



Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund announces 2010 grant recipients

By: Jim Hinnant
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RALEIGH - The Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund recently awarded more than \$2.3 million to help communities across the state protect farmland and promote agricultural enterprises, Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler announced last week.

"Momentum for protecting working farms continues to build across North Carolina, and we are glad that we can help support 21 conservation and enterprise projects around the state," Troxler said. "We received 45 applications requesting more than \$7 million in funding. Clearly, interest in farmland protection is high."

Below is a list, by county, of applicants that received grants:

Alamance

* Piedmont Land Conservancy received \$300,000 to help purchase a conservation easement on 114 acres of the Iseley Farm, a row crop and cattle producer.

Caldwell

* Foothills Conservancy received \$170,000 toward the purchase of a conservation easement on 135 acres of the Jones Farm, which produces cattle, corn, hay and barley.

Carteret

* The N.C. Coastal Land Trust received \$270,000 to help purchase a conservation easement on 50 acres of the Guthrie Farm, which produces a variety of row crops.

Catawba

* Catawba County received \$6,000 to help fund a program to educate farmers about the county's Voluntary Agricultural District and Enhanced VAD ordinances.

Chatham

* Triangle Land Conservancy received \$165,000 toward the purchase of a conservation easement on 102 acres of the Cohen Farm, a corn and hay producer.

Davidson

* The Land Trust for Central North Carolina received \$175,000 to help purchase a conservation easement on 256 acres of the Stokes Farm, which produces cattle, wheat and soybeans.

Franklin

* Franklin County Cooperative Extension received \$25,000 to conduct a feasibility study for a slaughter facility and farmers market in the county.

* North American Land Trust received \$182,600 to help purchase a conservation easement on 88 acres of Jumping Run Farm, which produces row crops, grain and hay. The land trust also received a grant of \$10,000 to help pay transaction costs on an additional 20 acres the farm's owners donated for a conservation easement.

Haywood

* The Southwestern North Carolina Resource Conservation and Development Council received \$69,000 to help purchase a conservation easement on 13 acres of the Henson Farm, which produces cattle, hay and corn.

* The council also received \$55,000 toward the purchase of a conservation easement on 24 acres of the Robinson Farm, a cattle and row crop producer.

Orange

* The Black Family Land Trust received \$50,000 to help purchase a conservation easement on 40 acres of the Thompson Prawn Farm, an aquaculture operation.

* Orange County received \$150,000 toward the purchase of a conservation easement on 153 acres of the Breeze Farm, which produces corn, wheat, hay and cattle.

Randolph

* Randolph County Cooperative Extension received \$25,000 to assist with the cost of creating and implementing a farmland protection plan.

Scotland

* Sandhills Area Land Trust received \$159,940 to help purchase a conservation easement on 97 acres of the Gainey Farm, which produces row crops and timber.

Surry

* Piedmont Land Conservancy received \$25,000 to develop a farmland protection plan for Surry County.

Swain

* Swain County Soil and Water Conservation District received \$2,500 for outreach and education efforts in developing a farmland protection plan.

Union

* Catawba Lands Conservancy received \$286,860 to help purchase a conservation easement on 118 acres of the Howey Farm, a corn, soybean and wheat operation.

The trust fund also awarded grants to the following organizations for projects of regional or statewide impact:

* Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project received \$7,500 for a conference to provide limited-resource, beginning and underserved farmers in Western North Carolina with tools and training to develop marketing plans for locally grown food.

* Natural Capital Investment Fund received \$65,000 to assist with the purchase of grain-storage bins for minority, low-wealth and beginning farmers in Eastern North Carolina.

* North Carolina's Eastern Region received \$100,000 to support development of farmland protection plans in Greene, Jones, Lenoir and Onslow counties.

* Western N.C. Communities received \$74,000 to support completion of a slaughter facility for use by livestock farmers in Western North Carolina.

The trust fund's purpose is to support projects that encourage the preservation of qualifying agricultural, horticultural and forest lands while fostering the growth, development and sustainability of family farms. Grants can be awarded for agricultural agreements that promote the active production of food and fiber on farm and forest lands; public and private enterprise programs that promote profitable and sustainable farm and forest lands; and the purchase of conservation easements on farm and forest lands.

The grants were made possible by a \$2 million appropriation from the General Assembly. The trust fund was able to award an additional \$330,000 this year because of unspent grant funds from previous years, said Dewitt Hardee, environmental programs manager at the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

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