

Sweet Potato Speak

Issue 02
June 2018



news about the nc sweetpotato industry

2018 Board of Directors

Jeffery Lee, **PRESIDENT**
Jeffery Lee Farms

Robert Boyette, **VICE PRESIDENT**
Boyette Brothers Produce

Thomas Joyner
SECRETARY-TREASURER
Nash Produce

Brent Leggett
Leggett Farming Partnership

Dewey Scott
Scott Farms

Frank Howell
Howell Farming Co., Inc.

Johnny Barnes
Barnes Farming Corp.

Kim K. LeQuire
Kornegay Family Farms and Produce

Lynwood Vick
Vick Family Farms Partnership

Rob Hill
Tull Hill Farms

Scott Sullivan
Sullivan Farms, Inc.

Thomas Chancy
Millstream Farms

Staff

Kelly McIver, Executive Director
Cindy Vanderhoof, Bookkeeper
CoCo Daughtry, Communications

Making Progress Branding North Carolina Sweet Potatoes

Do you readily recognize the terms Idaho Potato™ or Vidalia Onion™? These associations have branded their product in a way that sets the industry standard. Along the way, they have done a great job at marketing using their "brand" to entice not only produce buyers, but the consumer as well.

Noting what these two industries have done, NC growers are next with brand placement. In 2015 we wrote a grant to conduct a feasibility study to determine benefits of a branded sweet potato program. Upon completion of the study, we learned that by creating a branded program based on high quality standards we could potentially garner up to 25% more in price.

The study showed consumers are looking for the quality reassurance which brands sell as a promise. Additionally, retailers are looking for ways to differentiate themselves and give people reasons to choose them over their competitors. These needs have created a win-win situation and a perfect opportunity for us to brand North Carolina Sweet Potatoes!

Produce companies, consumers, and retailers all benefit from the rise of branded produce. What a great success this will be for our industry!

We have been in contact with our attorney, created a Brand Task Force chaired by our Marketing Specialist Heather Barnes,

and begun the work to create this brand for you, our members.

There are many details in creating the final product deliverables for a Branded program and initial meetings have created more questions than answers. What we can tell you is this; we are headed in the right direction by creating a marketing platform to help the #1 sweet potato producing state in the nation stay #1 as we grow our segment of the market place, both domestically and abroad.

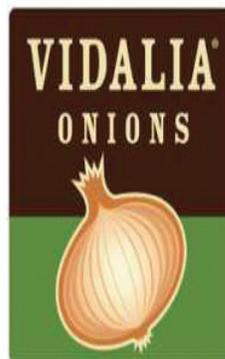
The North Carolina Brand will roll out in segments over the course of the next few years until all sections of our industry are covered.

We will be hosting regional meetings throughout this year to better serve you and keep you in the loop as we embark on this process. We are excited to share this with you; keep watching *Tater Talk* and *SweetPotato Speak* for more details as we continue to move forward.

Tater Talk is a weekly e-news communication to keep you current with industry news as it happens.

Not receiving *Tater Talk*? That's an easy fix, contact CoCo at the NCSPC office, communications@ncsweetpotatoes.com or by calling 919-894-1067 and update your contact information today.

As always, if you have thoughts or ideas, please let us know; we are here to serve you.



The North Carolina SweetPotato Commission Inc. is a nonprofit corporation made up of over 400 sweet potato growers along with the packers, processors and business associates that support them. The sole purpose of the commission is to increase sweet potato consumption through education, promotional activities, research and honorable horticultural practices among its producers. Thanks to the six sweet potato farmers that chartered the commission in 1961, the commission has supported its growers and maintained North Carolina as the No. 1 sweet potato producing state in the United States since 1971.

www.ncsweetpotatoes.com

Capitol Briefs



North Carolina Report:

John Cooper - Connect C

On May 16, the General Assembly convened their "short session" which is scheduled to adjourn in approximately six weeks. Committee meetings have continued since the last session adjourned and budget discussions and negotiations have occurred over the past few weeks. The budget will be the major issue for this session. North Carolina lawmakers have an additional financial cushion as they adjust the two-year state budget. The state expects to collect \$357 million more than anticipated this current year marking the fourth consecutive year in which the state will record a surplus. The Governor's budget has been released. The General Assembly is expected to have their budget assed in the early part of the session.

