A-Twitter

Cooperative Extension cultivates a new audience
When agricultural extension agent Debbie Roos first learned about the Internet service Twitter, she was a decided nonbeliever. Why in the world, she wondered, would people want to send and receive messages limited to just 140 characters – fewer letters than are in this sentence?

But 383 tweets later, Roos – or @growsmallfarms, as she’s known to nearly 400 followers in the Twitterverse – has done an about-face.

“I fell in love with Twitter last summer. It really works,” she says. “A lot of people who follow me now on Twitter weren’t familiar with my programs, and the potential to reach even more people is high.”

Roos, who works in Chatham County, has used Twitter to raise the visibility of small farm issues, including extension programs that encourage sustainable, organic and alternative agriculture. She directs Internet users to her resource-rich Web site, Growing Small Farms.

And, she says, she’s been learning a lot from the people she follows on Twitter: extension colleagues, growers and others across the country.

Roos’ tweets (as Twitter posts are known) range from links to agricultural news reports she runs across on the Internet, to notices of her upcoming workshops and field days, to information about publications developed by agriculture specialists at NC State and other universities.

Growing Audience

When it comes to tweeting for Cooperative Extension, Roos is not alone.

In western North Carolina, commercial horticulture agent Sue Colucci (@SuzyNCSU) has been using Twitter for more than a year to reach out to vegetable and fruit growers. She thinks it’s a great way to quickly reach busy people who don’t have much time to read. It also creates an extensive and searchable archive of information accessible 24/7.

Colucci’s western N.C. colleague Dr. Jeanine Davis, a horticulture specialist based in Mills River, found a new audience through Twitter (@JeanineNCSU) and Facebook, social networking tools she uses to send announcements and provide links to resources.
posted on her blog.

The downside? It takes time, which is often in short supply for extension educators.

“I have to be very careful to not leave out more traditional clientele,” Davis says.

“So, now if I send out an announcement, I send it on Twitter and Facebook, usually with a link to a more lengthy article on my blog. I send it by e-mail to four listservs and several local reporters.

“Depending on the content, I might have our secretary also post it on one or more of my three Web sites. So time management is an issue. I try to limit myself to 30 minutes a day.”

Strictly Business

In eastern North Carolina, cotton agent and Martin County Extension Director J.B. Coltrain uses Twitter to reach a small group of farmers interested in highly localized information: when to plant cotton and when moth counts reach a level that makes it advisable to use insecticides.

In the off-season, Coltrain uses the Twitter feed to announce production meetings and to share information about such topics as cotton variety characteristics.

“For me, the use of Twitter is strictly business,” he says. “You will not learn that I might dread Mondays, nor will I be tweeting TGIF.”

Even though Twitter is quick, easy and free, Coltrain hasn’t dropped older methods of communication, like the recorded telephone messages he’s used to reach growers for years.

“I wish I could tell you that all Martin County farmers use this wonderful service, but they don’t. In spite of the fact that they have to do nothing once they set it up, that setting up part is the killer,” he says. “The dozen or so farmers who follow my tweets were basically set up by me.”

Colucci and Roos encourage their fellow agents to give Twitter a try.

“The Internet can suck a lot of time out of you, but extension really needs to be there because that’s the first place a lot of people go to find answers,” Colucci says. “I’d say to other agents, ‘Don’t be afraid. Just get on it and try it.’”

Twitter isn’t the only way extension agents are making use of social media. Rockingham County Extension Director Brenda Sutton – aka “The Produce Lady” – has her own channel on YouTube.
Conversations with State Leaders
As part of the Conversations with State Leaders series, state Rep. Deborah Ross will share her insights on what leadership means to her and what it takes to be an effective leader. Ross, who represents House District 38, will speak at 4 p.m. on Thursday, March 11, in Riddick Hall, Room 325. Her talk is hosted by the School of Public and International Affairs. For more info, contact Tracy Appling-Biel at 513-0232 or tracy_biel@ncsu.edu.

Surviving the Dragon
Arjia Rinpoche, president of the Tibetan Mongolian Buddhist Cultural Center in Bloomington, Ind., will discuss Tibetan-Chinese relations at noon Monday, March 22, in the Talley Student Center North Gallery. Then at 4:30 p.m. Rinpoche will speak in Withers Auditorium about his newly published memoirs of his life as a monk in Tibet, his refusal to serve under the Communist government, and subsequent flight to the United States, where he now lives in exile. Hosted by the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies.

