

A new pilot program through the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services aims to give landowners in five North Carolina counties the tools they need to remove invasive pigs from their land. The 5-County Trap Loan Program, which is now available in Anson, Davie, Haywood, Montgomery and Randolph counties, provides high-tech corral traps that can be borrowed for up to one month. The pilot program is funded through the U.S. Farm Bill and is available to qualifying landholders through August 2023.

"Feral swine are one of the most destructive invasive animals in the country, representing a threat to clean water, food security, wildlife and property," said State Veterinarian Dr. Mike Martin. "Their rooting and wallowing behavior can destroy food crops, pollute waterways and devastate natural areas."

The pilot program is part of a national effort to address feral swine and the billions of dollars in damage they cause each year. Interested participants must complete an application and assessment before receiving a trap. The traps include a remote trigger system that allows an operator to monitor the trap with their smartphone in real time and close the gate when the entire group of pigs is inside. Borrowing one of the program's traps is free, but participants are responsible for baiting and monitoring the trap, as well as disposing of any pigs that are captured, although they can request assistance with disposal. By state law, feral swine may not be released alive from any trap.

"We're working with participating landowners to get these pigs tested for disease," said Martin. "There's a lot we're hoping to learn about the kinds and amount of damage they cause here in North Carolina, including the diseases they could spread to livestock."

According to the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, feral swine can be found in isolated areas statewide.

First released in North Carolina by European explorers, today's feral swine are a blend of Eurasian wild boar and domestic stock - genetics that allow them to mature quickly and produce multiple litters a year. This poses a huge challenge for landowners trying to remove them one or two at a time; a mature, pregnant sow that eludes capture can produce as many as 12 piglets in one litter, and those piglets can reach sexual maturity in as little as three months.

"Because they reproduce so quickly, protecting the land from feral swine isn't really about how many you can remove, but rather how many you miss and are left to multiply," said Falyn Owens, the Wildlife Commission's representative on the N.C. Feral Swine Task Force. "True success requires removing the entire group of pigs, which is exactly what these traps are designed to do."

Decades of sport hunting has had no impact on reducing feral swine populations. Instead, their presence on the landscape has increased, both through intentional releases and management practices that support them. In North Carolina, transporting any swine without approved identification from the NCDA&CS is against the law and can carry a fine of \$5,000 per animal.

Information about feral swine in North Carolina and applications for the trap loan program are available at ncferalswine.org. Officials with the N.C. Wildlife Commission are asking people to report feral swine sightings, harvests and damage at ncferalswine.org/report-feral-swine. The data collected will be sent to the Feral Swine Task Force and used to develop resources and guide future management efforts.

Wingate to Offer \$10,000 Graduate Advantage Scholarships

Wingate has long offered significant academic scholarships for undergraduate study. Beginning next fall, the University will offer qualified incoming students scholarships for their graduate education as well. Recipients of the Graduate Advantage Scholarship, valued at up to \$10,000, will be able to apply it to one of Wingate's master's or doctoral programs as soon as they complete their undergrad requirements at Wingate and are admitted to a graduate program.

"Offering a grad-school scholarship to a high school graduate before they ever take their first undergraduate course is a bit of a risky venture, but it fits with our lab of difference-making philosophy at Wingate," says University President Dr. Rhett Brown. "We aren't afraid to experiment and try new initiatives, especially when we believe they can create more opportunities for students to better their socioeconomic standing."

Dr. Eva Baucom, Wingate's vice president for enrollment management, describes the scholarship as "our way of letting incoming students know that Wingate is committed to providing them with a pathway to reach their goals."

"We know our bachelor's degree programs will prepare them well for graduate school, so we don't want any student to stop short of where they want to go because of a financial barrier," adds Baucom, who earned her doctorate in education from Wingate.

She believes the scholarship program will also serve as an added incentive for first-year students to apply themselves diligently to their academic pursuits so that when the time comes to apply to graduate school, they will meet the criteria for acceptance. All incoming undergraduate students - first-time freshmen, early-college students, and transfers - admitted for fall 2023 and beyond will be candidates for the scholarship regardless of their major or even if they have not declared a major when they enroll.

To take advantage of the scholarship, recipients must be accepted into their program of choice. They must enroll in the grad program within a year of completing their undergraduate requirements, maintain full-time-student status and make satisfactory academic progress in their graduate coursework to receive the full amount of the scholarship, which will be applied in increments of \$2,500 over the course of up to four semesters.

For programs that can be completed in one year or are labeled as +1 programs, the scholarship will be applied to fewer than four semesters and may not amount to \$10,000. Funds from the scholarship can be applied to tuition only.

Incoming high school students do not have to apply for the scholarship. Their application to Wingate will make them eligible for consideration. Once they have been admitted, students will receive a follow-up email from Baucom informing them that they have qualified for the Graduate Advantage Scholarship.

