



# Sweet Potato Speak

Spring 2012

SPECIAL ANNUAL REPORT EDITION



# A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear North Carolina Sweet Potato Supporter,



**E**volution—the process of change in a certain direction, from a lower or simpler form to a higher or more complex state.

That sums up the state of our industry—evolving or changing for the better. We started with something simple—sweet potatoes—the wholesome, traditional vegetable that appeared in relatively the same form on just about every Thanksgiving table in America. Daring cooks might add them to a stew or serve baked-potato style, but for the most part,

they made an annual appearance in November, only to appear again next fall.

That was then. This is now.

Now, we have more evidence and support for the positive nutritional impact sweet potatoes provide. Now, better storage methods mean that we can meet a year-round demand. Now, new value-added products meet the demands and lifestyles of today's educated, cost-conscious consumers—people who want good-tasting, top-quality, healthful, and affordable choices for themselves and their families year round. The sweet potato has evolved!

Consumers, retailers, and food manufacturers have taken notice and action. We only have to look at the french-fry frenzy to see how all three of these groups are responding to just one of the value-added sweet potato products on the market. It's a challenge not to find sweet potatoes in some form on fine-dining menus across the country, too. Because our industry has been able to adapt and change, the demand for sweet potatoes continues to rise in the US and in Europe.

The NCSPC has changed, too. Today we are a far-reaching, innovative organization that supports cutting-edge research, worldwide marketing campaigns, and grower and consumer education and outreach. We've developed programs that have educated us all on best practices for growing quality crops, managing resources, and serving as good stewards of our environment. As part of our communication plan, we've developed training programs to help growers, shippers, and manufacturers effectively and efficiently respond to issues should there be any question about the integrity of sweet potatoes or sweet potato products. We monitor and react to legislative issues that affect your bottom line, too.

Yes, our industry is changing, becoming more complex. And I couldn't be happier about that. Our combined efforts to move in a certain direction, from a simple to more complex state have given new shape and meaning to our particular "complex carbohydrate." One thing that won't change is that sweet potatoes will always represent wholesomeness and tradition. And they will always have their seasonal appeal. But change is certain. And be certain that the NCSPC is constantly evolving to meet new demands, to inspire new ideas, and provide for your changing needs.

Sincerely,

Sue Johnson-Langdon  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NORTH CAROLINA SWEETPOTATO COMMISSION, INC.

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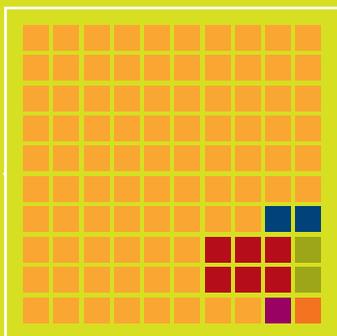
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# Fiscal Year Ending June 2011

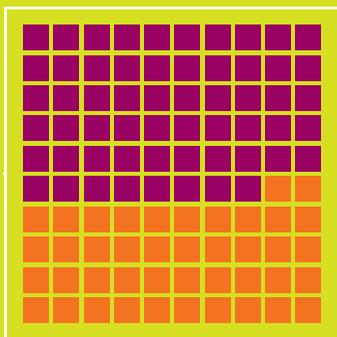
North Carolina SweetPotato Commission, Inc.  
& North Carolina SweetPotato Commission Foundation

## Support, Revenues, and Reclassifications **\$917,943.47**



- Sweet Potato Assessments & Penalties 88%
- Associate Member Dues 2%
- Promotion Agreement Royalties-EPA 2%
- Sales & Sponsorships 1%
- Interest & Debt Recovery 1%
- Net Assets Released From Restrictions 6%

## Program and Support Services Expenses **\$885,550.40**



- Program Services\* 58%
- Support Services\*\* 42%

\*Program Expenses include the NC Department of Justice Project; RAFI Grant Project; 2009 and 2010 Specialty Crop Block Grant Projects; NC Ag Endowment Foundation; public relations, marketing, and promotion fees and expenses (domestic and international); NCSU research; state legislative lobbying expenses; other program expenses related to increasing awareness, consumption, and production of North Carolina sweet potatoes.

