

ISSUE

04

MAY
2015



sweetpotato speak

Board of Directors

Rob Hill, **PRESIDENT**

Tull Hill Farms
Kinston, NC

Brent Leggett, **VICE**

PRESIDENT

Leggett Farming Partnership
Nashville, NC

George Massengill

SECRETARY-TREASURER

Hill Top Farms
Four Oaks, NC

Adam Wooten

Wayne E. Bailey Produce Co.
Chadbourn, NC

David Godwin

Godwin Produce, Inc.
Dunn, NC

Jeffery Lee

Jeffery Lee Farms
Four Oaks, NC

Jim Jones

Jones Family Farms
Bailey, NC

Johnny Barnes

Barnes Farming Corp.
Spring Hope, NC

Keith Smith

KS Farms
Four Oaks, NC

Robert Boyette

Boyette Brothers Produce
Rock Ridge, NC

Stacy Ham

Ham Produce, Inc.
Snow Hill, NC

Thomas Joyner

Nash Produce
Nashville, NC

news about the nc sweetpotato industry



this issue

Potpourri - The Spice of Life **P.1**

NC Ag Day - March 18, 2015 **P.2**

Camp BlogAway - Bootcamp **P.3**

The Non-GMO Sweet Potato Hubbub **P.4**

Market News Stats **P.5**

NCSPC Event Calendar **P.6**

POTPOURRI - THE SPICE OF LIFE

Webster's Dictionary describes the French word 'potpourri' as meaning "a collection of different things." It is one of the best words to describe the Commission's happenings in this newsletter over the past 3 months.

The 2015 board members have settled down to business. You only see their name and location not the amount of time volunteered for board and committee meetings (8-10 per year), lobbying events, strategic plan reviews, NCSU research related events, etc.

Associate Members are growing both in number and diversity. Please source them for your inputs whether agricultural, technology, supplies or service related.

The NC Ag Awareness Day took an army of people and lots of pre-planning to be successful. Because we employ a legislative consultancy and a team of 3 board members who lobby on your behalf, we were able to deliver targeted messages to key legislators as well as an exhibit booth with a knowledgeable staff and a taste of a "sweet" smoothie.

The Commission monitors the web for news affecting sweet potatoes. In April

2015, Google Alerts led us to an article entitled "Researchers find the genome of the cultivated sweet potato has bacterial DNA". Realizing the detrimental effect this can have on sweet potato sales, especially exports, the crisis team jumped into action. The article in Lab Notes is the prepared statement that was developed for your usage on this topic.

A second definition of potpourri is a mixture of dried petals and spices placed in a container to perfume a room. The promotional programs of the Commission does just that - perfumes the dullness of administrative stuff into a fragrance that fills the entire sweet potato industry. Social media is the best, most consistent way to communicate directly with consumers. Camp Blogaway set the blogger world on fire with our message of flavor, versatility and availability.

The rest of the potpourri is the daily email stream, the distribution of information, and a variety of other meetings. All of these things are truly the "Spice of Life" at the North Carolina Sweet Potato Commission.



2014-2015 Associate Members

5 Girls Produce
Clinton, NC

Arcola Hardwood Company
Warrenton NC

Atlantic Packaging
Wilmington, NC

B&B Produce
Benson, NC

BB & T Bank
Smithfield, NC

BB Hobbs Company
Darlington, SC

Brandt Ag Products
Godwin, NC

Carolina Eastern-Benson
Benson, NC

**Carolina Innovative Food
Ingredients**
Nashville, NC

Clinton Truck & Tractor
Clinton, NC

Coastal Agro Business
Greenville, NC

Crop Management Services
Princeton, NC

D & S Farms
Atwater, CA

Diversified Services
Jacksonville, FL

Farm Credit of NC
Raleigh, NC

Farm Fresh Produce
Faison, NC

Farm Pak Products
Spring Hope, NC

First Citizens Bank
Raleigh, NC

Frost, PLLC
Raleigh, NC

Getsco
Middlesex, NC

Ham Produce
Snow Hill, NC

J.R. Simplot Co.
Winterville, NC

Manry-Rawls
Franklin, VA

McCain Foods
Lisle, IL

McCall Farms/Bruce's Yams
Wilson, NC



CAPITOL BRIEFS

North Carolina Ag Day - March 18, 2015

In celebration of National Agriculture Day, farmers, food entrepreneurs, commodity associations and government representatives gathered at the North Carolina General Assembly in Raleigh on March 18 for the first-ever N.C. Ag Awareness Day. Your NCSPC staff and board lobbying team were on hand and pounding the pavement.

