

October, 2024

From the Director's Desk

Nearly two weeks ago, our neighbors to the west in the NC Mountains were hit with one of the greatest disasters this state has ever seen. As friends, families and loved ones in Western North Carolina continue to fight through the devastation caused by Hurricane Helene, Extension has received many comments — from both employees and clients expressing a desire to help with the flood relief efforts in our mountain communities.

Many roads remain closed in our western counties, with much of the region still labeled as for [“essential travel only”](#) by the N.C. Department of Transportation. Rest assured, there are other ways you can help make a difference for those in need out west which we will highlight below.

Donate to Trusted Organizations

Numerous organizations locally and across the state are working to support recovery efforts across Western North Carolina, providing supplies and coordinating volunteers to assist with cleanup, shelter and distributing essentials like food and water. Our community is hosting many local drives for supplies. Please give to these organizations delivering items to the west.

See below for other ways you can contribute to these causes:

- [NCDA&CS Donation Sites](#): Several of North Carolina's state-operated farmers markets are serving as drop-off locations for the most pressing hurricane relief supplies.
- [Baptists on Mission](#): Baptists on Mission is responding by setting up feeding units and recovery sites in multiple cities and towns. They need volunteers for a variety of efforts — food / water distribution, chain saw teams, clean-up crews, etc. — and donations can be made to support the work.
- [North Carolina Disaster Relief Fund](#): Donations go to nonprofits working to meet the immediate needs of Hurricane Helene victims in the state, such as food and water, cleaning supplies and other emergency supplies. All donations will directly support disaster relief. [Learn more about the fund.](#)
- [American Red Cross](#): The American Red Cross is on the ground helping people who have been impacted in Western North Carolina. Visit their site to find a shelter or make a donation. You can also call 1-800-RED-CROSS ([1-800-733-2767](#)) or text “Helene” to 90999 to request assistance anytime.

- **Samaritan's Purse:** The organization is mobilizing staff and equipment and enlisting volunteers to provide emergency aid out west. They often stay behind afterward to rebuild or restore houses for displaced families.

Caution: Beware of Scammers

Natural disasters often present an opportunity for scammers, who try to take advantage of people at their most vulnerable. Donate only to trusted organizations and be wary of unsolicited requests for money or offers of “too good to be true” deals on services like waste removal or cleanup.

Price gouging, or exorbitant increases in the cost of high-demand, often-scarce goods (like food, fuel, water, etc.) in times of crisis, is illegal in North Carolina. Report [price gouging here](#) or by calling 1-877-5-NO-SCAM ([1-877-566-7227](#)).

Learn more about [avoiding disaster recovery frauds and scams](#).

Stay Up to Date

The situation across WNC remains dangerous in many places and continues to evolve, with the full extent of the devastation and impacts far from fully realized yet. Find resources to help you monitor local developments and determine the most impactful means of contributing:

- **Fact vs. Fiction** — false reports and misinformation regarding response efforts have been rampant on social media; utilize trusted sources of information and discourage others from sharing unverified rumors
- **Drive NC.gov** — provides real-time road closures and traffic info statewide, including estimated road repair times related to Hurricane Helene's impact
- **North Carolina Emergency Management** — tracks local responses to the storm impacts
- **North Carolina Department of Public Safety** — answers storm questions, including how to track the situation in different areas

Many county governments are providing real-time updates on their websites and social media pages. You can find your specific county and its latest updates at [North Carolina County Governments](#).

Likewise, N.C. Cooperative Extension operates centers in all 100 counties and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. See [Extension county centers](#) for local updates and resources, which will be added as they are able.

Volunteer (when it is safe to do so)

As road and weather conditions allow, consider volunteering to help with cleanup, repair or supply distribution efforts in flood-impacted areas. Explore opportunities by connecting with local authorities, volunteer groups like [United Way of North Carolina](#) and some of the organizations [listed above](#).

Remember to wait for clearance to travel to WNC if you don't live in the area! While some roads are slowly being reopened, large areas remain restricted or are simply unreachable. An influx of people that are not officially approved to provide assistance can exacerbate existing traffic issues and hamper response efforts.

Support Our Farmers

As flood waters recede, many farmers and agribusinesses will be returning to barren fields and uncertain futures. As critical cogs in our food supply, economic well-being and everyday lives, they will need resources to assist with lengthy repair and rebuild efforts.

- State-operated farmers markets will begin serving as drop-off locations for hurricane relief supplies starting October 2. Find more details about [how you can donate supplies](#), including a list of the most-needed items in the impacted areas.
- The N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) is coordinating a [hay and livestock assistance form for farmers](#), if you are able to assist livestock producers by housing animals and/or providing feed or supplies.
- As power and internet service is restored, help connect farmers you know with essential resources, including NC State Extension's [N.C. Disaster Information Center](#) and the NCDA&CS [disaster resources site](#).
- Donate to [WNC Communities](#), an Asheville-based nonprofit that supports agricultural initiatives and community development across Western North Carolina.

