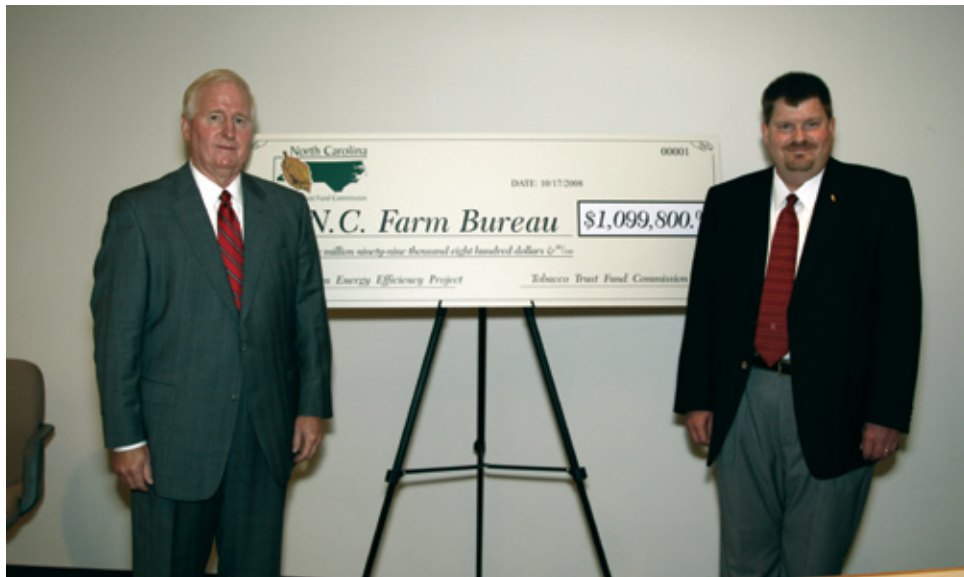


## \$1 Million for Energy Efficiency Project



On the left, Larry Wooten, president of NCFB, accepts a grant for more than \$1 million from William Upchurch, executive director of the N.C. Tobacco Trust Fund Commission, during an Oct. 17 meeting.

North Carolina Farm Bureau recently received more than \$1 million from the North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission for the North Carolina Farm Energy Efficiency Project (FEEP). The project will promote agricultural energy efficiency, serving tobacco farms and tobacco related agriculture.

Larry Wooten, president of NCFB, accepted the grant from William Upchurch, executive director of the trust fund commission, during an Oct. 17 meeting of NCFB's Board of Directors.

NCFB created FEEP, which serves to promote agricultural energy efficiency and on-farm renewable energy. The goals of the project include educating farmers about agricultural energy use and efficiency programs, providing low-cost energy audits for farmers and assisting in the implementation of on-farm energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

NCFB created FEEP, which serves to promote agricultural energy efficiency and on-farm renewable energy.

NCFB has initiated the first series of educational meetings to inform and advise farmers about FEEP. The first meeting was held Oct. 29 in Kenansville. Additional meetings are scheduled for Martin, Iredell, Alamance, Buncombe and Robeson counties. Farmers are encouraged to attend a session. Contact: NCFB at (919) 782-1705. [www.ncfb.org](http://www.ncfb.org).

## NCFB Annual Meeting Dec. 7-9

More than 1,000 farmers from across the state are expected to attend North Carolina Farm Bureau's Annual Meeting and Convention, Dec. 7-9, in Greensboro at the Joseph S. Koury Convention Center.

It will be a time of recognizing accomplishments and achievements from 2008, as well as solidifying NCFB's policy positions for the upcoming year.

"We need each member of every county Farm Bureau to take an active role in the policy development process that culminates at the annual meeting," said Larry Wooten, president of North Carolina Farm Bureau. "Policy development is the heart of Farm Bureau, but the annual meeting also offers an opportunity for fellowship, political education, good food and even a little fun."

The annual meeting will begin on Dec. 7 with two waves of the Young Farmers and Ranchers Discussion Meet round robin competitions.

The final round for the discussion meet will take place at 4 p.m., followed by a vespers session at 6:30. The annual NCFB Awards Ceremony will begin at 8 p.m., and will feature the presentation of the Excellence in Agriculture Award, the Safety Award and the Distinguished Service Award, among others.

