

# THE SMALL FARMS NEWSBREAK

A newsletter for ...

Sampson County Center

September 2012

## Inside This Issue

FACT Program.....	1, 2
Soil Testing Benefits Farmers and Homeowners.....	2, 3
Southeastern Small Farms Alternative Tour .....	4
Calendar of Events.....	4

## Contact Us

Sampson County  
55 Agriculture Place  
Clinton, NC 28328

(910) 592-7161 Phone  
(910) 592-9513 Fax

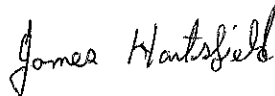
Website:  
[sampson.ces.ncsu.edu](http://sampson.ces.ncsu.edu)

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.

Welcome to the fall issue of *The Small Farms Newsbreak!* The purpose of this newsletter is to provide timely updates of educational information and events of importance to Sampson and Duplin Counties small and part-time farm families. This will be a continuing effort through the Sampson and Duplin Counties Small Farm Program, which is an outreach of the Sampson County Cooperative Extension Office, located at 55 Agriculture Place, Clinton, NC 28328.

Our professional staff is here to help you put knowledge to work by providing practical education to the citizens of Sampson and Duplin Counties. **We are here to serve you. If you need assistance, please visit or call our office at 910-592-7161. Our business hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm.** I hope you enjoy this issue!

Respectfully,



James Hartsfield  
Area Extension Farm Management Agent

## FACT Program



### What is the FACT Program?

The Farmers Adopting Computer Technology (FACT) Program helps farmers develop computer skills that can better enable them to manage their farming operation, maintain accurate farm records, and research new markets and vendors.

**NC** State University  
A&T State University  
**COOPERATIVE  
EXTENSION**

Empowering People • Providing Solutions

## **FACT Program (continued)**

### **Why the FACT program?**

- This program provides employability skills training for unemployed and underemployed farmers.
- It builds sound farm business management and establishes strong record keeping skills through computer literacy and technology.

### **Who can participate in the program?**

This program is designed for socially disadvantaged/limited-resource and part-time North Carolina residents who are actively farming. All citizens of North Carolina who qualify under the Human Resource Development and Workforce Development Program may participate.

### **Who recruits the farmers/participants?**

James Hartsfield, Area Farm Management Agent, partners with Sampson Community College and James Sprunt Community College on recruiting.

### **When are the classes offered?**

Classes are offered typically in the evenings from October to February.

### **Where are the classes held?**

Classes are held at Sampson Community College and James Sprunt Community College.

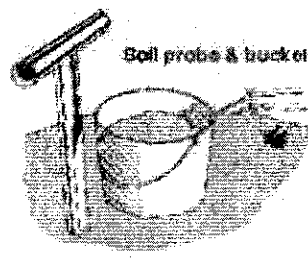
### **How much does the class cost?**

Program participants are provided with **low or no cost** computer training through the Human Resource Development and Workforce Development Program.

### **Who do I contact for assistance?**

For more information about the classes, including fee-waiver eligibility or to pre-register for the computer classes, please contact me, James Hartsfield, Small Farm Management Agent with the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, Sampson County Center at 910-592-7161 or e-mail at [james\\_hartsfield@ncsu.edu](mailto:james_hartsfield@ncsu.edu) or visit our website at <http://sampson.ces.ncsu.edu>.

## **Soil Testing Benefits Farmers and Homeowners**



In today's economy, consumers are always looking for ways to save money. One of the most practical ways to save money is to have your soil tested. Soil testing is a service provided by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services at their Agronomic Division in Raleigh.

## Soil Testing Benefits Farmers and Homeowners (continued)

For farmers, soil testing is the first step in planning an economical and environmentally sound fertilization program. The efficient use of nutrients can help reduce fertilizer costs and environmental concerns without reducing yield or quality. This requires a well-planned fertilization program based on soil sampling, wise selection of nutrients based on needs and costs and proper application of fertilizers. For homeowners, soil testing takes the guesswork out of maintaining the soil in optimum condition for plant growth and development.

