Keep Holiday Food Safe at Home or When Traveling

The most wonderful time of the year is already here. Some of us stay home for the holidays; others travel to visit relatives or friends. Regardless of the destination, one thing that does not change is that food is always part of the celebration.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is here to share food safety tips to ensure the food you prepare for your friends and family is safe and your holiday season won't be remembered for the wrong reason - food poisoning.

Holiday Food Safety 'To Do' List for Cooking and Traveling

Let's start our 'to do' list with USDA's four steps to food safety: CLEAN, SEPARATE, COOK and CHILL.

- ❑ Clean your hands for 20 seconds with soapy water. Always serve food on clean plates and avoid reusing plates that previously held raw meat and poultry.

- ❑ Separate raw and cooked foods so you don't cross contaminate.

- ❑ Cook using a food thermometer to make sure food reaches a safe minimum internal temperature.

- ❑ Chill leftovers within two hours of cooking. Keep track of how long items have been sitting on the buffet table and discard anything that has been out longer than two hours.

During the holiday season there are a wide variety of traditional dishes and family recipes that require specific preparations. When cooking these delicious party foods, make sure to cook them to the correct internal temperatures to destroy food poisoning bacteria.

- ❑ Cook all raw beef, pork, lamb and veal steaks, chops, and roasts to a minimum internal temperature of 145°F before removing meat from the heat source. For safety and quality reasons, allow meat to rest for at least three minutes before carving or consuming. For reasons of personal preference, you may choose to cook meat to higher temperatures.

- ❑ Cook all raw ground beef, pork, lamb and veal to an internal temperature of 160°F.

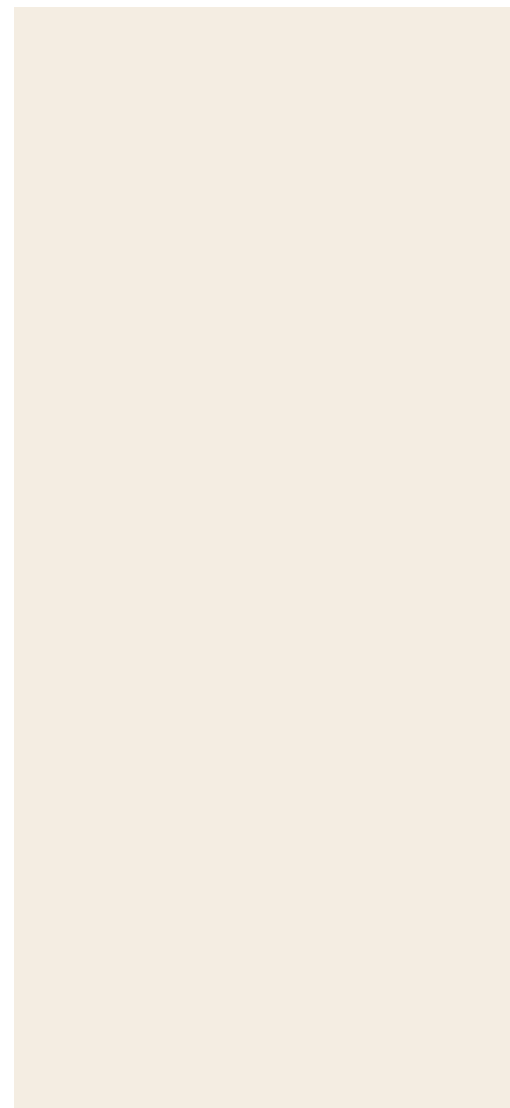
- ❑ Cook all poultry to a safe minimum internal temperature of 165°F as measured with a food thermometer.

If you are invited to a holiday party and plan to bring your famous holiday dish or if you are traveling to visit relatives or friends, be sure to keep hot foods hot (140°F or above), by carrying them in insulated containers. If you're transporting cold food, keep it cold (40°F or below), by carrying it with cold sources such as ice or frozen gel packs. The best way to ensure that food is being held at a safe temperature while you are traveling is to pack and use an appliance thermometer in the cooler.

Lastly, for our tech savvy holiday cooks, we recommend our smartphone and tablet application, the FoodKeeper. With more than 150,000 downloads on both the Android and iOS smartphones, the FoodKeeper is quickly establishing itself as the quick reference go-to guide for safe food storage and preparation. A recent update just integrated food product recall announcements into the app. Available in English and Spanish, the FoodKeeper has information on safe storage of leftovers and 500+ different food and drink items.

Consumers can learn more about key food safety practices at foodsafety.gov and follow @USDAFoodSafety on Twitter. Consumers with questions about food safety can call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) or chat live with a food safety specialist in English or Spanish at [AskKaren.gov](https://askkaren.gov), available from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday.

Source; [USDA.gov](https://usda.gov)



Our new agent...



Hello,

My name is Daniel Ostrowski and I am your new Agriculture and Horticulture extension agent here in Caswell county. I come to NCSU Extension from working in the private sector as an agricultural consultant for a pesticide retailer, and then as an agronomist and farm manager on a 1000-acre organic vegetable farm. Both of these jobs taught me a lot about different types of agriculture, soils, and many of the complex interactions between plants and their environment. I especially like working in plant nutrition and getting the soil fertility just right for extremely productive harvests. From my work in organics, I am also very interested in understanding pest and disease cycles and what we can do to disrupt these cycles so they do not interfere with production goals. However, I am not just limited to production agriculture and enjoy working with all plants; including the ones in your front yard! No question is too small or large when it comes to your curiosity about plants, pests, and diseases.

I grew up with three siblings at the base of a 14,162 ft mountain in far Northern California where my father is a forester and my mother is a school teacher. I have enjoyed being around plants my entire life and love helping people see how complicated, intelligent, and adaptive plants are. Sometimes when looking at a field, forest, or pasture, it helps me to remember that plants have been on this earth for about 700 million years. They grow wherever they germinate and don't have the option of running away from a drought, flood, or any other climatic event. They had to be able to adapt and survive long enough to pass their genetics on so they could repeat this cycle over and over. Pretty impressive for something we think of as simple and brainless!

I am always interested in a good plant or pest/disease mystery and look forward to your questions and calls. I look forward to meeting you. Please feel free to stop by the Extension office, or give me a call at 336-694-4158.

-Daniel Ostrowski

Contact us at **336-694-4158**

<https://caswell.ces.ncsu.edu/>

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