

*North Carolina Cooperative Extension
Montgomery County*



From the Director's Desk

January, 2022

Happy New Year! Our Staff are excited about the New Year and about serving the citizens of Montgomery County in the areas of **Agriculture (Livestock and Horticulture), Family and Consumer Sciences and 4-H Youth Development**. If you are unfamiliar with any of our programs, please stop by and visit us at 203 West Main Street, Troy. We would love to share all that we have to offer with you in person.

Our Cooperative Extension Staff are now recruiting new families for our spring **Empowering Youth and Families Program**. This program is offered to families with middle school age children in the home. The program is a ten-week program designed to help increase and strengthen communication between family members. The program also provides education regarding opioids and the impact they have on our community. Please call (910) 576-6011 for more information about Empowering Youth & Families Program and to register for our next program.

N.C. A&T State University's annual **Small Farms Week** is coming up in **March!** To celebrate the week, we will be having a **canned food drive from February 15 – March 15**. Please consider making a donation to our drive. Non-perishable items may be dropped off between 8 am – 5 pm, Monday through Friday.

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University's annual tribute to small-scale agriculture will be held March 21-27, 2021, and will offer a variety of virtual events and educational programs designed to inform the public and provide research-based information to support small farmers. Farmers and interested members of the public are invited to sign up free of charge at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/small-farms-week-35-years-resilience-strength-diversity-tickets-141203398165>

This year's theme is "35 Years: Resilience. Strength. Diversity." The week's virtual events are designed for farmers with limited incomes and acreage and will provide them with information to become more resilient and more profitable. The general public is also encouraged to attend. A virtual kickoff preceding Small Farms Week will take place Friday, March 19, and highlight agriculture in Avery County, the home of the 2020 Small Farmers of the Year, Amos and Kaci Nidiffer. The event will include a presentation about farming in Avery County, a panel of local farmers and recognition of the Nidiffers for their award.

The virtual program will continue Monday, March 22, with sessions about the health benefits of community gardening and ways to boost your immune system during the pandemic. A virtual education forum on Tuesday, March, 23 will cover plant production, farm management, high tunnel winter production and livestock production. A panel of N.C. A&T students will discuss the wide variety of career opportunities available in agriculture and related fields. Wednesday, March 24, will feature a virtual educational forum on marketing and agribusiness and a small farms update by members of A&T's College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences. The day also includes one of the highlights of the week: the virtual

Small Farmers' Appreciation Program, with a keynote address by Jimmy Gentry, president of the North Carolina Grange, and the announcement of the 2021 Small Farmer of the Year. The final event of Small Farms Week 2021 will be a panel discussion among A&T students on Thursday, March 25, about opportunities for young people in agriculture.



4-H Happenings in Montgomery County

Tracy Blake, 4-H Youth Development



Montgomery County Tree of Hope Christmas Assistance Program is co-sponsored by Montgomery County 4-H along with Montgomery County Schools, Communities in Schools and the Montgomery County Partnership for Children. 465 children from Montgomery County were identified to benefit from the program and distribution of gifts occurred on December 15th. We would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to everyone who donated money or gifts this Holiday season to the cause. Because of you, we can make a difference in our county one child at a time.



Are you a 4-H'er who will be entering college in the fall 2022 semester? If so – you are eligible to apply for 4-H Scholarship. Scholarships are for any graduating High School Senior in 2022. There are lots of 4-H Scholarships to apply for. Also – please remember if you have a renewable scholarship, your 4-H Agent needs to register you. Ask your 4-H Agent for the county deadline. They are due February 1, 2022, to the State 4-H office. It is also time to get your NC 4-H Honor Club Application ready. Be-

ing a North Carolina 4-H Honor Club member is more than just an honor. It is the chance to give back to the 4-H program using the knowledge and skills that 4-H helped you to gain. Honor Club seeks members who want the opportunity to contribute to the club's motto – Service – by continuing their involvement even after aging out of the 4-H program. Talk to your 4-H agent about the county deadline. They are also due to the State 4-H Office by February 1. 4-H Scholarship Application information, as well as NC 4-H Honor Club Application, can be found here: <https://nc4h.ces.ncsu.edu/youth-3/4-h-awards-incentives-programs-2/>