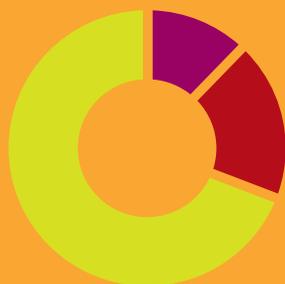
\*\* Support Services include salaries, office expenses (equipment repair and maintenance, rent, supplies, utilities, etc.), legal and accounting fees, consulting fees, printing, professional memberships, and other expenses related to day-to-day office and program administration.

A copy of the statement for the year ending June 30, 2011 is available upon request. Contact the NCSPC at 919.894.1067 or ncsweetsue@aol.com.

# Marketing Report

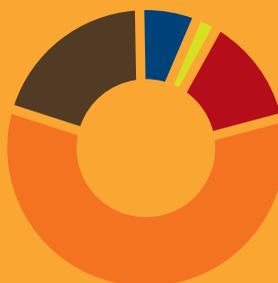
November 10, 2011 – February 25, 2012

**Total 40-Pound Cartons** **4,425,174**



Food Service 583,022 12%  
International 823,021 19%  
Retail 13,064,131 69%

**Total Pounds in Addition to Fresh Market** **56,636,180**



Baby Food 3,699,827 6.5%  
Canners 900,500 1.5%  
Chips 7,383,950 13%  
Frozen 33,189,363 59%  
Other 11,462,540 20%

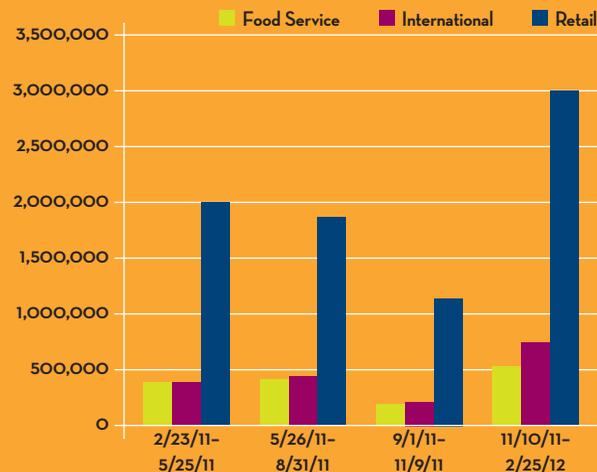
The FOB price ranges for this time period are: US #1 \$14-\$16; US #2 \$7-\$10; Jumbos \$6-\$9; US #1 Petites \$12-\$13.

The 2011 crop season total to date (August 21, 2011 through February 25, 2012) is 6,185,396 (40-pound cartons fresh market sweet potatoes). SOURCE: NCDA&CS MARKET NEWS SECTION.

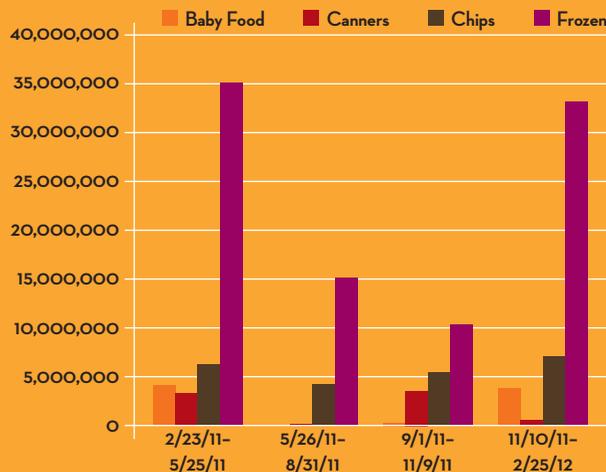
## Marketing Trends at a Glance

February 23, 2011 – February 25, 2012

### 40-Pound Cartons



### Pounds in Addition to Fresh Market



SOURCE: NCDA&CS MARKET NEWS DIVISION.

## *Uptick on Organic*

### NCSPC Foundation awarded SARE grant

The Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education grants and education program (SARE) recently awarded the NCSPC Foundation a Producer Grant in the amount \$15,000. The grant is specifically directed toward expanding organic sweet potato production in North Carolina.



Sustainable Agriculture  
Research & Education

*“This grant will help educate growers about organic sweet potatoes, with the aim of expanding acreage and production.”*

According to the Organic Trade Association’s 2011 *Organic Industry Survey*, US sales of organic food and beverages have grown from \$1 billion in 1990 to \$26.7 billion in 2010. Organic fruits and vegetables demonstrated the highest growth in sales during 2010 at 11.8% from the previous year. Currently, California leads in organic sweet potato production with 84% of the market; North Carolina, with 15% of the organic market, ranks second.

