

# Cooperative Extension Services

Organization: 310050

	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Current	2014/15 Requested	2014/15 Approved	Percent Change
<b>Revenues</b>					
State	\$0	\$3,000	\$0	\$0	0%
Local	0	0	0	1,662	0%
General Fund	247,611	321,514	349,095	320,851	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$247,611</b>	<b>\$324,514</b>	<b>\$349,095</b>	<b>\$322,513</b>	<b>-1%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Personal Services	\$21,613	\$74,136	\$25,728	\$25,749	-65%
Supplies & Operations	225,998	250,378	323,367	296,764	19%
Capital	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$247,611</b>	<b>\$324,514</b>	<b>\$349,095</b>	<b>\$322,513</b>	<b>-1%</b>
<b>Employees</b>					
Permanent	0.80	1.80	0.80	0.80	-56%
Hourly	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.80</b>	<b>1.80</b>	<b>0.80</b>	<b>0.80</b>	<b>-56%</b>

## Fiscal Year 2012/13 Outcome Achievements

Total Outcomes	Achieved	Not Achieved	Success Rate
26	23	3	88%

## Budget Highlights

Cooperative Extension's budget decreased by .62 percent or \$2,001 from the current year budget. The decrease is attributed to the Local Food Agent position no longer being solely funded by the County (the position is now jointly funded by with North Carolina State University) and the elimination of the vacant Family and Consumer Sciences Agent position.

Currently, Cooperative Extension does not have a director. While the department is director-less its Reinventing status has been suspended. This is the first time since Fiscal Year 1994/95 that the department participated in the traditional budget process.

## Performance Measurement

### Fiscal Year 2014/15

Cooperative Extension Services will continue to educate the community on agriculture and environmental protection. In regards to agriculture, the department will educate new, beginning, or transitioning farmers on current and alternative enterprises. Cooperative Extension will pursue environmental protection by partnering with Keep Catawba County Beautiful and a number of schools to increase plastic bag recycling. The department will also continue to emphasize youth development and leadership. 4-H will improve youth leadership, citizenship, and college readiness skills through

offering Catawba County Youth Council and college-preparedness programs. During the next fiscal year, Cooperative Extension will collaborate with the Soil and Water Conservation District to promote the importance of local agriculture for our environmental and community health.

### **Fiscal Year 2013/14**

At mid-year Cooperative Extension Services (CES) was on target to achieve or had already achieved 88 percent (15 or 17) of its Fiscal Year 2013/14 outcomes. The outcomes not on target pertain to reducing instances of food borne illness in Catawba County and assisting youth in acquiring knowledge and developing life skills. In regards to reducing food borne illness, the department has provided food safety training for 146 food handlers with 118 adopting safer food handling practices. The department also launched a food safety campaign to increase awareness of improper food handling. The one component to this outcome Cooperative Extension missed was making a high quality food safety training video available online. This was attributed to staff vacancy. CES assisted youth in acquiring knowledge and developing life skills by having 200 youths involved in clubs and special interest programs. Although CES reached 200 youth, this falls short of the 1000 student goal.

Cooperative Extension Services ensured Hmong farmers received the proper skills and abilities to maintain viable farm operations. The six techniques and/or skills taught to and adopted by Hmong farmers were Plasticulture, High Tunnel production, Season Extension, Business and Marketing Management, Alternative Farm Production, and Food Safety. In a partnership with Keep Catawba County Beautiful, CES is on target to reach its goal of maintaining a Litter Index Average of 2.0. During the first half of the year, Cooperative Extension planned and organized the Big Sweep Litter Collection event at Lake Hickory. The department has also been in contact with Lowes Foods' and Food Lion's corporate offices with the aim of having the grocery stores adopt the Best Bagging Practices Guide, which will reduce plastic bag consumption and litter.