On Monday, Dec. 8, following breakfast, Wooten will deliver his *Annual Meeting continued on page 2*

Annual Meeting continued from page 1

annual State of Farm Bureau address to kick off the general session, which begins at 9 a.m. Policy discussions will continue through the day, as the open session of the resolutions committee will occur at 3 p.m. and the district caucuses at 3:30 p.m.

After a hard day's work, members will get the chance to enjoy some relaxing entertainment at 8 p.m. with the American Belles patriotic vocals, followed by tasty treats offered by the PAC Ice Cream Fundraiser to be held at 9 p.m.

On the last day of the convention, Tuesday, Dec. 9, business and policy discussion will continue with a general session beginning at 9 a.m. and a business session at 1 p.m. In between, speaker Jeanne Robertson will entertain and inspire. The convention will adjourn after the final policy votes have been counted.



The American Belles.

## Crop insurance dates approaching

For all fall crops with a sales closing date of 9/30/08:

**11/15/08 Production Reporting Deadline**

**12/15/08 Acreage Reporting Deadline**

It's nearly time to report production for 2008. Timely and accurate reporting of production will help safeguard guarantees for the 2009 crop year. Please also remember that production should be reported by farm serial number to maintain optional units.

**THE  
VOICE  
OF AGRICULTURE®**

North Carolina Farm Bureau (NCFB) is the unified statewide Voice of Agriculture®. Working through our grassroots organizations to enhance and strengthen the lives of rural North Carolinians, we strive to build strong, prosperous agricultural communities. We are a private, non-profit, grassroots organization that has been actively promoting farm and rural issues since 1936 through legislative initiatives, member services, field representation, agricultural education, public relations and other programs.

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# Voluntary water use surveys begin January 2009

Farmers are encouraged to participate and protect their water rights

North Carolina farmers have the opportunity to document their agricultural water use starting in January 2009 and continuing on an annual basis.

Based on recent legislation passed in response to the drought, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Agricultural Statistics Division will be surveying farms on a voluntary basis.

NCFB policy opposes lowering the mandatory registration and reporting of water use by farmers from 1 million gallons per day. Accordingly, the new legislation preserves the current threshold for registering agricultural water use at 1 million gallons per day.

Farm Bureau worked feverishly to amend the bill, and final language also preserved private well-owner rights. Improvements were also made that are beneficial for the green industry.

The survey is still important, however, because data on basic agricultural water use is limited in most areas of the state and the public perception is that agriculture water use is excessive.

Regional surveys have provided facts that show agriculture water use—at about 10 percent—is relatively small in comparison with industrial and non-agricultural water uses.

“While farmers are not re-

quired to register their water use, I would encourage them to participate in the survey in an effort toward the future,” said Larry Wooten, president of North Carolina Farm Bureau. “If water allocation ever becomes a reality in North Carolina, this voluntary reporting would provide a record of farm water use that could be used to justify future usage.”

“While farmers are not required to register their water use, I would encourage them to participate in the survey in an effort toward the future.”

— Larry Wooten,  
president of North Carolina  
Farm Bureau

The new statewide survey will be based on the current Central Coastal Plain water use survey and develop comprehensive facts so that informed policy decisions can be made. Individual farm data collected will be held strictly confidential, according to law. Survey results will be made available no later than July 1, 2009 and will document agricultural water use during 2008.

“Make your voice heard and the facts known,” said Herb Vanderberry, director of the NCFB's Agricultural Statistics Division. “We need your cooperation on this important survey.”

Contact: Herb Vanderberry, director, Ag Statistics Division, (800) 437-8451.

# Four issues for 2009-10 Legislative Session

Volunteer leaders are being asked to prepare now for the next session of the General Assembly.

"Farmers need to make their voices heard now more than ever," said Larry Wooten, president of North Carolina Farm Bureau. "The current economic recession has made tough times even more difficult for our farmers. We have many friends in the General Assembly, but there are also numerous new lawmakers who need updates from our members."

The overarching problem with agriculture, like many industries, is keeping farms profitable.

"The issues facing family farmers, rural communities and agriculture are complex," Wooten added. "It's not too soon to start looking at how state lawmakers are likely to address the issues that will affect the profitability and security of farming operations."

The four focus issues for the 2009-10 General Assembly Session were shaped by Farm Bureau members who identified the following topics as among their top concerns:

1. Water rights and allocation.
2. Renewable energy development.
3. Animal welfare practices.
4. Present-use value taxation.

## WATER RIGHTS AND ALLOCATION

With the population growth in the Southeast, farmers could soon

find themselves looking at strict regulations on their water usage. Also, the water rights movement has advocates who claim agriculture uses too much water.