“Organic sweet potato production in North Carolina has lagged at a time when organic food purchases are on the rise,” stated John Kimber, NCSPCF Project Director. “The Board recognizes the opportunity to connect appropriate crop research with an expanding market for organic produce. This grant will help educate growers about organic sweet potatoes, with the aim of expanding acreage and production,” explained Kimber.

The SARE Producer Grant is awarded to farmers and ranchers to conduct on-farm research projects with the objective of educating and sharing research with fellow farmers while finding solutions to marketing and production challenges. This two-year project will begin in May 2012. NCSPCF Board members who are also organic sweet potato growers and Jonathan Shultheis and Nancy Creamer with NCSU Department of Horticulture will collaborate on the survey, design, execution, and reporting of the project.

## »» America’s Drive-In® Touts Sweet Potato Tots

### SONIC is first QSR to test unique tots

In February, SONIC, America’s Drive-In® introduced a new item on their menu—sweet potato tots. Tater tots have long been a favorite side at this popular quick-service restaurant (QSR), so when the food industry started buzzing about sweet potato fries, SONIC took things a step further.

“Everyone is talking about sweet potatoes as a trend but few are putting unique offerings on their menus,” said Clas Petersson, vice president of product and packaging. “SONIC is excited to offer its guests such a distinctive food flavor. If you love SONIC’s tots and sweet potatoes, this is a match made in heaven.”

The tots are on the menu for a limited time. Don’t miss an opportunity to try this sweet, salty and crunchy combo for yourself. With over 3,500 restaurants coast to coast, one can’t be far from wherever you are.

## Upgrade Update

Nearly a dozen growers onboard for storage review

Last winter we reported that the NC Tobacco Trust Fund awarded a \$60,000 grant to the NCSPC Foundation to fund efforts to provide engineering services detailing possible upgrades to each participating owner/operator of post-harvest storage buildings.

Since the middle of February, 11 growers have signed up for the free, confidential review of their storage

facilities being conducted by the NCSU Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department developed and led by Dr. Mike Boyette. Combined, these growers have 59 storage facilities with a capacity of over 2.5 million bushels.

Participation is voluntary, and there is no cost to the owner/operator. All findings and recommendations will be confidential, although gross data may be published in Cooperative Extension newsletters, grower meetings and other industry functions in order to encourage participation. Those interested in participating in this initiative may contact John Kimber, NCSPCF Project Director, at 919.845.0969 or [johnkimber@aol.com](mailto:johnkimber@aol.com).



Spencer SweetPotato—our good-will, good-news ambassador. (File photo)

## Spencer Sweet Potato More Popular Than Ever

Tight schedule keeps mascot hopping



He's always been a hit, but last fall Spencer SweetPotato was all over the map making personal appearances: schools, festivals, auctions, music stages, and parades. There were times the poor guy had only a 10-minute break before being whisked off to the next event which were anywhere from up in the mountains, down to the border with South Carolina, and points between.

Spencer is a wonderful ambassador for our industry. His character displays a wholesome, strong, and healthy attitude that is directly connected to sweet potatoes. And at over six feet tall, wearing vibrant green shoes, a contagious smile, and a bright orange suit, he's hard to miss! For information about booking an appearance for a special event, please contact the Commission at 919.894.1067 or [ncsweetsue@aol.com](mailto:ncsweetsue@aol.com).

## 4G Sweet Potato Going, Going, Gone...Global

It may have been frigid in February, but freezing temps could not stop the hot (or “haute”) North Carolina sweet potato contingency from warming up the crowds at Fruitlogistica in Berlin, Germany. Kelly Mclver, NCDA&CS Specialist, and our own Sue Johnson-Langdon worked the booths, walked the show, and made sure that NC sweet potatoes were well represented.

This was the second year that NCDA&CS and NCSPC participated in the world’s largest international fresh produce trade show, and it was a record setting event: 2,537 exhibitors with over 56,000 trade visitors from 139 countries. Sweet potatoes have established a global ID, and there’s no turning back.

“This is an excellent opportunity for our sweet potato industry,” said Johnson-Langdon. “At an event such as this, producers are able to make face-to-face contact with international buyers and make new business connections that will benefit all of our growers. Business gets done at this show,” she continued.

