Upcoming Winter Christmas Tree Meeting
March 9th in Jackson County

The NCSU Cooperative Extension Service is sponsoring Jackson County’s annual winter Christmas tree meeting on Tuesday March 9th from 2:00-4:00 p.m. The meeting will be held on the 2nd floor in room 234 of the Jackson Community Services building on 538 Scotts Creek Rd. Sylva, NC. The following topics will be covered:

- **Pest & Research Update** – Dr. Jill Sidebottom, NCSU Conifer Specialist
  - Elongate Hemlock Scale
  - Fall Treatments for Controlling Balsam Twig Aphids
  - Twig Aphid control using oil

- **Chainsaw Marketing** - Jeff Owen, NCSU Christmas Tree Specialist
  - Looking at the Big Picture
  - Risk Management
  - Inventory Management
  - Estate Planning
  - Marketing
  - Product Diversification

- **2009 Market Sales & What’s Ahead!** – Bill Glenn, NCDA Marketing Specialist

Come and join us! Now is a great opportunity to ask and learn more from our NCSU specialists and your fellow growers. Please register by calling the Extension office at phone # 828 586-4009.
Upcoming Workshops

Getting Back To Basics

When you hear the phrase “let’s get back to basics,” what do you think this means? Depending on who you ask, this expression may stir-up thoughts of living a simpler lifestyle in old-timey ways, utilizing old-fashioned craftsmanship, cooking traditional foods and having good old-fashioned fun. Others may contemplate getting off the grid, becoming more frugal or re-establishing fundamental lifestyles or life skills such as eating around the dinner table, canning tomatoes, raising chickens, saving money or making soap.

As we move into February 2010, Swain and Jackson County residents recognize that we are living in sobering times affecting the financial security of most businesses and families. As a result, more individuals desire to become more sustainable and self-reliant. Many homeowners have taken action to find ways to pay-off debts, making the most out of your land, adding to your income or learning new skills via the library or by attending workshops and classes at your local NCSU Cooperative Extension Center and Community College. In addition, moms, dads and those of all ages continue to spread the message of buying local by supporting our local businesses and farmers. All of these proactive measures are beneficial and will help support you, your family and our community. I want to encourage all of you to keep pressing on!

Although many of you are surviving and thriving, there are just as many good men and women who have lost their jobs, are struggling financially and facing difficult health and relationship issues. During this season of unrest, we know that when finances become restricted, often times health, nutrition, and relationships can become strained. To help you deal with these financial and emotional pressures, the Swain and Jackson County Cooperative Extension Centers have teamed together to launch a new program that features a series of multi-faceted educational seminars geared for youth and adults. This series deals with building a sustainable, self-reliant thriving home as well as specific ways to extend financial resources, such as home gardening and food preservation. Below is a list of programs that are coming your way:

Food & Nutrition
- Cook Smart Eat Smart
- Bread Making
- Food Preservation
- Season Extenders
- Saving Seeds
- Raising Backyard Chickens

Horticulture/Agriculture
- Starting Your Home Orchard
- Pruning Your Fruit Trees
- Bee School
- Gardening 101
- Managing Household Pests
- Managing Garden Pests
- Sewing Skills
- Vermicomposting
- Composting
- Money Management 101
- Farm to Fork
- Family Game Night
- Green Cleaning

For more information about Extension programs contact your local Cooperative Extension Center at 828 586 4009 or 828 488 3848 or go to website: http://swain.ces.ncsu.edu/ or http://jackson.ces.ncsu.edu/

Let’s put your knowledge to work!
Grub or Root Aphid Problems?

It is easier to treat seedling roots than to get chemicals into the soil to control grubs. Talstar (bifenthrin) is labeled for root dip at one gallon in 100 gallons (1.3 ounces/gallon). Talstar, which degrades within a few weeks in sunlight, will last for a year or more in the soil, protecting seedling roots. Be sure to wear appropriate personal protective equipment when handling pesticide treated seedlings. This method of control can also be used when re-setting seedlings that have died from grubs.

