

Christmas Tree Newsletter

Watauga County Center

January 2010

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Christmas Tree IPM Blog

NC Cooperative Extension's Dr. Jill Sidebottom has developed a one-stop Internet resource for tree growers. This blog will contain regular postings on insect observations, treatment windows and product options, as well as full pest descriptions and all things associated with IPM. The blog will also include insect images to assist with pest and beneficial insect identification. To keep updated on Christmas tree happenings, make sure to bookmark the blog on your computer (<http://fraseripm.blogspot.com/>).

New Director for Watauga County Cooperative Extension

Dr. Jim Hamilton, former agriculture agent for Watauga County, has stepped into the role of County Extension Director as of January 4, 2010. The Watauga Cooperative Extension welcomed back Hamilton at a reception on January 25. Hamilton will lead the Watauga Extension staff in addressing key community issues and developing effective resources for individuals, youth, families, farmers, and community organizations. Hamilton's areas of expertise include forestry, landowner outreach, natural resource-based issues, Christmas trees and Hispanic farmworker trainings.

The Cooperative Extension would also like to recognize Karee Mackey for her service as Interim Extension Director over the past year.

The Watauga Extension staff has many projects and workshops scheduled for 2010, and we are always looking for YOUR input to make our efforts useful to your needs. Please add your voice and help us determine how to make Extension as effective as possible.

Contact Us

Watauga County Center
971 West King Street
Boone, NC 28607

828-264-3061 (Phone)
828-264-3067 (Fax)

<http://watauga.ces.ncsu.edu>
Meghan_Baker@ncsu.edu

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**COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**

Empowering People • Providing Solutions

Regional Christmas Tree Marketing Conference

Thursday, February 11, 2010

8:30 AM – 4:30 PM

Watauga Ag. Conference Center



The regional Christmas Tree Marketing Conference will help small and medium growers develop or expand a customer-focused marketing plan. It will be held on Thursday, February 11, 2010, from 9 AM – 4:30 PM at the Agricultural Conference Center in Boone. Registration will start at 8:30 AM.

Building on last year's success, the agenda is designed to address both wholesale and retail marketing. After a morning together, participants will choose between wholesale and retail topics in the afternoon. Participants will learn ways to reach new customers as well as strategies to improve customer retention. Topics will include diversified markets, proven strategies, advertising, Internet marketing, customer service, public relations, and developing a marketing plan. Participants will receive a marketing resource notebook that includes the steps to build a marketing plan. Whether you are a novice or expert at marketing, this conference will offer a fresh challenge to improve your marketing efforts.

Registration deadline is Wednesday, February 3, 2010. The registration fee of \$15 includes lunch and the marketing resource materials. Note: Late registration is \$20 after February 3. Attendance is limited to 60 participants.

The conference brochure with agenda and directions will be available on January 25, 2010, at <http://www.mountainhort.ncsu.edu/events/marketing2010.pdf>

Registration Form

Name _____

Company _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone number _____

Email (for follow-up evaluation) _____

Deadline for registration is February 3: \$15 per person X # people = _____

Late registration (after February 3): \$20 per person X # people = _____

Make check payable to **NC State University** and mail to:

Jeff Owen
Extension Forestry
Mountain Hort. Crops Research & Extension Center
455 Research Drive
Mills River, NC 28759

Foothills Greenhouse and Ornamental Production Workshops in February

The Caldwell County Extension Center is offering two all-day workshops in February for greenhouse producers, nursery growers, and landscapers.

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

The **Foothills Greenhouse Production** workshop is designed to provide greenhouse and nursery growers updated information on greenhouse crops, production and pest identification and control. Information provided will also be beneficial to landscapers who install or maintain greenhouse crops in the landscape. Commercial pesticide recertification credits will be available to attendees -- up to 4 hours in the categories L, N, O, D, and X. Registration is \$20 before January 29, 2010, and \$25 after January 29. Topics include pest management for bedding plants, tree and small fruit varieties for the landscape, pest management for the greenhouse/garden center, floral diseases, and diagnosing Gerbera plant problems.



Wednesday, February 24, 2010

The **Foothills Ornamental Production** workshop is designed to provide updated information on ornamental plants, production practices and pest identification and control for those in the nursery and landscape industry. Up to 3 hours of commercial pesticide recertification credits are available for those attending the workshop. Registration is \$20 before January 29, 2010, and \$25 after January 29. Topics include controlling weeds in ornamental beds, irrigation and water-borne pathogens, update on ornamental pests and fire ants, diehard summer annuals, and woody selections for color in the landscape.

For more information on these workshops and to register, please contact Craig Adkins at 828-757-1290 or email craig_adkins@ncsu.edu.

Checks can be made payable to **Caldwell County Ag Development Fund**. Mail to:

Craig R. Adkins
NCCE – Caldwell Center
120 Hospital Avenue NE
Lenoir, NC 28645

Calibration Workshop

Tuesday, March 30, 2010

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

The Watauga and Ashe County Extension Centers will host an on-farm calibration workshop on March 30. (Directions will be available at a later date.) You will learn the steps for calibrating a backpack sprayer, high pressure sprayers, boom sprayers and mistblowers. Participants will also receive (pending approval from NCDA) 2 hours of pesticide credit in categories G,L,N,O,D, and X. Call the Watauga Extension Office to register for this free workshop. Transportation will be available according to participation, so please reserve your spot today!