Your support can provide immediate relief, helping WNC farmers preserve their livelihoods and continue to serve their communities. Every contribution counts.

A Long Road Ahead

As we learn more about specific needs, NC Cooperative Extension will help organize additional opportunities for people to contribute to the storm recovery. Extension leaders are meeting daily with community, industry and government partners to help coordinate efforts to supply aid and services for those in the state who most need it.

NCDA&CS and NC State [research stations](#) are already serving as staging areas for relief efforts, such as allocating animal feed and hay, as well as fuel for emergency responder vehicles and equipment in Mills River. The Upper Mountain Research Station in Laurel Springs is providing hot meals to emergency responders in the High Country.

Thank you to all who have provided support over the past two weeks. The journey will be long to recovery and rebuilding and NC is committed to helping our people.



4-H Youth Development Anna Hamilton

In 2016, the Academy of Learning and Development in Orlando, Florida submitted October as National Learning and Development Month. October is a great time to celebrate learning and put some time and energy back into yourself. Your best asset is you! Lifelong learning increases confidence, develops skills, grows social connections, and according to the National Institute on Aging, may reduce the risk of age-related cognitive decline. You can celebrate National Learning and Development Month by trying something new, completing a puzzle, attending a workshop, or volunteering to teach a class. Learning is a lifelong journey. If you would like to volunteer your skills to help foster youth development at 4-H, contact Anna Hamilton at (910) 576-6011 or anna_hamilton@ncsu.edu.

Montgomery County 4-H Livestock Club

This past month at the Livestock Club, we discussed the success of the Agriculture Fair and the Chicken Show, talked about upcoming club meetings, the Egg-cellent Egg Contest, and the Youth Market Turkey Show. Afterward, we celebrated with some craft projects, snacks, and socializing. We appreciate our 4-H Club Leaders and parents for supporting these meetings!



Family & Consumer Sciences Updates Rhonda Peters, FCS Agent Elizabeth Callicutt, Nutrition Educator

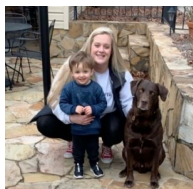
School Nutrition Programs



As the school year started back up in August, so did our school Nutrition programs! We have kicked off the Go, Glow, Grow program with pre-k students in three classrooms at Troy Elementary, and with a kindergarten and first grade group at Tillery Charter. We are scheduled to start the program with pre-K students at Mt. Gilead Elementary School and Star Elementary School beginning the first week of October. As you may recall, the Go, Glow, Grow program consists of six weekly sessions introducing our youngest learners to MyPlate and the importance of eating a variety of foods from all the food groups. To reach their level, food groups are broken down into “Go” (the grains group, which give us energy to run, jump, and play all day), “Glow” (fruits and vegetables which help make our hair shine and our eyes sparkly), and “Grow” (dairy and protein which help us to go big and strong). Each lesson includes a taste test of healthy food from the area we study during that session.

Coming Up in FCS in October

- Go, Glow, Grow kicks off with Mt. Gilead Elementary School on Oct 1
- Go, Glow, Grow kicks off with Star Elementary School on October 2
- Mindful Workshop with Daymark (every Monday at 10 am)
- Senior Fun Day at Troy-Montgomery Senior Center on Thursday, October 10
- Re-Entry Fair at Southern Correctional Institution on Friday, October 25
- Cooking Live with Extension offered through Facebook Live on the Troy-Montgomery Senior Center Page, held on Wednesday October 30 at 10:30 am



Elizabeth's Healthy Recipe Corner

Pumpkin Cookies



Ingredients

- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups pumpkin (pureed, cooked)
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ c. vegetable oil
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups flour
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups whole wheat flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

Directions

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.
3. Mix pumpkin, brown sugar, eggs, and oil thoroughly.
4. Blend dry ingredients and add to pumpkin mixture.
5. Add raisins and nuts.
6. Drop by teaspoonfuls on greased cookie sheet.
7. Bake 10 to 12 minutes until golden brown.

Agricultural Updates

Owen Washam, Horticulture & Forestry
Emi Briggs, Livestock & Field Crops

Flora Fridays



Two new articles were published for September. In the September 13 edition, readers explored species of cardinal flower, *Lobelia*. On September 27, *Flora Fridays* explored fall crops that can be planted for winter gardening. To access all *Flora Fridays*, visit our

website at

<https://montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu/florafridays/>

NC STATE EXTENSION

Master Gardener | Montgomery County

The Montgomery County Extension Master Gardener volunteers (EMGs) met on September 9, 2024. They enjoyed a Harvest Dinner celebrating the group's



summer accomplishments. The September workdays were held on the 21st and 23rd. As the Horticulture and Forestry Extension Agent, Owen Washam serves as instructor and advisor to the Montgomery County EMG volunteer group. He is planning an EMG class for interested individuals, if you would like to join please contact Owen at owen_washam@ncsu.edu.

