

NC General Assembly Approves Deadline Extension for Agricultural Disaster Program

The N.C. General Assembly has approved extending the deadline for the agricultural disaster relief program to Dec. 20. The bill now awaits Governor Roy Cooper's signature.

Eleven additional North Carolina counties have received secretarial disaster declarations based on agricultural losses from Hurricane Florence or Tropical Storm Michael. These counties are Anson, Avery, Dare, Person, Tyrrell, Vance, Wake, Warren, Washington, Watauga and Yadkin. With these additions, 65 counties are now eligible for agricultural disaster relief through this program.

Six counties are still awaiting a secretarial disaster declaration, which would make them eligible to participate in the disaster assistance program. These counties are Davie, Franklin, Forsyth, Rockingham, Stokes and Surry.

"We don't want to miss any farmers that are eligible for help through this program," said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. "To qualify for assistance, a farmer only needs to farm in a disaster-declared county. Payments from this fund will be based on county averages for loss and yield rather than individual losses."

This assistance is available to farmers who suffered crop losses including apples, barley, corn, cotton, hay, industrial hemp, nursery crops, specialty crops, tobacco, peanuts, sweet potatoes, livestock, aquaculture and more.

"I urge farmers to go online and fill out an application as soon as possible," Troxler said. "You can find the application as well as other information about the program at www.ncagr.gov/agriculturaldisasterprogram or call 1-866-645-9403.

30th Annual North Carolina Commodities Conference: January 9th – 11th, 2019

You are invited to attend the 30th Annual NC Commodities Conference of NC Small Grains, Soybeans, Corn & Cotton Producers Associations, an informative and educational conference dedicated to discussing challenges of farming in the 21st Century. Come along and find out the latest in trends and technologies in the tradeshow, and hear from some of the leading figures in the industry today. Guest speakers this year will include:

- Ray Starling, Chief of Staff to United States Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue
- David Kohl, PH.D.,- Powerful Ag speaker! Award-winning instructor. Writes regularly for Corn and Soybean Digest and other ag lending publications
- Edgar Woods, President, Palmetto Grain Brokerage

The Conference will be held January 9th – 11th, 2019 at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel & Convention Center located at: 4700 Emperor Blvd., Durham, NC 27703. There is no cost for attending the conference, but pre-registration is required. To register online and for more information about the conference please visit: <http://www.nccommoditiesconference.com/index.php>

We hope to see you there!!!

NCSGGA Board Meeting Recap

Last week, the NC Small Grain Growers Association held its Annual December Board of Directors Meeting on Thursday, December 6th & Friday, December 7th at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel in Durham. Directors from across the state gathered to conduct Association business and hear various updates from Guest Speakers. Topics discussed included the Economy of the Grain Industry, NCSU Wheat Breeding Program, Wheat Crop Outlook, Nuisance Lawsuits Updates, Farm Bill Updates, NC Dept. of Agriculture Updates and Hurricane Damage Overview. Directors also heard an overview of NCSGGA Staff Events for a total of 88 Outreach, Education and Promotional events for 2018 reaching over 37,000 people!! The Wheat Yield Contest Drawing was also held; a grower winner and a county agent winner were randomly drawn for a trip to the 2019 Commodity Classic in Orlando Florida. Lastly, Directors approved the voting date for our Assessment Referendum Renewal which will be August 7th, 2019 more details to follow.

NCSGGA Hosts International Meeting

On Thursday, December 13th Dan Weathington, Executive Director of NCSGGA, spoke on the Association's behalf to researchers and government officials from India visiting NCSU's International Department. The meeting was held at our office in Raleigh; Mr. Weathington gave a presentation on North Carolina Agriculture discussing topics such as crop and food production practices, safety practices, crop breeding and genetically modified crops. The group also visited the NC Corn Growers Association as well as several departments on NCSU Campus. To see a picture from the meeting please visit our photo gallery on our website at: <http://ncwheat.com/media-gallery/>

