Dear Extension Families,

We hope your family had a wonderful Easter. The youth from RMS helped with the Easter Egg Hunt at Sweetgum Church and did a great job!

Our staff is looking forward to the Rescue Squad Ramp Dinner and events at Stecoah Valley Center. We hope you and your family can come out to some of these activities. A list of Ramp Weekend activities is in a later newsletter article.

May is usually a busy month for Extension staff. The weather has gotten us all into the spring planting mood. It has been hard for us to wait until the potential frost date passes on May 12.

We want you to know that our staff is here to provide information as you plant your gardens, landscape your yards, deal with pests, and harvest and preserve fruits and vegetables. We tell everyone that if you have a question, Extension is a good place to start asking!

Have a great month!

Teresa Garland
County Extension Director

Randy Collins
Extension Agent
Agriculture

Eve Rogers
Extension Agent
Family & Consumer Science

BUY LOCAL: VEGETABLE PRODUCER LIST

North Carolina Cooperative Extension is currently attempting to put together a list of Graham County vegetable producers who wish to market their produce to the public. This will not only help producers market their products, but will help consumers locate producers with greater ease.

Anyone who wishes to be placed on this list needs to contact NC Cooperative Extension in Graham County at (828) 479-7979 and leave their name, address, phone number, and what fruits and vegetables they will have to offer.
Graham County Commissioners made the decision last month to restore the Smith-Howell Building to its original design and that Cooperative Extension would move back. However, some changes will have to be made to the facility to make it handicap accessible and bring it up to current building codes. Also, the commissioners have agreed that if the Golden LEAF grant application Extension submitted is funded the teaching kitchen can be included in the remodeling. We will learn if that grant is funded on June 2. In the event that grant is not funded, we hope the space for a future teaching kitchen and meeting space will still be included in the floor plan so we can pursue other grants to support the project and help expand our career and nutrition programs. The architect is currently working on the design. We hope to have more to report to you in the near future!

In 1977, Wachovia Bank donated the building to the county to be used for educational purposes. The County Extension Director, Roger Hyatt, was instrumental in working with the bank to get the facility donated. Through his efforts, the county has housed Extension and other departments for thirty years. The building donation has saved the county hundreds of thousands of dollars in the past three decades. We appreciate the work Mr. Hyatt did in 1977 and look forward to returning to the facility he helped secure for the county.

Graham County 4-H’ers enjoyed a rainy day at Murphy’s indoor swimming pool!

IT'S PRESENTATION TIME AGAIN!!

It is time to start practicing presentations for 2011. You can choose almost any topic, but it helps if you do a presentation on the project book topic you selected for 2011. That way you can list it as something you did for your project. Presentations can be done by any 4-H’er at the county level. 4-H’ers age 9 and over can participate at district level competition. Winners at district go on to compete during Congress at NC State in Raleigh.

Presentations will be given during County Activity Day on May 15 at the United Methodist Church starting at 2:30pm. Also that day will be Fashion Revue and 4-H Entertains (talent show). Rules for each activity can be picked up at the Extension Center. 4-H’ers must call to register for the event and tell us about their presentation, or garment, or act.

HEIRLOOM SEED PROJECT

Graham County Cooperative Extension will be collecting heirloom seeds for a preservation project. We need the name of the seed and at least twenty seeds. Please help us preserve heirloom plants!
Ramp Festival Weekend Local Events – April 30-May 1

The Rescue Squad Ramp Festival will be held on Sunday, May 1 from 11 am to 2 pm (or until food runs out – whichever comes first!). The cost is $7.00 for chicken or trout and all the fixin’s. Please come out to support this worthwhile cause. The event is always held at the Graham County Rescue Squad Building on Moose Branch Road.

We were sorry to hear that the Children’s Fair has been canceled this year, but heard it may return in 2012.

Cache in on Fitness from noon until 4:00 at the Graham County Playground on May 1.

Stecoah Valley Center is having a dinner and concert on Saturday, April 30th. There will be two seatings for dinner – 5:00 and 6:15. The menu is roasted pork loin, ramp potato home fries, honey glazed carrots, baked apples, cole slaw, cornbread, ramp/cheese biscuits, and blackberry cobbler with ice cream. The cost is $17.95 for adults and $7.95 for children 12 and under. The concert at SVC begins at 7:30 pm and the performance is by Honey Holler, a female group which performs honky-tonk and bluegrass – adults $10, students $5.

Ramps from Ole’ Boy to Gourmet! Michael Gentry will be teaching how to cook ramps using gourmet and traditional recipes. Participants will learn to prepare ramp cornmeal polenta, ramp biscuits, egg burritos, and mahogany ramps. The cost is $40. The class will be at SVC on April 30 from 9:30 am - Noon.