The legislature revived public discussions over redrawing judicial election districts. A House-Senate study committee on the judiciary met recently and reviewed updated election boundary proposals for Superior Court and District Court seats. Legislation approved last year by the House that would shift certain judicial appointments from the governor to the General Assembly was discussed but no recommendations were made.

When the General Assembly adjourns, legislators will prepare for the election in November. All seats in the N.C. General Assembly are up for re-election. All 170 members will have opposition in November which is highly unusual.

Federal Report:

Brad Edwards - Jenkins Hill Consulting

Congress is currently working on the FY 2019 Appropriations bills to fund the government prior to the September 30, 2018 deadline. The U.S. House of Representatives has passed the Farm Bill, HR 2 (the full bill can be found at www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/hr2/text) out of committee and is waiting for House floor action. The U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee is currently working on a bi-partisan Farm Bill to consider sometime this summer.

Trade related matters continue to dominate the news with ongoing discussions relating to possibly NAFTA withdrawal and separate bi-lateral agreements with Mexico and Canada. The China tariff negotiations continue, among Administration trade related officials and Chinese officials, on working out resolutions to the tariffs that have been implemented.



Place
YOUR
ad HERE

Call Today
919.894.1067

5 Girls Produce
910-567-6877
www.5girlsproduce.com

AgBiome Innovations
984-260-0201
www.agbiome.com

Arcola Hardwood Company
252-257-4484
Warrenton, NC

AS Wilcox Ltd.
+649 237-0740
Auckland, New Zeland

B&B Produce
919-894-2527
Benson, NC

Barfoots of Botley
+44 1243 261211
www.barfoots.com
West Sussex, UK

BB & T Bank
919-938-4768
www.bbt.com

Benchmark Bldg. & Irrigation
252-398-3116
www.bbandi.com

Carolina Eastern-Benson
919-894-2922
www.carolina-eastern.com

Carolina Farm Credit
704-761-2857
www.agcarolina.com

Carolina Innovative Food Ingredients
919-720-0291
www.cifi1.com

Clinton Truck & Tractor Co.
910-592-4188
www.clintontt.com

Coastal Agro Business
252-756-1126
www.coastalagro.com

Courtier Nordany Broker, Inc.
506-473-9492
www.nordany.com

Crop Management Services
919-920-0238
Princeton, NC

EWR, Inc.
901-753-5026
www.ewrinc.com

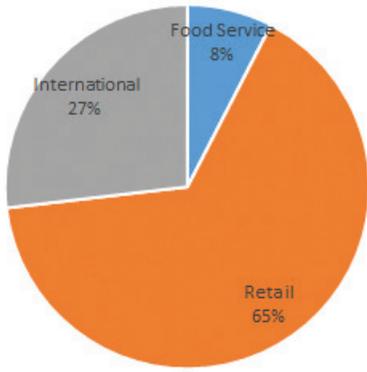
Farm Fresh Produce
800-606-9267
www.farm-fresh-produce.com

Farm Pak Products
252-459-3101
www.farmpak.com

Frost, PLLC
919-782-8410
www.frostpllc.com

NC Marketing Report

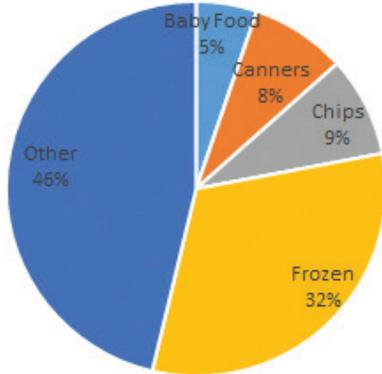
October 22, 2017 thru May 5, 2018



Total - 40 Pound Cartons 5,074,251

The FOB Prices ranges for this time are:

- US#1 \$12-\$16
- US #2 \$8 - \$10
- Jumbos \$8 - \$10
- US #1 \$10 - \$14
Petites



The 2017 crop season total to date (August 20, 2017 thru May 5, 2018) is:

Total Pounds in addition to Fresh Market 4,481,331

2,714,593 (40 pound cartons fresh market sweet potatoes)

This compares to 1,979,130 (40 pound cartons fresh market sweet potatoes) for the total to date last season of the 2016 crop.

* Source: NCDA&CS Market News

NCSPC Scholarship Awarded

The North Carolina SweetPotato Commission, Inc. Scholarship, established in 1977, is a merit based scholarship awarded annually to undergraduate students of the Department of Horticulture Sciences. Recipients are selected by a scholarship committee of the Department of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

This scholarship is awarded on the basis of merit, including scholastic achievement, departmental leadership, interest in horticultural sciences and financial need.

The 2018-19 scholarship recipient is Ian Dalrymple, a renewal of last year's scholarship. Ian has been interested in becoming a landscaper/landscape designer since he took his first horticulture class during his freshman year in high school. He has enjoyed completely immersing himself in related courses/majors during college thus far. Ian was first exposed to the field of horticulture by his father who gardened as a hobby.

Scholarship monies awarded this year were \$1060.

**Rainbow.
Full Spectrum Nutrition
for Sweet Potatoes.**

Quality is just as important as weight for a sweet potato crop. Outside of weather, nothing influences performance more than your fertilizer program. Most soils in the coastal plain are deficient in boron & manganese. Unless a good source of these nutrients is available in your fertilizer, the crop may suffer. Rainbow Plant Food contains precise amounts of nutrients chemically compounded to form a homogenous granule. The nutrients in Rainbow fertilizers exist in an available form, so they can move quickly through the roots in time to promote healthy, hearty growth. When high yields and quality are critical, growers can rely on Rainbow fertilizers to produce the best sweet potatoes possible.

Find out more at RainbowPlantFoodProducts.com

©2018 NUTRIEN Ltd.; Rainbow, NUTRIEN logos and designs are registered trademarks owned by NUTRIEN Ltd.



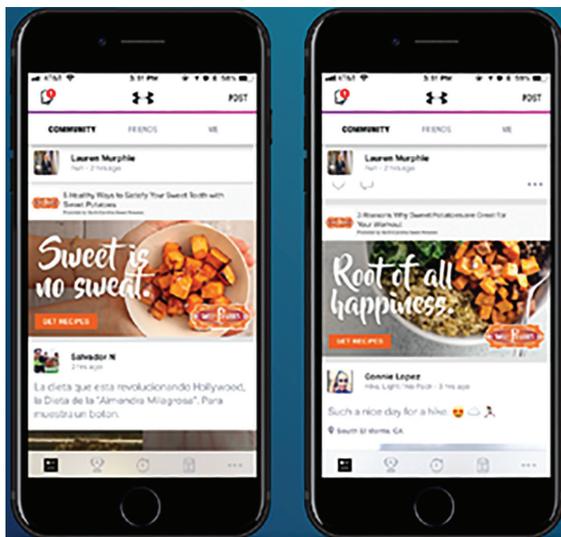

Public Relations Update

NCSPC Marketing Initiatives in 2018

PadillaCRT, Julie LePere

The NC Sweet Potato Commission's Registered Dietitian Tool Kit is under construction! The three-year-old Tool Kit continues to be a great resource for supermarket registered dietitians for use in in-store demos, consumer education, community activities and employee wellness. The Tool Kit will be updated to refresh the current look and feel and adhere to new FDA ruling for Nutrition Facts Labeling.

After a successful first month in January, the three-month partnership with MyFitnessPal™ resumes this spring (May) and summer (July) encouraging greater use of sweet potatoes among health and fitness enthusiasts.



Throughout May and July, sweet potatoes will be highlighted through creative ads acting as visual reminders of all the nutritious and delicious ways MyFitnessPal™ users can incorporate sweet potatoes in their health and fitness journey.

The team worked closely with MyFitnessPal™ to evaluate the performance of the January ads in order to optimize upcoming placements for May and July. Each placement will drive users to the NCSPC website where they can find more sweet potato recipes, tips and inspiration.

Our next campaign was digital working with Adwords.

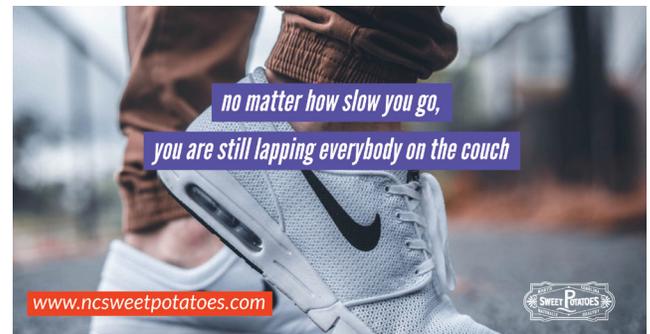
The goal of an Adword campaign is to increase organic search traffic to the NCSPC website and improve search engine ranking. With year-round availability and versatility in mind, we then scheduled the campaign for July to encourage consumers to think of sweet potatoes outside of the holiday season.

Our goal is to reach sweet potato lovers in the summer, and Google's online advertising program allows us to reach new visitors based on "sweet potato" searches that users type into Google.

NCSPC Marketing Initiatives in 2018

North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS), Heather Barnes

We are excited to announce the launch of Sweet Feet, a running team of sweet potato ambassadors!



The team has runners from across the state who are active on social media and love to eat sweet potatoes. Runners range from casual runners who race some 5K (3.1 miles) local events, to runners who have competed in marathons. The goal for the team is to promote sweet potatoes as a great addition to a runner's diet. We partnered with Bucket List Tummy, otherwise known as Registered Dietitian Sarah Schlichter, who not only wrote about the reasons why sweet potatoes are good for runners, but also developed six recipes featuring our favorite vegetable. You can visit Sarah at her website, <https://bucketlisttummy.com/>.

**North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS),
Michelle Wang**

On April, 20th and 21st, we participated in **VDD Congress** in Germany with North Carolina Sweet Potatoes. This congress is organized by the German association of dietitians, and attracts more than 1,500 attendees every year.



Dr. Alexa Iwan, German nutritional and host of different TV shows, held a lecture for us on sweet potatoes and their health benefits. The congress participants had the opportunity to take information material including a booklet presenting sweet potatoes as a natural alternative to table sugar. There were also mini sweet potato muffins available for tasting.

At the end of April, the launch of the famous restaurant guide **GUIDE PUDLO** took place. It is one of the most important events of the year for the top French gastronomy (the study of the relationship between food, and culture, art of preparing and serving rich or delicate an appetizing food), edited by journalist and restaurant critic Gilles Pudlowski. For the second time North Carolina acted as official sponsor of the event. Chef Alan Geaam, who owns four restaurants in Paris, cooked delicacies with sweet potatoes for the expert audience, which ignited great enthusiasm.

To celebrate the third International Sweet Potato Week, North Carolina sweet potatoes initiated a large-scale social media campaign on Facebook in the EU, including a competition with attractive prizes. The attention was enormous: 1,200 Facebook users took part in the competition, within ten days the EU version of NCSPC Facebook received 700 new fans and the interaction rate was 6,300 in March, an increase of 40,000%. In addition to the competition, exciting facts about sweet potatoes in general, and health in particular, as well as creative recipes and engagement polls were shared daily. Sweet potatoes not only conquer the real world but, the online cosmos turns orange too.

Great Opportunities

**FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS
COMING SOON!**

- “TATER TALK” ADS
- E-BLASTS
- ADDITIONAL MAILINGS

ADVERTISING RATES

Size	Specs	Cost (per Issue)	
		Inside	Outside
Biz Card	3.5 X 2	\$150.00	\$200.00
1/4 Page	5.25 X 4	\$300.00	\$500.00
Half Page	10.5 x 4.25	\$600.00	\$800.00
	5.25 x 8	\$600.00	\$800.00
Full Page (2 side)		\$1,000.00	n/a

Electronic Ad Members Portal	Size	Cost (per month)
Side bar	180X150 px	\$45.00
Banner	468 X 60 px	\$45.00



North Carolina SweetPotato Commission
700 E. Parrish Dr. Suite C
Benson, NC 27504
919.894.1067 ph
919.894.7018 fax
www.ncsweetpotatoes.com

Associate Members (cont'd)

Godwin Produce Co. Inc.
910-892-4171
www.sweettater.com

Ham Produce
252-747-8200
www.hamfarms.com

Interlog USA, Inc.
800-603-6030
www.interlogusa.com

International Paper
910-258-1522
www.internationalpaper.com

J.R. Simplot Co.
252-508-2677
www.simplot.com

John Hackney Agency of Rocky Mount
52-442-3186
www.JHARM.com

Lancaster Farms
252-291-9278
Wilson, NC

Mallory Alexander International
972-522-4740
www.mallorygroup.com

Manry Rawls
800-666-6131
www.manryrawls.com

McCain Foods USA, Inc.
630-857-4418
www.mccain.com

Moody Dunbar, Inc.
910-892-3175
www.moodydunbar.com
Nash Produce
252-443-6011
www.nashproduce.com

Nature's Way Farms, Inc.
910-594-0096
www.nwfarms.net

NC Certified SP Seed Growers
252-467-2777
Nashville, NC

Netafim
559-453-6800
www.netafimusa.com

Pratt Industries
704-878-6615
www.prattindustries.com

Quality Equipment
910-892-6171
www.qualityequip.com

Roberson Onion Co.
912-375-5760
www.robersononion.com

Robinson Fresh
952-683-3266
www.robinsonfresh.com

S.A.I.L. Sea Air Integrated Logistics
252-243-7245
www.sail.li

Scott Farms
919-284-4030
www.scottfarms.com

Snow Tractor
252-746-8200
www.snowtractor.com

Southern Container
252-237-0539
www.socontainers.com

Southern Produce
910-267-0011
www.southern-produce.com

Spring Acres Sales
252-478-5127
www.springacres.com

Steele Plant Company, LLC
731-648-5476
www.sweetpotatoplant.com

Streamlines NV
813-253-312
www.streamlinesnv.com

Strickland Bros Enterprises
252-478-3508
www.stricklandbros.com

Techmark, Inc.
517-322-0250
www.techmark-inc.com

Timac Agro USA
910-258-1522
www.us.timacagro.com

Triangle Insurance & Assoc.
919-496-2239
www.triangleinsuranceonline.com

TriEst Irrigation
843-944-0596
www.triestirrigation.com

UPL
919-260-8040
www.www.uplonline.com

Vick Family Farms
252-237-7313
www.vickfamilyfarms.com

Wada Farms Marketing
919-578-4020
www.wadafarms.com

Wadsons Farm Ltd.
+441-238-1862
www.wadsonsfarm.com

Wayne E. Bailey Produce
910-654-5163
www.sweetpotatoes.com

Wilco Transportation Services
919-689-2500
Mount Olive, NC

Yara
252-504-2514
www.yara.com