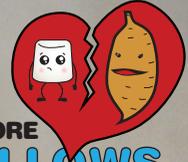
According to the Fruitlogistica organizers, approximately three-quarters of the trade show visitors hold key decision-making positions as managing directors and department heads—those responsible for purchasing and procurement. Additional statistics from the event indicate that one-third of the trade visitors signed deals during the show and another 78% plan to follow-up negotiations and transactions with their new business contacts.



A chef prepares sweet potatoes for sampling at Fruitlogistica, the world’s largest fresh produce trade show.

# All Substance, No Fluff

## “No More ‘Mallows” blogger recipe contest



**NO MORE MALLOWES**  
Blogger Recipe Contest  
North Carolina SweetPotato Commission

Recipe contests seem to never go out of style, which is why NCSPC sponsored another tasty challenge, this time celebrating the versatility of sweet potatoes. The “No More ‘Mallows” contest encouraged creativity in any recipe category—appetizers to desserts—but entries had to be nontraditional—no pies, muffins, casseroles, or marshmallows allowed!

Bloggers were invited to post their original recipe, a photo, the inspiration for their creation and the picture of the “No More ‘Mallows” picketer on their blog post between March 1st and 31st. Lewis & Neale, the Commission’s PR agency managed the contest and posted the entries on Facebook.

A panel of culinary professionals whittled down 134 original entries to six finalists and awarded four prizes based on taste, originality, importance of sweet potatoes, and ease of preparation. The grand prize was \$2000 with three runner-up prizes of \$500 each, bringing the total prize money to \$3,500. NCSPC’s web page, Facebook, the Sweet Bytes recipe blog, and other bloggers promoted the contest online. Sweet!



## »» *Our State’s Super Food*

### Colorful ad highlights powers of sweet potatoes in key NC publication

This full-page ad was also on the magazine’s website. One mouse click took browsers to the NCSPC site.

That’s right. Sweet potatoes are the vegetable with super food powers. We’re proud that NC is the leader in production of this heart healthy, low fat, low calorie, nutritious, and delicious vegetable.

So proud, in fact, that our partners in promotion, NCDA&CS, helped us create and publish a full-page advertisement in *Our State* magazine to remind readers in and outside of North Carolina that sweet potatoes are good for you. The advertisement ran in the March issue and also appeared on the magazine’s website with a link to the NCSPC website.

And here are some interesting statistics about the magazine and its readers that show this placement hit a bull’s eye with our target audience—

- 97% spend at least thirty minutes reading *Our State* each month
- 80% live a lifestyle that incorporates fitness and exercise
- 87% of subscribers renew their subscription—nearly three times the national average
- 65% visit the magazine’s website
- 61% save their issues, and 50% share theirs with others

*Our State* readers are here in North Carolina and scattered around the country and the world—super exposure for our own favorite super hero.

(SOURCE: CIRCULATION VERIFICATION COUNCIL AUDIT; THE BOONE GROUP; CORPORATE RESEARCH; US CENSUS BUREAU)



# Sampling Sways Supermarket Shoppers

Retail promotions reach new consumer group

Last summer the NCSPC's German public relations and marketing firm, MK-2 coordinated a sweet potato sampling program in three major grocery chains: Karstadt, Kaufhof, and Globus. Take a look at these impressive supermarket sampling statistics gathered for the 148 days of point of sale promotion—

- Karstadt Perfitto, #2 German food retailer - 60 days of promotion in 30 affiliates
- Galeria Kaufhof, #5 German food retailer - 38 days of promotion in 19 affiliates
- Globus, among top 10 German retailer - 50 days of promotion in 20 affiliates

The Commission's Sue Johnson-Langdon and NCDA&CS International Marketing Specialist, Kelly McIver, traveled to Germany to visit and observe the sampling program firsthand. Consumers tasted sweet potato rounds sautéed in olive oil and also received recipe cards for further inspiration. "The take on the cards was almost a hundred percent," observed Johnson-Langdon. "At one store, the sweet potato samplers were so busy that the woman sampling lettuce ended up helping the sweet potato sampling, too," she added.



Attractive sampling stations at point of sale drew in new sweet potato consumers.