NCFB policy speaks to this topic, saying "we recommend that agriculture, including horticulture, have unrestricted use of water for production of crops and livestock."

Recent years of drought have given some legislators a venue to make ideological shifts away from the idea that it is best to give farmers unmitigated access to the water they need to keep their operations efficient and affordable. Adding layers of regulation takes time and money away from core farm duties.

Also, farmers are encouraged to attest to the validity of their water use by completing the 2008 Agricultural Water Use Survey.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

The potential of renewable energy development provides many opportunities for North Carolina and its farmers. Legislators need to understand the economic impact their support of renewable energy programs can have for the agricultural industry.

North Carolina farmers could have a prominent role in the development of cellulosic ethanol, which uses wood, grass and remnants of plants to make

ethanol that reduces the demand for corn as fuel and imported gas.

North Carolina State University, the Biofuels Center of North Carolina and other entities are leading efforts in the development of these new energy sources.

## ANIMAL WELFARE PRACTICES

Numerous organizations whose goal is the end of animal agriculture are bolder with their attacks and more than flush with influence and funding.

It's time for farmers to speak up with the message that animal agriculture is safe, humane and important to the economy. Lawmakers need the information that can help them see through the misinformation these anti-animal agriculture groups disseminate.

These groups have had success with propositions at the state level around the country, and they have gained the money and position to take their campaigns to retailers and processors.

The animal practices they demand threaten to increase regulations to stifling levels and sharply cut into farm budgets.

## PRESENT-USE VALUE TAXATION

On the subject of present-use value taxation, legislators are being encouraged to keep current statutes that protect farmland from unviable zoning classifications.

## Tobacco Associates hosts delegation of international buyers

Fifteen international visitors—representing six different countries and six different tobacco companies—recently spent two activity-packed weeks learning about U.S. tobacco, as guests of Tobacco Associates, Inc.

The goal of the visit was to promote U.S. tobacco in hopes of creating new business partnerships. Tobacco Associates Chairman Allen Wooten, who is also president of Pender County Farm Bureau, said

**Tobacco Assoc. continued on page 4**



Tobacco Associates recently hosted a delegation of international buyers.

## Transportation Handbook: Topic 10 — Securing Cargo

*Editor's note: Throughout 2008, each issue of the Leader newsletter has provided information about a different transportation issue affecting farmers. This is the last installment of the series. At the end of the year, we will compile the information from this series of articles into a bound transportation handbook.*

### General Rule

**State Regulations**—Vehicles must be constructed and loaded to prevent any of the load from falling, blowing, dropping, sifting, leaking or otherwise escaping from the vehicle. When hauling rock, gravel, stone or similar substance, the load must be six inches below the top of the walls and covered with a tarp. (N.C.G.S. 20-116)

**Federal Regulations**—All commercial motor vehicles over 26,000 pounds GVWR are subject to Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations related to load securement if engaged in intrastate commerce (operating within North Carolina boundaries). Commercial vehicles over 10,000 pounds GVWR are subject to federal regulations if engaged in interstate commerce (crossing state lines). (19A NCAC 03D .0801 & 49 CFR Part 393)

### Ag Exemptions

#### State Regulations

- State regulations are not applicable to transportation of seed cotton, poultry or livestock, silage or other feed grain used in the feeding of poultry or livestock.

#### Federal Regulations

- Federal regulations only apply to farm vehicles that cross state lines or exceed 26,000 pounds when operating solely within the state.

### Specific Federal Requirements

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations for securing cargo are listed specifically in 49 CFR Parts 393.100 through 393.136. These regulations are detailed; listing the specific standards for each type of tiedown, number of tiedowns required and cargo specific requirements. In general, the requirements that are imposed under the regulations are:

- Cargo must be contained, immobilized or secured to prevent the loss of any part of the load and prevent any shifting of the load that could adversely affect the vehicle's stability (Part 393.100).
- The systems and devices used to secure cargo must meet minimum performance criteria for breaking strength and working load limit, typically 50 percent of the weight of the load. Equivalent to the performance criteria is complete immobilization of the load (Part 393.102).
- For cargo that requires tiedowns, the number of tiedowns used is determined by the length and weight of the individual cargo articles and whether the trailer has a header board. As an example, only one tiedown is needed for articles 5 feet or less and weighing less than 1,100 pounds (Part 393.110).
- Heavy equipment (>10,000 pounds) must be secured with a minimum of four tiedowns as close to the front and rear of the equipment as possible. Accessory equipment must be lowered and separately secured to the trailer (Part 393.120).