A soil test will access the present levels of major plant nutrients, soil pH, and micronutrients. Recommendations will include the amounts of lime and fertilizer, if necessary, to meet the requirements of the specific plant or crop being grown.

Collect samples three to six months before planting time. Taking good samples, filling out paperwork properly, and packaging samples for delivery in a well-organized manner are important. For best results, use the following guidelines.

1. For conventional crops, collect soil samples to a depth of 6 to 8 inches. For no-till crops and established crops, or lawns, flowers and gardens, samples need to be only 4 inches deep.
2. Use a stainless steel or chrome-plated tool and a clean plastic bucket to avoid contamination.
3. Mix soil cores in a bucket, then fill a standard soil box to the indicated line.
4. Avoid taking samples when soil is wet.
5. Use permanent ink to fill out the information on the box.

Soil sample boxes and forms can be picked up at the North Carolina Cooperative Extension – Sampson County Center, 55 Agricultural Place, in Clinton. Samples can be mailed to the lab in Raleigh or dropped off at the Extension Center where they will be delivered to Raleigh. Extension agents can also assist you in interpreting the soil test results or developing a soil treatment plan.

Last but not least, and most importantly, regular soil tests are a free service for all North Carolina residents. Specific Tests for plant tissue analysis, waste analysis, solution analysis, and nematodes are conducted for a small fee.

Remember, having your soil tested before planting gives you the opportunity to increase your yields on the farm or improve your landscape around the house.



## Southeastern Small Farms Alternative Tour



Small and part-time farmers and other interested persons will have the opportunity to visit a number of alternative systems such as intensive fruits and vegetable production with plasticulture, a pastured pork operation, greenhouse vegetables, and other alternative enterprises by attending the Southeastern Small Farm Alternative Tour to be held Thursday, October 4<sup>th</sup>. Transportation will depart from the Duplin County Extension Center at 165 Agriculture Drive located on Highway 11 south of Kenansville at 6:45am and is scheduled to return around 5:00pm. Featured counties include Robeson, Bladen, Duplin and Sampson. Refreshments will be provided for tour participants. Lunch will be Dutch!

Transportation is limited so all interested persons are encouraged to register or reserve a seat on the van by calling the Sampson County Center of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension at 910-592-7161 by Tuesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Individuals with disabilities and/or special needs interested in this program should call so proper arrangements can be made.

### Calendar of Events

**Tuesday, September 11, 2012, from 6:00pm to 8:00pm - Niche Pork Growers School on Lameness in Outdoor Pigs -** Dr. Mark Knauer, Assistant Professor, Department of Animal Science at North Carolina State University will be speaking on outdoor pigs. Location: Duplin County Extension Center at 165 Agriculture Drive, Kenansville, NC. For more information contact James Hartsfield, Farm Management Agent, Sampson County Center, 910-592-7161 or [james\\_hartsfield@ncsu.edu](mailto:james_hartsfield@ncsu.edu); or Amanda Hatcher, Livestock Agent or [Amanda\\_hatcher@ncsu.edu](mailto:Amanda_hatcher@ncsu.edu).

**Tuesday, October 9, 2012, from 10:00am to 3:00pm - Regional Web Page Marketing Design Workshop for Small Farmers, Sampson Community College -** Cooperative Extension Agents will present the program from Sampson and Robeson Counties. They will assist farmers in creating their own web page or updating their webpage that could have the potential of providing more marketing opportunities. With the creation of a webpage, small-scale farmers will be able to compete in today's global economy using the World Wide Web. For more information, please contact James Hartsfield, Area Farm Management Agent, Sampson County Extension Center at 910-592-7161 or [james\\_hartsfield@ncsu.edu](mailto:james_hartsfield@ncsu.edu); or Nelson Brownlee, Area Farm Management Agent, Roberson County Extension Center at 910-671-3276 or [nelson\\_brownlee@ncsu.edu](mailto:nelson_brownlee@ncsu.edu).