# Marketing to the Media Reaches the Masses

Print and electronic outreach reaps results in Germany



In another tactic to reach consumers in Germany, MK-2 developed a "BBQ with Sweet Potatoes from North Carolina" theme to include newly developed, delicious recipes; stunning, fresh photography; cooking tips; and health and nutrition information. This outreach raked in exciting exposure and results for North Carolina sweet potatoes in print and online—

- **Leicht & Lecker (Light & Tasty)** - a recipe magazine featuring "smart, slender" recipes all under 500 calories; circulation 76,000
- **My Time Magazine** - circulation 7,000
- **Gastronomie & Hotellerie** - a trade journal for chefs, caterers, food-service personnel, and managers; circulation 41,700
- **Lisa Kochen & Bocken (online portal)** - features recipes for everyday cooking; 1,260,000 unique visitors, monthly

NCSPC along with its partner, NCDA&CS, is looking forward to future promotions in this and other international markets.

⤴  
The BBQ and NC Sweet Potatoes theme got pick-up in key pubs.

## Location, Location, Location

### Scientists working to identify white grub real estate

Researchers at NCSU's Vegetable Entomology Department are taking aim at invasive soil-dwelling pests—in particular, the white grub, *Plectris aliena*. The white grub presents a particular challenge because it's difficult to track. Scientists are trying to find out why the grubs choose some pieces of real estate and leave others alone.

"We are looking for answers to why the white grub appears in some fields and not others. Being able to identify connections to infestations will allow growers to pinpoint and avoid high-risk fields," explained Mark Abney, assistant professor at the NCSU Department of Entomology.

New tactics include developing a system to track the spread and distribution of the white grub by identifying the pheromone, or chemical, the adult female beetle produces to attract the male beetle for mating. Significant progress in the search for the pheromone in 2011 means field trials of prospective compounds will begin this year.

NCSU graduate student Nancy Brill has been investigating other factors, including temperature that may limit its spread. Laboratory studies determined that overwintering grubs are susceptible to freezing at temperatures below 24°F. However, even during the coldest time of the year in eastern NC, soil temperatures at depths greater than four inches do not drop below 24°F.

Controlling pests costs money. That's why the goal of the extension and outreach programs of the NCSU Vegetable Entomology Department is to find ways to cut costs to manage pests while continuing to "strengthen the vegetable industry by improving the economic and environmental sustainability of pest management strategies." This research is one example of how science and scientists are key partners in promoting the sweet potato industry.



## » Old Technology, Newly Applied, Could Bolster Profits

### Demand for domestic dehydrated sweet potatoes fuels research

One reason our industry continues to grow like it does is because talented and innovative researchers continue to find new ways to put the vegetable to good use. This time the focus is on dried sweet potatoes for use in pet products and human consumption. Currently, the US imports approximately five million pounds, 83%, of dried sweet potatoes from China and Peru. Manufacturers want to source dried sweet potatoes in this country to ensure a safer, more reliable product ingredient, but current domestic prices slash their profits.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

Opportunity to decrease dependence on imports is real. The NCSPC Foundation is working to find a way to provide more dehydrated sweet potatoes at a lower cost than current US product by deploying drying technology typically used to cure tobacco. A \$30,000 grant from the Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA recently kick started research and testing to fine-tune cost-effective production. Trials took place at Barnes Farming and focused on the impact of temperature and time to dry 14,500 pounds of sweet potatoes.

John Kimber, project director for the NCSPC Foundation, is very hopeful for the future of this unique value-added product, “The fact that the Foundation was able to secure grant funding in a tough funding environment is very encouraging. In concert with Dr. Mike Boyette [NCSU Bio and Ag Engineering], Den Truong [USDA], Dr. Korinn Saker [NCSU Veterinarian College], and Roger Townley [Townley Associates], we have shown that growers have an opportunity, either working together as a company or separately, to use existing drying technology to create a new business opportunity.”



Barnes Farming participates in dehydrated sweet potato trials.

## *Prevention and Protection Are Polestar in Futuristic Research*

### Scientists investigate index and ingredients

**T**wo research projects funded in 2011 are addressing two questions: Does color affect the glycemic index (GI) of sweet potatoes? And what kinds of sweet potato products can be used as ingredients in “functional foods”?

**COLOR & THE GLYCEMIC INDEX** – Sweet potatoes are considered to be a low-glycemic food and therefore, suitable for a diabetic diet. With more varieties being cultivated and introduced into the marketplace, consumers are bound to ask: Is the GI the same for purple, orange, white, or yellow sweet potatoes? Is the starch and fiber metabolized differently according to color? Dr. Jonathan Allen, Food Science Coordinator, Nutrition Program Director of Graduate Program at the NCSU Raleigh is working on the answers.

