This newsletter is intended for people interested in commercial fruit and vegetable production, business planning and North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service meetings throughout North Carolina. For back issues of this newsletter please go to the Jones County Extension website and click on the Commercial Horticulture, Nursery & Turf menu option on the left side of the website. The website address is: http://jones.ces.ncsu.edu

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Upcoming Workshops, Tours & Meetings

September 4, 2008. 56th Annual Peanut Field Day. Peanut Belt Research Station. 8:45 AM – 1 PM. Lewiston-Woodville, N.C.

September 30, 2008. Regional Farmers Market Managers & Roadside Marketers Meeting. Onslow County Extension office. 9 AM – 2:30 PM. Call Mark Seitz at (252) 448-9621 to register or for more information. Topics: Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) farmers markets and roadside marketers, food safety and product liability insurance. Speakers: Mark Seitz, Annette Dunlap, Rod Gurganus, Robin Seitz.

September 15-20, 2008. Lenoir County Fair. Lenoir County Fairgrounds. Kinston, NC.


October 31-November 2, 2008. 23rd Annual Carolina Farm Stewardship Association Sustainable Agriculture Conference. Anderson, SC. Go to: www.carolinafarmstewards.org to register online.

November 6-8, 2008. NC Strawberry Association Annual Conference. Hilton University Place, Charlotte, NC. Contact Debbie Wechsler at (919) 542-4037 to register or go to the online registration at: http://www.ncstrawberry.org/ for more information. There are two very good sessions planned for Thursday: Strawberry Plasticulture Production for New Growers and Are You Making a Profit?


December 2-4, 2008. Certified Crop Advisor Training. Onslow County Extension Center. Contact Curtis Fountain at the Duplin County Extension office at (910) 296-2143 for more information.

January 13-16, 2009. Mid-Atlantic Direct Marketing Conference. Atlantic Coastal Agricultural Conference and Trade Show. Trump Taj Mahal Casino-Hotel, Atlantic City New Jersey. Optional Farm Tour, January 16th. www.madmc.com. This is a very good conference with farm tours in an area of the country with high population, heavy doses of urban sprawl, high land prices and lots of customers with large amounts of disposable income.

January 21, 2009. Muscadine Grape Production & Pruning Workshop. 9 AM – 1 PM. Jones County Senior Center & Warren Vineyard, Trenton, NC. Call Mark Seitz at (252) 448-9621 to register and for more information.

2005 Crop Production Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>NC’s Rank</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>% US Production</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sweet potato</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5,950 cwt</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumbers for pickles</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>69,000 tons</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blueberries</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26.0 million pounds</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberries</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>195,000 cwt</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanuts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>288 million pounds</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2006 Agricultural Statistics, NDCA&CS

Business Planning

Management

Management is a 20th century term that most people equate with the term business management1 and yet there are all kinds of management activities that go on which are common to business and government alike.

There are two textbook definitions of management that apply to this article: 1) the act or art of managing: the conducting or supervising of something (as a business) 2) judicious use of means to accomplish an end.2

Peter Drucker says, “The key to good management is not just a matter of directing the business. The key to good management is to find the right people to make the right decisions.”3 Another management guru – Jim Collins, has a slightly different spin on Drucker’s philosophy. Collins says you need to get the right people on the bus and then let them drive it!

No matter what definition you use getting the right people to manage your business is critical—you’re your success. In today’s world everyone knows how difficult and critical it is. You have to hire and retain people that can be trusted to do the work you need to have done without having to be there 24/7 to monitor them or their progress.

To do this Jim Collins says there are three simple keys to making this happen, which he calls the Hedgehog Concept. Managers (business owners) must find work, companies or industries that:

1. They are deeply passionate about.4

   • Bill Gates started Microsoft from his parent’s garage in Seattle, WA. How many billions has Microsoft earned over the years?

   • Duff Goldman started Charm City Cakes (Food Network) in Baltimore, MD and loves making cakes. Cake deposits start at $1,000 with a two year waiting list. If you watch the TV show you can easily see how passionate this man and his staff are about what they do.

   • Christopher Zane (Zane’s Cycles) in Connecticut started in 1981 from his parent’s garage and today runs a bicycle shop that does over $4.5 million dollar business.

2. They can be the best in the world at.5

   General Electric’s famous CEO Jack Welch believed that if you were not #1 or #2 in the market with a product, you should get out of that part of your

5 Ibid. Pg. 96.
business. Finding the right mix of products for your farm operation is critical for you to be successful.