Academy of Moore County – Agriculture Day

On Friday, December 14th the NCSGGA will speak at the Academy of Moore County's Agriculture Day. Third grade students will hear presentations from the NC Small Grain Growers Association and The NC Soybean Producers Association. Topics discussed will include wheat and soybean production, management, statistics, research, products, and nutrition. The goal of this event is to promote NC agriculture, teach students where their food comes from and to have a better appreciation for our farmers. Thank you to the school for inviting us to come and educate your students on North Carolina Agriculture! Pictures will be posted to our website after the event, please visit our photo gallery to view: <http://ncwheat.com/media-gallery/>

National Association of Wheat Growers: Weekly Update

NAWG Welcomes New WOTUS Proposed Rule

On Tuesday, December 11 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Army Corps of Engineers released a new proposed Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) rule which redefines the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act more narrowly and provides clarity to what is required of landowners. NAWG President Jimmie Musick issued the following statement:

“NAWG is encouraged by today's action by the EPA and Army Corps of Engineers to increase clarity and transparency around the Waters of the U.S. regulation.

“Wheat growers know the importance of protecting our resources in order to sustain our farming operations and feed a growing world population. However, we need regulatory certainty, so we can remain in compliance with the law.

“We believe the new proposed rule does just this and reduces ambiguity in the law. We welcome the new proposed rule and plan on submitting comments.”

Additionally, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) updated its website with fact sheets and other helpful information on the new proposed rule which can be found here: <https://www.epa.gov/wotus-rule/step-two-revise>

NAWG Supports 2018 Farm Bill Conference Report; Urges President to Sign into Law

On Tuesday, December 11th, the Senate passed the 2018 farm bill conference report in a vote of 87-to-13. One day later, the House voted to pass the bill 386-47. The National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG) applauds the Senate and House of Representatives for their quick action and bipartisan votes on the Farm Bill conference report, and call on President Trump to sign the bill into law as quickly as possible.

“Historically low prices, trade instability, and the current weather challenges are all weighing heavily on the minds of growers,” stated NAWG President and Sentinel, OK wheat farmer Jimmie Musick. “The 2018 farm bill provides the certainty they need to get through these arduous times and many of the programs within the bill can help growers stay in business.”

NAWG applauds the committee for maintaining a strong crop insurance title and supports the language allowing for producer choice between Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC). NAWG appreciates the Committee recognizing the importance of using consistent data in determining farm program payments, while making RMA data its primary source, and for making improvements to both ARC and PLC.

“Many producers own multi-generational farms and want our children to be able to thrive on the land more than we did,” continued Musick. “This means leaving it healthier and better than when we received it and incorporating good stewardship practices into our operations. The farm bill helps growers achieve this goal by supporting investment in conservation tools and wheat research.”

Additionally, NAWG is pleased to see that the conference report increases funding for research of Fusarium head blight to the amount of \$15 million for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023.

“The United States exports 50% of its wheat, making trade a vital component of the wheat industry,” continued Musick. “NAWG is pleased to see that the conference report renews funding for the Market Access Program (MAP) and the Foreign Market Development (FMD) program. We also support statements made by U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) on both programs and appreciate their work to make these programs successful for wheat.”

“NAWG commends the House and Senate for quickly voting on the bill and passing it out of their respective Chambers with strong bipartisan support,” concluded Musick. “We urge President Trump to support this bill and sign it into law.”

WOLF Nominations Needed

The Wheat Organization Leaders of Tomorrow (WOLF) Program for upcoming NAWG leaders will be taking place at the beginning of Winter Conference from Monday, February 11th– Tuesday, February 12th, 2019. The WOLF program is sponsored by Bayer through a partnership with the National Wheat Foundation and will come at no cost to participants or your state association. All participants flights to and from DC will be covered, as well as meals and hotel rooms for Monday and Tuesday. We do encourage participants to stay through the full NAWG Board meeting, however hotel rooms after Tuesday night will be at the cost of a state association. We are asking for all WOLF applications to be returned to Craig Berning, cberning@wheatworld.org, by Friday December 21st, 2018.

White House Delays MFP Payments

The White House is delaying additional payments from a \$12 billion aid package for farmers stung by President Donald Trump's trade war with China because it expects Beijing to resume buying U.S. soybeans. The move comes despite a lack of evidence in agricultural markets of any return by China to the U.S. soy market. China last year purchased about 60 percent of U.S. soybean exports, but it has not inked any new soybean deals since Beijing imposed tariffs on U.S. supplies in July.