### **Fiscal Year 2012/13**

Annual outcomes for this department are developed around the agency's core purpose of providing citizens with scientifically-based information and informal educational opportunities focused on local needs and issues. The focus remains on the four core areas of the program: agriculture and food, family and consumer education, 4-H and youth development, and community and rural development.

#### *Agriculture and Food*

Cooperative Extension exceeded its goal of providing professional training to 175 green industry professionals by educating 402 landscapers and producers on new ideas related to insect, disease and weed management, perennial crop Integrated Pest Management (IPM), and new perennial crops to grow. Implementation of recommended practices resulted in a savings of \$190,650 in chemical and labor costs, less pesticides being applied in the County, and increased awareness on how to become better environmental stewards.

The Voluntary Agricultural District Program accepted 30 tracts containing 586.5 acres, a 2 percent increase. The Farm & Food Sustainability Plan was developed and includes strategies that will assist with farmland preservation.

Cooperative Extension exceeded its goal of increasing the knowledge of 100 current and aspiring livestock and forage producers by educating them on the use of alternative feeds and modern marketing techniques, resulting in a savings of \$112,000 over traditional methods. Additionally, 100 youth livestock participants participated in Extension sponsored learning activities including monthly club meetings, livestock judging and “skillathons,” live animal shows and on farm demonstrations of management practices.

Cooperative Extension reached 482 people with information on the availability of local foods through promotion of Foothills Fresh, during safe food handling trainings, at community outreach events and through media outlets. Cooperative Extension planned two farm tours which included producers of blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, vegetables, baked products, free range eggs, and honey. 28 percent of local food producers surveyed indicated they had increased sales of their products. However, Cooperative Extension did not meet its goal of connecting 25 restaurant owners with local producers. 70 beef cattle producers attended an educational farm tour to learn about the use of warm season grasses in their enterprises, exceeding Cooperative Extension’s goal of reaching 20 forage and livestock producers. 10 producers also reduced their need for stored forages and have extended the grazing season on their farms.

Cooperative Extension exceeded its goal of teaching 30 producers about different soybean varieties. Cooperative Extension provided a demonstration test plot of “Liberty Link” soybeans for growers to compare these varieties with other conventional and herbicide tolerant varieties. Using these soybeans would increase the yield for Catawba County farmers by approximately \$445,000. Eight growers planted these varieties and an additional 200 producers were reached with information on pesticides, pest management and a variety of information to improve the profitability of their enterprises.

Cooperative Extension exceeded its goal of educating 60 field and forage crop producers, with 20 percent adopting one or more practices. 40 growers attended a corn variety field day to see the differences in yield, grain quality, disease resistance, and lodging resistance among 22 new and high yielding corn varieties. 18 producers adopted one or more of the practices they learned. An additional 20 growers were educated on managing Kudzu bugs – a new pest of soybeans. 25 Southeast Asian farmers attended the Growers School, which provides attendees an opportunity to improve and/or expand their farming operation. Cooperative Extension exceeded its goal of educating 20 farmers. In addition, one-on-one assistance was provided to six different farms.

Cooperative Extension was not able to meet its goal of providing training to 20 dairy and other farm producers on various farm management practices.

Cooperative Extension met its goal of encouraging 75 individuals to enter production and encouraging producers to expand production. 57 individuals attended the Putting Small Acreage to Work conference and learned how to earn supplemental income off their small acreage. Cooperative Extension also hosted a “Getting Started with Garden Chickens” workshop, where 18 individuals (50 percent of participants) indicated they intended to start a small flock in the next year.

342 horse owners received information about horse management, exceeding Cooperative Extension’s goal of educating 75 horse owners.

### *Family and Consumer Education*

Cooperative Extension exceeded its goal of reaching 200 participants with information about making healthy food choices. 530 people participated in programs provided by Cooperative Extension in partnership with other health and wellness education agencies, including Cook Smart – Eat Smart, Eat Healthy – Be Active, diabetes education workshops and other nutrition education programs.

