Small Farms Week
March 19–25, 2006

Small farmers such as the late Burnice Blanks of Robeson County discovered early on that to survive and thrive in the business of small farming he would have to accommodate consumer demands.

So Blanks, a former N.C. Small Farmer of the Year, took the butter beans that he’d once sold by the bushel, then shelled them and packaged them by the pound, and did a more thriving business than ever.

That example of product-driven agriculture, says Dr. M. Ray McKinnie, is one of the new prongs of small farming. Such continuing evolutions in agriculture are also why farmers continue to rely on the expertise and information provided through Cooperative Extension, which helped Blanks. As The Cooperative Extension Program at N.C. A&T State University prepares for a pivotal 20th annual Small Farms Week March 19–25, reasons abound to recognize the achievements of small farmers in the state.

This year’s theme, “Small Farms, It’s a Growing Business” with an emphasis on “Ensuring Financial Success,” reflects Extension’s concept of how to continue to help small farmers. The Cooperative Extension Program continues to aid farmers, McKinnie says, through such activities as the plasticulture program; the mentor farmer program; the agribusiness marketing effort teaching farmers to create Web pages; the niche marketing efforts that help inform farmers about establishing roadside stands; the women in agriculture series; water-quality activities and other programs.

As for Blanks, he knew to adapt his farming strategies to keep pace with consumer tastes and needs.

“He realized that there were people out there who didn’t know about having to shell beans, but that if that process was taken care of, the consumer now has a product that he can buy, take home wash and put in the pot and cook,” says McKinnie, administrator of The Cooperative Extension Program. “It was just one less step that the consumer had to do that made the product more enticing.”

The cost that Blanks incurred in shelling and packaging was passed on to consumers who were willing to pay more for the labor-saving luxury. Although Blanks’ death last fall leaves a void - as one of the staunchest supporters of The Cooperative Extension Program - his example of adaptability is reflected among small-scale farmers throughout the state.

Some farmers are focused on value-added products, whereby they may farm one crop and sell it for multiple uses - such as growing corn, and harvesting it for various uses, including using its stalks and leaves for conversion into ethanol fuel. Other farmers, who once raised cattle only to a limited age, are now successfully grazing mature cattle on pastureland and herding them until they can sell their meat directly to consumers.

McKinnie, who is the son of a Wayne County small farmer — the late Rayfield McKinnie — knows firsthand the need for farmers to stay abreast of evolving trends in agriculture. His own father successfully farmed tobacco, corn, cucumbers and feeder pigs and believed in healthy, balanced diets for the pigs. His father also sought advice from local Extension agents. Since joining Extension as a small animal science specialist, and now as Extension administrator, McKinnie reflects on how his father’s success and adaptability was intertwined with advice and information he learned through Extension.

“That is the basic tenet for small farmers and their success: producing a quality product, delivering it on time and delivering it in a fashion by which consumers want it,” McKinnie says. “We, at A&T, are doing a lot of things with these new approaches to farming techniques.”

Small Farms Week special edition
registration form inside

February 2006 • Vol. V, No.1

Recipients of the G. L. and Clara Y. Dudley Small Farmer of the Year Award

1987 Roy Robertson, Stokes County
1988 Kenneth Tobler, Surry County
1989 Lonnie Harrison Jr., Warren County
1990 Robert Edmonds Jr., Halifax County
1991 Linda Woody, Yancey County
1992 Charles D. Sneed, Franklin County
1993 Elton Smith, Halifax County
1994 Harold Davis, Yancey County
1995 Alex & Betsy Hitt, Alamance County
1996 Jackie Garner, Bladen County
1997 Larry & Barbara Pierce, Halifax County
1998 Lesker Loyied & Barbara Norris, Wake County
1999 James Dunn, Wake County
2000 Willie Woolard, Martin County
2001 Burnice Blanks, Robeson County
2002 James A. Davis, III, Halifax County
2003 Amy Locklear-Cummings and Ellery Locklear, Robeson County
2004 Stanley Hughes, Orange County
2005 Gilmer L. and Clara Y. Dudley Small Farmer of the Year Award went to Kirby and Nathaniel Maram’s What Fir! Tree Farm.
Small Farms Week Schedule of Events March 19 – 25

