



# NEWSLETTER

Spring/Summer 2006

## *President's Message*

I would like to thank everyone who helped make our 2006 NCWA Convention the most successful in our history. We had a very large attendance and a record setting auction that grossed over \$312,000.00! Don Hiller was responsible for inviting all the buyers that made our auction such a great one. We would like to express a tremendous thank you to the following stores and buyers who bought watermelon loads at the auction:

- Food Lion:** Kyle Aucello and Paul Newman
- Hapco Farms:** Chuck Dechene and Steve Van Meter
- Harris Teeter:** Jody Goff
- Ingles Market:** Jim Ray
- SuperValu:** Tom Finefield and John Hubbard
- Wal-Mart:** Charles Freeman and Greg Hitt
- Bi-Lo:** authorized Don Hiller to buy a load for them.

I encourage all of these stores to invite our beautiful 2006 NC Watermelon Queen, Katie Mills, to do a promotion for your store. This can easily be done by contacting our Promotions Coordinator, Sandra Woodard, at 252 585-1125 and setting up a date. The profit from our auction enables us to fund our extensive marketing and research programs throughout the year.

Allan Thornton did a wonderful job coordinating several interesting speakers for a very informative educational session for growers and others on Friday afternoon. Don Hiller led a great discussion period with growers, shippers, and buyers on Saturday morning. Everyone attending our convention had the opportunity to return home with new and useful information. In addition to this, we all had fun at the reception and dance on Friday night and at the luncheon, seed spit, auction, and banquet on Saturday.

Watermelon season is now approaching and I know everyone will become very busy. However, if you have the chance to attend any of the festivals or promotions on our schedule, please do so. I'm sure you will enjoy them and you will be proud of our Queen Katie representing the NCWA.

I wish everyone a great watermelon season!

Warm regards,

*Gloria Richardson*



## *Executive Director's Report*

*Cathy Price*

The NCWA has relocated to 5111 A#15, Falls of Neuse Road, Raleigh, NC 27609. Our phone, fax and email information has not changed. We do have a new mailing address: PO Box 58220, Raleigh, NC 27658.

It is not too late to join the NCWA. Please visit our website: [www.ncmelons.com](http://www.ncmelons.com) and download an application today. Renewal of your membership and new memberships assure that the NCWA will continue to be one of the best recognized and most active of the North Carolina commodity groups.

If you need additional membership renewal information, please contact the Association office.

## *Association News!*



### **NC Watermelon Queen - Trademark Title**

The NCWA Board requested that the Executive Director initiate the process required to have the title "NC Watermelon Queen" trademarked through the NC Secretary of State office. Paperwork has been submitted and we expect notification that this has been accomplished. We will update you on the final process.

### *NCDA&CS Marketing Specialist*

*Nick Augostini*

The NCWA's 2006 Marketing campaign will consist of media, educational and promotional materials that promote the consumption of North Carolina Watermelons. The media portion of the campaign will include radio, billboard, restaurant and magazine advertising along with television ads airing state wide on UNC-TV. Radio ads will be placed on stations in Eastern North Carolina that focus on the tourist and local trade. Billboards promoting watermelon consumption will be strategically located on major highways in the state. Display ads will be featured in the Sunbelt Foodservice magazine, a publication dedicated to the service of the food distribution industry.

We will once again be using local transit systems for bus wraps. These bus wraps will cover the Asheville, Greensboro, and Durham areas.

The educational part of the campaign will consist of a Farm to School Display Contest and a Watermelon brochure. The brochure includes watermelon facts and

nutritional information, watermelon selection and storage information, as well as recipes and menu items. These brochures will be given out at Welcome Centers, State Farmers Markets and Extension offices throughout North Carolina.

General promotion items will include T-shirts, hats, bumper stickers and coloring books. These items will increase awareness of the association as well as promote the consumption of North Carolina watermelons. The Queen's Tour is a big part of the promotional campaign. She is scheduled to make appearances at 25 events this summer. A slide production highlighting the Watermelon Queen's participation in events and promotions will be compiled throughout the tour and it will be shown at the NCWA's Annual Meeting.

Governor Easley has proclaimed July as Watermelon Month in North Carolina and he urges all North Carolinians to support the industry.

### ***Promotions Coordinator Report*** ***Sandra Woodard***

The North Carolina Watermelon Association wishes to welcome Katie Mills as 2006 Watermelon Queen. Katie is an eighteen year old senior from Fayetteville attending Cape Fear High School. Katie was crowned 2006 Watermelon Queen at the Banquet held during the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Watermelon Convention at the Wilmington Hilton Riverside in Wilmington, NC. Selected from a field of six contestants, Katie plans to attend Campbell University this fall, majoring in law.

Stephanie McLamb of Benson was named 1<sup>st</sup> Runner Up. Rachel Spears received 2<sup>nd</sup> Runner Up and Jean-Ashley Noble was selected as Miss Jubilee. Congratulations to these young ladies.

Many thanks to everyone who donated or purchased items at the auction to make it our most successful ever. Special thanks also to everyone –

individuals, companies, queen sponsors, judges, President Gloria Richardson, NCWA Board, NCDA and to Cathy Price and Bonnie Holloman who helped NCWA have such a successful convention.

Our 2006 Watermelon Queen Katie began her reign by participating in the NC Azalea Festival Parade in Wilmington, NC on April 8. A visit in April to Jackson Farming Co. gave Katie the opportunity to meet Brent Jackson, NWA President and his wife Debbie at his farming operation and to get to learn and experience first hand about planting watermelons.

April 21-23, Queen Katie and 1<sup>st</sup> Runner up Stephanie and I attended the National Watermelon Promotion Board Queen Media Training in Orlando, Florida. Both young ladies enjoyed meeting the National Watermelon Queen, Candice Fralish, along with the other state Watermelon Queens and Queen Coordinators. The National Watermelon Promotion Board did a fantastic job hosting and teaching us about watermelons and how to successfully meet the public and the media. Thank you to all who made the weekend such a special experience.

Katie and I look forward to a great summer filled with many opportunities to promote watermelon.

### **2006 Queen Tour**

#### **April**

Visit to Watermelon Farm  
8<sup>th</sup> Azalea Festival Parade in Wilmington, NC  
21<sup>st</sup> -23<sup>rd</sup> Media Training in Orlando, FL

#### **May**

13<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> North Carolina Tourism Week  
15<sup>th</sup> I-95 Welcome Center – Roanoke Rapids, NC  
15<sup>th</sup> I-85 Welcome Center – Norlina, NC  
29<sup>th</sup> Glory Days – Fayetteville, NC

#### **June**

Dismal Swamp Welcome Center – South Mills, NC  
2<sup>nd</sup> Gatesville Elementary School- Gatesville, NC  
24<sup>th</sup> Onslow Co. Farmers Market – Jacksonville, NC

#### **July**

8<sup>th</sup> State Farmers Market – Lumberton, NC  
13<sup>th</sup> Farmers Market Festival – Raleigh, NC  
14<sup>th</sup> State Farmers Market – Asheville, NC  
15<sup>th</sup> China Grove Farmers Day - China Grove, NC  
21<sup>st</sup> State Farmers Market – Charlotte, NC  
28<sup>th</sup> -29<sup>th</sup> SE NC Watermelon Festival – Fair Bluff, NC

#### **August**

4<sup>th</sup> Farm Safety Day Camp – Plymouth, NC  
4<sup>th</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> NC Watermelon Festival – Murfreesboro, NC  
10<sup>th</sup> State Farmers Market – Raleigh, NC  
11<sup>th</sup> Piedmont Triad Farmers Market – Greensboro, NC  
25<sup>th</sup> -26<sup>th</sup> Winterville Watermelon Festival – Winterville, NC

#### **September**

USDA/Washington DC – Watermelons on Capitol Hill  
23<sup>rd</sup> Food Lion Family Day – Salisbury, NC

#### **October**

13<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> NC State Fair – Raleigh, NC  
20<sup>th</sup> -24<sup>th</sup> PMA in San Diego, CA



**DON'T FORGET TO  
MARK YOUR  
CALENDARS**

**2007**

**NC WATERMELON ASSOCIATION  
ANNUAL CONVENTION  
MARCH 9-10, 2007**

**Hilton Raleigh-Durham Airport at Research Triangle  
Park**



**4810 Old Page Road Durham, NC 27703  
Phone: 919-941-6000 Fax: 919-941-6030**

**Research Update**  
**Allan Thornton Extension Associate**  
**Horticultural Science, NCSU**

I want to take this opportunity to thank the NC Watermelon Association for their support of the research and extension programs at NC State University. The Association continues to step up its support for the research necessary to move the NC watermelon industry forward. Without industry support, our job would be much more difficult.

NCWA is supporting the following research:

- 04-01** Reducing Sandea Injury in Seedless, Seeded, and Pollinizer Watermelon – K. Jennings & D. Monks (R)
- 05-04** Optimizing Seedless (Triploid) Watermelon Production Using New Diploid Watermelon Pollenizers – J. Schultheis & P. Dittmar (R)
- 05-05** Evaluation Fungicide Programs for Control of Watermelon Gummy Stem Blight, 2005 – A. Thornton & G. Holmes (R)

**Sandea Herbicide is Registered for Watermelon**  
**Allan Thornton and David Monks**

Sandea herbicide recently received an expanded label registration for use in watermelon. Sandea is marketed by the Gowan Company, Yuma AZ. Sandea has been labeled for row middle applications only until recently. The new label allows for preemergent use on watermelons at ½ to ¾ ounces per acre. The lower rate is recommended on lighter soils. Sandea provides suppression of nutsedge and control of many of our troublesome broadleaf weeds. See the label for a complete list of weeds controlled.

**Bareground Applications** - Sandea can be applied preemergence at ½ to ¾ ounces per acre after seeding watermelon in bareground culture. Applications should be completed prior to soil cracking. For bareground transplant situations, Sandea should be applied pre-transplant 7 days prior to transplanting.

**Plasticulture Applications** - Sandea may be applied as a pre-seeding or pre-transplanting treatment in plasticulture production systems. Applications should be made after final bed shaping and just prior to installing the plastic mulch. Watermelons can then be seeded or transplanted 7 days after laying plastic mulch.

For either production system, care should be taken to limit the movement of soil during the seeding or transplant process. Sandea treated soil in the planting hole may result in crop injury.

Sandea can also be used in row middle applications in bareground or plasticulture watermelon. Our research at NC State University has found that postemergence application that contacts the watermelon plant can lead to stem splitting and crop injury. Thus, Sandea should not contact the watermelon plant as crop injury is likely to occur. The use rate is ½ to 1 oz per acre for row middle application.

Follow all instructions and restrictions on the herbicide label. The label can be accessed at the following web address: <http://www.cdms.net/ldat/ld5LK038.pdf>

## 21<sup>st</sup> Annual NC Watermelon Festival

### **Historic Murfreesboro to Host**

Come celebrate the 21st annual North Carolina Watermelon Festival in Historic Murfreesboro, August 2 - 5, 2006, and enjoy a complimentary slice of the State's finest melons! This year's theme will be a celebration of music with Randy Parton as the festival's special guest.

We especially encourage members of the North Carolina Watermelon Association to come and participate in the festival. During festival hours, watermelons are sliced and served to attendees. Last year over 6,000 slices were served and we need extra help. Please come and share your watermelon slicing talent with us! We have a good time working under the information tent and know that you would enjoy promoting our product.

Festival activities include a narrated musical revue, a 5K race and walk, large antiques/collectibles/crafts fair, a fantastic variety of food, amusements rides, street dances each night, free watermelon slices, and watermelon games. Highlighting the festival is NC's largest agricultural parade on Saturday, August 5 at 10:00 a.m. in downtown Murfreesboro, a 5K Race or Run, a musical revue, and a large fireworks show which will take place on Saturday, August 5 at 9:15 p.m..

The festival and nightly street dances will be held in the Murfreesboro Historic District, one block north of Main Street.

For information on any of the activities contact Kay Mitchell-Thomas at (252) 398-5922 or email: [ncheritage@earthlink.net](mailto:ncheritage@earthlink.net)

### **Calendar of Events**

#### **July Proclaimed as NC Watermelon Month**

**July 28-30, 2006** - Fair Bluff Watermelon Festival, Fair Bluff, NC

**August 2-5, 2006** - Murfreesboro Watermelon Festival, Murfreesboro, NC

**August 25-27, 2006** - Winterville Watermelon Festival, Winterville, NC

**October 24-25, 2006** – NC Greenhouse Vegetable Growers Association Annual Meeting – Wake County Agri Center, Raleigh, NC

**November 9-11, 2006** – Southeast Strawberry Expo, Sea Trail Resort & Conference Center, Sunset Beach, NC

**December 13-14, 2006** – Southeast Vegetable & Fruit Expo and 24<sup>th</sup> Eastern N.C. Vegetable School, Myrtle Beach Convention Center, Myrtle Beach, SC

**February 21-25, 2007** National Watermelon Association - Grove Park Inn, Asheville, NC

**March 9-10, 2007**– NC Watermelon Association Annual Convention, Durham, NC