A high percentage of the NC General Assembly members have served less than 3 full terms, so a lot of education needs to be done about the importance and size of North Carolina's Agriculture Industry; commodity groups and organizations from across the state came together to share this message.

We had a joint meeting with House Agriculture Chairs Rep. Langdon, Rep. Dixon and Rep. Brody. We also met with Rep. West and Rep. Warren.

In the Senate, we met with Senate Agriculture chairs, Sen. Brock and Sen. Wade as well as the Appropriations Chair, Sen. Jackson

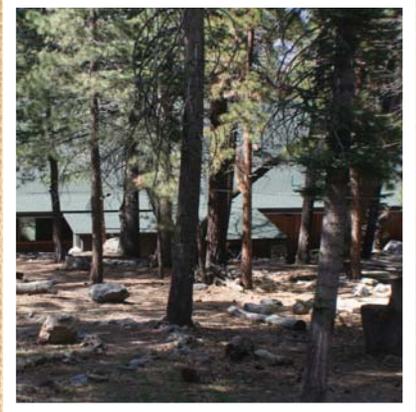
Four major issues were discussed with all members, the primary bill sponsor is listed next to the title.

1. HB 328: Highway Safety/Citizen Protection Act – Rep. Harry Warren
2. SB 513: North Carolina Farm Act of 2015 – Sen. Brent Jackson
3. SB 369: Sales Tax Fairness Act – Sen. Harry Brown

4. HB 227: Broaden Sales Tax Exemption for Farmers – Rep. Bryan Holloway

While the lobbying team met with these key state decision makers, the NCSPC staff was busy sampling our Sweet Potato Creamsicle Smoothie to the masses of people who ventured through the legislative building. All in all, sweet potatoes were represented well and the day was a success!





MARKETING WORTH MENTIONING

Camp BlogAway - Bootcamp for bloggers

On Friday, May 1st over 100 bloggers, dieticians, chefs, sponsors and presenters traveled from across the USA to California to spend the weekend at Camp Blogaway, held at a mountain camp 7300 ft. above sea level. Attendees shared cabins in the woods, surrounded by the peaceful sounds of nature. Being “unplugged” (no phone or internet) created a serene setting to learn, share and present our “sweet” message with the bloggersphere.

The goal of the weekend was to network with influential bloggers and share sweet potato information and recipes. CoCo gave a 30-minute presentation to educate the attendees on the sweet potato industry, health benefits and nutrition as well as methods of preparation.

The audience was bursting with questions and were thrilled that North Carolina sweet potatoes have such diversity in color, flavor and preparation. They were curious to learn more about the nutritional breakdowns of other varieties (i.e. purple & white). When discussing the year round availability they were impressed to learn more about the growing and storage process. Many asked how they could find out if their grocer carried NC sweet potatoes.

Another win for NCSPC was that we had sweets from both California and North Carolina on site. They could see and taste the difference for themselves.

To appeal to our audience we sampled a variety of recipes to share and educate about the versatility of our extraordinary vegetable. The recipes prepared were:

- o Classic Baked Sweet Potato (white and orange) with Assorted DIY Toppings

- o Sweet Potato Creamsicle Smoothie

- o Sweet Potato Curry Soup with Thai Pesto

We also launched an Instagram contest with bloggers encouraging them to share a picture of a sweet potato dish and follow us on Instagram. Contest winner will receive a \$100 grocery gift card.

Campers raved about all they tasted, but the hit of the list was our Sweet Potato Creamsicle Smoothie. As dieticians noted that the smoothie trend is at its height, no one had thought of using sweet potatoes in this medium. After sampling, enjoying the taste and discovering the nutritional content, many shared that they would be incorporating the sweet potato into their drinks, writing and their personal lives.