Wingate offers master's programs in education, teaching, physician assistant studies, sport management, public health, accounting and business administration. Doctoral degrees are offered in physical therapy, occupational therapy, pharmacy and education. In addition to these programs, the Graduate Advantage Scholarship can be applied to future graduate programs that are started within a recipient's time at Wingate. For example, the University plans over the next few years to add master's degrees in social work and clinical mental health counseling.

Baucom says she understands that graduate school may seem like a long way off for incoming first-year students, but she wants them to know even before they set foot on campus that Wingate is committed to them for the long haul. "We're ready to help students achieve their educational and career goals from their first day as a Bulldog," she says.

BBB Tip: Student Loan Forgiveness is Here. Here's How to Avoid Scams

The Biden Administration recently announced that the federal government will cancel up to \$20,000 of Federal student loans per person. Millions of Americans will be recipients of the student loan debt relief; unfortunately, this creates an excellent opportunity for scammers. See our recent warning about student loan forgiveness scams.

As student loan holders navigate the new forgiveness program, con artists will undoubtedly be there to take advantage of any confusion. It happens with any big government initiative, including the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out, eviction moratorium and pandemic relief programs. Always be sure to do your research before sharing any personal information.

Tips to avoid student loan forgiveness scams

- Get to know the terms of your student loan and the relief program before acting. Always do your research before sharing personal information. Be sure to understand the ins and outs of your specific loan, as well as how student loan relief impacts you.
- Go straight to official government websites, such as ED.gov and studentaid.gov, for information.
- Never pay money for a free government program. Scammers often trick victims into paying for free government programs - or they claim you can get additional benefits, faster benefits, etc., for a fee. A real government agency will not ask for an advanced processing fee. These are all red flags of a scam.
- Be wary of out-of-the-blue calls, emails or text messages claiming to be from the government. In general, the government will not contact you using these methods unless you grant permission.
- Watch out for phony government agencies or programs. If you speak to someone claiming to be a government representative who is offering you student loan relief, do some research before you agree to anything. Scammers often make up look-alike government websites that sound similar to legitimate agencies or programs.
- Think something seems suspicious? Reach out to the agency directly. If you have any concerns about an alleged government representative's legitimacy, hang up the phone or stop emailing/texting. Then, report the suspicious calls or messages. Then, find the official contact information (look on ED.gov and studentaid.gov or other official sites) and call to verify.
- Be careful, even if the information comes from a friend. Even if a close friend or family member you trust sent you the information regarding student loan relief, make sure the claims are real first. During the COVID-19 pandemic, BBB received many reports of hacked social media accounts being used to spread government impostor scams.

Church

SEPTEMBER 25 - 28

Revival
With Pastor Cameron McGill at Cathedral Baptist Church, 1215 Old Lilesville Road in Wadesboro, 7pm nightly.

OCTOBER 2 - 5

Annual Revival
At Johnson Chapel Holiness Church. Sun-Pastor Pearl Taylor 11:45am. Mon-Pastor Roman Henry; Tue-Pastor Harvey Marsh; Wed-Pastor Sharon Lockhart, all at 7pm. All are invited. Safety guidelines followed.

OCTOBER 8

Yard Sale
7am at Burger King parking lot in Wadesboro by Rock Hill Missionary Baptist Church. Great deals, something for everybody!

OCTOBER 9

Friends & Family Day
At Rocky Mount AME Zion Church in Ansonville, 1:30pm with Minister Nicklous Trumond Lee.

OCTOBER 15 & 16

Friends & Family Day
New Grove Missionary Baptist Church, at Alex's house, 270 School St, Polkton. Sat 3-7pm fun, food, fellowship, talent show, gospel music, games, bounce house! Sun 11am worship service, fun, food, fellowship, games, bounce house. Info 704-272-8884.

OCTOBER 23

Special Service

At Mt. Beulah Baptist Church, 3373 Country Club Rd, Wadesboro, at 10:30am. Izabella McMillon, Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Ministry Samaritan's Purse.

Homecoming

At Bethany Free Will Baptist Church on Old Lilesville Road in Wadesboro with Rev. Johnny Johnson. Catered meal follows service.

ONGOING

Bible Study/Prayer

Every 3rd Saturday at noon, Faith Believers of Deliverance Holiness Church, 215 Brown Creek Rd, Wadesboro

Bible Study & Prayer

At Savannah AME Zion Tuesdays at noon & 6pm. The public is invited

Bible Study

Every Wednesday at 6pm at Flakes Chapel MBC. Everyone is invited

Bible Study

Hour of Power at Ebenezer MBC Wednesdays at 7pm

Bible Class

Tuesday nights at Lakeside Holiness Church, 6:30-7:30pm, activities for children

Events

OCTOBER 4

Board of Commissioners Meet 6pm in Board Room, Suite 209, in Government Center, 101 S Greene St in uptown Wadesboro. This is the regular monthly meeting. Meeting available online at youtube.com, search for Anson Commissioners. To appear, sign up prior to meeting. Info 704-994-3201

OCTOBER 6

Early Dismissal for Parent/Teacher Conferences for Anson Middle School, Anson High School & Anson County Early College. Dismissal 1pm. Conferences 2 to 7pm.

