

got to be **NC** AGRICULTURE™  
Goodness Grows™  
**update**

NC Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services • Steve Troxler, Commissioner

August 2016

**SAVE THE DATE: Thursday, Feb. 23, 2017**

**NCDA&CS will host the NC Ag Buyer Expo in Raleigh. This Buyer-Producer Conference will provide one-on-one meetings between retail and foodservice buyers and local farmers, ranchers and fishermen. [Buyer registration is now open](#). Producer registration will open later this year.**

**Commissioner's Food Safety Forum set for Aug. 16 in Raleigh**



The Commissioner's annual Food Safety Forum will be held Aug. 16 at the Expo Center at the State Fairgrounds in Raleigh to discuss the future of food safety with the nation's food safety experts, congressional delegation, industry leaders, regulators, public health officials, emergency management and academia.

Learn about the revolutionary technology of whole genome sequencing and how its basic foodborne pathogen identification during foodborne illness outbreaks may help reduce those outbreaks in the future. There also will be discussions on the sanitary transportation of food, an important step in ensuring the public has access to a safe and abundant food supply, and

preparing for the implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act through on-farm readiness review. Admission is free. Register for the event by clicking [here](#).

**Register now for Women Working in the Meat Business Conference**

[Registration](#) has opened for NC Choices' *Women Working in the Meat Business Conference* in Efland **Oct. 2-4**. With training that spans from live-animal handling led by NCSU's Amazing Grazing, to hands-on butchery led by third-generation Master Butcher Kari Underly, to in-depth whole animal pricing and business know-how, the conference makes for a not-so-typical "classroom" workshop.

Full and partial [scholarships](#) are available with a submission deadline of **Aug. 5**. Although the conference has doubled to accommodate growing demand, seats are expected to sell out quickly.

**NCDA&CS offers organic certification cost-share assistance**

Organic growers in North Carolina can apply for partial reimbursement of the cost of becoming certified or recertified through a program offered by the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Growers who are certified or recertified between Oct. 1, 2015, and Sept. 30, 2016, can [apply](#) for up to 75 percent of the cost of organic certification, up to \$750, through the program. For questions, contact Heather Barnes at 919-707-3127.

## A family tradition: Got To Be NC member Holly Grove Farm



Three generations of the Craig family have now been involved with breeding goats, milking goats and making goat cheese at [Holly Grove Farm](#). Founded by the late Ron Craig and his wife Debbie, Holly Grove Farms is located near Goldsboro and Mount Olive.

With the loss of Debbie's husband in 2009, Holly Grove Farm became one of only a handful a female-owned, family-run goat farms and goat creameries in the United States. With the help of her children and grandchildren, Debbie has taken the legacy and vision that Ron so proudly started into avenues the family had never contemplated before.

## Two new state laws to benefit N.C. agribusinesses

Two new state laws will make it easier for N.C. agribusinesses to raise money, and easier for school boards to purchase food grown and raised in the state.

A new law loosens the rules for [crowdfunding](#) and intrastate investors for North Carolina businesses. Known as the NC PACES Act — short for Providing Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs and Small Business — the legislation allows non-accredited investors to help raise money for North Carolina startup companies or businesses. Prior state rules restricted such investments to accredited investors only, or those who have a personal net worth of at least \$1 million or income of at least \$200,000 per year.

The N.C. Farm Act of 2016 also was signed into law last month. Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler said this year's legislation has many good things in it for agriculture. The law will make it easier for school boards to purchase food grown and raised in the state, streamlines the inspection process for rendering plants, and establishes training for soil and water district supervisors. The law also makes it clear that our agricultural emergency response teams are on the same footing as other emergency responders who help during and after disasters.

## Registration open for Southern Forest Products Export Conference

Register now for the Southern Forest Products Export Conference at [www.SouthernForestProducts.org](http://www.SouthernForestProducts.org)

The **Oct. 17-18** meeting will conclude with two optional field tours in the Charleston, S.C., area: a mill tour of the co-located Kapstone paper mill and Ingevity's chemical plant, and a back-stage pass to two Charleston ports. Pre-approval of the port tour will require some personal info to be provided before the meeting. Contact Clay Altizer at [clay.altizer@ncagr.gov](mailto:clay.altizer@ncagr.gov) for more information.