**FORM & FUNCTION** – Dr. Mary Ann Lila, Food Science Director at Plants for Human Health Institute at the NC Research Campus in Kannapolis, is working to develop new sweet potato products (i.e. sweet potato flour) that can be used as ingredients in “functional food” products—healthful foods that claim to offer disease-preventing or health-promoting properties in addition to their basic nutritive content.

Results of this future-focused research have promising and long-lasting implications for preventing disease and improving human health and our industry.



## Four Lessons in Effective Pest Management

Download two-page guide and take control

A few months ago we told you about the new “Insect Management Guide” created by NCSU Department of Entomology. The guide helps take the guesswork out of when, where, what, how often, and how much pesticide to use to maximize control over root and leaf feeding insects. Corn and tobacco wireworms, flea beetle larvae, and caterpillar pests are specifically targeted.

“Today’s recommendations provide good control, but damage still occurs in some fields,” explains Mark Abney, assistant professor with NCSU Department of Entomology. “We’ll continue to evaluate new insecticidal chemistries and application methods that will increase control while reducing costs to growers and minimizing environmental impact.”

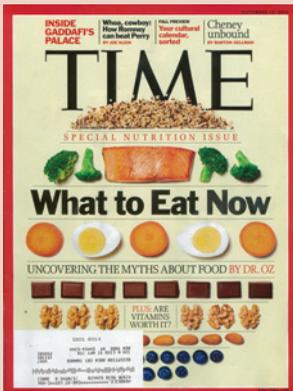
Wireworm damage is still the most common insect problem facing NC sweet potato growers, and two species, the tobacco wireworm and the corn wireworm, are responsible for most of the damage.

The two-page guide is available to download and print at [www.4.ncsu.edu/~mrabney2/index-4.html](http://www.4.ncsu.edu/~mrabney2/index-4.html). Other insect management guides are available at this site.



## Two National Pubs Teach Type and Nutrition

Just in time for prime time sweet potato season



Last fall two national publications hit the stands promoting sweet potatoes as a nutritious, traditional, and delicious fall favorite.

The special nutrition issue of *Time* (September 14) included an article by Dr. Mehmet Oz, the cardiologist who gained national attention on the popular *Oprah* show and who now hosts his own daily program. *The Dr. Oz Show* focuses on health issues and promotes active lifestyles that include a heart healthy foods.

The article underscored the virtues of moderation, portion control, and exercise. So that readers “got the picture,” a photo of sliced sweet potatoes graced the cover of the magazine. A second photo of sweet potato chunks and other heart-healthy foods further supported the article. This connection to nutrition and its well-known and credible messenger, Dr. Oz, is invaluable endorsement that sweet potatoes offer tasty and healthy meal solutions.

Ben Mims, the associate food editor at *Saveur*, contacted the Commission to learn everything he could about sweet potato varieties. “Sweet Sue” shipped 40 pounds for him to experiment with. The November issue not only included a cornucopia of sweet potato recipes, but a full-page chart with photos of 16 sweet potato varieties, their names, and flavor profiles. The history of the sweet potato casserole added some nostalgia to the article, and Mims shared his favorite way to enjoy sweet potatoes—baked with a dab of butter, brown sugar, cracked pepper, and a sprinkle of kosher salt—another unsolicited, third party endorsement!

## System Update

### E-Verify system and immigration hot topics

In October 2011, Johnny Barnes of Barnes Farming and John Cooper, NCSPC's lobbyist at the General Assembly, met with Representative Walter Jones (R, District 3) to discuss the NC General Assembly's stringent E-Verify law that is scheduled to take effect in 2013. The verification system was created as a tool to allow employers to electronically verify authorized employment of newly hired employees. The result has been a significant increase in labor costs and lower numbers of field laborers, putting a financial burden on many growers during this past harvest. Jones was very supportive and agreed to work with members, the Farm Bureau and other organizations regarding the current labor situation and cumbersome system.

As is the case in many states, immigration, specifically illegal immigration, is a hot topic. The North Carolina House has created a committee specifically to study the state's role in illegal immigration. The expectation is that no recommendations will be made until the Supreme Court takes up the Arizona immigration laws and renders a decision in June.



