

# Report to the People

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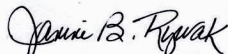
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If you are interested in learning more about any information in this newsletter, contact me at the Extension Center or e-mail me at: [janine\\_rywak@ncsu.edu](mailto:janine_rywak@ncsu.edu). For accommodations for persons with disabilities, contact me no later than five business days before the event.

Sincerely,



Janine B. Rywak  
County Extension Director

## From the Director

As the Anson County Cooperative Extension Staff begins the process of aligning local programs to the new statewide strategic plan, with challenges we are finding opportunities. Many of our traditional programs will easily fit into the plan's emphasis on agriculture, food and youth development. Programs that do not fit will offer opportunities to reprioritize, network with other agencies, and become better at what we are most qualified to do. From preserving rural farmland and increasing our producers' productivity, to developing young minds and supporting small farms,

Cooperative Extension programs have and will continue to serve our community. Included in this annual report of program impacts are examples of how Cooperative Extension has been at work in Anson County. In this issue, we have pulled some of the success stories from our 2014 accomplishment reports to share with you. As you will see, Extension programming efforts are a diverse mix, but targeted to the issues in the county, with the help of a network of volunteers and partnering organizations. We are pleased to offer this report for your review, and

highlight some of the work that exemplifies Cooperative Extension programming. Our staff is proud of our accomplishments, and proud to serve Anson County. Thank you for working with us!



## Cooperative Extension's Mission –

The North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service partners with communities to deliver education and technology that enrich the lives, land and economy of North Carolinians.

## Local Foods

## Dustin Adcock, Area Agent

Distributed in furtherance of the acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

A very common concern for homeowners and farmers alike is how to prune their fruit trees and plants. Many individuals neglect their trees due to a lack of knowledge and confidence in pruning. This can become quite costly if the agent attempts to visit each site and demonstrate pruning techniques. Anson County Horticulture Agent, Aimee Colf, and Local Foods

Agent, Dustin Adcock, collaborated and developed a four hour workshop that would provide a hands-on learning opportunity for people to learn how and when to prune their fruit trees and small fruit plants. Agents split the nine individuals into two groups and gave demonstrations followed by opportunities to practice. All applicants

were informally evaluated in discussion and formally by survey. Of participants, 100% reported and demonstrated a significant increase in knowledge, skills and confidence that they could put the techniques to practice at their homes. Specifically, participants acknowledged learning more about pruning timing, tools, and proper cuts.

## 4-H & Youth

**Roshunda Terry, 4-H Agent**



Anson County 4-H Volunteer , Yolanda Mitchell teaches a team building workshop to other volunteer leaders from the South Central District.

Volunteers play an important role in NC Cooperative Extension and the 4-H program. They allow agents to expand outreach efforts and serve more people. With county level staff being limited and local needs continually growing, the demand for volunteer delivered programs has increased. Anson County 4-H allows and encourages enrolled 4-H volunteers to teach programs for summer day camp participants and also fellow volunteer leaders.

These opportunities are available during the summer months and other times throughout the year. These opportunities allow more areas to be covered along with more audiences being reached through the program. Based on current records and observation, 4-H volunteers have increased opportunities for more programs. The total number of youth and volunteers that have been reached, as well as adult volunteers training adult volunteers, has increased by

50%. Beginning at the county level, 4-H volunteers have also broadened their expertise to go on to higher levels and teach. A total of three 4-H volunteers taught programs this summer and three volunteers taught workshops at bi-monthly volunteer meetings. In addition, four volunteers taught workshops at district 4-H volunteer leader fall day and one volunteer was selected to teach a workshop at the 4-H Volunteer Regional Conference in Eatonton, GA.

## Livestock

**Jessica Morgan, Agriculture Agent**

*“57% of participants indicated that they would think differently about the way their cattle were marketed.”*

Many people in the area use part-time farming as a supplementation to their income at "in town" jobs. These producers are typically smaller, and have inherited the small farm/land from past generations who also kept a few cows. These producers are missing out on gains that could be made through improving management practices and marketing decisions. Cooperative Extension recognized this need in the Southern Piedmont area. A four-class program was offered, with 11 participants from four counties (Anson, Stanly, Union, and Mecklenburg). These

participants included several members of the Anson County Livestock Club youth, local producers that had a few head of beef cattle, and folks who were interested in getting started in the beef industry. These programs included lectures, discussion, focus groups, and a field trip. Each participant left the program with a binder full of resources related directly to beef cattle. Evaluation was conducted at the conclusion of the fourth and last session, a quantitative survey utilized for a formal evaluation. Additionally, personal interviews were conducted informally with several participants to gauge their reactions to certain

materials and needs for improvement on the course. All 11 participants indicated that they were "Very Satisfied" with the program in the areas of relevance, presentation quality, and overall quality of training. The participants indicated that the largest changes in knowledge were on the topics of beef cattle nutrition, and marketing and facilities. As a result of this program, 57% of participants indicated that they would think differently about the way their cattle were marketed, with an additional 30% indicating that they maybe would think differently.

