

LINCOLN COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

NEWSLETTER

lincoln.ces.ncsu.edu

MAY MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the Newsletter from Lincoln County Cooperative Extension. We are pleased to have such a great community to serve and help support the mission and vision of Cooperative Extension in this wonderful county that we live in. Thank you for your continued support and dedication! Keep an eye on this monthly publication for upcoming events and information from our Agents.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SEE?

BY TANYA BINAFF

Are you wanting more from your local Cooperative Extension Office? We don't want to be "The Best Kept Secret". We want to hear from you on how we can better serve you in your educational needs through resources, programs, camps, clubs, and volunteer opportunities? Scan the QR Code to share your thoughts.



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

BY RACHEL EVANS

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, so think about what you can do for yourself throughout the week that helps you recharge, relax, and feeds your soul. Stepping outside to feel the sun's rays on your skin, spending quality time with loved ones, putting down your smart phone and "unplugging" from social media and/or work. Taking the time to take care of yourself so that you can better take care of your other tasks and duties. Remembering that taking care of ourselves and our mental health should be a top priority - you can't pour from an empty cup.

NEWS FROM OUR AGENTS

Join Lincoln County Cooperative Extension every Tuesday for the Farmers Market to get local produce, baked goods, handmade crafts, food trucks and more!



4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

May being Mental Health Awareness month, we need to remember to take time for even our youth. Youth should understand mental health and the importance of incorporating emotional wellness and self care into their lives. LC 4-H can help provide these opportunities to our community youth through Mindfulness programs which incorporate yoga, Mindful Me, and Your Thoughts Matter curriculum through our 4-H School Enrichment Programs and our 4-H Community Clubs. The Mindful Programs help youth promote mindful practices that lead to improvements in managing goals, developing a sense of self, time management, stress management, emotional regulation, and mindful eating practices. Helping youth navigate these emotions is an important life skill that 4-H can provide.



This month, LC 4-H will be wrapping up our 4-H School Enrichment Programs at our local schools. These include 4-H Embryology, Mobile 4-H Farm, Steps to Health, Recycling, and Color Me Healthy. We will also conclude our 4-H Homeschool Series and looking to start a new SPIN Club for community youth.

Summer is right around the corner and before you know it June will be here and school will be out. If you are looking for an educational camp for children 9-15 years of age, stop by the 4-H Office to sign them up. We have two amazing camps (June 10th-15th & July 15th- 19th) that we are offering this year, but space is limited.

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE

As berries are ripe this month, check out this guide on how to freeze fresh fruits! If you wash fruits prior to freezing, be sure they are thoroughly dry before packing to maintain quality.

How to Freeze Fresh Fruits

10%
 BUILDING NORTH CAROLINA'S LOCAL FOOD ECONOMY

Preserve the tastes of summer in your home freezer! Besides being quick and easy, freezing helps retain more nutritive value and flavor than any other method of preservation. Here are some general freezing tips:

- Pick fruits when fully ripe. Peak taste and nutrition are lower in immature fruit.
- Handle fruits quickly during preparation to limit exposure to air. Also, use a moisture-proof packaging material like glass, rigid plastic, freezer bags, etc.
- Fruits are usually frozen using one of two methods—dry or floated in sweet syrup. If you need an additive to preserve taste or appearance, use uncooked and unfiltered honey as opposed to sugar. Use a mild honey like those available in spring and early summer.
- If you want to freeze fruits in a sweet syrup, make a thin syrup by mixing two cups of honey with two cups of very hot water. Chill all syrups before using them. Use enough to completely cover the fruit.