Regional GPS Training for Christmas Tree Farmers

Friday, February 12, 2010

9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Watauga County Ag. Conference Center

This workshop will teach you how to use GPS mapping tools on your farm. Collecting and utilizing GPS data can help tree producers manage and track insect pests, determine tree inventory, organize labor, refine fertilizer efficiency, and map tree blocks. Topics include: how GPS works, choosing the right software for your needs, hands-on learning to use a Garmin GPS receiver, and collecting data. Lunch will be provided. We will be traveling to a nearby tree farm to practice this technology out in the field. An additional topic on linking your farm data with County Mapping GIS Data and NRCS Web Soil Survey will be held from 3-4 PM.

For growers that seek additional assistance with using the technology, follow-up sessions will continue in cooperation with NC Cooperative Extension. Please contact the Watauga County Cooperative Extension office to register. The registration fee is \$15 before February 5 or \$20 after February 5. This workshop is limited to the first 15 participants; however, an additional workshop will be scheduled for Monday, February 15 if there is demand. You must send in your registration fee to the Watauga Extension Center to be considered fully registered. For more information, please call the Watauga County Cooperative Extension at 264-3061.

Fire Prevention Tips for Safe Debris Burning

Rudy Johnson, Watauga County Ranger, NC Forest Service



- Please Help Fire Fighters Prevent Uncontrolled Fires
- Please Help Prevent Fire Fighter Injuries and Fatalities

- ✓ Burn after 4:00 PM or at night when the air is damp
- ✓ A Burning Permit is NOT required after 4:00 PM when it is safer to burn
- ✓ Obtain a Burning Permit if you burn before 4:00 PM
- ✓ Burning Permits can be acquired on-line at www.dfr.state.nc.us/
- ✓ Burning Permits can also be obtained from local Burning Permit Agents
- ✓ For more information on Burning Permits, call 828-265-5375
- ✓ Never burn when it is breezy or windy
- ✓ Avoid burning between March 1st and May 15th (unless it is raining or snowing)
- ✓ Wait and burn after May 15th when the vegetation is green
- ✓ Generally the worst wildfires in this area occur between March 1st and May 15th
- ✓ Have a water hose available (pre-wet surrounding area before burning)
- ✓ Have hand tools available to control fire (shovel, rake, hoe, etc.)
- ✓ Dig a 3 foot wide control line around area to prevent fire from spreading
- ✓ Stay with fire and maintain a constant watch
- ✓ Never leave fire unattended
- ✓ Fully extinguish all sparks and embers before leaving
- ✓ Do NOT burn any artificial materials that release pollutants in the air
- ✓ For air pollution concerns, call Division of Air Quality at 336-771-5000
- ✓ For specific information pertaining to Christmas tree burning, please contact the NC Cooperative Extension - Watauga County Center

- THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP! ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT WILDFIRES!
- YOU CAN HELP PREVENT FIRE FIGHTER INJURIES AND FATALITIES!

Creating a Resilient Community

A Community-Wide Conversation on Key Issues in Watauga County

The Watauga nonprofit MountainKeepers is hosting a forum for all community members on creating more local resilience in the face of economic, environmental and climatic challenges. The purpose of this event is to create networks of people concerned about similar community issues. This event seeks to bridge communication between town and county residents, students, farmers, government leaders, and community organizations on key local issues that demand our attention. Topics include natural resources, energy, farming and local food supplies, transportation and recreation, zero waste and recycling, and health and safety.

The forum will be held on Saturday, April 10, 2010, at the Watauga County High School Cafeteria. Registration begins at 8:30 AM with the program starting at 9:00 AM. Small group discussions and breakout sessions will lead participants in addressing identified topics. This is a reduced-waste event; please bring a coffee mug and beverage container. Registration includes lunch and costs \$10 before April 10 and \$15 on the day of the event. Checks can be made payable to MountainKeepers. For more information or to register, call 828-268-0637 or email keepers@mountainkeepers.org.

Calendar of Events

Full details and directions can be found at the Watauga County website (<http://watauga.ces.ncsu.edu>)

Feb. 2: Foothills Greenhouse Production, 8 AM – 4 PM

Feb. 4: Blueberry Pruning Workshop, 2 PM -4:30PM

Feb. 11: Regional Marketing Conference, 8 AM – 4:30PM

Feb. 12: Regional GPS for Tree Farms Training, 8 AM – 4 PM

Feb. 23: Pome & Stone Fruit Pruning Workshop, 2PM – 5 PM

Feb. 20: Watauga Co. Beekeeper Shortcourse, 8 AM – 5 PM

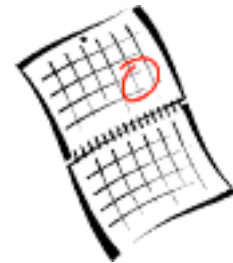
Feb. 24: Foothills Ornamental Production, 8 AM – 4 PM

March 1: Watauga Extension Report to the People (timeframe TBA)

March 5-6: NC Christmas Tree Assoc. Winter Meeting in Boone

March 30: NC Extension Calibration Workshop for Tree Growers

April 10: Watauga County Resiliency Forum, 8:30 AM– 2 PM



Recommendations for the use of agricultural chemicals are included in this publication as a convenience to the reader. The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services in this publication does not imply endorsement by North Carolina Cooperative Extension nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Individuals who use agricultural chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. Be sure to obtain current information about usage regulations and examine a current product label before applying any chemical. For assistance, contact your county Cooperative Extension agent.

Newsletter compiled and edited by:



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Christmas Trees and Commercial Horticulture