Call Stecoah Valley Center at 479-3364 to register for any of their activities.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Ramp Cornbread

1½ cup white cornmeal
½ cup flour
1 t salt
3 t baking powder
2 T sugar
2 eggs
1 cup milk whole or butter
½ cup oil
1 cup finely minced ramps

Sift dry ingredients together, add ramps, combine eggs, milk and oil. Fold into dry ingredients beat until smooth. Preheat oven and well oiled 8 inch iron skillet to 400 degrees. Pour mixture into hot skillet and bake for about twenty minutes until top is golden brown and a piece of spaghetti inserted into the center come out clean.

Serve hot with plenty of butter and a big glass of buttermilk or whole milk as desired.
N.C. FORECLOSURE PREVENTION FUND

Many North Carolina homeowners are struggling now to make their mortgage payments due to job loss or reduction of income through no fault of their own or because of an unforeseen temporary financial hardship, such as a divorce, serious illness or death of a co-signor. If you are searching for help, be assured that you are not alone. The N.C. Foreclosure Prevention Fund is here to help you avoid foreclosure.

The Mortgage Payment Program offers zero-interest loans of up to $24,000 to pay your mortgage and other related expenses for up to 24 months. If you live in one of the “hardest hit” counties with the highest unemployment rates, you may qualify for a loan of up to $36,000 for up to 36 months. The loan can also be used to bring mortgage payments current.

The Second Mortgage Refinance Program may help you refinance a high-cost second mortgage and reduce your monthly payments to an affordable level.

For more information, call 1-800-737-5485 or visit: http://www.ncforeclosureprevention.gov

Avoid Scams: Foreclosure help is free through our counseling partners. The N.C. Attorney General’s Office provides information on how to recognize and avoid scams.


4-H SUMMER ADVENTURES

4-H Summer Adventure programs are being planned for June, July and August. As most of you know, traditional 4-H clubs do not meet during the summer months. 4-Hers do stay busy however. This year we have many exciting activities already planned. The list of activities and enrollment form will be mailed to each 4-H’er later this month. The deadline for registration will be Friday, June 10.

Space is limited for each activity, so be sure to complete your enrollment form and get it into the office as soon as possible. If you have any questions, please contact us at 479-7979.

PAM’S PERSPECTIVE

I hope that everyone had a wonderful spring break; I know it passed too fast, but summer vacation is just around the corner. This month I have been assisting with nutrition classes at Robbinsville Elementary School in the 3rd grade. Youth are encouraged to think healthy, eat healthy and live a healthier lifestyle. Each lesson they get to try a food that is healthy and delicious. Some lessons they also receive a gift. With 4-H we follow the school schedule, so we did not have a Cloverbud meeting, but we offered a trip to the Murphy swimming pool on Tuesday, their club-meeting day. The weather outside was bad, but the pool was covered and they had a great time. I met with Robbinsville After-School on the 7th; their lesson was about bears, being able to tell the difference between grizzlies, polar and black bears by their characteristics not by the color. They learned about bear habitats, their diets, and some interesting characteristics about each bear. Musketeers had the same bear lesson and picked out project books for the coming year. They also started to think about presentations, some already have chosen their topic. I think we are going to have some great presentations this year! Stecoah, Extreme II and Snowbird also had lessons on the environment. Stitch and Stir was canceled in April, but we will resume in May. Be sure to watch your May calendar for dates about Shooting Sports. We plan to start this club back up since the weather is nice. I hope to see you in May.

FADING VOICES

May 28th

Little Snowbird Baptist Church

Held since 1986 on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend, the Cherokee people of the Snowbird community invite members of the public to join them in an "Annual Demonstration Day" that includes a mound-building ceremony, arts and crafts, performances of music and storytelling, and Cherokee food.
IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

4-H
May 3   KORT at RHS
May 5   Robbinsville After-School
May 9   Shooting Sports
May 10  RMS Club
May 10  Cloverbuds
May 11  County Council
May 13  4-H District Lock-In
May 14  4-H Leaders Association Meeting
May 16  Shooting Sports
May 17  Musketeers
May 18  Stecoah After-School
May 19  Extreme II After-School
May 23  Shooting Sports
May 24  Extreme Teens
May 24  Stitch N’ Stir
May 25  Snowbird After-School

AGRICULTURE
May 17  Pesticide Collection Day
June 7  Small & Niche Market Poultry Growers

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES
May 25  Extensions FCS 100th Birthday

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
May 1   Cache in on Fitness
If you are interested in any of these programs call 479-7979 for more information!