Registration is open for 4-H Winter Enrichment, an opportunity offered by the South Central District Officer Team! 4-H youth ages 12-18 may attend a fun day of workshops and social activities. This year's enrichment will take place Saturday, January 15, 2022, in Kannapolis. All youth who attend will receive a FREE ticket to the movie theater as their afternoon social event! Transportation available. Register ASAP to secure your spot. Registration Link: <https://forms.gle/9CnN5mXpCu11DkVW6>

Upcoming 4-H Club Meetings

We are excited to start club meetings again this fall! Clubs are open to all youth ages 5-18. Come join us! Contact Tracy Blake at tracy_blake@ncsu.edu for more information.

Creative Hands-First Tuesday of month, 5-6 pm @ Extension Office, Troy

Shooting Stars-First Thursday of month, 6-7 pm @ Star Elementary School

Teen Cooking Club-First Friday of month, 4-6 pm @ Extension Office, Troy

Livestock Club-Third Monday of month, 6-7 pm @ Ag Center, Troy



For more information regarding Montgomery County 4-H Programs or to register your child (ages 5 – 18) in 4-H, please contact Chrissy Haynes, County Extension Director at (910) 576-6011 or by emailing chrissy_haynes@ncsu.edu

Agriculture Updates

Kaitlyn Lamaster, Extension Agent, Horticulture

Montgomery County Beekeepers Association

The Montgomery County Beekeeper's Association did not meet for the month of December. Meetings will start again January 20th at 6PM in the MCC Large Meeting Room.

If you are interested in attending future meetings or learning more about the group, please contact Kaitlyn Lamaster at kaitlyn_lamaster@ncsu.edu.

Montgomery County Master Gardener's

The Montgomery County Extension Master Gardener group met on December 6th, 2021 for their monthly meeting and to celebrate the holidays together. Food was abundantly dispersed and gardening related gifts were shared with a fun game. The raffle winners were chosen and prizes administered that week!

The group plans to expand on their projects in 2022.

If you are interested in joining the group or learning more about the Master Gardeners and what they do, please contact Kaitlyn Lamaster at kaitlyn_lamaster@ncsu.edu or call 910-576-6011 ext. 26. Like or follow the Montgomery County Master Gardener Facebook page to stay up to date on their projects around the county!



Houseplants 101 Series

(All sessions are virtual unless otherwise noted)
To register for one or all of these sessions, visit:
<https://forms.gle/gdUc38FuoYeWrvs7>

Overwintering Tropics November 30th - 12-1PM Outside in summer, inside in winter - understand caring for plants that love heat during the cold months.	Watering & Fertilizer December 7th - 12-1PM Watering and feeding plants can be a fine line between too little and not enough. Learn a few tips and tricks on properly feeding your plants.
Understanding Media December 14th - 12-1PM An often overlooked component of plants, media is a foundation for plants - provide support, holding nutrients, and maintaining saturation.	Propagation December 21st - 12-1PM One of the best ways of having plants is sharing them. Learn about the different ways to propagate and what you need to do them.
Pests: ID & Control January 4th - 12-1PM Knowing what you're looking for, how to control them, and how to prevent them from the start is important in keeping your plants healthy.	Natural & Artificial Light January 11th - 12-1PM Light can be one of the trickiest things to supply indoors. Noticing what plants need and what you can do to supplement it keeps plants thriving.

Plant Exchange (In-person)
 January 18th 5:30-7
 Bring plants to give away or share cuttings of to the Montgomery County Cooperative Extension Office.



NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION  

Questions, concerns, and accommodation requests related to a disability should be made by November 29th to Kaitlyn Lamaster, 910-576-6011. NC Cooperative Extension provides equal opportunity and affirmative action for all individuals. For more information, please contact the Extension agent or contact the NC Cooperative Extension, 1000 Salisbury St., Raleigh, NC 27615. For more information, please visit www.ncstate.edu/extension.

Houseplants 101 Series

There are only two sessions left in the houseplants 101 series, one being virtual and one being an in-person plant exchange.

Those that are interested are still able to sign up for the sessions remaining using the google link or QR code displayed on the flyer. This series gives people the knowledge they need to better care for their indoor jungle and bring questions to the NC Cooperative Extension Horticulture Agent. If you have any questions or concerns about joining, please email Kaitlyn Lamaster at kmlamast@ncsu.edu or call 910-576-6011.

