

## WE'VE MOVED....

The NC Tobacco Trust Fund Commission has moved to its new offices in the L.L. Polk House. This was the historic home of our first Commissioner of Agriculture, Leonidas L. Polk. He was also the founder of Progressive



Farmer magazine. Located near downtown Raleigh, the TTFC offices are located on the 2nd floor. The L.L. Polk Foundation is hard at work on transforming the first floor into a museum highlighting the work of Polk and featuring other agricultural exhibits.

## IT'S IN THE NUMBERS...

**47,000**—The number of customers served at TTFC supported farmers markets in Nash County, Wilmington's Poplar Grove Plantation and Columbus County.

**\$100,000**—new record value of crops sold through Madison Family Farms; a 40+ member farmer co-op in western NC supported by a TTFC grant.

**\$28,000,000**—Value of new NC crops sold after a TTFC supported NCDA&CS trade mission to China in August, 2009.

## WNC LIVESTOCK & MARKETING CENTER BREAKS GROUND

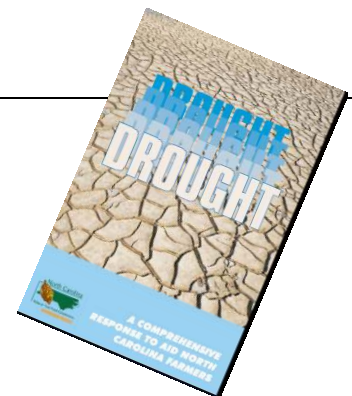
Western North Carolina government officials, businessmen and citizens gathered on a cold, windy day on February 11. The short ceremony was held to break ground on the new **WNC Livestock & Marketing Center**. The NC Tobacco Trust Fund Commission is the primary funder for the \$2.1 million project. Other funding partners include Golden LEAF Foundation, the NC Rural Center, Appalachian Regional Commission and the NC Ag Development & Farmland Preservation Trust Fund. The center will serve livestock producers in western counties and is expected to sell over 25,000 head of cattle per year. The site is located just off I-40 in Haywood County on land owned by International Paper Co., Inc. Site work and construction of the building are expected to be completed by June. WNC Communities, a non-profit organization dedicated to economic development in western counties is the project leader.



Rep. Ray Rapp, TTFC Exec. Director William Upchurch, TTFC Board Members Bill Holbrook and Bill Teague, Sen. Joe Sam Queen, & Rep. Bruce Goforth participate in the golden shovel ceremonial ground-breaking.

## DROUGHT RESPONSE PROJECT IMPACTS 92 NC COUNTIES

A multi-year year TTFC grant overseen by the NC Rural Center continues to impact thousands of farmers. Just a few years ago, the state-wide drought wiped out crops, dried up wells and affected the livelihood of thousands of farmers. Thanks to a partnership with the TTFC, the NC Rural Center, Soil & Water Conservation Division of NC, NCSU and the NC Foundation for Soil & Water Conservation, many farmers are now better prepared to handle future drought emergencies. Over 11,000 acres of pastures have been renovated, 370+ new water wells have been installed and over 100 ponds have been improved. In addition, pasture management workshops have been conducted for farmers across the state. Other projects include improved irrigation equipment. The grant continues until April, 2011. Interested farmers should contact their local Soil & Water Conservation office.



A mid-project booklet produced by the TTFC features stories from farmers across the state. They share their experiences on how they fought the drought's effects and implemented cost share projects to sustain their farms. For your free copy, email the TTFC at [tobaccotrustedfund@ncagr.gov](mailto:tobaccotrustedfund@ncagr.gov).

### NCTTFC BOARD MEMBERS & HOME COUNTIES...

- Billy Carter, Chairman, *Moore*
- Bill Teague, Vice-Chair, *Buncombe*
- Susan Barnes, *Johnston*
- Keith Beavers, *Duplin*
- Pete Burgess, *Vance*
- Sam Crews, *Granville*
- Layten Davis, *Madison*
- Richard Enoch, *Alamance*
- Bill Holbrook, *Haywood*
- Susan Leggett, *Nash*
- Al Leonard, Jr., *Columbus*
- Gwen Pitt, *Edgecombe*
- Jeff Simpson, *Cumberland*
- Willard Small, *Columbus*
- Rick Smith, *Pitt*
- Dan Ward, *Bladen*

For more information on these and other grants, click to [www.tobaccotrustfund.org](http://www.tobaccotrustfund.org)

or call our office at 919.733.2160



## STUDY TARGETS FOOD TRACEABILITY SYSTEMS

Food safety and how growers can track potential problems from the field to the store is a hot topic among consumers. Funded by a grant from the TTFC, a just-completed study conducted by the NC Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services and NC State University tackled how NC farmers can better implement food traceability plans. Dr. Ben Chapman (NCSU Extension) with support from NCDA&CS carried out this project from the 2008 grant cycle. Its mission was to determine

what kind of food traceability systems are in place and which ones work best. Through extensive phone surveys among NC produce grower/shippers and site visits to various growing/shipping facilities some interesting statistics were developed. For example, over half of the respondents already have a "Good Agricultural Practices" program in place. There are a variety of traceability plans being used, and the study found that many are based on

the demands of the wholesale/retail customers. A lack of nationwide industry standards for product labeling, technological limitations, and increased costs are just some of the roadblocks for traceability implementation by producers.



## NEW ONLINE RESOURCES FOR GROWERS



Through a grant from the TTFC, the NC Market Ready team of the former Program for Value-Added & Alternative Agriculture recently launched new web sites for growers. The Blackberry & Raspberry and the Tomato Growers information portals are now online. These sites offer the latest information on research, production, budgeting, varieties and more. Crop updates, grower meetings and a seasonal checklist are also included. Go to [www.ncmarketready.org](http://www.ncmarketready.org) for more information.

## SILK HOPE COMMUNITY BUILDING UNDERWAY

As reported in an earlier issue of "News for You," the groundbreaking was held by the Silk Hope Ruritan Club for its new Community Building. Construction has begun on the 3,000 sq. ft. facility which will serve Chatham and the surrounding counties. TTFC grant funds have been leveraged with a USDA Rural Development loan to provide affordable financing for the project. The building will host up to 300 farming-related and community meetings a year.



Located at the Ruritan Farm Heritage Center, the building will open in the Fall of 2010.