



Agriculture News

Chowan County Crops Newsletter
October 2009

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Agricultural Advisory Board

The Chowan County Voluntary Agricultural District Ordinance was adopted by the County Commissioners during their September meeting. The next step is to form the Agricultural Advisory Board, which oversees the program. This Board requires a minimal time commitment.

To be eligible, nominees must be actively engaged in farming or own qualifying farmland in Chowan County. Application forms are available at the County Manager's office, Cooperative Extension and the Natural Resource Conservation Service office on the Chowan County or Chowan Extension website. I have also included an application in this newsletter. Nominations should be submitted to the Extension Office. For more information call 482-6585.

In this Issue:

Soil Sample Reports Going Online	2
RAFI-USA Grants Meeting	2
Hydrilla Found in Chowan County	3
Upcoming Events	Back Page

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Recommendations for the use of agricultural chemicals are included in this publication as a convenience to the reader. The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services in this publication does not imply endorsement by North Carolina Cooperative Extension nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Individuals who use agricultural chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. Be sure to obtain current information about usage regulations and examine a current product label before applying any chemical. For assistance, contact your county Cooperative Extension agent. For accommodations for persons with disabilities, contact Denise Bunch at 252-482-6585 no later than five business days before the event. 369 copies of this public document were printed at a cost of \$29.52, or \$0.08 per copy.

NCDA&CS seeks to reduce postage costs, save paper by putting soil tests and other agronomic reports online

RALEIGH – Beginning Nov. 1, the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services will no longer routinely mail out paper copies of agronomic reports. This policy will apply to reports for soil tests and nematode assays, as well as plant tissue, waste, solution and soilless media analyses. All these reports are readily available through the NCDA&CS Agronomic Division's Web site, www.ncagr.gov/agronomi.

“By making the switch to electronic-only reports, the NCDA&CS will work within its limited budget to save significantly on postage, printing and paper costs,” said Dr. Colleen Hudak-Wise, director of the Agronomic Division. “Although environmental and fiscal benefits are driving this change, clients should also see increases in convenience and efficiency. Online reports are available to clients faster than mailed reports and make record keeping much easier.”

“Copies can be easily downloaded and saved, and the analytical data can be exported into spreadsheet format,” Hudak-Wise said.

Eventually, the NCDA&CS would like to notify all clients via e-mail when their reports are available online. Clients who provide a valid e-mail address on their sample information form, or who register an e-mail address with the Agronomic Division online, can receive electronic notification. In the interim, all other clients will receive a postcard with instructions on how to find their reports.

Clients who visit the Agronomic Division home page should select the “Find Your Report” link from the left-column navigation bar. This link takes visitors into the division's laboratory-information site, known as PALS. For most people, using the “Quick Report Search” link is the most convenient way to access reports.

Basic instructions are outlined at www.ncagr.gov/agronomi/reportsearch.htm. Anyone who has difficulty using the PALS report-search feature or has questions can call (919) 733-2655 for assistance during regular weekday office hours.

RAFI-USA Grants Meeting

A meeting has been scheduled on November 12 at 7 p.m. for Gates, Chowan and Perquimans farmers to learn about the RAFI-USA grants program. The meeting will be held at the Perquimans County Extension Auditorium.

Grants from \$10,000 to \$30,000 will be made to individual farmers or collaborative farmer/community projects. They will be awarded for farm enterprises that demonstrate innovative opportunities in production, processing and marketing. Full and part-time farmers are eligible to apply. Past projects have included improved greenhouse vegetable production, supplies for pasture-raised livestock, expansion of nursery operations and farmer's market assistance.

Hydrilla Found in Chowan County

Steve Gabel, Area Aquaculture Agent

The non-native and highly invasive aquatic weed Hydrilla has been found in several locations in the Chowan River in Chowan County. Following up on complaints by land owners in the Rocky Hock area, Steve Gabel, Area Aquaculture Agent with North Carolina Cooperative Extension, in addition to Gwen Van Duyn and Paul Ward, Field Inspectors with the NCDA Pesticide Division, made a site visit to two of the locations. Samples of the weed were taken and a positive identification of Hydrilla was made.

Samples were also sent to the University of Georgia for a screening for Avian Vacuolar Myelinopathy (AVM), which is a degenerative brain disease that affects Bald Eagles, American Coots and other birds in the southeastern United States including ducks and geese. This disease has been linked to the Hydrilla plant. These samples came back negative for AVM.

