Bladen County Voluntary Agriculture District (VAD)

On June 4, 2007, the Bladen County Commissioners approved Bladen County to become part of the Voluntary Agriculture District (VAD) program. The purpose of this program is to encourage the voluntary preservation and protection of farmland from non-farm development. The Bladen County Voluntary Agricultural Districts will be governed by an Agricultural Board composed of five members. These members will be appointed by the Bladen County Board of Commissioners. To be qualified for the Voluntary Agriculture District program, farmland must:

* Have a FSA issued farm or tract number

* The property shall be certified by the USDA FSA, NRCS, Bladen County Extension, and the Bladen SWCD as being a farm on which at least two-thirds of the land is composed of soils that: Have good farming qualities and are favorable for crops, livestock, ornamentals, Christmas trees or timber common to Bladen County.

You can enroll your farm in the program by picking up an application from the Bladen County Cooperative Extension Office and returning the completed application with a check payable to Bladen County Cooperative Extension in the amount of $65.00. This $65.00 will provide you a membership sign for your farm.

For applications and information, contact Bladen County Cooperative Extension

Request For Crop Residue To aid With Livestock Feeding

Due to the drought we are experiencing in our area, many livestock producers are faced with a shortage of hay. We are compiling a list of farmers that will allow livestock producers to bale crop residue for feed over the winter months. If you would be interested in allowing your crop residue to be baled, please contact me so we may add your name to the list.

If you are thinking of cutting any crops before harvest, please contact your insurance agent before doing so. Some types of insurance may not pay crop loss insurance if cut before an appraisal is done.
Farmer-Saved Wheat Seed: Regulations You Should Be Aware Of

Patented Wheat Seed And Plant Back
As small grain planting time draws closer, growers are deciding which varieties to plant and where they will get their seed. Some have already booked seed with their dealer, some are waiting to see how the year progresses before making this decision, and some will rely on seed they grew last year on their own farms. In the past, other than quality issues, saving wheat seed to plant back on your farm was not a concern. Today however, some wheat varieties carry a utility patent that makes saving seed of these varieties illegal. Growers are urged to look closely at what seed they are considering saving for plant-back. If the grain in the bin was produced from seed of a patented variety, growers should sell that as grain and select other sources of seed to plant.

Plant Back For Cover Crops?
Some growers may have questions about their right to save seed based on their intended use of that seed. For example, what if I am only planting cover crop wheat? Can I save seed from a patented wheat variety? The answer is no. It does not matter what the crop will be used for. No seed of patented varieties can be saved for planting purposes regardless of the intended use of the crop.

Patented Seed And Custom Cleaners
What about custom seed cleaners? What are their responsibilities? Custom cleaners are liable for any seed of patented varieties found in their facility. To avoid law suits, custom cleaners should consider having growers sign statements related to the identity of the seed to be cleaned, including the variety name, the company that sells the variety, the farm from which the seed came, the amount of seed to be cleaned, and the name and address of the person requesting cleaning service. While taking these steps will not eliminate liability risk, it will substantially decrease it and should reduce the risk of the cleaner being guilty of willful infringement.

Avoid Violations
Violation of patent laws is serious and penalties can be substantial. Growers, retail dealers, and custom cleaners should be aware of all Federal and State laws pertaining to saving seed and handling seed.

J. F. Spears – Extension Seed Specialist, Randy Weisz – Extension Small Grain Specialist
Department of Crop Science North Carolina State University

UPCOMING EVENTS

- September 13: Pesticide Credit Recertification Class, V Credit
- September 15: Dublin Peanut Festival
- September 20: Pesticide Credit Recertification Class, X Credit
**Soybeans For Hay or Soybeans For Grain**

Many of you farmers are patiently waiting on soybeans to put on pods and the weather is just not cooperating. A option that has been mentioned is to cut the beans for hay to be feed for livestock. But we do need to consider if there is enough time to make a crop of beans before doing this. If we finally get rid of our 95+ degree temperatures as predicted, I expect the soybeans to stay shut down if they don’t have soil moisture available to work with, and many of our soybean acres don’t. If they have available soil moisture, they should resume fairly normal growth and development, albeit with fewer days than if they had done it a few weeks ago.

Soybeans can and will shorten the time from flower to physiologically mature pod down to about 45 days, but I doubt if they can shorten it much more than that. For much of the state, that means we have to get that flower developing by somewhere around Labor Day, or it won’t have 45 days before a killing frost. While soybeans may be able to get a crop mature before a killing frost, there typically will be fewer bushels per acre, since they did it in 45 days instead of the more normal 60 to 70 days, and the day lengths were a little shorter. We have seen 20 Bu/A produced from September 7th flowers before (in a NC county on the Virginia line), but I have no idea if you will experience good enough weather to do it again. We need to keep a close eye on the bean crop for this and keep the option of haying them in the back of your mind. That way we may salvage some profit out of the bean crop. If you do decide to cut some for hay, be sure to contact your insurance agent before doing so if they are covered in your policy.

**PEANUT POD BLASTING**

With the varying pod maturity of peanuts this year because of the dry weather, the normal pod blasting day will be delayed a couple of weeks. If you have some fields that you would like pod maturity checked please contact me and I will come and test fields on an individual basis. If this will work better for you at that time, we will continue to check them on a farm to farm basis instead of an actual day set for this. I also have some of the new pod maturity charts available for you if you would like one. Just call me and I will be happy to bring one to you.

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North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. NC State University, NC A&T State University, US Department of Agriculture and local governments cooperating.

Sincerely,

Ryan Harrelson
Agriculture Extension Agent,
Field Crops

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