Agriculture Updates

Tracy Blake, Extension Agent, Livestock

The Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program

(SMHPP) provides pandemic assistance to hog producers who sold hogs through a negotiated sale from April 16, 2020 through September 1, 2020. USDA's Farm Service Agency will accept SMHPP applications from December 15, 2021, through February 25, 2022. Additional information is available at farmers.gov/smhpp.

Montgomery County is serviced by the Area FSA office located in Lee County. For help from this FSA office contact Marlo Dunn, County Executive Director at 919-775-3407 Ext. 2 or marlo.dunn@usda.gov



USDA United States Department of Agriculture

SPOT MARKET HOG PANDEMIC PROGRAM

Accepting Applications
 Dec. 15, 2021 to Feb. 25, 2022
www.farmers.gov/smhpp or 877-508-8364

Register Today!

2022 Regional Chicken Project

Save the Dates

Registration Deadline:
January 5, 2022
Chick Delivery:
February 2022
Show:
May 10, 2022
 All dates are tentative as plans are still being finalized

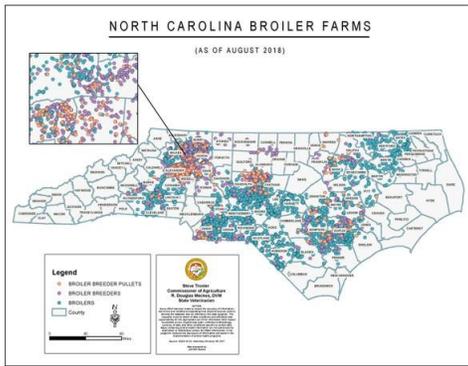
FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL YOUR LOCAL EXTENSION OFFICE

Bladen: **Becky Spearman, 910-862-7851**
 Brunswick: **Morgan King, 910-253-2610**
 Columbus: **Phyllis Creech Greene, 910-862-4591**
 Cumberland: **Liz Joseph, 910-321-6860**
 Hoke: **Liz Joseph, 910-875-2162**
 Montgomery: **Tracy Blake, 910-576-6011**
 New Hanover: **Scott Enroughty, 910-798-7660**
 Sampson: **Elizabeth Merrill, 910-592-7161**

NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION  

North Carolina Cooperative Extension is an equal opportunity provider.

Registration has been extended for the 2022 4-H Regional Chicken Project. Youth 5-18 interested in learning about chickens, chicken production or chicken showmanship should register! Registration closes January 12, for laying hens and February 3rd for Broilers. This year, laying hen breeds are Cinnamon Queens (brown egg layers) and Easter Eggers (multi-color layers). You may also choose to raise and show broilers. The broilers MUST be surrendered after the show so their meat may be donated to a local food bank. See our website for additional details and registration form: <https://montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu/2021/12/2022-regional-4-h-chicken-project/> Questions, contact Tracy Blake at 910-576-6011 or tracy_blake@ncsu.edu



As the annual 4-H Chicken Project approaches, it's important to consider the impact of the poultry industry on North Carolina and Montgomery County. As you can see by the graphic, Montgomery County, is a heavy poultry producing county. The 2017 Ag Census reported \$125,901,000 in sales from poultry in Montgomery County. Our regional poultry specialist reports that approximately 48 farming families raise chickens in our county averaging 6 houses per family. That calculates as 288 chicken houses producing over 5 million birds annually. North Carolina ranks 4th in broiler (meat chicken) production in the US and 3rd

in pounds produced. This makes North Carolina responsible for 9.3% of America's chicken annually. With two commercial hatcheries located in Candor (Mountaire and Purdue) as well as a Perdue processing plant located in Rockingham, our county is perfectly situated for poultry production. It's important to remember that 96% of farms in Montgomery County are family owned and operated, and 27% of farms hire farm labor. From hatcheries, to grow out houses, to processing plants, the poultry industry is providing jobs for our citizens and meat for our families. Montgomery County should be proud to support the NC Poultry Industry.