Apples To freeze apples in slices, first peel, core, and slice. Pack dry or mix with 2-4 tablespoons of honey, mixed with 2 tablespoons of lemon juice to prevent browning. 1.5 lbs fresh = 1 pint frozen		Grapes Wash and stem grapes, then pack seedless types whole; cut others in half, remove seeds and freeze dry or in a thin syrup. 1.5 pints fresh = 1 pint frozen	
Apricots First peel, cut in half and remove pits. Add a few pits to each container for flavor. Trickle honey thinned with water over fruit. Apricots may also be packed in a thin honey syrup or in a pectin pack. 4/5 lb fresh = 1 pint frozen		Peaches Peel, but don't scald to skin. Slice into a small amount of syrup and lemon juice. Pack tightly as possible without bruising. Add a piece of crumpled parchment paper on top to keep fruit submerged in syrup. 1.5 lbs fresh = 1 pint frozen	
Blueberries Can be packed dry or with a trickle of honey in the container. Seal and shake until well mixed. If picked wild, a one-minute scalding will prevent the skins from toughening. Chill quickly in ice water. 1.5 pints fresh = 1 pint frozen		Pears Choose ripe, but firm (not hard) fruit. Wash, peel, and core. Prepare only enough fruit at one time to fill a container to minimize oxidation. Slice directly into a honey syrup with added lemon juice. 1 lb fresh = 1 pint frozen	
Cherries Stem and pit sour cherries after chilling in ice water. Add a small amount of honey and pack. Sweet cherries call for the chili-wash treatment, with lemon juice added. Bush cherries can be packed whole or pitted. 1.5 lbs fresh = 1 pint frozen		Rhubarb Freezes best from the early spring crop. Choose crisp, tender red stalks. Remove leaves and discard any woody ends. Wash and cut into 1-inch pieces. Pack dry or in a honey syrup. 1 lb fresh = 1 pint frozen	
Figs Wash, sort, and cut off stems of figs, then peel and leave whole or slice. Cover with a thin syrup. For crushed figs, wash and coarsely gring in blender; add honey if desired. 3/4 lb fresh = 1 pint frozen		Strawberries Quickly rinse; don't soak. Remove hulls and slice or cut in two. Drizzle honey over the berries and turn to coat. Freeze in an airtight container. 2/3 quart fresh = 1 pint frozen	

Credit: Organic Gardening Handbook, Rodale Press, Inc. 1975

In Season in May

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 BUILDING NORTH CAROLINA'S LOCAL FOOD ECONOMY






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NEWS FROM OUR AGENTS

LIVESTOCK

Check out the Hay Directory for Catawba and Lincoln Counties to connect hay sellers and buyers: <https://lincoln.ces.ncsu.edu/hay-directory-for-buyers-and-sellers/>

Attention Lincoln County Livestock Producers! If you planted long season small grains for grazing purposes in fall of 2023, you may be eligible for reimbursement through the 2024 Livestock Forage Program (LFP). Here is what you need to know for the application process:

- Compensation is based on long season small grains planted in pastures as of November 14, 2023.
- The program calculates payments based on the highest number of livestock inventory on small grain planted pastures between September 14th and November 14, 2023.
- For pastures not certified by November 14, 2023, there's a filing fee of \$46/farm serial number (not tract).
- You can also include sold (mitigated) livestock if they were sold between September 14th and November 14th, 2023. Remember, you'll need copies of receipts for verification.
- The sign-up deadline is September 30, 2024.
- Please note that the FSA office only accepts checks for filing fees; no cards or cash.
- If you're not already established in the FSA system, don't worry! We can set you up when you come in for your appointment.
- Additionally, there's a form for landowner signatures for any leased land that qualifies for LFP.

For more information and to schedule an appointment, please call the Gaston-Lincoln Farm Service Agency at 704-922-3806 ext. 2.

Let's make the most of this opportunity to support our local producers and enhance our community's livestock industry!

Eligible Livestock:

Kind of Livestock	Type	Weight Range	Kind of Livestock	Type	Weight Range
Beef	Adult	Cows and Bulls	Sheep	All	
	Nonadult	500 pounds or more	Goats	All	
	Nonadult	Less than 500 pounds	Deer	All	
Dairy	Adult	Cows and Bulls	Equine	All	
	Nonadult	500 pounds or more	Elk	All	
	Nonadult	Less than 500 pounds	Reindeer	All	
Beefalo	Adult	Cows and Bulls	Alpacas	All	
	Nonadult	500 pounds or more	Emus	All	
	Nonadult	Less than 500 pounds	Llamas	All	
Buffalo/ Bison	Adult	Cows and Bulls	*--Ostrich	All	
	Nonadult	500 pounds or more			
	Nonadult	Less than 500 pounds			

HORTICULTURE

With May comes warm and sunny days, perfect for gardening and yard work. Now is a great time to prune back shrubs like azaleas and camellias after they finish flowering to get them ready for next year. Plant vegetables like green beans, peas, squash, cucumbers, and pumpkins directly by seed for harvest later in the season. Now is also a great time to look out for pests like aphids and diseases like powdery mildew before they become well established.