USDA Updates Wetland Determination Guidance to Increase Consistency, Timeliness

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is improving the process by which it makes wetland determinations, updating guidance to improve consistency and timeliness as well as to responding to feedback from farmers and other stakeholders. The updates do not change the definition of a wetland for USDA program participation purposes, but rather provide greater clarity and uniformity in how NRCS makes determinations nationwide. On December 7, 2018, the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) posted an updated guidance in the Federal Register as an interim final rule. NRCS is accepting comments on this rule through Feb. 5, 2019. Review or comment on the interim final rule on the Federal Register by Feb. 5, 2019. Learn more about conservation compliance on the NRCS website: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/farmland/?cid=stelprdb1257899>

Former NAWG President and Nebraska Farmer Passes

Mr. John "Frank" Franklin Johannsen passed away at age 92 on December 9, 2018 at Heritage Estates, Gering, Nebraska. Johannsen helped found the Nebraska Wheat Growers Association and his subsequent service on committees and served as State President in 1975 and 1976. He became active in the National Association of Wheat Growers serving as Secretary-Treasurer, Vice-President and President in 1989. While serving as president, he made a number of trips around the United States and abroad for wheat market development, including one trip around the world. He also served on the Board of Directors for U. S. Wheat Associates, a market development group. His obituary can be found here: https://www.starherald.com/obits/john-frank-franklin-johannsen/article_135ca337-3b97-54bb-98b4-e17384034965.html

Soil Health Partnership (SHP)'s Annual Soil Health Summit

As the pursuit of improved soil health as an on-farm business and environmental strategy continues to grow, the Soil Health Partnership is taking a new step to foster that interest. For the first time, the organization has opened to the public the annual Soil Health Summit, January 15 – 16 in St. Louis, and encourages growers and agronomists to attend. Registration is open from the Soil Health Summit website. The registration fee for the two-day event is just \$100 for farmers and educators. The cost for other attendees is \$250. This registration fee includes the event meals, all sessions, and a reception.

Housing and Registration Opens for 2019 Commodity Classic

Housing and registration has officially opened for the 2019 Commodity Classic, which is scheduled for February 28th – March 2nd in Orlando, Florida at the Orlando Convention Center. NAWG has been assigned to the Rosen Centre hotel (9840 International Drive, Orlando, Florida 32819) which is located right next to the Convention Center.

2019 NAWG/U.S. Wheat Winter Conference Housing and Registration Open!

Housing and registration has officially opened for 2019 NAWG/USW Winter Conference scheduled for February 12-15, 2019 at the Grand Hyatt Washington in downtown Washington, D.C. Register and reserve your rooms here: <https://www.uswheat.org/2019-usw-nawg-joint-winter-meeting-registration/>. Please remember to register your spouses and select the correct room block on the LAST PAGE of your registration. The deadline to reserve your room is MONDAY, JANUARY 21, 2019.

NCSGGA Upcoming Events

January 9th, 2019 / 1:00pm
NCSGGA Board Meeting
Sheraton Imperial Hotel
4700 Emperor Blvd. Durham, NC

January 10th – 11th, 2019
NC Commodities Conference
Sheraton Imperial Hotel
4700 Emperor Blvd. Durham, NC

January 30th – February 1st, 2019
Southern Farm Show
NC State Fairgrounds Raleigh, NC

February 12th – 15th, 2019
NAWG Winter Meeting
Washington D.C.

February 20th, 2019
Northeast Ag Expo
Small Grains Field Day
120 Selwin Rd.
Hobbsville, NC 27946

February 27th – March 2nd, 2019
Commodity Classic
Orlando, Florida

March 5th - 6th, 2019
Duplin Grows
Duplin County Events Center
Kenansville, NC

March 15th, 2019
AG Science Day
Bailey Elementary School
Bailey, NC

April 16th, 2019
AG By the Slice
Guilford County 4-H

The North Carolina Small Grain Growers Association, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation formed to encourage, promote and develop more efficient and effective small grain marketing and production practices and to participate in all matters relative to the interests of small grain producers. For more information please contact Dan Weathington, Executive Director of NCSGGA at

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