Boone, Monday, March 20:
9 a.m. – Kickoff at the Watauga County Extension Center in Boone (971 W. King Street)

9:30 a.m. – Reflections on Small Farms Week
Ellen Smoak, western region program coordinator, The Cooperative Extension Program at A&T
2005 Small Farmer of the Year Video Featuring Kirby and Nathaniel Maram of What Fir! Farm in Watauga County

10 a.m. – Panel Discussion: Ensuring Financial Success for Small Farmers in North Carolina
Moderator: Jim Hamilton, professor of forestry, Haywood Community College
Panelists:
Jim Deal, chair, Watauga County Board of Commissioners
Jim Hunt, branch manager, Carolina Farm Credit
Dr. Blake Brown, associate professor of Agriculture and Resource Economics, N.C. State University
Dan Meyer, president and CEO of the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce
Kirby and Nathaniel Maram, Owners of What Fir! Tree Farm and 2005 Small Farmers of the Year

Noon – Lunch on site
1 to 3 p.m. – Tour of What Fir! Farm (330 Wolf Ridge Trail, Boone)

Greensboro, Monday, March 20:
1 p.m. – Dr. Howard-Yana Shapiro, an expert in sustainable agriculture systems and co-author of the landmark book, Gardening for the Future of the Earth, will be giving a presentation on “The Story of Sustainable Cocoa: Reducing poverty, improving lives, protecting the environment one chocolate bar at a time”
WEBB HALL AUDITORIUM, N.C. A&T

Tuesday, March 21:
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
University Farm Show
The campus’ largest classroom, the 568-acre University Farm, is the site for the second major event on the roster of Small Farms

Week activities. Factory representatives and vendors will be on hand demonstrating the latest in farm equipment and supplies. Some of the farm’s research facilities and projects will be open for tours. UNIVERSITY FARM

Wednesday, March 22:
Small Farmers Appreciation Day at N.C. A&T*
8 to 9:30 a.m. – Registration.
COLTRANE HALL

8:30 a.m. – Extension specialists and researchers available to discuss new and innovative programs affecting farmers.

9:30 a.m. – Welcome and Premiere for Solutions for North Carolina™. Extension administrators greet attendees and present the first public showing of the annual report for The Cooperative Extension Program.

10 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. – Educational Forum: “Beyond the Tobacco Buyout Program — Ensuring your Financial Future”
GODFREY ROOM, COLTRANE HALL

Tobacco Buyout Program 2006: Current Situation and Outlook
Dr. John O’Sullivan, Extension marketing & farm management specialist, N.C. A&T State University
An update on the current status of the Tobacco Buyout Program and strategies for navigating through the buyout system.

Tax Consequences of the Tobacco Buyout Program
John K. Pierre, J.D., associate vice chancellor for Special Projects, Southern University Law Center, (Baton Rouge, La.) Pierre has been on the law faculty at Southern since 1990. He teaches courses in commercial, contract and property law, and estate planning. Last fall he was part of a team of representatives from state and federal agencies that conducted workshops for Louisiana farmers with pressing needs for disaster relief. Southern University Law Center has a mediation program for settling disputes without expensive litigation — an important option for resolving disagreements between farmers and insurance companies. He is also part of the legal team filing a class-action suit to force FEMA to provide more timely aid to victims of Hurricane Katrina.
STALLINGS BALLROOM, MEMORIAL STUDENT UNION BUILDING

Outpost – Posters in the Student Research Competition on view in the Stallings lobby. The competition is co-sponsored by the Gamma Sigma Delta agricultural honor society and the Agricultural Research Program of the SAES.

Thursday, March 23:
8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. – Showcase on Agricultural Research: Small Ruminant Research — Goats
Dr. Ralph Noble, chair of the School of Agriculture and Environmental Science’s Department of Animal Sciences, will lead a field day for farmers interested in goat herd management. There will be information sessions covering genetics, breed selection, marketing options and health management strategies. SMALL RUMINANT RESEARCH UNIT, UNIVERSITY FARM