(From left) Johnny Barnes, Representative Walter Jones, and John Cooper



## Delegation Talks Legislation

### Three key issues on the table

In February 28 and 29, a delegation of NCSPC board members, representatives, and lobbyists connected with congressional leaders to educate them about the state's top crop—sweet potatoes—and to address three key federal issues affecting growers: technical correction for sweet potato assessment, H2A/Adverse Wage Index, and E-verify legislation. The delegation from North Carolina held meetings with a number of legislators and hosted a reception to foster relationships, discuss the issues and sample a bevy of sweet potatoes hors d'oeuvres made with North Carolina sweet potatoes.

Photo A (L-R): Johnny Barnes, John Kimber, Dewey Scott, David Godwin, Sue Johnson-Langdon, Congressman Kissell, Brent Leggett, Rob Hill, Adam Wooten, Jim Jones, George Wooten III

Photo B (L-R): Johnny Barnes, Dewey Scott, David Godwin, Sue Johnson-Langdon, Congresswoman Ellmers, Brent Leggett, Rob Hill, Adam Wooten, Jim Jones, George Wooten III

Photo C (L-R): Deborah Fetting, George Wooten III, Adam Wooten, Brent Leggett, Rob Hill, David Godwin, Senator Hagan, John Kimber, Dewey Scott, Jim Jones, Lisa and Johnny Barnes

# The Feds and the Farm Bill

## House and Senate all ears

The US House of Representative completed four field hearings in April in regards to the 2012 Farm Bill. All four of the hearings were listening sessions for all aspects of the Bill. Specialty crops were not the focus of these hearings, but it is anticipated that they will be considered at hearings scheduled in the capitol in May or June.

The US Senate held four hearings in Washington D.C. and will continue through late spring. They will focus on four points of the Farm Bill—

• Energy and Economic Growth • Conservation • Healthy Food Initiatives • Risk Management and Commodities

When it comes to crunching the numbers, agriculture will feel an impact. The bi-partisan Debt Commission received a proposal from the House and Senate Agriculture Committee the included \$23 billion in cuts over the next ten years.

It is anticipated that there will be a one-year extension of the current Farm Bill prior to the September 2012 deadline.



**Photo A (L-R):** (front row) Sue Johnson-Langdon, US Representative Renee Ellmers, Rob Hill (back row) George Wooten, Dewey Scott, Adam Wooten, Johnny Barnes

**Photo B (L-R):** (front row) Rob Hill, US Senator Kay Hagan, Sue Johnson-Langdon, Johnny Barnes, Howard Fisackerly, Dewey Scott, Adam Wooten

**Photo C (L-R):** (front row) George Wooten, Rob Hill, Sue Johnson-Langdon (back row) Dewey Scott, US Senator Richard Burr, Johnny Barnes, Adam Wooten

## Issues Management Calling on Capitol Hill

Last summer, NCSPC board members made a trip to the nation's capitol to meet face to face with government leaders and demonstrate a collective concern for issues including but not limited to the 2012 Farm Bill legislation.

Topping the list for discussion was the current guest worker program, which currently falls under the 2009 Department of Labor (DOL) Executive Order. Board members stressed the need to change the costly and cumbersome H-2A and E-Verify legislation for more affordable and reliable options to prevent a negative impact on growers and the state's agriculture sector.

Access to accurate, up-to-date acreage counts was a hot topic during the desk-side blitz. NCSPC receives the bulk its annual funds from assessments of \$15 per planted acre. For the 2010–2011 fiscal year, that amounted to 87 percent of the total budget (see page 3). Having current and correct information is vital to the planning and execution of the numerous programs that benefit the state's sweet potato industry. Board members again stressed the importance of keeping this information current, correct, and close at hand. The information is available from the USDA Farm Service Agency.

