



You Too Can Become an Anson Beekeeper

Anson Cooperative Extension will be hosting four evening classes devoted to Introductory Beekeeping. Classes will be held February 27, March 2, March 13, and March 16, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The curriculum targets participants with little to no beekeeping experience and introduces aspiring hobbyists to honey bee biology, seasonal hive management, tools, protective equipment, pests, diseases, and opportunities for lifelong continuing education at the local and state levels.

Many pollinators are in decline due to habitat loss, disease, and pesticides. Why should this matter to the average person? We all like to eat! Besides being the producer of honey, the role of honey bees as pollinators is

crucial to the success of North Carolina's \$96 billion fruit and vegetable industry. Up to one-third of the food we eat can be directly attributed to the work of pollinators. A short list of honey bee crops includes cucumbers, watermelons, berries, squash, okra, persimmon, strawberry, peach, blackberry, and even cotton, which most of us are wearing today. And there are many other pollinators; wasps, beetles, flies, solitary bees, bumblebees, bats, and hummingbirds that also contribute in that role.

Nationwide, honey bee hive numbers have been falling, from 180,000 hives 30 years ago, to only about 100,000 today. Even so, North Carolina has more beekeeper hobbyists than any other state. Startup cost is under \$1,000. The school is \$30 per person, or \$45 per couple. Classes will be taught at Anson Cooperative Extension, with instructors from Extension, Anson Beekeepers Association, and NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. A special thank you goes to the Anson Beekeepers Association for sponsoring this program. Participants must pre-register. Space is limited. Please contact Aimee Colf at aimee_colf@ncsu.edu or at 704-694-2415 for more information.

Attending a beginner's class is a great way to look before you leap into this buzz worthy, home-scale, ag-venture.

Corn Growers Association of North Carolina Referendum

February 22 is the date when corn growers will vote on continuation of the self assessment program for six years. The Board of Directors of the Corn Growers Association is asking that farmers assess themselves at a rate of 1.25 cents per bushel on all corn marketed in North Carolina. The campaign to continue the assessment was announced on January 13 by President Dennis Waller at the North Carolina Commodities Conference of Corn, Cotton, Soybeans and Small Grain Producers at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel and Convention Center in Durham.

Waller urged growers to continue the assessment program which is administered by the Corn Growers Association of North Carolina. "As farmers, we must stay united and work together to survive in the farming industry," said Waller. The Association is involved in the following areas: International and domestic marketing; research and education; grants to cooperative extension offices and legislation that will be helpful to corn growers and other farmers. A 24-member Board of Directors, covering all the producing areas of North Carolina, governs the organization's activities. This Board also gives support to issues of a local nature that they believe will benefit farmers.

Growers may vote at local cooperative extension offices from 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. on February 22. The Anson County Cooperative Extension Office is located at 501 McLaurin Street in Wadesboro. All farmers currently engaged in the production of corn, including tenants, sharecroppers, or other persons sharing in the production of income of corn are eligible to vote.

A 2/3 favorable vote is required to carry the referendum as authorized by Article 50, Chapter 106 of the General Statutes of North Carolina. If approved the assessment shall be collected by the first handler or purchaser of the commodity from the producer, and remitted to the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, which remits the proceeds to the Association. Any corn grower may get a refund of levied assessments from the corn.

For more information contact Jessica Morgan at the Anson County Cooperative Extension at 704-694-2915.

Gang Awareness Workshop is Feb. 16

A Gang Awareness Workshop will be held at the Anson County Cooperative Extension Center, located at 501 McLaurin Street in Wadesboro, on February 15, from 12 noon to 1:30 p.m. Brian Taylor, a Probation Officer and Certified Gang Instructor, will be the guest speaker. Lunch and materials are provided free.

Contact Suzanne Maness at (910) 627-1769, toll free (877) 211-5995, or by email at connectionsfp@gmail.com to register. The deadline to register is Monday, February 13.

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Call 704-994-3218 with questions.

Remit payments to:

**Anson County Tax Collector
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Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
An after hours drop box is available too. Thank you.