

Catawba County Agriculture



2012 Farm and Food Sustainability
Plan

Jeff Carpenter, County Ext. Director



Some details on where we are:

- Farm income rose from \$30 M (2007) to \$55 M in 2010
- Livestock = \$40 M, Crops = \$15 M
- 737 farms, \$517K value
- average production expense = \$40K



Other highlights

- 3 dairies currently
- Contract poultry operations increasing
- 3 active farmers markets
- VAD program has 8,000 acres enrolled
- 4 Vocational Agricultural programs



Where we rank in NC

- Cattle – 12,700 (20th)
- Broilers – 8.9M (24th)
- Hay – 25K acres (7th)
- Milk cows – 600 (19th)
- Beef cows – 5,500 (21st)
- Nursery/greenhouse – 21st



Where we rank (NC)

- Corn – 2,300 (56th)
- Soybeans – 6,700 (56th)
- Wheat – 2,850 (32nd)
- Vegetables/fruits – 67th
- Government payments – 82nd
- Total cash receipts – 48th



County population – 154,358

- Beef consumption – 58.1 lbs
- Chicken – 56 lbs
- Wheat flour – 135 lbs
- Fruits and vegetables – 648 lbs
- Milk – 20.6 gallons
- Corn products – 33 lbs

Source: US Census Statistical Abstract (2012)



Our unique infrastructure ...

- MDI
- Midstate Mills
- FFA chapters
- Catawba County Ecocomplex
- 2 poultry integrators (Case & Tyson)
- 6 farm supply dealers





Livestock and Poultry

- 2 poultry integrators, 100 broiler houses
- Feeder calf marketing facility



Conservation Reserve Program

664 total acres in CRP

491 acres planted to timber

173 acres in grass cover

Pays an annual rental rate to landowners (\$36 average)

Purpose of the program is to idle highly erodible land and provide wildlife habitat





NC State University
A&T State University
**COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**
Catawba County Center

Midstate Mills



Wheat Usage
650 K storage
3 M bu/year
126 M lbs flour

Modern Feed mill
75K ton capacity
10-15 K bu corn/wk

Voluntary Agricultural District Program

- Began in July, 2008
- Currently 8,000 acres enrolled
- Present use acreage is 56,315 acres in 1449 parcels



Greenhouse and Nursery

- \$9.2 M in 2010
- Industry impacted by recession, but improving



Vocational Agriculture

- Bandys
- Fred T. Foard
- St. Stephens
- Bunker Hill



Agri-Tourism Ventures

- Red Wolf Farm
- Bird Brain Ostrich Ranch
- Devine Farm
- Buffalo Beals



Fruit and vegetable production

- Foothills Fresh is most complete listing
- Products from berries, vegetables, meats, eggs, roadside stands, farmers market vendors, wholesale
- 46 farms in 8 counties
- www.foothillsfresh.com



2007 Census Data

Total vegetables	25 operations	148 acres	
All berries		29 acres	
Orchards		20 acres	
Cantaloupes	8 operations	6 acres	
Sweet corn		9 acres	
Snap beans		7 acres	
Strawberries		12 acres	
Grapes		11 acres	



MDI, Inc.

- Major fruit and vegetable supplier
- Average 150,000 cases vegetables/week
- Affiliated with Lowes Foods
- Initiative to work with local growers



Good Agricultural Practices - GAP

- Education – Tier 1 (5-6 hours, local), Tier 2 (1 day, NCSU)
- Self audits
- 3rd party audits – NCDA offers this (\$750?)



SunnyRidge – Blackberry Production

- 250 acres production area
- Lincoln, Cleveland and Gaston Counties
- 500,000 – 4.5 lb flats annually
- Potential for additional contracts?
- Owned by Dole but other markets exist?