# 2012-2013

## Board of Directors

Rob Hill, President  
Tull Hill Farms • Kinston, NC  
252.523.4406; thfarms@centurylink.net

Johnny C. Barnes, Vice President  
Barnes Farming Corp. • Spring Hope, NC  
252.459.3101; johnny@farmpak.com

George Massengill, Secretary-Treasurer  
Hill Top Farms • Four Oaks, NC  
919.894.4611; georgemassengill@ncrrbiz.com

Sue Johnson-Langdon, Executive Director  
North Carolina SweetPotato Commission • Benson, NC  
919.894.1067; ncsweetsue@aol.com

## Board Members

Dwayne Ferrell | JDM Food Group • Sims, NC  
252.218.8095; dwayne.ferrell@jdmfoodgroup.co.uk

David Godwin | Godwin Produce Company • Dunn, NC  
910.892.4171; sweettater@aol.com

Jim D. Jones | Jones Farms • Bailey, NC  
252.235.3248; jonesfarmssc@aol.com

Phil Hudson | John Hudson Farms, Inc. • Newton Grove, NC  
910.337.1711; jhudso2@yahoo.com

Danny F. Kornegay, Jr. | Kornegay Farms • Princeton, NC  
919.936.0211; tkornegay4@aol.com

Brent Leggett | Leggett Farming Partnership • Nashville, NC  
252.467.2776; leggettfarms@embarqmail.com

Dewey Scott | Scott Farms, Inc. • Lucama, NC  
919.284.4030; dewey@scottfarms.com

Terrell Williams | H. Williams & Sons • Autryville, NC  
910.567.4337

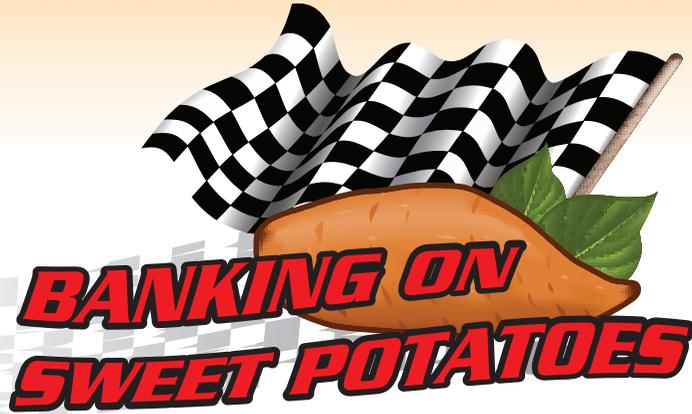
Adam Wooten | Wayne E. Bailey Produce Co. • Chadbourn, NC  
910.654.5163

## Associate Members

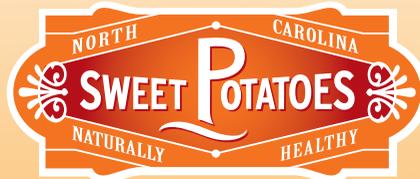
5 Girls Produce, LLC - Clinton, NC  
Ag World Support Systems - Moses Lake, WA  
Allen's, Inc. - Turkey, NC  
Arcola Hardwood Company - Warrenton, NC  
Clinton Truck & Tractor Co., Inc. - Clinton, NC  
Crop Management Services - Princeton, NC  
Farm Fresh Produce - Faison, NC  
Farm Pak Products, Inc. - Spring Hope, NC  
First Citizens Bank & Trust - Clinton, NC  
Ham Produce Company - Snow Hill, NC  
J. R. Simplot - Caldwell, ID  
John Deere Water - Apex, NC  
L & M Companies - Raleigh, NC  
Manry Rawls Insurance - Franklin, VA  
McCain Foods USA, Inc. - Lisle, IL  
Moody Dunbar, Inc. - Dunn, NC  
Nash Produce - Nashville, NC  
NC Certified Sweet Potato Breed Producers - Bailey, NC  
Netafilm - Fresno, CA  
Reliable Farm Data Research, Inc. - Clinton, NC  
Russet House - Quebec, Canada  
SAIL Sea Air Integrated Logistics LLC - Wilson, NC  
Sandhills Consolidated - Lillington, NC  
Scott Farms, Inc. - Lucama, NC  
Spring Acres Sales Company - Spring Hope, NC  
Strickland Bros. Enterprises, Inc. - Spring Hope, NC  
Universal Forest Products, Inc. - Grand Rapids, MI  
Vick Family Farms Partnership - Wilson, NC  
Wada Farms Marketing Group, LLC - Idaho Falls, ID  
Wayne E. Bailey Produce Company, Inc. - Chadbourn, NC  
Williamson Produce, Inc. - Wilson, NC  
Yara North America - Beaufort, NC



*NCSPC is hosting the national conference,  
January 20-22, 2013. Mark your calendars!*



*The 51st Meeting of the United States  
Sweet Potato Council - Charlotte, NC*



P.O. Box 609  
Benson, North Carolina 27504  
919.894.1067

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