Planning, Planting, and Maintaining Beautiful Pollinator-Friendly Gardens in the South



On September 16th, Dr. Danesha Seth Carley spoke to community members about growing plants for pollinators. The program was very popular with partici-

pants, who reported by survey they increased their knowledge and plan to act as a result of Dr. Danesha's talk. Dr. Danesha generously donated two copies of her book, one of which will be deposited in the Cooperative Extension Library. The other copy went to a lucky attendee!



Bri Arthur Tour

On September 23, Owen Washam led seven community members on a tour of Brie Arthur's foodscape garden in Fuquay-Varina. Participants were treated to a talk by Brie and toured the landscape features at the property. After the tour, participants were able to buy seeds, plants, and books from Brie. Finally, the group enjoyed lunch at the Mason Jar Tavern.



2024 Agricultural Fair

The annual Agricultural and Crafts fair was a hit this year. We had 91 entries in many different categories. The categories included fresh fruits and vegetables, canned goods, photography, arts, creative writing, heritage crafts, fresh cut flowers and plants, and honey.

We had several county organizations have an educational booth as well. These organizations were Montgomery County Cattlemen's Association, Montgomery County Beekeepers' Association, Montgomery County NC Extension Master Gardener Volunteers, 4-H Montgomery County, and 4-H Livestock Club. We had two food trucks present, La Suerte food truck and Ivy's Italian Ice. We had several people sign up for the organizations present and look forward to seeing many new faces in the groups. We had an amazing sponsorship from Montgomery County Farm Bureau to make this whole event possible. We are already planning for next year and can't wait to have such a wonderful evening with the community again!

Chicken Show

The 2024 annual chicken show was during the Agricultural and Crafts Fair. There were 12 participants, 5 classes, and 4 age categories including cloverbud, junior, intermediate, and senior. Each age category was able to show in showmanship and then the last class was an open breed class. In showmanship, the judge will determine the knowledge the contestant has relative to the contestants age and how well their partnership is with their chicken. In the open breed class, all the chickens are judged against one another. The judge commented that the youth participants blew him away and they were extremely knowledgeable about poultry. During awards placement, we had a championship drive and awarded grand champion and reserve champion to the winning contestants. Thank you to the Farm Bureau of Montgomery County for sponsoring this event. It wouldn't have been possible without them!

Montgomery County Cattlemen's Association



The Montgomery County Cattlemen's Association met for the first time on 9/10 from 6:30 pm to 8 pm for the 2024-2025 meeting year.

They had the first business meeting of the year and had a wonderful guest speaker, Dr. Bruce Akers, DVM. The meeting topic was biosecurity and was to protect your farm in the event of an emergency. The next meeting is 10/8 at 6:30 pm. The evenings topic will be Breeding Soundness Exams, How to Detect Sub Fertile Individuals and their Impact on a Beef Herd by Dr. Nicolas Negrin Pereira, DVM, MSc. PhD.

If you are interested in joining the Montgomery County Cattlemen's Association, please contact Emi Briggs at Emi_Briggs@ncsu.edu or call 910-576-6011.

Eggcellent Egg Competition

We finished off this year's 4-H Eggcellent Egg Competition the last week in September. 4-H youth participants entered their eggs in two categories. Each participant could enter 2 half dozen eggs in different color categories. All youth entered in the brown category. We had one white category entry and 2 blue/green entries. The eggs are judged on uniformity, shell hardness, egg grade, cleanliness, and overall weight. The participants had to submit supplemental educational activities to go along with their eggs in the competition to help gain further knowledge on poultry and poultry products.

Montgomery County Beekeepers' Association



The Montgomery County Beekeepers' Association met on September 19th, from 6 to 8 pm and learned about beekeeping in Estonia. They had their meeting raffle items and 50/50 raffle and discussed the current mentor/mentees of the Janno Lewis Scholarship. The scholarship is currently open if you have less than 2 years experience with beekeep-

ing. If interested in applying, give us a call today at 910-576-6011 and we can provide the information on how to apply. The application has to be postmarked by October 31st to be considered on time.

Their next meeting is October 17th at 6 pm at Montgomery Community College. All is welcome, give us a call today if you would like to join.

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

For more information regarding 4-H programming in Montgomery County, please contact Anna Hamilton at (910) 576-6011 or by email at anna_hamilton@ncsu.edu

To find out more about FCS programs in Montgomery County, visit www.montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu or visit us on Facebook. If you would like to discuss bringing programs to your community, please call Rhonda Peters or Elizabeth Thompson at (910) 576-6011 or email rtpeters@ncat.edu or eathompson@ncat.edu

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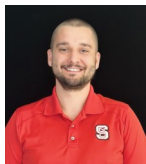
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