Honor Society Induction
Phi Kappa Phi will hold its spring 2010 induction ceremony at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, March 23, in Stewart Theatre. A dessert reception will follow. Faculty, staff and students are invited.

What Can Humans Know? A Presocratic Answer
The philosophy Colloquium Series welcomes Patricia Curd (Purdue University and the National Humanities Center) for this talk at 4:30 p.m. Thursday, March 25, in Withers Hall, Room 344.

Hear Poet Charles Simic
Former U.S. Poet Laureate Charles Simic will give a lecture on culture at 3 p.m. Monday, March 29, in Stewart Theatre, followed by a reading at 7:30 p.m. in Titmus Theatre. Simic’s many poetry volumes include That Little Something, My Noisless Entourage, and The Monster Loves His Labyrinth. The events are free and open to the public. Hosted by the Creative Writing Program and Arts NC State.

EnviroVision Video Contest
Encourage your students to create and submit a 30-second public service announcement about sustainability.

Finalists’ entries will be screened at the Campus Cinema during Earth Week (April 19-23). The winner gets a gift certificate, coverage on the housing Web site ... and cinematic glory. For contest details and information, contact Scott Braswell. The submission deadline is April 7.

Fishburne to Receive Friday Award
Keith Fishburne, President and CEO of Special Olympics North Carolina, has been selected as the 2010 recipient of the William C. Friday Award, presented by the Class of 2010 Park Scholars at NC State. Fishburne will be honored for his efforts to improve the lives of children and adults with intellectual disabilities. He will receive the award at 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 24, in the McKimmon Center.

The William C. Friday Award honors Friday’s dedication and excellence in leadership, scholarship, character and service, and recognizes the recipient’s contributions to North Carolina.

The Park Scholarships program is among America’s most prestigious undergraduate merit scholarship programs. The scholarships are named in honor of the late Roy H. Park, a distinguished alumnus of NC State and president of the media company Park Communications, Inc. The Park Foundation of Ithaca, New York, established the scholarships at NC State in 1996. Through the generosity of the Park Foundation, the program now supports about 200 Park Scholars each year. For more information, visit: http://www.ncsu.edu/park_scholarships.

New South Lecture Series Continues
The NCSU Libraries and the North Carolina Research Campus (NCRC) present the third in the New New South lecture series, exploring the forces that have shaped – and are shaping – the South. Rising to the Research Challenge of the Twenty-first Century: The New Workforce will include a panel consisting of Dr. Tom Miller; vice provost for distance education and learning technology; Donnie Goins, COO and president of Tavve Software Company; and Dr. Larry Monteith, former chancellor of NC State. The event will be held at 4 p.m. Thursday, March 25, in the D. H. Hill Library.

Apply for Summer Institute
Apply through March 31 to attend the 12th annual Teaching and Learning with Technology Summer Institute for Faculty, which will be held May 17-21 in the D.H. Hill Library. The Summer Institute is a program for faculty interested in Web-enhanced or online instruction. The program includes 20 hours of workshops, plus lunchtime seminars and optional lab sessions, spread over one week. Benefit from the Summer Institute by:
> Learning new ways to teach using technology
> Developing camaraderie with like-minded colleagues
> Listening to experienced lunchtime speakers (lunch provided, thanks to our sponsors)
> Receiving software and equipment in support of Web-enhanced teaching endeavors

Apply at http://delta.ncsu.edu/summer_institute/apply.

Wolfl ine Service Affected by Construction
Wolfl ine bus service will be affected by a water main project on Ligon Street. Wolfl ine will be unable to serve the current bus stop located at the corner of Ligon Street and Method Road for the duration of the project (through April 15). The closest alternative bus stop is at the corner of Jackson Street and Method Road. The on-street city parking west of Method Road will not be available. Ample free parking remains available at both Carter-Finley park and ride lot, as well as the Westgrove park and ride lot.

Repaving work is also expected to begin on Ligon Street, including “P” parking spaces located just west of Gorman Street on the south side of the street (E.S. King Village side). These parking spaces will be unavailable for parking from Monday, March 8, through Wednesday, March 10. If repairs and paving do not take as long as anticipated, spaces will open up as work is completed.

Wolfl ine questions? Contact Kim Paylor, Wolfl ine transit manager, at kim_paylor@ncsu.edu. Transportation-related questions? Contact Ryan Givens at ryan_givens@ncsu.edu or Gary Bridges at gary_bridges@ncsu.edu.