12:30 p.m. – Small Farms Luncheon
Speaker – John K. Pierre, J.D., associate vice chancellor for Special Projects, Southern University Law Center, (Baton Rouge, La.) Pierre has been on the law faculty at Southern since 1990. He teaches courses in commercial, contract and property law, and estate planning. Last fall he was part of a team of representatives from state and federal agencies that conducted workshops for Louisiana farmers with pressing needs for disaster relief. Southern University Law Center has a mediation program for settling disputes without expensive litigation — an important option for resolving disagreements between farmers and insurance companies. He is also part of the legal team filing a class-action suit to force FEMA to provide more timely aid to victims of Hurricane Katrina.
STALLINGS BALLROOM, MEMORIAL STUDENT UNION BUILDING

Check the Web page for updates to the schedule:
www.ag.ncat.edu
Small Farms Week Registration Form

Each individual should complete a separate registration form.
Check each of the events you will attend.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location/Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, March 20</td>
<td>□ Video Presentation of the 2005 Gilmer L. and Clara Y. Dudley Small Farmer of the Year</td>
<td>9:30 a.m. — Watauga County Extension Center in Boone (971 West King Street)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Ensuring Financial Success for Small Farmers in North Carolina</td>
<td>10 a.m. — Watauga County Extension Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Kickoff luncheon</td>
<td>Noon — Watauga County Extension Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Tour of What Fir! Farm</td>
<td>1 to 3 p.m. — What Fir! Farm (330 Wolf Ridge Trail, Boone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ The Story of Sustainable Cocoa: Reducing poverty, improving lives, protecting the environment one chocolate bar at a time</td>
<td>1 p.m. — Webb Hall Auditorium, North Carolina A&amp;T campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, March 21</td>
<td>□ University Farm Show</td>
<td>9 a.m. to 4 p.m. — University Farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, March 22</td>
<td>□ Extension specialists available to discuss programs</td>
<td>8:30 a.m. — Coltrane Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Premiere of “Solutions for North Carolina™”</td>
<td>9:30 a.m. — Coltrane Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Educational Forum: “Beyond the Tobacco Buyout Program - Ensuring your Financial Future”</td>
<td>10 a.m. — Coltrane Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Small Farmer Appreciation Luncheon, featuring guest speaker John K. Pierre, J.D.</td>
<td>12:30 p.m. — Stallings Ballroom, Memorial Student Union Building, North Carolina A&amp;T campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, March 23</td>
<td>□ Showcase on Agricultural Research: Small Ruminant Research - Goats</td>
<td>8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. — Small Ruminant Research Unit, A&amp;T State University Farm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name ____________________________

City ____________________________ State/Zip ____________________________

Telephone Number ____________________________ e-mail address ____________________________

Affiliation (please check the appropriate box(es))

□ Small farmer
□ Cooperative Extension employee
□ Agency representative, agency name ____________________________
□ Other, indicate name of group/organization ____________________________
□ Individual

To register —

• Fax this form to (336) 256-0810
• e-mail to deborahh@ncat.edu
• call (336) 256-0812

• mail to: The Cooperative Extension Program
N.C. A&T State University, P.O. Box 21928,
Greensboro, N.C. 27420
on the move

North Carolina A&T State University School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences Newsletter
Produced by the Agricultural Communications and Technology Unit

Dr. James C. Renick, Chancellor
Dr. Alton Thompson, Dean, School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences
Dr. M. Ray McKinney, Associate Dean, Administrator The Cooperative Extension Program
Dr. Carolyn Turner, Associate Dean, Agricultural Research Station
Dr. Donald McDowell, Associate Dean, Academic Programs

North Carolina A&T State University is a land-grant doctoral/research intensive institution and AA/EEO employer.

Send change of address and correspondence to:
on the move Newsletter Editor
Agricultural Research Program
CH Moore Agricultural Research Station
Greensboro, NC  27411

7,000 copies of this public document were printed on recycled paper at a cost of $879.14 or $0.13 per copy.

Distributed in furtherance of the acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. Employment and program opportunities are open to all people regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. North Carolina A&T State University, North Carolina State University, US Department of Agriculture and local governments cooperating.

on the move/flip side

James Collier learned some valuable lessons in a nutrition education program offered by Guilford County Extension. His success story is one of eight that will be in the spotlight when the next edition of Solutions for North Carolina™ premieres on Wednesday March 22 at Coltrane Hall.

Small Farms Week March 19–25

www.ag.ncat.edu