**Tobacco Assoc. continued from page 3**  
the experience was beneficial for both the hosts and guests.

"If we're going to survive, exports are going to be a key to survival," he said. "There's tobacco around the world, but it doesn't have the same quality. This type of endeavor is a win-win situation."

During their stay, tobacco company delegates from Bulgaria, Croatia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam traveled around North Carolina and to Lexington, Ky. They studied all aspects of flue-cured and burley tobacco by visiting operations, and they also toured the Tobacco Museum in Durham.

During an appreciation dinner that closed out the visit, Hank Mazingo, a vice-president with Tobacco Associates, said the delegation was the largest group the organization had hosted, and the visitors asked insightful questions and showed strong interest in U.S. tobacco.

"It's been probably one of the most enjoyable, but productive, trips," he said. "I think they fully understood why the quality of our tobacco is superior."

Ivo Koychev, a tobacco department manager from Bulgaria, said seeing farming operations and learning USDA's tobacco grading system were particularly useful and impressive.

Dr. Tomislav Budin, of Croatia, said the industry has changed much during his 30 year career, and U.S. tobacco is changing particularly fast.

"I think the people from Tobacco Associates worked really hard to put this together," Budin said. "I'm impressed by the ability of American farmers to adjust to new circumstances they've had to adjust to so far so fast."

Charlie King, secretary-treasurer of Tobacco Associates, said he's gotten strong feedback from the group, which he said included the key people in their respective companies.

## Slaughter ban's consequences not a pretty picture

A U.S. House bill approved in the Judiciary Committee would criminalize the transportation of horses for slaughter, but the measure actually poses a number of unintended consequences that derail its supposed mission of stopping cruelty to horses.

It's being called the Prevention of Equine Cruelty Act, but it removes humane and responsible options for dealing with horses that are no longer viable.

The horse slaughter ban would, in effect, criminalize horse slaughter for human consumption, and ban the transportation, sale or delivery of equine meat. Violators could face up to three years in jail. States have already banned horse slaughter facilities.

Dr. Tom Ray, director of Livestock Health Programs in the State Veterinarian's office, said he is hearing from field veterinarians and animal technicians that more calls are coming in already from people spotting abandoned horses.

During a recent horse show and sale, horses either were not selling or not bringing anywhere near the prices they would in a healthy economy, Ray said.

"I think people are getting horses and don't realize what they're getting into," he said.

Ray said horse slaughter was always a kind option for older horses, and that U.S. methods are much kinder than those used in some other countries where the practice continues.

People who have a horse they

can no longer care for or who find an abandoned horse should contact their local animal control agency.

It hardly seems that prevention of equine cruelty is the bill's goal when an amendment was shot down that would have delayed implementation of the bill until the U.S. Ag Secretary could certify whether the U.S. has enough shelter space to house unwanted horses.

In an interview with AgriTalk Radio, Dr. Angela Demaree, assistant director of governmental relations for the American Veterinary Medical Association, said the mandate would likely go unfunded, and therefore, would get little enforcement.

She added that legal horse slaughter at least gave USDA oversight of operations to make sure that horses were treated humanely. Without regulated slaughter operations, the likelihood increases that more horses will starve to death or die miserably from carrying around illness.

"In fact, no, this bill will not protect horses...We have already seen increasing numbers and media reports of horses that are being abandoned, neglected, abused," she said.

She added that increasing costs of hay, food and fuel are leading to higher instances of horse abandonment and driving many horse rescue and rehabilitation groups out of operation.

On Oct. 3, the House Ag Committee took control of the bill and has a Jan. 3, 2009 deadline for action.

## Congress approves 10-acre fix bill, president signs

Lawmakers approved the bipartisan 10-acre provision correction bill on Oct. 6 in order to correct a U.S. Department of Agriculture misinterpretation of the farm bill base acre provision. The President signed the bill Oct. 13.

The 2008 farm bill contained a provision (1101(d)) that prohibits farmers with 10 base acres or less on a farm from receiving direct payments, counter-cyclical payments or ACRE pay-

ments on that farm. Congress intended for farmers to be able to aggregate or reconstitute farms to meet this threshold, but USDA was not allowing farmers to aggregate or reconstitute farms, thereby eliminating almost 460,000 farm tracts from the farm safety net.