OCTOBER 9

Mr. & Mrs. Ben Taylor

Family Reunion, 1pm at Hopewell United Methodist Church, located at 1715 Hopewell Church Rd, Peachland. Please bring well-filled food basket & auction item for Cemetery Fund.

OCTOBER 13

Early Dismissal for Parent/Teacher Conferences

for Anson Elementary Schools. Dismissal 12:30pm. Conferences 1 to 6pm.

ONGOING EVENTS

Cub Scouts Pack #530

Meets each Thursday at Peachland UMC at 7pm. Info 704-994-9173

Free Food Distributed by Anson Crisis Ministries

Every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday, 8am-1pm. It is located at 117 North Rutherford Street in uptown Wadesboro. Telephone is 704-694-2445

SC Jazz Festival In Dizzy's Hometown

Dizzy Gillespie's hometown of Cheraw, SC ushers in its 17th year of the South Carolina Jazz Festival October 13-16 with four days of great jazz and exciting activities. The weekend, which coincides with the 105th anniversary of Gillespie's birth, will showcase the unique bond Gillespie shared with his South Carolina roots and jazz.

A wide variety of free events and one ticketed concert are scheduled for Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday October 13-16. This year's festival will culminate on Sunday, October 16, with a Free Jazz concert at First Presbyterian Church of Cheraw.

Over 24 Jazz performances are scheduled during the festival that include in-school performances. The concerts will feature regional musicians from both North and South Carolina and beyond. The festival kicks off with a free concert on Thursday, October 13th at the Dizzy Gillespie Homesite Park featuring Cheraw native Robert Gardiner Jazz Quintet. Robert is an educator at Lander University and also the founder of the SC Jazz Masterworks Ensemble.

Featured artist for the ticketed evening performance on Friday, October 14 at the Theatre on the Green will be New York based Trumpet Player Alphonso Horne & the Gotham Kings. South Carolina musician Mark Rapp & the Dizzy Gillespie Celebration Band with guest vocalist Martina DaSilva will perform at a free outdoor concert on Saturday evening, October 15.

Alphonso Horne is one of the most sought-after musicians today. Known for his high level of musicianship, Horne has performed with some of the leading musicians in jazz including, touring with Wynton Marsalis and Jazz at Lincoln Center (2013), performing on the PBS Special: Lady Gaga and Tony Bennett (2014), playing in the house band of the Late Show with Jon Batiste, and playing on Grammy nominated albums (Jamison, 2015; My Favorite Things, 2015). Horne was also featured in the 2019 film Bolden, playing a cameo role.

Mark Rapp is a distinguished trumpeter, composer, arranger, didgeridoo player, recording and touring artist and has performed with artists from Branford Marsalis to Hootie and the Blowfish. He has performed around the world at jazz clubs and jazz festivals and has been guest soloist with big bands, recorded as a special guest artist on CDs, and played in the United Nations Symphony Orchestra. "Rapp is willing to tackle the history of this music with his eyes on the past and his mind on the present and future of this music." AllAboutJazz.com

Jazz Vocalist Martina DaSilva, a New York City native, captivates audiences with her signature blend of daring technical virtuosity and expressive emotional sensitivity. Drawing equally from the styles of early jazz, opera, and chamber music, her musicality transcends conventional genre labeling. As a Brazilian-American, Martina also has a passion for performing the works of Brazilian composers. Martina has received high praise for her performances at the Kennedy Center, The Bern International Jazz Festival, the NYC Hot Jazz Festival, and Jazz at Lincoln Center.

Weekend activities include free performances at Cheraw's Centennial Park featuring the 208th Army Jazz Band, a Be-bop parade, evening jazz crawls, and a jazz lunch and brunch. Music will be presented at the Gillespie family's home church, Wesley United Methodist on Saturday, the 15th. Art abounds during the weekend with Art on Town Green and the festival's 13th Italian Madonnari Chalk Competition. Attendees can enjoy a self-guided Historic Cheraw Cell Phone Tour to over 25 points of interest, including Dizzy Gillespie related sites.

Tickets for the Friday evening October 14th concert at the Theatre on the Green are \$25.00 per person. For more information or to purchase tickets call the Cheraw Arts Commission 843.537.8420 x12 or visit www.scjazzfestival.com

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