The Montgomery County Cattlemen will begin meeting again in January. Meetings are held monthly on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6:30PM at the Agricultural Center on Glen Rd. For more information about Montgomery County Cattlemen's Association, contact Tracy Blake, 910-576-6011 or tracy_blake@ncsu.edu.



Record Keeping for Small Ruminants

Wednesday, February 2, 2022 at 7:00 pm EST

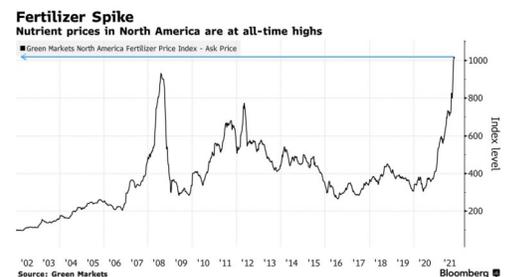
Join NC Cooperative Extension for this free, virtual workshop offered through Zoom for sheep and goat producers.

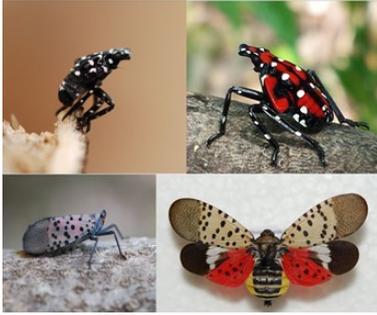
Register online: go.ncsu.edu/smallruminantrecords

North Carolina Cooperative Extension is an equal opportunity provider.

Join the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Small Ruminant Team and Rafael Bravo, sheep producer in Polk county, to discuss the importance of record keeping on small ruminant operations and practical ways to implement record keeping systems. Learn how records can be used to identify strengths and weaknesses in a flock, establish goals and priorities, and make management decisions. Event takes place on February 2nd. Register on Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/record-keeping-for-small-ruminants-tickets-230892815627?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>

America's farmers are struggling to meet the nations demand for commodity crops like corn and wheat, due to increased input costs of fertilizer. In some areas, the cost of fertilizer has risen as much as 200% as a result of global supply chain issues initiated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Prices are expected to remain high moving into spring of 2022, which may cause farmers to shift from high input demand crops, such as corn, to other commodities. Depending on how many acres are shifted, we could feel the effects in the retail sector. NC State has tools available for farmers to make the best crop selection for 2022. Those tools can be found here: <https://cals.ncsu.edu/are-extension/crops-marketing-and-logistics/grain-marketing/>





Invasive Species Alert! State agriculture officials are urging people to stay vigilant for the appearance of the spotted lanternfly, which was recently detected in Virginia less than 20 miles from the North Carolina border. Please take a picture and submit it in an email to badbug@ncagr.gov or call the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services at **919-707-3730**.

Each year feral swine cause about \$1.5 billion in damages to agricultural crops, landscaping and historic sites nationwide. They also carry diseases that pose significant risk to livestock, humans and pets and compete with our native wildlife for resources. The NCDCA department of NRCS received a grant of \$1.25 million to be used as a Five County Feral Swine Trap Grant. Counties included in this grant program are Anson, Davie, Haywood, Montgomery and Randolph. The NC Feral Swine Task Force, a partnership of state and federal agencies, will be responsible for distributing and administering the trapping initiative. Montgomery County currently has 10 traps that can be borrowed for a maximum of 30 days by any land owner or farmer after attending a training course. The following websites have more information about the trapping initiative. <http://info.ncagr.gov/blog/2021/02/09/nc-feral-swine-task-force-receives-2-6-million-in-grants/>

<https://www.ncferalswine.org/five-county-trap-loan-project>

For more information about traps in Montgomery County, contact Joseph Huntley, Soil & Water, at 910-572-2700 or at joseph.huntley@montgomerycountync.com or Tracy Blake, NC Cooperative Extension, at 910-576-6011 or at tracy_blake@ncsu.edu.



Links of Interest:

The Visit NC Farms App (Download Today!): <https://www.visitncfarmstoday.com/>

Livestock Newsletter: <https://montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu/livestock-newsletter/>

NC Horse Blog (Winter Horse Care Routines): <http://nchorse.blogspot.com/>

Farms Food & You Podcast (NC "Hops" To It): <https://cals.ncsu.edu/farms-food-and-you/>



Family & Consumer Sciences Updates

Rhonda Peters, FCS Agent

Elizabeth Thompson, Nutrition Educator



We wish you a happy and HEALTHY New Year from the Family & Consumer Sciences Program!!!!