## Food truck introduces N.C. sweet potatoes to German fans



The International Marketing section of the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has partnered with the [N.C. SweetPotato Commission](#) to sponsor a food truck introducing N.C. sweet potatoes and sweet potato recipes in Germany.

The North Carolina sweet potato food truck began a journey last month through the whole of Germany. You can follow its adventures on [Facebook](#) (Facebook offers translation).

A member of the food truck team reports sweet potato fries are especially popular, but interest in other dishes and in sweet potatoes, has been very strong. The food truck had customers at one festival lined up for three hours.

## Got To Be NC Competition Dining Series heads to Charlotte



Twenty-four highly competitive chefs on eight individual teams go against each other this month in the Charlotte round of the [Got To Be NC Competition Dining Series](#).

The Charlotte series will take place in two heats, the first with two preliminary battles on **Aug. 8 and 9** and a semifinal round on **Aug. 11**. The second heat sees preliminary battles on **Aug. 22 and 23** and a semifinal round on **Aug. 25**.

The Charlotte Finale will take place on Sunday, **Aug. 28**. The finale is already sold out.

In the Raleigh series, Team Mirepoix with chefs Franz Propst, executive chef at [The Peak City Grill & Bar](#) in Apex; Ryan Summers, chef at [Chef's Palette Restaurant & Bar](#) in Cary; and Tom Halik, chef and proprietor at Main Street Grille Cafe & Bakery in Wake Forest, won the regional title. The finale featured dishes using blackberries from Whitfield Farms in Newton Grove and Certified Angus Beef.

## More News

**Carolina Farm Stewardship Association** is offering scholarships to new and beginning farmers and ranchers to participate in its [Sustainable Agriculture Conference Nov. 4-6](#). To qualify for the scholarship, the applicant must be actively farming on land the applicant owns or leases in N.C. or S.C., and have been farming for five years or less. Applicants should not be a previous Dow scholarship recipient. [Applications](#) are due by 5 p.m. on **Aug. 4**.



**Wayne E. Bailey** has developed and trademarked a private label sweet potato product, **Petitelings**. Perfect for foodservice operators, the item comes in three size packs: 10-pound, 20-pound and 40-pound. George Wooten, president of the company, notes that Petitelings are also available to the retail sector.

**National Farmers Market Week** is **Aug. 7-13**. The Farmers Market Coalition offers a free [media kit](#) and other resources. Use the U.S. Department of Agriculture's hashtag **#FarmersMarketWeek** in your social media during the week.



**Our State** magazine received over 500 submissions, many from *Got to Be NC* members, for its first Made in NC Awards. The magazine's [website](#) now features a product showcase that includes all the submissions received across four categories: Food & Drink, Style, Craft and Home. Winners will be announced **Aug. 15**.

**Krispy Kreme and Cheerwine** [have teamed up](#) again, this time to create a Cheerwine soda with Krispy Kreme's Original Glazed Doughnut flavor.

**How to Finance Your Food Business** [Triangle Food Makers'](#) next meeting is Wednesday, **Sept. 28**, from 5-8 p.m. to discuss how to raise money for your food business. The evening will include "Local Bites" where you can sample 15 locally made products, will feature a lively conversation with various investors and lenders, and include practice pitches from some local food companies. Contact Jill Willett at [jill@coachingforcooks.com](mailto:jill@coachingforcooks.com) for more information. Sign up for announcements of upcoming Triangle Food Makers events at [http://eepurl.com/bXAH\\_P](http://eepurl.com/bXAH_P).