Efforts are now underway to bring in the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NC DENR) Division of Water Resources (DWR) to begin a cost share program to control this outbreak of Hydrilla. Mr. Rob Emens, Environmental Specialist with DWR has already visited two of the sites and has determined it will cost approximately \$600 per acre per year to control the Hydrilla and the whole process could take five to ten years.

Hydrilla, often called the perfect aquatic weed, is very difficult to control due to several factors. First, Hydrilla is capable of thriving in light intensities of 1/10 that required by most aquatic plants. This allows it to out-compete nearly all other aquatic plants.

Hydrilla also reproduces by fragmentation of existing plants, by seed, and by tubers in the roots. The seeds and tubers are capable of lying dormant in the sediment for years before sprouting another plant. The most prevalent way of spreading Hydrilla is through transportation of plant fragments. Boaters and fishermen need to be especially careful of plant fragments on and in their boats as well as on the trailers. One small node of the plant where the leaves attach is all that is required to spread the plant.

For more information about the identification, biology and control of Hydrilla, contact Gabel at 252-482-6585.

Web Sites:

www.weedscience.ncsu.edu/aquaticweeds/

<http://aquat1.ifas.ufl.edu/node/183>

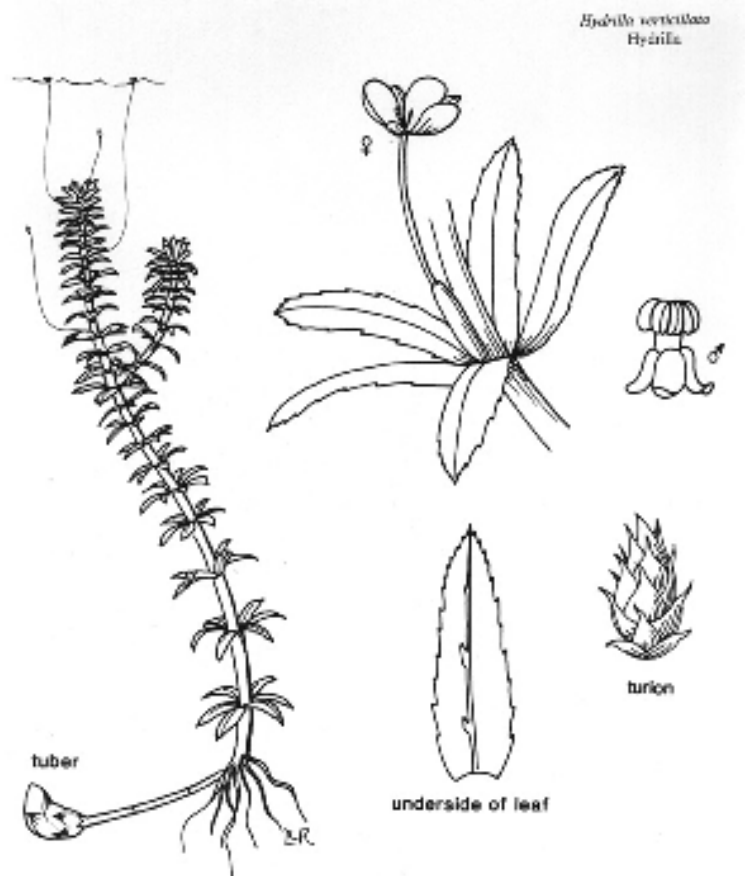


Illustration provided by:
IFAS, Center for Aquatic Plants
University of Florida, Gainesville, 1998

Upcoming Events

- November 10 NC Farm Energy Efficiency Project (FEEP) meeting
Martin County Farmers Market, Williamston
Presentations will focus on discussing program highlights and elaborate on how FEEP can provide extremely low cost farm energy assessments. New energy efficiency cost-share and renewable energy grant programs will be introduced. USDA representatives will be on hand to discuss how this program leads into the REAP program which provides grants and loan guarantees for energy improvements.
- November 12 RAFI-USA Grants meeting, Perquimans County Extension Office, 7 p.m.
- November 19 NC Tobacco Referendum, County Extension Office
- November 27 Deadline for NC Corn Yield Contest Entries
- December 25 Deadline for NC Soybean Contest Entries