New Year, New You?

Did you make New Year's resolutions this year? Did they include the typical "lose weight", "stop smoking" and "be more active" promises that people have made for themselves for years? Maybe yours was more personal or relationship based – like "spending less time on social media" or "being more present with my kids". Maybe yours was related to your financial well-being like "save more money", "spend less", or "pay off credit card debt".

According to the U.S. News & World Report, 80% of individuals setting a New Year's resolution will fail to keep their resolution, with the majority failing by February. Why do you think resolutions and promises to ourselves never seem to work out? Perhaps it's because people don't truly make a good plan to meet those goals. As the saying goes, "a goal without a plan is nothing more than a wish upon a star". You see, in order to actually make lifelong changes, we need to think about setting **SMART** goals.

Make your goal **S**pecific. Instead of just saying you want to lose weight, say that you want to lose 10 pounds. Instead of saying you want to save money, say that you want to save \$100 per month.

Make your goal **M**easurable. Whether you track steps, minutes spent with the kids, minutes reading, or biometrics, focus on a measurable goal that will allow you to track progress. This encouragement is important to keep you focused on your goal.

Make sure your goal is **A**ttainable. While you may want to save \$20,000 this year, is that really gonna happen? Not likely. Filter your goal into something realistic that you can make happen. \$100 a month – that's \$25 a week, or about three less lunches out. Is that doable for you?

Make sure your goal is **R**elevant to your life. Do you want to read more just because somebody said it was good for you? Do you want to pay off credit card debt just because someone said it was important? Set your goals in a way that has relevance in your life. Lose weight to be able to play with your grandchildren without running out of energy. Drink more water so you feel better throughout the day. Save enough money that you can take the family on a real vacation and create a memory that will last a lifetime. Whatever your goal, make sure it has meaning to YOU.

Set a **T**ime for it's accomplishment. Be specific in your planning. "Beginning on February 1," for example. Or, "By January 30, I want to have saved xxx." For another example. Don't keep putting stuff off either – make a start date and stick to it!

Plan for how to overcome barriers. Just because you set a goal doesn't mean it's going to be easy to achieve. Let's say that your goal is to pay off a specific credit card. What if you suddenly need new tires on your car, or the baby gets sick or you have another financial emergency? How are you going to put extra money on your credit card payment AND take care of these unexpected emergencies. Make a plan of how you will overcome these obstacles BEFORE they happen to keep them from throwing you off your game when they do happen. (If you really are interested in paying down debt, check out www.powerpay.org for really good information to help you!)

Teen Cooking Club

We are excited that our Teen Cooking Club is working so hard! We have met three times since we started, and the kids have been super excited and engaged during every session. In December,



we learned about the importance of breakfast and tried our hand at making healthier substitutions in familiar recipes. We made festive banana pancakes, shaped like reindeer. We posted pictures on our Facebook page and asked for viewers to vote on their favorites. We will be revealing the winners during our January club meeting. We are also super excited that we continue to get messages and pictures from families showcasing how their youth have gone home and tried these recipes at home. THIS is what the program is all about – providing youth with both the knowledge and skills to make healthier choices and encouraging them to make it part of their everyday life. During January's meeting, we will be focusing on "Finding the Fat" – and learning how to make healthier recipes or variations without so much extra fat.

Due to COVID restrictions, we are still actively monitoring how many people are in the meeting room at one time. That being said, we are still in need of some adult volunteers to help with this club. If you are interested in volunteering, even for just one club meeting, please contact Rhonda or Elizabeth.