Whether you run a large operation or small, find the crops or activities you are really good at and focus on them. Getting watered down with unprofitable ventures not only drains the bank account but it also drains your management time and energy. Stick with what you know and what you’re good at.

3. Drives their economic engine.

If it makes money without draining time and capital resources, keep doing it! Don’t be afraid to try new things but don’t lose track of the foundation of your business. If growing strawberries is your game, be the best strawberry grower in the county, region, state. If growing sweet potatoes or tomatoes is your niche, concentrate on that.

No matter what you do, tenaciously focusing on these three things will push you, make you happy and help you be successful for a long, long time no matter what Mother Nature throws at you.

Crop Production

Pesticide Recertification Credit Opportunities


Rotating Your Chemical Applications

What do you think of when you think about ‘rotating your chemicals’? With crop rotations this is fairly simple: tomato, cucumber, sweet corn, watermelon, etc. To reduce the threat from insects and diseases you need to rotate your crops over a three to four year (or more) time period.

Rotating your chemistry follows the same mindset but can be somewhat confusing. Rotating chemistry by mode of action, is a topic that is frequently discussed at pesticide applicator recertification training programs, at Extension meetings, in Extension newsletters and field days and yet there still seems to be some confusion about what chemical rotation really means.

Just like crop production, failure to rotate the use of insecticides, fungicides and herbicides based on their mode of action leads to the build up of resistance by the fungi, insects and weeds that you are trying to suppress. In the long term this can make the product you are using ineffective.

One of the most common and well known types of resistance showing today in large agriculture operations is the development of resistance to Roundup™. The build up of resistance to Roundup™ herbicide by a number of weed species is a clear example of what can happen when you rely on one product for too long.

Rotating chemistry is all about paying attention to the mode of action of the product, known as the Group number of the product. The modes of action are categorized as group numbers such as: Group M, Group 11, Group 27, etc., and each product is unique. When

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6 Ibid. Pg. 96.
trying to decide what product to use the Group rating is the information you need to refer to rather than the trade name or chemical name.

Example: Bravo, mancozeb, sulfur, and copper are all Group M fungicides. Group M fungicides are all classified as contact fungicides with no systemic control. While this is a ‘rotation’ based on product name, these products all control the disease organism using the same mode of action. Therefore rotating by name will not work.

Cabrio (Group 11), Pristine (Group 11 + 7), Ranman (Group 21) and Tanos (Group 11 + 27) and many other products offer a variety of different modes of action. However, because of the mixed products with mixed modes of action there are still commonalities within these products that you must pay attention to.

There is an excellent table (Table 6-20) on page 297 in the in the 2008 NC Agriculture Chemicals Manual that highlights these group numbers and many chemical companies now put these groups on the product label to make it easier for you to identify the mode of action of the product.

Paying to the modes of action, their commonalities and how often you can use them each year will help maintain their effectiveness against the weed, insect and disease problems you face. Failing to do so will lead to problems similar to Roundup resistant weeds seen more and more in corn, soybean and cotton fields around the area.

New Chemical Update

Syngenta Corporation announced the registration of a new formulation of the insecticide Platinum. Platinum 75SG is the new formulation and it is a second generation neonicotinoid insecticide, labeled for use on 109 fruit and vegetable crops in North Carolina. Platinum 75SG (chemical name: thiamethoxam) is a group 4A insecticide, which can be soil applied before planting. Platinum 75SG also comes in a foliar form with the trade name Actara. Dr. Mark Abney, Vegetable Entomologist at NCSU, is evaluating this product in sweetpotato research test plots this year.

Largest Watermelon Contest

The State Farmers Market Restaurant, R&H Produce, The NC Watermelon Association, The State Farmers Market and The North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services sponsored a Watermelon Day at the Raleigh Farmers Market on Thursday, August 7, 2008. Here are the winners:

1st place – 163 lbs. - Larry Boyette -- Kenly, NC – (Johnston County)
(Now on display at The State Farmers Market Restaurant)

2nd place – 154.5 lbs. - Donald Murphy – Pink Hill, NC
(Duplin County)

3rd place (tie) – 146.5 lbs. – Adam & Robert Worley – Cerro Gordo, NC

3rd place (tie) – 146.5 lbs. -- Jacob Small – Fair Bluff, NC

Congratulations to the winners!
Courtesy Bonnie Holloman, NC Watermelon Growers Assn.

If you have questions about any of the information, upcoming meetings, business strategies, or crop production management issues, please call me at the Jones County Extension Center at (252) 448-9621. I can also be reached by email at: Mark_Seitz@ncsu.edu.