Cooperative Extension increased the safety of food production by improving the food preparation habits of 277 food handlers.

Cooperative Extension exceeded its goal of educating 100 parents and child care educators by increasing the knowledge of 131 people in providing more experiential practices and including a greater variety of learning activities for young children. 134 individuals participated across four separate events and reported an increase in knowledge and/or indicated an intention to implement one or more strategies into their practice.

61 caregivers or older adults increased their self-care knowledge and awareness of care giving and self-care skills, exceeding the goal of educating 50 people. Nine percent of workshop participants changed their behavior and 56 percent of participants indicated intent to change behavior.

Cooperative Extension exceeded its goal of increasing the financial management knowledge of 100 adults, by engaging 129 adults in the “More in My Basket” sessions and 12 adults in a workshop addressing issues regarding the distribution of untitled property.

109 adults received information about best practices for energy conservation, exceeding Cooperative Extension’s goal of reaching 100 adults. An average of 26 Best Management Practices was recorded per survey respondent.

### *4-H Youth*

232 youth, ages 5-18, participated in 4-H clubs along with short term and special interest programs designed to improve life skills in the areas of leadership, citizenship and communication, exceeding the goal of improving the skills of 200 youth. Additionally, three volunteer training workshops have been offered and reached 28 adult and youth volunteers who are providing leadership for 4 H clubs.

Cooperative Extension set out to improve the leadership and related life skills of thirty middle and high school students through the Catawba County Youth Council. This goal was surpassed as 59 high school students participated in the Catawba County Youth Council.

998 youth have improved their understanding of science and making healthy choices as a result of participating 4-H school enrichment, short term programs, and science based 4-H clubs, exceeding the goal of reaching 600 youth. 209 youth learned about the dangers of substance abuse through participation in the Health Rocks program. Additionally, 189 youth participated in “Reading Makes Cents”, with 88 percent of parents indicating their children showed a greater interest in money, talked with them about earning an allowance, and showed an improvement in their ability to use math in working with money. However, Cooperative Extension did not meet its goal of training 25 new teachers to utilize hands-on 4-H curriculum as only 12 new teachers were trained.

### *Community and Rural Development*

Cooperative Extension exceeded its goal of increasing the awareness of 250 residents as 200 individuals participated in Litter Sweep events. Approximately 200 people received information about plastic shopping bag litter and received a reusable shopping bag litter at Earth Day celebration in Hickory in April. 857 second grade students from 10 schools learned about the problem of litter through a KCCB classroom reading project.

376 individuals, groups, churches, fire departments, and school groups received information about Adopt a Highway and Adopt A Street, exceeding the goal of targeting 100 individuals. Cooperative Extension met its goal of increasing the number of streets adopted by 25 percent by instead increasing adoption by 29 percent.

Cooperative Extension exceeded its goal of improving the waste management practices of 25 residents. 10 Master Gardeners participated in composting training and have adopted some form of backyard composting. Additionally, 25 students and teachers at The Sandbox received training on composting and have begun composting food scraps from their lunch to reduce waste.

Cooperative Extension exceeded its goal of increasing the awareness of 500 citizens, as approximately 640 individuals received information about plant selection, plant management and or pest management by telephone and 2,048 individuals received information by personally visiting the Extension center or attending classes and workshops on plant disease management, choosing plants for the landscape, and controlling insects.

82 individuals attended trainings/classes to learn about environmentally sensitive landscaping practices, exceeding the goal of reaching 75 individuals. Topics included organic gardening, gardening for water quality protection, composting, and soil sampling.

In partnership with the Catawba County Leadership Academy, 19 families totaling 50 adults and children are now gardening in raised bed gardens at the Family Care Center on Highland Avenue. Cooperative Extension exceeded its goal of having 25 individuals adopt vegetable gardening skills.

## COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICES

### Statement of Purpose

North Carolina Cooperative Extension - Catawba County Center is a cooperative educational agency sponsored jointly by the United States Department of Agriculture, North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, and Catawba County. It provides Catawba County citizens with scientifically based information and informal educational opportunities focused on local needs and issues in four major areas: Agricultural and Natural Resources, Family and Consumer education, 4-H and Youth, and Community and Rural Development.

### Outcomes

#### Farm

1. Two hundred (200) green industry professionals in the nursery, greenhouse and landscape business will receive professional training and be encouraged to adopt and use practices associated with Best Management Practices (BMP), ornamental plant selection, innovative production practices, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), alternatives to conventional practices, and environmentally sound practices related to protection of water quality.
  - a. 65 percent of attendees will increase their awareness on how to become better environmental stewards. Impacts will be measured through pre- and post-surveys, one-on-one feedback, observations, and adoption of practices.
  - b. Implementation of those practices related to IPM and BMP's will decrease the amount of pesticides applied to the environment in Catawba County and will save participants \$100,000 in chemical and labor costs. Impacts will be measured through pre- and post-surveys, one-on-one feedback, and implementation of practices.
2. To educate new, beginning, or transitioning farmers on current and alternative enterprises, NC Cooperative Extension will host two field days to demonstrate different sustainable and alternative production techniques. Fifty percent (50 percent) of all participants will report an increase in knowledge through pre and post surveys, with ten percent (10 percent) planning to adopt/expand their farm enterprise based on the knowledge gained from the field days. Success and impact will be measured through pre and post surveys, one-on-one contact and farm visits.

#### Beautification

3. To promote a beautiful and litter-free environment community, NC Cooperation Extension, in partnership with Keep Catawba County Beautiful will maintain a Community Appearance Index above 2.0 and will:
  - a. Coordinate and promote 2 litter collection events and continue to expand the pool of volunteers
  - b. Implement 2 community beautification projects, at least one of which will be to improve areas in the county that are considered an eyesore (as determined by board members and the public).
  - c. Implement a youth education project to teach litter prevention and waste reduction and share with 6 classes, afterschool groups, 4-H clubs, or other group of youth.

- d. Persuade 6 local high school and/or middle schools, 33 percent of Catawba County's high school and middle schools, to participate in the *Trex's Plastic Bag Recycling Challenge*.
4. To promote improved landscaping skills to protect our local natural resources (water quality, wildlife diversity, healthy soils) NC Cooperation will hold six classes (three in the fall, three in the spring) or workshops on environmentally friendly landscaping practices (such as encouraging wildlife, conserving water, composting, etc.). Participants will be surveyed and 75 percent will adopt at least one new skill.

#### **Youth Education**

5. 1000 students will participate in 4-H School Enrichment programs, which will be utilized in elementary and middle school classrooms to reinforce the standard course of study. 75 percent of the participating students will show a 20 percent improvement in their knowledge of STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and improve their ability to make healthy lifestyle choices as a result of program participation. Changes will be measured by using student and teacher evaluations, tracking the number of new teachers utilizing 4-H science curriculum and also by the number of educators trained in and utilizing NCSU science curriculum.
6. 200 youth ages 5-18 will develop targeted life skills and gain new subject matter knowledge as a result of participating in volunteer-led 4-H clubs, short-term and skill-building competitive programs. 50 percent of the participants will show will increase subject matter knowledge and life skill development by a minimum of 20 percent with impact measured using a written evaluation completed by participating families, successful completion of skill building competitive programs, club expansion and development.
7. Thirty high school students, reflecting diverse backgrounds, will improve their leadership, citizenship, and college readiness skills participating in Catawba County Youth Council and college-preparedness programs. 100 percent of the teens will show an improvement in skills in at least one identified area. Skill development will be measured through pre and post evaluations, completion of Youth Council projects, and number of youth advancing to higher education.