WEST DISTRICT 4-H LOCK-IN
Haywood County Extension Center
Friday, May 13, 2011
Movies...Fun & Games...Icebreakers...Dance

CACHE IN ON FITNESS
Geocaching/scavenger hunt for teams of up to 5 participants.
All ages invited to participate!
Graham County Playground    May 1    12-4 pm

JAPANESE EXCHANGE
If your family is interested in hosting a Japanese teen for a month this summer contact Teresa Garland at 479-7979 or go to:
http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/randolph/4hprogram/exchange/index.php

SMALL & NICHE MARKET POULTRY GROWERS
June 7, 2011   9:00-4:30
Fletcher, NC
For more information go to
www.smallflockpoultry.wordpress.com

PESTICIDE COLLECTION DAY
May 17, 2011
Please bring any unused pesticides that you would like to dispose of to the Graham County Cooperative Extension office located at 2439 Tallulah Road. Disposal is FREE of charge!
SEVEN REASONS NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION IS NEEDED!

1. We help people endure
Sustainability has historically referred to the ability of biological systems to meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. In today's world, sustainability is taking on a new meaning. Many of the nation's governors are using it to underscore why Americans must become good stewards in all facets of their lives. One example: Tightening budgetary restraints on the U.S. healthcare system are prompting more Americans to adopt lifestyle practices that safeguard against chronic disease. Meanwhile, farmers are gearing up to feed a projected 9 billion people by mid-century with less cropland and water and in the midst of spiking fuel and fertilizer costs, even as they are being called upon to develop safer, greener production systems that emphasize organic- and locally-grown foods.

Even with online sources literally available at their fingertips, people can't solve these problems entirely on their own. Extension is uniquely equipped to help people adopt sustainable practices in all facets of their lives. Extension can help people survive and thrive.

2. We help people change
Through the Internet, farmers are as readily exposed to new ideas and ways of thinking as the rest of us, but they still need catalysts — trained experts who can see the larger picture and who can point to cost-effective solutions they otherwise would not have considered because of time constraints or other factors. What applies to farmers applies to all of us.

3. We empower people
A pre-occupation with personal empowerment will persist for a long time. The good news for us is that personal empowerment is our business. We are an agency of empowerment.

As government searches for cost-effective alternatives in the midst of these budgetary restraints, the role we serve enabling people to do more with less will garner a renewed appreciation — as we are telling our story.

4. We are human infrastructure:
We all know that in the 21st century, there is a strong emphasis on building technological infrastructure. Small wonder why: It offers enhanced opportunities for intellectual exchange, which, in turn, creates enhanced opportunities for creativity and innovation. Let's not forget that we are infrastructure — not the inanimate stuff like high-speed rail or Internet connections — but the flesh-and-bone variety — human infrastructure.

Even in this wired age, there remains an enormous value in the dense network of face-to-face relationships that characterize the Cooperative Extension mission. They have enormous potential for enhancing the connections that emerge from this newer, technological infrastructure.

5. We help people put knowledge to work
The bad news: As flesh-and-bone knowledge providers, we cannot hold a candle to virtual knowledge sources, especially search engines — no doubt about that. The good news is that we still possess something that search engines and other online applications lack: the ability to provide our audiences knowledge that has depth. We help our diverse audiences not only understand knowledge within a wider learning context but, even more important, how to use it to enhance their lives in lasting, meaningful ways.

6. We help build partnerships
Our longstanding experience with forging and cultivating partnerships among diverse groups has often enabled us to succeed. As our work in community resource development has underscored time and again, Extension educators have provided the crucial impetus that moves ideas from the drawing board to the assembly floor and, ultimately, to the end user. In these current economic times, effective partnerships will be essential for future success.

7. We are collaborators
The power of collaborative wisdom and learning is being adopted by everyone from global companies to educational institutions. Extension pioneers Seaman Knapp and Booker T. Washington anticipated this 21st century mindset more than a century ago: They didn't view their clients as passive subjects; they considered them equals — more than that, they regarded them as active collaborators in their outreach efforts. This trait gives us an enormous competitive advantage over other public and private entities that are just now coming to terms with the new demands of the 21st century knowledge economy.

A charge to keep
Even in this cash-strapped era, we have a charge to keep. In the midst of this gloom, our longstanding appreciation for listening to the needs of the community, forging partnerships and empowering people uniquely equips us for the challenges of the 21st century.

