

NC STATE

Mike Carroll <cmcarro2@ncsu.edu>

Agricultural News From Craven County ExtensionMike Carroll <mike_carroll@ncsu.edu>
To: mike_carroll@ncsu.edu

Fri, Jul 11, 2025 at 4:40 PM

NC STATE EXTENSION

NC Cooperative Extension, Craven Center



Agricultural Update

July 2025

In this Newsletter.....

Upcoming Events
Understanding Corn Stress
Black Light Data
Changes in Soybean Defoliation Thresholds
Craven County Agricultural Building Remodeling & Impact to You
Supplemental Disaster Relief Program (SDRP)
Imported Pests
NC Farm Helpline

Important Note: Registration deadline for events listed below will vary from as few as 24 hours prior the event to as much as 3-4 days prior the event so please register as much in advance as possible. Also, while attendance is open to anyone, meals, when served, will only be provided for those that register in advance.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2025 Tobacco Field Day - On July 22, 2025 from 9am - 1pm, NC State University will present an overview of research and current tobacco production at the Oxford Research Station, 901 Hillsboro St, Oxford, NC. The trams will leave the main station at 9am for the field and return for lunch onsite. Please register at: <https://forms.gle/B7jJWt1kZRvDnFtj6>. Additional information or any updates will be provided at the NC State Extension Tobacco Web Portal.

2025 Blackland Farm Managers Tour will begin with a sponsored breakfast at 7:00 a.m. with opening remarks at 8:30 a.m. on August 6, 2025. Wagons depart for field tours at 8:45 a.m. North Carolina State Extension specialists will cover the latest corn and soybean production information. The field day concludes with a sponsored lunch. Pesticide and CCA credits will be available. More information is found at <https://blacklandnc.org/>

NOTE: Renovation and upgrades are scheduled for the Craven County Agricultural Building from September - December 2025. Thus, no meetings will be scheduled in the auditorium during this time.

Understanding Corn Stress

For most fields within Craven, corn received excessive rainfall during early plant growth stages to the point that plant growth was slowed or stunted. This likely resulted in a more shallow root system than desired. As such, when temperatures increased, corn rapidly wilted during the periods of hot, dry weather. Realize, however, that this wilting was not a result of poor soil moisture. Most plants that we grow as a crop simply lack the ability to uptake enough water from the soil and transport it to the leaves where needed when temperatures are much above 90 degrees F. As such, plants will wilt during the heat of the day and recover late evening,

nighttime, and early morning until the heat again rises to about 90 F. This is critical to understand because the wilting is not an indication that irrigation is needed. These plants will likely wilt even should one irrigate! In fact, irrigating or more rainfall may actually decrease yield because it will raise the soil water table into the root zone decreasing aeration and oxygen levels.

Daniel Simpson, CED in Pamlico, has written an excellent article on this matter. He installed soil moisture sensors that send continuous signals measuring the soil moisture content at two soil depths. The article, [Soil Moisture and Crop Needs](#), outlines his effort. We do not have much, if any corn field under irrigation that is not associated with swine production. However, if you feel installation of such sensors would aid you in production, we certainly can consider installing them in strategic places throughout the county to monitor soil moisture. If so, please contact our office with your thoughts.

On another matter, there are ample models, apps, and websites that keep track of "Corn Stress Days". This essentially uses the baseline temperature of 86 F and subtracts this from the daily high temperature. As example, a high temperature of 92 F would result in 6 stress units. When 140 Corn Stress Days is met, yield is reduced. For the Midwest, this is monitored closely. For us, we can do so too, but regrettably, we exceed 140 Corn Stress Days virtually every year. As such, monitoring such is still important, but simply realize exceeding this critical level is almost a certainty for this area.

Black Light Insect Data

Black lights are monitored for insect catches across the state. We have one in Craven. To review this data, visit the [2025 Data website](#). Select the pest you wish to review data and the chart should show the data. Simply realize that all sites do not always record all pest.

The primary pest that we should indeed monitor are the corn earworm and stinkbugs. Both of these pest impact all crops we tend. To date, neither are at levels high enough to warrant anything other than continued scouting. However, this may change quickly.

Changes in Soybean Thresholds

The article, [Important Change to North Carolina Soybean Defoliation Thresholds After Beginning Flowering \(R1\)](#), outlines some important changes to defoliation thresholds for soybeans. The rationale is based on NC research findings that full-season soybeans can tolerate up to 66% defoliation in the reproductive growth stages without experiencing a yield loss. Double-cropped soybeans are more sensitive, losing yield between 33% to 100% defoliation, depending on conditions. So, before assuming that bean leaf beetle, loopers, velvetbean caterpillars, etc. should be treated due to defoliation, please read this article. Too, evaluate the total defoliation carefully. The top leaves can essentially be almost entirely defoliated yet the plant remain well below threshold because the lower leaves are still intact. When averaged, the defoliation loss is often still below threshold.

Craven County Agricultural Building Remodeling & Impact to You

For those unaware, remodeling and upgrades are scheduled for the Craven County Agricultural Building. Initial work will begin in the auditorium this fall and last until early 2026. Work will immediately transition to update the NC Extension offices and we will be moved to the auditorium to work until our offices are completed. As such, the auditorium will be closed to the public between September 2025 and June 2026.