#### **Local Food Production and Advocacy**

8. To promote and diversify local agricultural production, fifteen Southeast Asian farmers will receive training on six different types of specialty crops suitable to our region through the Specialty Crop Classes with farmers adopting one new specialty crop by the end of June 2015. Success will be measured by the number of specialty crops adopted through on farm observation, one-on-one contact and follow up surveys.
9. To address gaps in consumer knowledge of purchasing and preparing fresh, local foods as identified through previously completed surveys, NC Cooperative Extension will work with farmers' market managers to host four events that educate the public on buying, preserving, and cooking fresh fruits and vegetables. Fifty consumers will report via written evaluation a greater understanding of how to cook with fresh fruits and vegetables and 20 percent will report plans for incorporating more fresh fruits and vegetables into their diets.

10. To increase the capacity of local farmers, restaurants, and individuals to participate in the local food economy, NC Cooperative Extension will organize four events that provide education on how to purchase, how to market, and the availability of local foods. Events will include Eat, Drink, and Be Local, a networking event for farmers and chefs, a local foods procurement training for chefs, and a marketing training for farmers selling to restaurants. The “NC 10 percent Campaign” will be used to measure success. The events will result in a 20 percent increase in pledges to purchase local foods. (18 business participants will increase to 22 and 184 individual participants will increase to 221.)
11. Promote agricultural literacy within the general public by:
  - a. Increasing the number of farms participating in public tours/events by 10 percent (from 13 to 14 farms)
  - b. Increasing the number of individuals participating in tour by 10 percent (from 1082 to 1190)
  - c. Coordinating with GIS and Technology to develop a webpage highlighting agri-tourism sites in Catawba County

### **Farm and Food Sustainability Plan**

12. To promote and support the local agricultural economy, being defined as within 75 miles of the center point of Catawba County, NC Cooperative Extension will provide educational programming that will increase the knowledge of 60 interested producers on all aspects of fruit and vegetable production, livestock production, best farm management practices, and new direct marketing opportunities, which would enable them to begin/expand production. 50 percent of participants will report plans to begin/expand production or marketing efforts.
13. To recruit future fruit and vegetable producers, NC Cooperative Extension will further develop a youth component to educational programming. At least 30 youth will participate in the programming and at least 50 percent of participants will report an interest in fruit and vegetable production in the future.
14. To encourage home food production, NC Cooperative Extension will host four fruit and vegetable gardening classes and demonstration events for the general public. 80 percent of participants will report plans to grow fruits and/or vegetables for home consumption.

### **Farm Support**

15. To increase farm sustainability, NC Cooperative Extension will host meetings, workshops, or field days, and will provide one-on-one assistance and informal feedback to 30 beef/dairy farmers or confinement animal operations. Successful outreach will be determined by:
  - a. 50 percent of producers will use animal waste as a source of natural fertilizer
  - b. 65 percent of producers will soil test or have their nutrient waste analyzed
  - c. 45 percent of producers will implement soil and pasture conservation practices
  - d. 10 percent will utilize forage/feed analysis to improve their feeding protocol

- e. 30 percent of producers will calibrate their manure application equipment (this applies to confinement dairy producers only and is required once every three years based on when they were permitted)
  - f. 65 percent of producers will maintain their animal waste operator certification (based on when they were permitted and whether they achieved six credit hours of continuing education within three years)
16. One hundred horse owners will increase their knowledge of horse management as a result of participating in educational programs, receiving newsletters/media releases or through personal assistance on weed control and pasture management on small acreage, farm management, disease control and prevention, horse evaluation/selection, hay and feed evaluation and horse waste management. Success will be measured using post-survey evaluations. Fifty percent (50 percent) of the individuals served will agree that their needs were met or they implemented at least on recommended best management practice.
17. To promote the importance of local agriculture for our environmental and community health, NC Cooperative Extension will partner with Soil and Water Conservation to offer six presentations to civic groups, school groups, and to the general public at county farmers markets. One hundred people will be reached through the presentations.