Example for a Mineral Soil
If current soil pH = 5.0, target pH = 6.0, AC = 1.2, and RC = 0, since no lime has been applied within the past year, then the recommended lime rate is:

\[ 1.2 \times \frac{(6.0 - 5.0)}{(6.6 - 5.0)} - 0 = 0.76 \text{ ton/acre}. \]

This value is rounded off and reported as 0.8 tons per acre. To convert the recommendation to pounds per 1,000 square feet, calculate:

\[ 0.76 \text{ ton/acre} \times 2,000 \text{ lb/ton} = 1,520 \text{ lb/acre}, \]
\[ 1,520 \text{ lb/acre} / 43.5 = 35 \text{ lb/1,000 square feet}. \]

For a more acid-tolerant crop such as Fraser fir Christmas trees, with a target pH of 5.5, the recommended lime rate would be lower:

\[ 1.2 \times \frac{(5.5 - 5.0)}{(6.6 - 5.0)} - 0 = 0.38 \text{ ton/acre}, \text{ rounded off to 0.4 ton/acre}. \]

Liming Materials
Liming materials come in two types. Those containing only calcium carbonate (CaCO₃), calcium hydroxide [Ca(OH)₂], or calcium oxide (CaO) are called “calcitic limes.” Pure calcium carbonate is used as the standard for liming materials and is assigned a rating of 100 percent. This rating is also known as the “calcium carbonate equivalent” and is referred to as the CCE. All other liming materials are rated in relationship to pure calcium carbonate.

The second type of liming material contains significant amounts of magnesium carbonate (MgCO₃) and is called “dolomitic lime.” If a soil is low in magnesium, dolomitic lime should be used; otherwise, calcitic lime can be used. Many organic soils and some piedmont soils are naturally high in magnesium; most sandy soils in the coastal plain have little magnesium. The soil-test report will indicate which lime should be used. A magnesium fertilizer could be used instead of dolomitic lime, but the cost of this treatment is almost always considerably higher. Dolomitic limes are slightly more efficient in neutralizing soil acidity and may have CCE values greater than 100, depending on purity.

Because lime dissolves very slowly, it must be finely ground to neutralize soil acidity effectively (Figure 2). Lime fineness is measured by using sieves with different mesh sizes. Higher mesh size numbers have smaller holes, so they limit passage to finer particles. Note that 40- to 50-mesh lime raised the pH to a higher level than 8- to 20-mesh lime did during an 18-month study. Thus the ability to neutralize soil acidity depends on both the purity (CCE) and the particle size of the liming material. The effective neutralizing value (ENV) is a way to quantitatively evaluate limes based on both purity and particle size. It is calculated by multiplying the CCE (expressed as a decimal) by the relative reactivity (based on fineness). (See the section on “Adjusting Lime Rate Based on Effective Neutralizing Value” for more information.)

Liming Product Standards for North Carolina
Size standards and other criteria have been established by the state of North Carolina for the sale of agricultural liming materials to ensure a quality product. They are:

- Agricultural liming materials must be crushed so that at least 90 percent passes through a U.S. standard 20-mesh screen (with a tolerance of plus or minus 5 percent).
- For dolomitic limestone, at least 35 percent must pass through a U.S. standard 100-mesh screen; for calcitic limestone, at least 25 percent must pass through a U.S. standard 100-mesh screen (with a tolerance of plus or minus 5 percent).
- A product must contain a minimum of 6 percent magnesium in the carbonate form to be classified as a dolomitic limestone.
- There is no minimum calcium carbonate equivalent requirement for limestone sold in North Carolina. However, the product must be labeled to show the amount necessary to equal that provided by a liming material having a 90 percent calcium carbonate equivalent. For example, a product having a calcium carbonate equivalent of 80 percent would be labeled “2,250 pounds of this material equals 1 ton of standard agricultural liming material.” Pelleted lime must slake down to the fineness criteria specified above when it comes in contact with moisture.
Food allergies affect approximately 2 percent of adults and 4 to 8 percent of children in the United States. Over the last decade, the number of young people with food allergies has increased. Food allergies can be serious and life-threatening; severe reactions kill 100 to 200 Americans per year. The risk of accidental exposure to foods can be reduced if physicians, parents, child care providers, and teachers work to minimize risks and provide a safe environment for children with food allergies. This publication provides general information and guidelines to manage food allergies at home, schools, day care centers, and camps.

What Is a Food Allergy?
A food allergy is an immune system response. It occurs when the body mistakes a food ingredient, usually a protein (allergen), as harmful and creates a defense system (antibodies) to destroy it. Food allergy symptoms develop when the antibodies are battling the “invading” food.

Food intolerance is a digestive system response rather than an immune system response. It occurs when something in a food irritates a person’s digestive system or when a person is unable to properly digest or break down the food. Common food intolerances include lactose and gluten.