The focus for the weekend was to cultivate relationships and educate the blogger community with regards to sweet potatoes. At the conclusion of the weekend, Michelle (our rep from PadillaCRT) who attended, and I felt we had succeeded in our mission.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER

Diversified Services

Crop Insurance, Grain Marketing, Financial Services

217-479-6068

Jacksonville, FL

www.diversifiedservices.com

ASSOCIATE



LAB NOTES

The NON-GMO Sweet Potato Hubbub

The recent research report that sweet potato represents an example of a “non-transgenic crop” that developed at least 8,000 years ago is a very interesting scientific development. While this research is interesting from a scientific point, it does not change the status of sweet potato as a tasty, highly nutritious and safe food crop enjoyed throughout the world. Sweet potato is the seventh largest global crop (following only wheat, maize, rice, potato, barley and cassava), with no adverse health effects noted. On the contrary, sweet potatoes have been consistently considered a **SUPER FOOD** by many organizations.

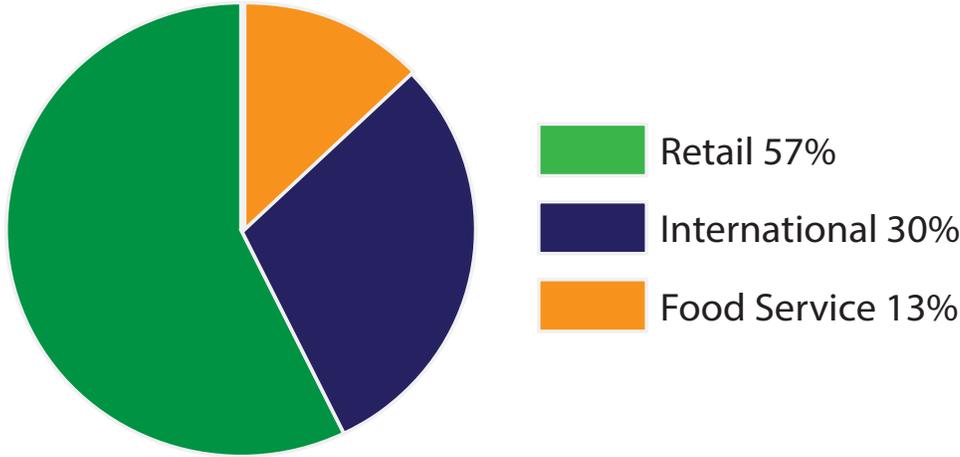
The recent finding that sweet potatoes are an example of a “non-transgenic crop” is the result of a process called horizontal gene transfer, a natural process, in which naturally occurring symbiotic soil bacteria and fungi introduce genes into a plant to enhance its survival. Over time, through several different genetic mechanisms, some of these genes may be incorporated into their host and there is speculation that while most of these genes have a neutral effect on the crop, some also enhance a crop’s ability to survive or even adapt to new envi-

ronments. Molecular scientists have harnessed this natural process to introduce new genes for herbicide and insect resistance into a wide range of laboratory-developed GMO crops. ***However, the sweet potatoes currently available in the market have not been developed using this laboratory-based method and are the result of conventional breeding methods.*** The recognition that most cultivated sweet potato varieties contain transfer-DNA (T-DNA) elements, which have been used to produce some GMO crops, in their DNA blueprint has arisen due to new DNA detection technologies that have only recently become available. Indeed, scientists expect to find many other domesticated fruits and vegetables that are a “natural GMO.”