**N.C. State University and CEFS' Amazing Grazing** have developed three voluntary production protocol guidelines to assist producers in creating beef finishing systems. The systems include a "[Local Finished Beef](#)" product that has no dietary and few management restrictions; a "[Local Pasture-Raised and Pasture-Finished Beef](#)" product that has limits on the amount and type of concentrates fed, and ensures that animals remain on pasture throughout production; and a "[Local Grass-Fed Beef](#)" product that severely limits feeding of concentrates and ensures that animals remain on pasture throughout production.



The National Watermelon Promotion Board is offering a new tool kit to retailers to more effectively market the popular fruit. It can be found in the "Retailers" section of [watermelon.org](http://watermelon.org).

**Slawsa** was [recognized](#) on The Today Show on National Hot Dog Day last month.

*Have news to share? [Let us know.](#)*

**August is National Goat Cheese Month!** Visit our General Store for [listings](#) of producers of goat cheese and other cheese products.

**AUGUST**

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| 31     | 1      | 2       | 3         | 4        | 5      | 6        |
| 7      | 8      | 9       | 10        | 11       | 12     | 13       |
| 14     | 15     | 16      | 17        | 18       | 19     | 20       |
| 21     | 22     | 23      | 24        | 25       | 26     | 27       |
| 28     | 29     | 30      | 31        | 1        | 2      | 3        |

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- Aug. 4 [Grand Re-opening](#) Earthfare 1856 Hendersonville Road, Asheville
- Aug. 5 Grand Re-opening Earthfare 66 Westgate Parkway, Asheville
- Aug. 5 Tomato Tasting WNC Farmers Market 11a.m.-1p.m., Asheville
- Aug. 5 Franklin County Horse Farm Tour with educational stops at three new Franklin County equine facilities. Starts at 7:30 a.m. at the Franklin County Cooperative Extension in Louisburg. To register, contact Martha Mobley at 919-496-3344 or [Martha.Mobley@ncsu.edu](mailto:Martha.Mobley@ncsu.edu).
- Aug. 10 [Lake Wheeler Turf Grass Field Day](#) 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Raleigh
- Aug. 12 Back to School Sale at Fort Bragg North Post Commissary with N.C. Watermelon Queen, N.C. SweetPotato Commission, N.C. Beef Council and N.C. food companies
- Aug. 13 [WPTF Weekend Gardener Show](#) State Farmers Market 8-11 a.m., Raleigh
- Aug. 13 Master Gardener Plant Clinic WNC Farmers Market 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Asheville
- Aug. 18 [ASAP's Local Food Experience](#) 5:30-8:30 p.m., Asheville
- Aug. 20 Honeybee Day State Farmers Market 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Raleigh
- Aug. 27 Master Gardener Plant Clinic WNC Farmers Market 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Asheville
- Sep. 3 [N.C. Simmental Association](#) Fall Harvest Sale featuring bulls, cow/calf pairs, bred cows, bred heifers, open heifers and quality embryo lots. Noon, Shuffler Sale Facility in Union Grove. Contact the NCSA at 336-468-1679 or [ncsa@yadtel.net](mailto:ncsa@yadtel.net) for sale catalog.
- Sep. 9-18 [N.C. Mountain State Fair](#) WNC Ag Center, Fletcher
- Sep. 17 [Lincoln County Apple Festival](#) 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Lincolnton
- Sep. 17 Amazing Grazing's Sheep Grazer's Workshop 9 a.m.- 5 p.m. Raleigh For more information, contact Johnny R. Rogers at [jroger3@ncsu.edu](mailto:jroger3@ncsu.edu)
- Sep. 30- Oct. 1 Got to Be NC Pavilion at [Wide Open Bluegrass Festival](#), Raleigh

About a dozen food writers from across the state participated in a farm tour hosted by the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services last month. The writers visited [Nash Produce](#), [Triple J Produce](#), [Dean's Farm Market](#), [Yamco](#), [Covington Vodka](#), [Brothers Farm](#), [Cottle Farms](#), [Burch Farms](#), [NC SweetPotato Commission](#) and [Porter Farms and Nursery](#). Other farm tours are being planned.