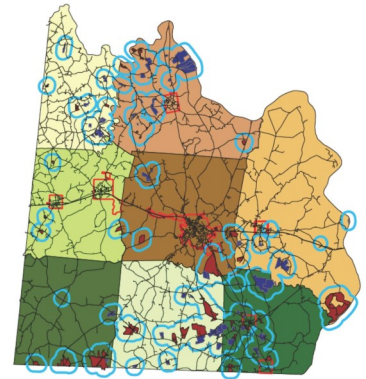
## Community Rural Development

Janine Rywak, County Director

In 2014, Farm Futures Magazine ranked Anson County as the 19th best to farm in the nation, based on data and performance metrics. Local ag agencies strive to support producers in being as profitable as they can. Offering the Voluntary and Enhanced Voluntary Ag Districts Program to producers is another tool to additional profitability. Cooperative Extension

administers the county's Voluntary and Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural Districts Ordinance, working with Brown Creek Soil & Water Conservation Districts, USDA Farm Service Agency, and a 14-member advisory board. To date, over 11,000 acres have been enrolled in the program, representing 56 landowners, with 22 of those participating in the enhanced program. In the past three

years, five of those members have taken advantage of being members of the enhanced program. As an added benefit, Brown Creek Soil & Water was able to offer increased savings in cost-shared conservation practices to members, from the standard 75/25 cost-share to 90/10. As a result, local producers have realized a cost-savings of \$107,249 on \$119,164 worth of farm improvements.



Current map shows property enrolled in Anson County's Voluntary and Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural Districts program.

## 4-H Youth Promise

Yolanda Mitchell, Case Manager

Often youth offenders are not held accountable for their criminal actions due to lack of court staff to supervise them. Community programs are vital in helping with this situation. Anson County 4-H Youth Promise offers a community service/restitution program for juvenile delinquents in Anson County. Either through actual court hearings or Division of Juvenile Justice Court Counselors, youth are referred to the program with a specific

amount of community service hours to be performed. 4-H Youth Promise receives a referral on each youth, must make contact to set up an intake appointment, line up community service work sites, supervise the youth, and keep track of each hour completed. Various partners are used for work sites, such as Anson Cooperative Extension, Anson County Schools, Anson County Government, and local churches. Each youth has a

file which includes monthly reports, community service time-sheet log, work site supervisor's checklist, and client/guardian contact sheet with weekly contact notes. Program staff also monitor time-sheets to make sure hours are completed in a timely manner. In the past six months, 30 youth have completed over 600 hours at the various sites, with a 100% success rate of youth completing assigned hours.

*"In the past six months, 30 youth have completed over 600 hours of community service at various sites, with a 100% success rate of youth completing assigned hours."*

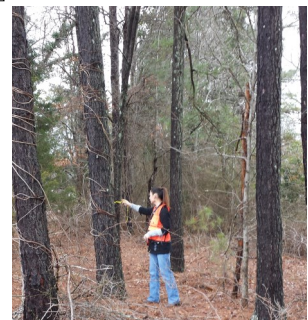
## Forestry

Aimee Colf, Agriculture Agent

Anson Cooperative Extension was contacted by the tax office to assist private forest landowners in developing forestry management plans to qualify for the NC Forestry Present Use Value Program. Since January 2014, 14 forestry management plans have been updated or created for this purpose. Working through the Anson Tax Office, the Forestry Extension Agent, private forest landowners, and their families discuss the

condition of their stand, forest management goals, and future harvest plans, in order to maximize short and long-term production. Site visits are conducted by the Extension Agent with the landowner to assess overall condition of stand(s). The assessment includes a walk throughout the parcel, noting tree diameter and height, overall condition of the stand, and species present, with discussion on recent and

future forest stand improvement practices, and any topics of concern. Qualifying for the program and working with the agent to develop a forestry plan qualified 14 landowners to save an average of \$857 in property taxes for a total of \$11,994 in savings over 673 acres. Finally, the average value of each forestry plan was \$180 per plan, for an average savings of over \$1000 per landowner.



Horticulture and Forestry Agent, Aimee Colf, gathers field information to help an Anson County landowner with the development of a forestry plan to maximize productivity based on their management goals.

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## Poultry

### Richard Goforth, Area Agent

Poultry production is North Carolina's largest agriculture sector accounting for 35.8% of total cash receipts.

Commercial poultry production produces large volumes of manure and bedding material, referred to as poultry litter.

While litter is a waste byproduct to poultry growers, crop farmers can utilize litter as an excellent fertilizer, thus reducing or replacing their use of commercial fertilizers, usually at a cost savings. Waste management plans are required by General Statutes to protect water quality and they help farmers to utilize the nutrients in the litter to maximize benefits for the

crops. Last year, the area poultry agent developed seven waste management plans for new and expanding growers in Anson County during the first half of 2014. Producers were trained in proper record keeping, sampling, and handling regulations to protect water quality and maintain compliance with the NC Division of Water Resources. Waste management plans are required by lending institutions before closing loans on poultry farms to ensure producers have adequate land or a signed agreement with a crop farmer to utilize the waste

their farms will generate. As a result of these efforts 16,157 tons of litter these farms generate should be utilized to maximize crop production and preserve water quality for the citizens of North Carolina, and protect the state's largest industry.



Area Poultry Agent, Richard Goforth, teaches an animal waste operator class for Anson County producers.