Swine News

For individuals who would like to become a Certified Operator in Charge, the following classes have been scheduled:

**Type A Certification Classes:**
April 5 and April 6, 2005 from 9:00AM – 4PM both days at the Cumberland County Cooperative Extension Center, Fayetteville. Contact Tyrone Fisher at 252.534.2711 for more information.

July 20 and July 21, 2005 from 9AM – 4PM both days at the Craven County Cooperative Extension Center in New Bern, NC. Contact Amy Andrews at 252.633.1477 for more information.

October 18 and 19, 2005 from 9AM – 4PM both days at the Duplin County Extension Center in Kenansville, NC. Contact Star Jackson at 910.296.2143 for more information.

**TASTE OF ELEGANCE EVENT:**
NCPC will host its Taste of Elegance chefs’ competition on Sunday, April 24, from 2-5 p.m. in Clinton. There will be music, and hors d’ oeuvres will be provided by local caterers and restaurants. Everyone is invited, so mark your calendars. For more information, contact Angie Crone by phone (919-781-0361) or by e-mail at angie@ncpork.org.

Cattle News

April 7, 2005 – The Duplin County Cattlemen's Association will meet at 7:30PM at the Duplin County Cooperative Extension Center Auditorium. An educational program on cattle genetics will be presented.

USDA to clarify pasture standards for organic dairy cows

The following article was taken from the Chicago Tribune and was written by Andrew Martin. I thought it was a timely article due to the increasing numbers of individuals asking questions about organic livestock and crop production.

As more large dairies enter the robust organic milk business, the U.S. Department of Agriculture plans to clarify what it means to be an organic dairy cow. USDA officials asked a federal advisory panel, the National Organic Standards Board, to produce a "guidance document" elaborating on a provision in the federal code that requires organic cows to have "access to pasture."

One group argues that organic cows should spend their days munching grass in open pastures, a formula rooted in the belief that a key mission of the organic industry is supporting family farms.

The other side contends that there is a place in the organic business for large-scale dairies where cows are fed organic
grains in outdoor pens. The large-scale dairies can make milk cheaper, lowering costs for consumers, and increasing the amount of cropland converted to organic feed production.

While the federal rule requires organic dairy cows to have access to pasture, it provides exemptions for bad weather, animal health and undefined "stages of production" for the animal.

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**Horse News**

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**Other News**

**Soil Sample Turn Around Time**
The North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Agronomic Division is reporting a four week turn around time on soil samples. NCDA gives a few tips on how to expedite getting your reports back.

1) Use the current soil sample information sheets. If the sheets you have are 2002 or older, discard them and go to your local Cooperative Extension Office, Fertilizer Dealer, Regional Agronomist, or the following website for updated forms: [http://agronomy.agr.state.nc.us/](http://agronomy.agr.state.nc.us/)

2) The soil testing laboratory does not accept any soil samples unless the NCDA&CS soil box is used. Samples that are submitted in bags or boxes from other labs may be processed but with a much greater delay.

3) If you mail your samples, one of the following addresses should be used to submit your samples:

Sincerely,

Star Jackson

NCDA's new U.S. postal mailing address is as follows:
NCDA&CS AGRONOMIC DIVISION
SOIL TESTING SECTION
1040 MAIL SERVICE CENTER
RALEIGH NC 27699-1040

Samples sent to the NCDA lab by carriers such as UPS or Federal Express should continue to be sent to our physical address:
NCDA&CS AGRONOMIC DIVISION
SOIL TESTING SECTION
4300 REEDY CREEK ROAD
RALEIGH NC 27607-6465