# Competition for retail shelf space growing fiercer

By [Annette Dunlap](#), NCDA&CS Agribusiness Development Specialist



If you exhibited at the Summer Fancy Food Show a few weeks ago, you may have tried to catch the eye of Ana Maria Friede or one of her counterparts. Friede is a category buyer for Whole Foods' Mid-Atlantic region, and she walks the show looking for the “next big thing.” It's Friede's job to keep her finger on the pulse of what is happening in the world of food, and especially with what is

happening with Whole Foods' customers.

This year, according to [this article in the Washington Post](#), Friede was on the lookout for salsa. Not just any salsa, mind you, but salsa that meets WF's growing list of stringent requirements when it comes to sourcing and additives.

At this stage, Friede is looking more for filling in the gaps in WF's offerings, rather than trying to fill the shelves. That's a key message for those of you who have set your sights on a presence in the chain. Is there a category gap that you can fill? Friede wasn't much interested in chips or waters or bars, and she was blunt about the taste of one vendor's pickled corn.

It's a keen reminder that competition is fierce and that you need to think beyond Whole Foods as your primary option. And if you're already in the store, then you need to sustain and bump up your sales – or someone else might take your place during the next category review.

## **Not all millennials are the same**

As we all know, millennials are increasingly the driving force behind so many of today's food trends. Recent research shows, however, that millennials are not monolithic when it comes to food preferences. According to one study, gender, geography and race play a big part in food choices. Millennial men, it appears, prefer craft beers. Women favor quinoa and have a preference for meals served in bowls.

Geography plays an important part in promoting food trends – and the news for those of us in the South is not encouraging. Trends generally begin in large urban areas and trickle down to smaller population centers. The West and Northeast are the regions with the strongest interest in trying new foods, 19 percent and 17 percent, respectively, of those surveyed, followed by the Midwest (14 percent). The South is less adventurous, with only 11 percent of those surveyed saying they've tried artisanal foods. But, as is noted in the results, the South actually has its own artisanal foods, and some of them are unique to the region.

African-Americans and Hispanics are more likely to refer to themselves as “foodies,” as compared with Caucasians and Asians. Some of this self-identification is tied to food traditions that identify each group's culture.

What's the take-away? In an increasingly diverse society, it's a good reminder that your target marketing needs to do a good job of identifying your customer's characteristics. One-size-fits-all doesn't work in the food biz the way it once did. To read more details on the survey, click [here](#).

The N.C. Ag Finance Authority provides credit to agriculture in areas where financing is not available at reasonable rates and terms. The agency originates, services and finances farm loans, rural business loans, disaster loans and cotton gin loans. It also offers tax-exempt ag development bonds for agribusiness processing, ag-related manufacturing or ag waste disposal. For more about Ag Finance Authority programs or to request a loan application, call 919-790-3949 or email [RequestLoanInfo@ncagr.gov](mailto:RequestLoanInfo@ncagr.gov)

# Google. The first place potential customers go to find you

By [Annie Baggett](#), Agritourism Marketing Specialist

How would your family feel if you got to the farm gate to discover it was locked up tight with different hours than what you Googled an hour ago? Really disappointed, right?

Families, a primary audience for farms welcoming visitors, are using smartphones more than ever to navigate how they will spend their time and money – and, in real time, too.

Sixty percent of millennials, including adults with children under the age of 18, use mobile devices to research products and services to include destinations like yours.

Do not disappoint! Potential customers may be bummed when they discover that the u-pick season is over, they can't take that hay ride they wanted or can't spin in the tire swing on your farm's playground. If they take their disappointment to your Google reviews or social media accounts, it could add negative content to your marketing message. (Remember, it takes at least 10 times the number of positive messages to counteract one negative voice.)

Begin the rural experience of a lifetime *before* customers even arrive at your farm and save yourself a few customer service headaches at the same time. Verify your farm's website address, hours, activities, map and contact information today. Learn more: <https://www.google.com/business/>.

Find archives of Annie's Monday Marketing Message at <http://www.ncagr.gov/markets/agritourism/newsletter/>.

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Got to Be NC is the official marketing program for North Carolina agriculture.

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