Horticulture Oil For Spring Pest Control

SUMMARY: Horticultural oil sprayed in mid-March gives good control of twig aphids and rust mites, and will reduce problems with spider mites and balsam woolly adelgid.

Taken from the Bog Site http://fraseripm.blogspot.com/ by Dr. Jill Sidebottom

For the past couple of years, Bryan Davis, IPM technician in Ashe, Alleghany and Watauga Counties, and Dr. Jill Sidebottom have been looking at horticultural oil for twig aphid control. They found that spraying trees in mid-March with a 2% oil solution resulted in excellent twig aphid control without causing burn if the agitation was sufficiently provided.

Jill states “So how is oil controlling twig aphids? The picture to the right shows a twig aphid egg that has been sprayed with oil. It is the black thing in the middle that kind of looks like a raisin. It looks a lot different from a healthy egg which is plump and has white, waxy rods scattered across it. This egg will not hatch in the spring.

A 2% oil solution is also quite effective at controlling hemlock rust mites. In fact, oil is every bit as good as some of our other miticides such as Sanmite and Envidor. In addition, oil will also reduce problems with spider mites, and control balsam woolly adelgid. The trick is to apply the oil before the twig aphids have started to hatch, as it’s not as effective against the aphids as their eggs. Early to mid March is a safe time to apply. By the end of March, some aphids will be present. I haven’t gone as early as February with a treatment, but may if the weather cooperates.”

Jill continues to add “there are 2 down sides to using oil. One is that you have to use a high pressure sprayer. Though I haven’t tried it personally, I don’t think that there will be good enough coverage to get control of pests with oil applied with a mistblower. The other down side is potential for burn. Fraser fir are very sensitive to burn by oils and pesticides. If there isn’t good enough agitation, even dormant trees will be burned. After all, oil and water don’t mix. However, there may now be a solution.

Even if you don’t get burn, there is a distinct change in the color of the trees. It’s not that the trees look bad, but on a sunny day you can definitely tell that the trees have been sprayed with oil. Saf-T- Side oil is an encapsulated oil that mixes readily with water. It is more expensive than regular oil, but it appears to be much safer. I tried it last summer on a hot day in July for elongate hemlock scale control, and though several other products burned the trees, this oil did not.” In Jills’ plans for future oil treatments she states, “I haven’t tried it for twig aphid control in the spring yet, but I plan to this spring. I don’t see why it wouldn’t work. After all the July spray with oil gave the same results you would expect with a regular oil -- about 65% control. I’ll let you know how it works.” For more details go to the blogsite:http://fraseripm.blogspot.com/
The North Carolina Extension Service in Swain County is now taking orders for fruit trees along with a few selected grapes and blueberries. Prices are generally $8.00 for the grape and blueberries, and $12.00 for the apple, peach and pear trees. All trees are 3-4 feet tall. All plants are bare-rooted. For more information or to receive an order form, contact the Swain County Extension Service at phone # 828 488-3848. The deadline for taking last minute orders will be Friday February 26th 2010.

**The NCSU Extension Service & the Smoky Mountain Beekeepers** – are holding a Beginning Bee School on Saturday March 6th from 8:30-4:00 p.m. at the Old Almond School in Swain County. School cost is $20.00 which includes lunch and handouts. Come and listen to Robert Brewer Ga Extension Coordinator on the following topics:

- Basic Beekeeping Equipment
- Getting Started with Your Hive
- Buying & Installing Packaged Bees
- The Beekeeper’s Calendar – A Year in the Hive
- Nectar Plants & Honey Flow
- Honey Harvesting
- Pest Management in the Hive

To pre-register, contact Tom Rodgers at (828) 293-0678 or email at Rodgers44@verizon.net. Checks should be made to Smoky Mountain Beekeepers and mailed to Tom Rodgers, 438 Gray Fox Ridge, Cullowhee, NC 28723. Pre-registration deadline is February 28.

Sincerely,

Christy Bredenkamp, Extension Agent
Agriculture-Horticulture

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