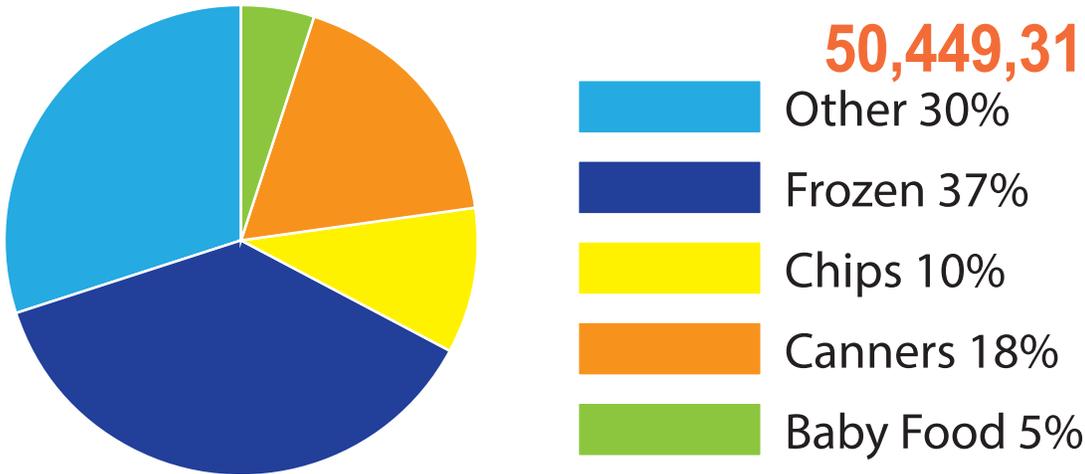
This will undoubtedly challenge us all to reconsider our assumptions about the role of laboratory-based GMO crops in society, and each of us will have to come to our own conclusions. For now, however, please rest easy. Sweet potato is still a remarkably diverse, important and highly nutritious food crop for the world that is naturally healthy and safe to serve to your family.

NC Marketing Report as of May 9, 2015

Total - 40 Pound Cartons 3,495,138



**Total Pounds in addition to Fresh Market
50,449,317**



The FOB Prices ranges for this time are:

- US#1 \$16-\$18
- US #2 \$8 - \$10
- Jumbos \$9 - \$10
- US #1 \$13 - 15
- Petite

The 2014 crop season total to date (August 3, 2014 - May 9, 2015 is: 11,684,691 (40 pound cartons fresh market sweet potatoes) this compares to 9,104,702 for the total to date last season of the 2013 crop.

*Source: NCDA & CS Market News



2014-2015 Associate Members

Moody Dunbar, Inc.
Dunn, NC

Nash Produce
Nashville, NC

NC Yam Festival
Tabor City, NC

Netafim
Fresno, CA

Pratt Industries
Statesville, NC

Russett House
Bedminster, NJ

Sager Creek Vegetable Co.
Turkey, NC

SAIL- Sea, Air, Integrated Logistics
Wilson, NC

Scott Farms
Lucama, NC

Snow Tractor & Equipment
Ayden, NC

Southern Container
Wilson, NC

Southern Produce
Faison, NC

Spring Acres Sales Co.
Spring Hope, NC

SSI Packaging Group
Richmond, VA

Steele Plant Company
Gleason, TN

Strickland Brothers Enterprise
Spring Hope, NC

Techmark, Inc.
Lansing, MI

Triangle Insurance & Associates
Louisburg, NC

Trust Freight Services
Jamaica, NY

Valent
Lumberton, NC

Vick Family Farms
Wilson, NC

Wada Farms Marketing
Raleigh, NC

Wayne E. Bailey Produce Co.
Chadbourn, NC

Williamson Produce
Wilson, NC

Annual Meeting Location Change!

You said, and we listened! Many have suggested we have outgrown our Annual Meeting Space. In order to serve you better and provide ample opportunity to visit vendors, we are moving to:

SAMPSON COUNTY AGRI-EXPO
CENTER
414 Warsaw Road
Clinton, NC 28328

In keeping with tradition, the meeting will be January 21, 2016. On-site registration will begin at 8:00AM and the program will begin at 9:00AM. Lunch is provided.



Upcoming Events

MAY

- 1-3 Presentation @ Camp (Sponsorship & Exhibit)
- 12 Research Committee Meeting
- 14 Media Dinner Lab Promotion – New York
- 25 Memorial Day – Office Closed
- 27 Military Appreciation Day – Morehead (Sponsor)
- 28 Finance Committee Meeting
- 29 Ft. Bragg South, Sampling Event

JUNE

- 9 Board Meeting
- 21-24 ASPMI & US Council Mid- Year Board Meetings – Washington, D.C.

JULY

- 4 Independence Day – Office Closed
- 13 Crisis Management Training – Staff
- 15 Photoshoot – Chef Vivian Howard
- 20-24 ASPMI – USDA/FSA Audit

AUGUST

- 11 Board Meeting



North Carolina SweetPotato Commission
700 E. Parrish Dr. Suite C
Benson, NC 27504
919.894.1067 ph
919.894.7018 fax
www.ncsweetpotatoes.com