In response to USDA's interpretation of this provision, the Senate and House passed a bill that eliminates the 10-acre provision for 2008 ONLY.

## BUREAUBRIEFS

**Ag Tax Issues**—North Carolina State University's Office of Professional Development is sponsoring a series of workshops on Farm Taxation Issues this month. The workshops are scheduled for the following dates and places: Nov. 3-Williamston; Nov. 5-Greensboro; Nov. 10-Monroe; Nov. 11-Statesville; Nov. 12-Fletcher; and, Nov. 19-Carthage. Contact: (919) 515-2261, or [www.mckimmon.ncsu.edu/opd](http://www.mckimmon.ncsu.edu/opd).

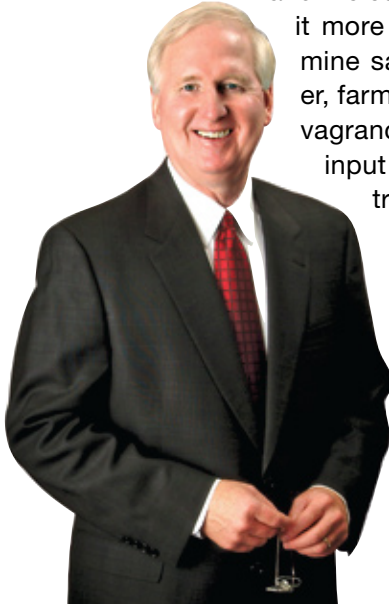
**Ethanol Announcement**—East Coast Ethanol recently announced plans to construct four corn-based fuel ethanol plants in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. The company said its \$871 million investment would make it the foremost supplier of ethanol to the Southeast market.

**Fall Festival, Nov. 7**—The 2008 Fall Festival is scheduled for Nov. 7 at North Carolina Farm Bureau headquarters in Raleigh. The festival benefits North Carolina Farm Bureau's R. Flake Shaw Scholarship fund. The country store will open at 9 a.m. and the auction will begin at 10 a.m. There are 24 students on scholarship. Each student receives \$3,000 per year.

**Farmland Preservation Grants**—County governments and nonprofit groups pursuing farmland preservation projects can apply for funding assistance from the N.C. Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund. Applications and guidelines for the 2009 funding cycle are available online at [www.ncadfp.org](http://www.ncadfp.org) or by calling (919) 733-7125. Applications are due Dec. 5.

**Fruit & Vegetable Expo**—The 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Southeast Vegetable & Fruit Expo is scheduled for Dec. 2-3 at the Myrtle Beach Convention Center. Contact: Cathy Price, (919) 334-0099 or [cathyprice@bellsouth.net](mailto:cathyprice@bellsouth.net).

While the national recession is directly tied to a complicated formula involving the crippled housing, banking and investment markets, it's easy to see the agricultural industry is the backbone of the state and nation's economy.



Farming has certainly always been a risky business, and the current fiscal situation is making it more difficult for growers to determine safe production levels. However, farmers have always dealt with the vagrancies of weather, prices, credit, input costs and many other uncontrollable circumstances.

As a result, agriculturalists may understand the risks and challenges of surviving a sour fiscal climate better than most.

While the situation has certainly reached the farm budget and bottom line, the agriculture industry remains one of the few economic foundations in our nation that hasn't crumbled.

The state's agricultural industry—food, fiber and forestry—accounts for almost one-fifth of the state's income, or \$70.8 billion of the \$375 billion gross state product, according to the latest data from Mike Walden, extension economist with North Carolina State University. The ag industry also accounts for 644,000 of the state's 4 million employees, or just over 16 percent.

By adhering to the conservative economic philosophy of the Founding Farmers who established North Carolina Farm Bureau in 1936, our organization remains strong. Our companies remain viable and our investment portfolio remains sound.

We're not going to stop and be content with stability, however. We're rolling up our sleeves and facing the challenges. We must look forward, beyond the current economic crisis, with optimism and hope for the future.

Farm Bureau is proud to continue to serve the family farmers, agricultural industry and agri-businesses of North Carolina. We pledge to continue to represent the state's strongest economic sector with the aggressive and well-planned advocacy that is synonymous with the Farm Bureau name—The Voice of Agriculture®.

"THE FALLOUT FROM THE GENERAL FINANCIAL MALAISE IS BEING FELT WORLDWIDE."  
TERRY FRANCL, AFBF SENIOR ECONOMIST.

## NORTH CAROLINA FARM BUREAU **LEADER**

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