An allergy is more serious than a food intolerance (which is usually not life-threatening and usually does not impair the person’s daily activities). The only way to know for sure if you or your child has a food allergy or food intolerance is to have the symptoms evaluated by a board-certified allergist.

What Are the Most Common Food Allergens?
Eight common food allergens are responsible for 90 percent of all allergic reactions. These are:
- Soy
- Fish
- Tree nuts (pecans, walnuts, etc.)
- Shellfish (crabmeat, shrimp, etc.)
- Milk
- Eggs
- Peanuts
- Wheat

Allergies develop within the first one to two years of life. For reasons not entirely understood, research has shown that many food allergies are lost or outgrown over time. Because of this, some allergies tend to be more common among children, while others are more common among adults.

Most Common Allergens in Children
- Eggs
- Milk
- Wheat
- Soy
- Peanuts

Most Common Allergens in Adults
- Shellfish
- Finfish
- Peanuts
- Tree nuts

What Are Common Food Allergy Symptoms?
- Tingling mouth, swelling of tongue or throat.
- Hives, itching, skin rash.
- Abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea.
- Runny nose, nasal congestion, wheezing.
- High blood pressure, trouble breathing (anaphylaxis), death.

How Children Describe Food Allergy Symptoms
- “My tongue is hot.”
- “My mouth itches.”
- “My lips feel tight.”
- “My mouth feels funny.”
- “There is something stuck in my throat.”
- “This food is too spicy.”

Adapted from The Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network website.

How Dangerous Are Food Allergies?
Although new treatments for some food allergies show promise, currently, there is no cure. Strict avoidance (do not taste, smell, or touch it) is critical in preventing a reaction. For some people, just one bite can bring on a severe reaction (anaphylaxis) that can be fatal without appropriate medical intervention.
Reading Food Labels to Manage Food Allergies

The U.S. Food Allergen Labeling Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA) requires food labels to clearly identify all allergen ingredients by listing food allergens in "plain language." This means that if a food contains one of the eight major food allergens or any ingredient that contains the protein derived from any of these eight foods, the label must be written in language that is easy to understand. For example, if whey, a product derived from milk, is used as a food ingredient, then the food label must include the word "milk" next to the ingredient. This plain-language declaration has made it easier for parents, children, and caregivers to read a food label and recognize if one of the eight allergens is present and must be avoided.

Food Allergies and the Americans with Disabilities Act

Food allergies are considered disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Civil rights laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in employment and education in agencies, programs, and services that receive federal money. For example, a public school that receives federal funding cannot discriminate against children with food allergies.

Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies at Home

- Always read labels, even on foods that you consume regularly. Ingredients may have changed.
- Avoid keeping allergens in the home. If this is not possible, wash all utensils and contact surfaces, such as cutting boards, knives, cups, tables, etc., with hot, soapy water to remove any allergen residue.
- Be aware of how “cross-contact” can happen. Cross-contact is when a food containing the allergen touches or is transferred to another food that does not contain it. For example:
  - When eating out, ask about the ingredients used and how foods are cooked. If allergen-containing foods, such as fish, are cooked in the same oil with a nonallergen-containing food, such as chicken, bits and pieces of the fish (allergen) may be left behind in the oil after cooking. These particles may then be transferred to the chicken or any other foods fried in the same oil and can cause the person who consumes the cross-contaminated food to have an allergic reaction.
  - Meat slicers, bulk bins, and salad bar utensils can be a source of the allergen because they could have been shared with allergen-containing foods.

Eight common food allergens are responsible for 90% of all allergic reactions in the U.S.

Food manufacturers can label food products that are made with an ingredient that is a major food allergen in one of two ways (see Figure 1 below).

| Ingredients: Enriched flour (wheat flour, malted barley, niacin, reduced iron, thiamin mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid), sugar, partially hydrogenated cottonseed oil, high fructose corn syrup, whey (milk), eggs, vanilla, natural and artificial flavoring, salt, leavening (sodium acid pyrophosphate, monocalcium phosphate), lecithin (soy), mono- and diglycerides. | OR | Ingredients: Enriched flour (flour, malted barley, niacin, reduced iron, thiamin mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid), sugar, partially hydrogenated cottonseed oil, high fructose corn syrup, whey, eggs, vanilla, natural and artificial flavoring, salt, leavening (sodium acid pyrophosphate, monocalcium phosphate), lecithin, mono- and diglycerides. |
| Contains: Wheat, Milk, Eggs, and Soy. |

Figure 1. Two ways food manufacturers can label food products.

Source:
Virginia Cooperative Extension Service