Cooking with Extension

We have been very pleased to partner with the Troy-Montgomery Senior Center to offer the "Cooking Live with Extension" program, once a month in 2021. The program is live-streamed through Facebook (accessed through the Troy-Montgomery Senior Center page) and provides live recipe demonstrations for seniors using healthy, kitchen-tested recipes to improve health. Through this program, we have reached just under 5000 viewers. Although evaluation for this program is complicated, we know through facebook comments and face-to-face responses that people are excited to try new recipes and learn new nutrition concepts. We love it when viewers send in pictures of having tried these recipes at home. December 15th was National Cupcake Day, and we focused on the importance of portion size. Although cupcakes are typically less-healthy foods, and things we should only enjoy on special occasions, if we prioritize eating smaller portion sizes, and making healthy substitutions in our recipes, we can make these "whoa" foods a bit healthier for us. In December, we had the unique experience of filming the program live on Facebook, as well as being joined by 10 senior adults in person at the center. After the program ended live on Facebook, we continued the discussion about tips and tricks to boost nutrition. Remember, if you can't join us live when the programs are scheduled, you can always go back and view the recordings on Facebook. Our next sessions are scheduled for Wednesday, January 12th at 10:30 am and Wednesday, February 9th at 10:30 am.



Graduation Announcement

We would like to announce that Rhonda Peters, our Family and Consumer Science Agent, graduated from North Carolina State University on Tuesday, December 14th, 2021 with a Master's Degree in Youth, Family and Community Science. This achievement will empower her to provide even better programming for youth and families in Montgomery County.



Elizabeth's Nutrition Nuggets

Cold Weather Challenges

As the temperature continues to drop in many areas, people become challenged to maintain a healthy diet. On a cold day, it's tempting to curl up on the couch with a bowl of canned salty soup or leftover holiday treats. Eating healthy throughout the winter months can be challenging for many reasons. Food is a large part of most winter celebrations. While munching on a few cookies or pieces of candy here and there is expected, consuming too many unhealthy options can be a problem. "Winter holidays can be deadly in terms of the increased focus on food and especially those once-a-year desserts," says Andrea Dillaway-Huber, PhD, RD, LDN, who practices in Wyomissing, Pa. "A rule that I recommend to clients is to survey all the options available at a family event or party and to pick whatever they can't live without, having just a bite. Not a slice of pie, but a bite of pie. I advise them to fill up on lower calorie fruits, vegetables, low-fat dips, reduced-fat chips, and snacks first. Then, when they are approaching that comfortably full feeling, enjoy that bite of pie and really savor it." There are plenty of temptations throughout the colder months, so choose foods and beverages in moderation. Try to find an exercise or activity that you enjoy so you are more likely to stick with it during these colder months. Here is a simple delicious soup recipe for you to enjoy on these cool days/nights:

Six Can Chicken Tortilla Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 (15 ounce) can corn, drained
- 2 (14.5 ounce) cans chicken broth, low sodium
- 1 (10 ounce) can chicken, drained
- 1 (15 ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (10 ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chilies, drained
- 6 ounces tortilla chips
- 3 ounces low-fat Cheddar cheese, shredded



Directions:

- Wash hands with soap and water.
- In a large saucepan, combine corn, chicken broth, chicken, black beans, and tomatoes. Bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer until heated through.
- Serve over tortilla chips and top with a little cheese.

Nutrition Information:

Serving Size (1/6 of recipe): Calories 410 Total Fat 16g Saturated Fat 4g Cholesterol 30mg Sodium 1170mg Total Carbohydrates 50g Fiber 8g Total Sugars 6g Protein 24g Vitamin A 8% Vitamin C 20% Calcium 15% Iron 20%

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Ask Extension

The North Carolina Cooperative Extension is a service that is meant to help serve the general community, both professionally and personally. If you have questions regarding any topic within Horticulture, Livestock, Family and Consumer Science, or Youth Development please do not hesitate to reach out! The office can be called at 910-576-6011 and your question will be directed to the agent that best fits your category. Emails can also be sent directly to agents that you feel would best know the answer. It is a good idea to include pictures if you have a specific situation at hand. The list of agents can be found at <https://montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu/people/>.

STAY UPDATED!!!!



If you haven't "liked" us or "followed" us on Facebook, take the time to do it today! Our facebook and webpages are updated regularly with news articles, posts, and pictures of current and future programs as well as news you can use. Find us at <https://www.facebook.com/North-Carolina-Cooperative-Extension-Montgomery-County-117219574995061/> and on our website www.montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu. If you would like to be added to our email distribution list, please email Kim_Gibson@ncsu.edu

Check out our current videos by visiting
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOIPmzMobAJJoawefJK_ldzA

