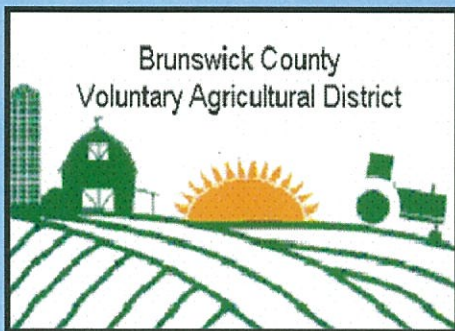


Brunswick County Voluntary Agricultural District 2013 Annual Report



"Our Best for You in Brunswick"

Program Update in a Glance

During 2013, the Voluntary Agriculture District began protecting an additional 248 acres, and increased 4% in total farms as more farmers sought the benefits of this program.

Major objectives for the year were to recognize and equip agricultural entrepreneurs in Brunswick County. These were accomplished through member recognition activities, membership drives, a highly educational annual meeting and informative newsletters.

Going Forward the Brunswick County VAD will continue to seek new members from the group of landowners here who are active in agriculture and who actively practice conservation of the natural resources under their control and management.

The board appreciates support and feedback from those interested in the success of this program, so please contact a board or staff member with any comments or suggestions.

Brunswick County Voluntary Agricultural District

Recognizing the importance of agriculture to the economic and cultural life of the state, the North Carolina General Assembly authorized counties to establish programs to encourage farmland preservation. This statutory authority is found in Chapter 106, Article 61 of the North Carolina General Statutes. Thus the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners in regular session September 17, 2001, enacted an ordinance to establish a Voluntary Agricultural District program to encourage the preservation and protection of farmland from non-farm development.

The Brunswick County Voluntary Agricultural District is governed by an Agricultural Board composed of five members approved by the Board of County Commissioners. The County Extension Director, the County Soil and Water Conservation District Director, and a Planner with the Planning Department serve as ex-officio members of the Agricultural Board. The Board is responsible for approving membership applications.

To be classified as “farmland” under this program:

- The farm must contain a minimum of three acres and not located in a planned development; unless the development was originally designed to accommodate agriculture.
- The property must be engaged in agriculture and defined as a Bona Fide Farm.
- The property must be certified by NRCS in consultation with NCCES and the FSA.
- The property is a subject of a conservation agreement that prohibits non-farm use or development.
- The property must be located in the unincorporated area of Brunswick County or in a municipality where the county is authorized to exercise the authority.

The benefits of participating in the Voluntary Agricultural District:

- To increase the identity, awareness and pride in the agricultural community.
- Protection from nuisance law suits.

- Protection from infrastructure development. Participants will not be required to connect to the county water or sewer system or be assessed charges until the farm is connected to water and sewer services.

Brunswick County Voluntary Agricultural District

There is a one-time fee to join the Voluntary Agricultural District Program. This fee will cover a portion of the sign cost which designates a farm’s membership and the charges involved in filing the document with the Brunswick County Register of Deeds Office. Additional expenses for participating in the program are provided by Brunswick County Government. Participation in the program is voluntary. The normal term for the agreement is ten years; however, participants can revoke the agreement at any time by notifying the Agricultural Board in writing. To withdraw from the program there is a fee to cover the cost of filing expenses with the Brunswick County Register of Deeds.

The VAD program helps farmers demonstrate that they intend to continue their productive activities and their land, with the enthusiastic support of local government.

Accomplishments in 2013:

- The Voluntary Agriculture District increased 4% in total farms, and increased 1% in total acres.

	2012	2013	% Change
New applications approved	2	7	
Total farms in program	183	190	+4%
Total acres in program	27,241	27,489	+1%

- Held quarterly Agricultural Board meetings. Approximately 40 volunteer hours were contributed on behalf of the Board.
- Held the Eleventh Annual Membership Dinner Meeting on September 26, 2013, at the Cooperative Extension Office in Bolivia, NC. Nathan Lowder and Curtis Furr explained the how cover crops improve soil conditions.

2014 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
BRUNSWICK COUNTY
VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT

Goal

To encourage the preservation and protection of farmland from non-farm development.

Objectives

- Collaborate with targeted municipalities that have farms within their ETJ's.
- Continue marketing outreach efforts:
 1. Host the Twelfth Annual Membership meeting in the fall.
 2. Target hunting preserves, beekeepers association, commercial horticulture and row crop producers for membership.
 3. Serve as a representative voice for the agricultural community by staying informed and attending public meetings.
 4. Promote the agricultural district program during farm-related organizational meetings.
 5. Present annual report to the Board of Commissioners and Planning Board.
 6. Publish a membership newsletter (spring and fall issues).
 7. Seek positive media opportunities in the region.
 8. Coordinate with regional agricultural public relations representatives.
- Attend educational meetings and updates as appropriate and needed.

BRUNSWICK COUNTY VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT BOARD

<u>Name/Address/Telephone</u>	<u>Appointment Date</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Appointed by</u>	<u>Expiration Date</u>
Sam Bellamy 1590 Hickman Rd., NW Calabash, NC 28467 910-287-6403 skbindigo@atmc.net	1/2013	3	Farm Bureau	1/15/2016
Pearly Vereen 338 Exum Rd., NW Ash, NC 28420 910-287-3210 910-540-7008 cell	1/2014	3	Cooperative Extension	1/15/2017
Chip Carroll, Chair 5014 Northwest Rd NE Riegelwood, NC 28456 910-655-2241 SusanCarroll.PTA@atmc.net	1/2012	3	Soil & Water	1/15/2015
Jody Clemmons, Vice-chair 273 Sellers Rd NW Supply, NC, 28462 910-231-3900 jclemmons@atmc.net	1/2012	3	Farm Service Agency	1/15/2015
David Knox 4288 Hwy. 17 East Bolivia, NC, 28422 910-253-4785	1/2014	3	At-large	1/15/2017
Mamie Caison, Ex-Officio Soil and Water Director PO Box 26 Bolivia, NC 28422 253-2830 mamie.caison@nc.ncadnet.net			Mark Blevins, Ex-Officio Cooperative Extension Director PO Box 109 Bolivia, NC 28422 253-2610 mark_blevins@ncsu.edu	
Kirstie Dixon, Ex-Officio Planner II, Planning Department PO Box 249 Bolivia, NC 28422 253-2027 kdixon@brunscos.net			Dawn Coleman, Clerk to the Board Extension Administrative Secretary PO Box 109 Bolivia, NC 28422 253-2610 dawn_coleman@ncsu.edu	



BRUNSWICK COUNTY VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURE DISTRICTS

Legend

- Roads
- Agriculture District
- 1/2 Mile Agriculture District Buffer
- Municipal Limits (including ETJs)

New Hanover County

Columbus County

Atlantic Ocean

Horry County, SC