For pesticide license holders seeking additional credits Lincoln County Cooperative Extension will be hosting a class on May 23rd, and another on June 18th. See our website for additional information.

FIELD CROPS

I hope you get the chance to join us at ASR Grain Company on Thursday, May 9th, where Dr. Angela Post, Small Grain Extension Specialist, will cover important small grain production topics. Some focus areas will be (but are not limited to): plant growth regulators (PGRs) + demonstration plot, planting population, nitrogen rate, fungicide, and herbicide applications. Breakfast biscuits will be provided thanks to the Small Grain Association!

This is the second Whistle Stop tour I have hosted and will be similar to a small field day. A great opportunity to ask questions and participate in hands-on learning experiences. **Please make sure to RSVP by May 7th**, so that we have breakfast for everyone.

Location: ASR Grain Company

Demo field coordinates: 35.368379, -81.648483

The field is on Greene Farm Road (Shelby, NC 28150), you will see a tent and vehicles there!

Feel free to email me Heather.Schrone@NCSU.edu or call (704) 736-8461 for more information or questions.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Farmers Market: Our Spring Farmers Market is back up and running. Each week Cooperative Extension provides a venue for our local farmers to connect with our community members at the Farmers Market Pavillion on East Waters Street. Our hours our unique, Tuesday 8:00 am-1:00 pm, which helps our farmers within our community to have an additional day to sell items. In addition, we invite a food truck to set up during the Farmers Market. Come Out and visit us each Tuesday until the end of November!

Donation Station: The Donation Stations seek to improve access to fresh, locally-grown food while supporting the farmers who grow it. It is designed to combat local food insecurity while raising awareness that a healthy local food system must include every member of the community.

Donation Stations use a simple farmers market-based approach where volunteers collect food and monetary donations from farmers market shoppers, buy directly from farmers at the farmers market, and donate the resulting food to a local hunger relief agency. Our May collections will be donated to Gaylian's House in Lincolnton.

4-H Community Club Meetings: LC Livestock 4-H Club & 4-H Homeschool Club Series (open to 4-H club members only).

Small Grains Whistle Stop Tour: ASR Grain Company on Thursday, May 9th, where Dr. Angela Post, Small Grain Extension Specialist, will cover important small grain production topics. Some focus areas will be (but are not limited to): plant growth regulators (PGRs) + demonstration plot, planting population, nitrogen rate, fungicide, and herbicide applications. Please make sure to RSVP by May 7th.

Thursday, May 9th 9-11a.m. | Location: ASR Grain Company | Demonstration field coordinates: 35.368379, -81.648483
The field is on Greene Farm Road (Shelby, NC 28150).

4-H Fundraiser: Thank you to Good Wood Pizzeria at 209 N Aspen St. Lincolnton for seeing the value in our 4-H program. On May 28th from 11am-8pm 10% of sales will be donated to LC 4-H Youth Development Program. Come eat some yummy pizza and support your community youth!



MAY

/ 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28	29	30	1	2	3 Master Gardener Training Series	4
5 LC Livestock 4-H Club Meeting	6	7 NCSU Farmers Market 8am-1pm	8	9 Small Grains Whistle Stop Tour	10 Master Gardener Training Series	11
12	13	14 NCSU Farmers Market 8am-1pm	15 ECA District Day	16 4-H Homeschool Club Series	17 Master Gardener Training Series	18
19	20	21 NCSU Farmers Market 8am-1pm Donation Station	22	23 Pesticide Class 5:30-7:30pm	24	25
26	27 Office Closed for Holiday	28 NCSU Farmers Market 8am-1pm 4-H Fundraiser Good Wood Pizza 11am-8pm	29	30	31	1