This will likely result in those needing pesticide credits to travel to other counties to attend classes or to take these classes online. (We will work to host the class but just in other counties or locations). Too, all of our normal productions meetings will also be held in other counties. We simply lack available facilities within Craven County (at least those that are free) to host these meetings. So, anticipate most meetings to be held in conjunction with adjacent counties.

In addition to this change in meeting venue, simply realize that should work be performed on the front of the building, this door will be locked. As such, use the back door for entry into the building. When work is scheduled for the back portion of the building, use the front door. Cones, signs, work crews, and taped off areas will indicate the appropriate action.

Supplemental Disaster Relief Program (SDRP)

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins announced that agricultural producers who suffered eligible crop losses due to natural disasters in 2023 and 2024 can now apply for assistance. The Supplemental Disaster Relief Program (SDRP) allocates \$16 billion in assistance. Eligible losses must be the result of natural disasters occurring in calendar years 2023 and/or 2024. For this region, disasters will include hurricanes, floods, excessive heat, tornadoes, excessive moisture, and related conditions. There will be two stages of payments. Stage one payments are based on the SDRP adjusted NAP or Federal crop insurance coverage level the producer purchased for the crop and will not exceed 90% of the loss. Phase two payments will be announced by the FSA for uncovered losses, including non-indemnified shallow losses, and quality losses. Further details will be announced this fall. For more information, visit the FSA office or call them at 252-637-3567.

Imported Pest

The USDA, NCDA & CS and us, often remind you to watch for potentially damaging pests that have either been introduced into the US or have been eradicated yet encroaching upon us again. One such pest is the New World Screwworm. This pest was eradicated in the US and Mexico but is now moving northward, recently noted in Veracruz, Mexico. As such, our ports have closed for cattle, bison, horses and swine from Mexico. Secretary Rollins launched a plan to combat New World Screwworm by protecting our border at all costs, increasing eradication efforts in Mexico, and increasing readiness. This may impact meat prices in a positive manner for those selling cattle or swine. Read more in the article from the Southern Farm Network, [USDA Closes Southern Ports as Screwworm Moves North](#)

Similarly, we need to monitor our farms for invasive weeds, insects, or diseases. Spotted Lanternflies, Woolly Frogs Mouth, Asian Longhorn Beetle, Tropical Spiderwort, and Sweet Potato Weevils are particularly notable for our region to monitor. Read more about the distribution of these particular pests as well as contact information should you find one at the [NCDA & CS Plant Industry website](#).



NC Farm Help Line

Tariffs, low economic prices, unpredictable weather, age, labor problems, and many other factors contribute to stress of farming. In fact, whether we like it or not, agriculture has one of, if not the highest, accidental death rates due to equipment use, as well as the highest suicide rate for occupations. Do consider potential impact of things that can be a negative influence on production but please don't worry about things you cannot change! If you find yourself depressed, well, we can listen! If you are not comfortable discussing issues with us, help is available 24/7, through the Help Line that connects individuals experiencing a crisis or in need of other help with resources including mental health, financial, legal, farm safety/health, Cooperative Extension and more at 844-325-3276 or online at <https://ncfarmstress.org/crisis-and-resource-lines/>. Additionally, for tobacco producers, legal or labor assistance is available free from [GAP Connections](#)

Disclaimer:

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 the NC Cooperative Extension Service 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 product.

NC Cooperative Extension, Craven Center

Mike Carroll, Director and Field Crops	mike_carroll@ncsu.edu
Ashley Brooks, 4-H & Youth Development	albrook4@ncsu.edu
Stephanie Stephenson, Family & Consumer Sciences	stephanie_stevenson@ncsu.edu
Lisa Rayburn, Specialty Crops & Markets	lisa_rayburn@ncsu.edu
Kristi Welke, Area Livestock Agent	kdwelke@ncsu.edu
Mark Eubanks, Consumer Horticulture	meubank2@ncsu.edu
Debbie Titus, Administration	debbie_titus@ncsu.edu

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, N.C. Cooperative Extension will honor requests for reasonable accommodations made by individuals with disabilities. Please direct accommodation requests to: Mike Carroll at 252-633-1477 or email: mike_carroll@ncsu.edu. Requests can be served more effectively if notice is provided at least 10 days before the event.

NC State University and N.C.A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity and prohibit discrimination and harassment regardless of age, color, disability, family and marital status, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, political beliefs, race, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation and veteran status. NC State, N.C. A&T, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

If you feel you have experienced discrimination or harassment, you may file a report with Equal Opportunity and Equity.
<https://diversity.ncsu.edu/report-a-concern/>

Place additional articles/links below:

- Visit our webpage
- Join us on Facebook
- Follow me on Twitter
- Review current Events for Craven County Extension
- SUBSCRIBE to this newsletter



NC State University and N.C. A&T State University work in tandem, along with federal, state and local governments, to form a strategic partnership called N.C. Cooperative Extension.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

N.C. Cooperative Extension - Craven County Center, 300 Industrial Dr, New Bern, NC 28562, United States

[Click here to unsubscribe](#)