Faculty and Staff Notes

Army Honors Steer for Roadside Bomb Research
Dr. Michael Steer, engineering professor, will receive the U.S. Army Commander’s Award for Public Service for research that has helped American forces remotely counter roadside bombs, saving hundreds of soldiers’ lives in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Maj. Gen. Nick Justice, commanding general of the Army’s Research, Development and Engineering Command, will present the award to Steer at 2 p.m.
Earthwise Awards Nominations Open

The Office for Diversity and Inclusion and the Student Diversity Advisory Council request nominations of students, student organizations, faculty, staff and administrators who have gone the extra mile in celebrating and embracing diversity on campus.

For more information, contact Jo-Ann Robinson at 513-3222 or joann_robinson@ncsu.edu.

Diversity Awards Nominations Open

The Office for Diversity and Inclusion and the Student Diversity Advisory Council request nominations of students, student organizations, faculty, staff and administrators who have gone the extra mile in celebrating and embracing diversity on campus.

Friday, March 26, is the deadline for diversity award nominations. The nomination form is available online. For more information, contact Jo-Ann Robinson at 513-3222 or joann_robinson@ncsu.edu.

Pennell Commissioned for National Report

Georgetown University’s Center for Juvenile Justice Reform has commissioned Dr. Joan Pennell (with Durs. Carol Shapiro and Carol Spigner) to author a report on family and youth engagement in dual-jurisdiction cases of child maltreatment and juvenile offending. This report will serve as a basis for a national symposium on the topic. Pennell is a professor of social work and director of the Center for Family & Community Engagement.

Earthwise Nominations Needed

It’s time to nominate environmentally conscious faculty, staff and students for an Earthwise Award from the Sustainability Office. Fill out a nomination form online at www.ncsu.edu/earthday and e-mail your submission to sustainability@ncsu.edu by 5 p.m. on Friday, April 2. The winner in each category receives a $200 cash award and recycled glass plaque, along with a pair of tickets to a 2010 Wolfpack football game.

Join Efforts to Help Colleagues in Chile

NC State faculty and staff are organizing to help colleagues at Universidad de Concepción, a partner institution that suffered severe earthquake damage, including complete destruction of the chemistry labs in a fire triggered by the quake. To find out how you can get involved, join the Facebook group, NC State solidarity with Universidad de Concepción. For more information, contact Steve Wiley, Department of Communication, at steve_wiley@ncsu.edu or 302-6418.

Student Speaker Sought for Spring Commencement

Registration and Records is seeking a student speaker for spring commencement. Any interested graduating senior can apply. Faculty and staff are asked to encourage qualified students to complete the application form, which is available in Harris Hall, Room 1008.

Nominate an Interesting Graduate

Faculty and staff are invited to nominate interesting graduates for recognition during spring commencement. If you know an undergraduate student (or two) with an interesting story or background, please e-mail the names to emily_brooks@ncsu.edu. The deadline for nominations is Monday, March 22. Students who are selected will be profiled during the chancellor’s speech on Saturday, May 15.

AllCampus Card Changes Under Way

The AllCampus card is getting an upgrade. New features will enable door access, advanced credentialing and assignable expiration dates, along with an extra stripe for Wolf Copy machines.

Starting this spring, new cards will be available to EPA and SPA employees. “To make this easy for employees, we will set up re-carding events in various areas of the campus. Employees will be notified by postcard when we will be in their area,” said Mike Smith, director of University Card Operations. “There will be no charge to either the department or the employees for the new card.”

Incoming freshman will be next to receive the new card when they arrive on campus during summer orientation.

Join Efforts to Help Colleagues in Chile

NC State students will continue a tradition of service March 12-21 through Alternative Spring Break. On domestic trips from Alaska to West Virginia and international projects in Belize, Mexico and the Dominican Republic, teams lend a hand with construction, tutoring and health screenings. To find out more, visit the Center for Student Leadership, Ethics and Public Service Web site, www.ncsu.edu/cslc.

Bulletin

The Bulletin is published weekly, except during the summer and holidays, by North Carolina State University News Services. To subscribe to the online version, visit www.ncsu.edu/bulletin.

Please submit news and announcements one week in advance of publication.

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Editors: D’Lyn Ford and David Hunt
Countdown to Employee Appreciation Day

Fun and games, free ice cream and chances to save money. You had us at free ice cream.

Article by D'Lyn Ford

NC State will officially welcome a new wolfpack to campus at 2 p.m. March 9 with the installation of three bronze wolves on the plaza just west of the bookstore and south of the Free Expression Tunnel.

You won't want to miss this. Employee Appreciation Day is your chance to enjoy fun and games while taking care of important business. Activities run from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 17, in the Talley Student Center.

Here’s a quick countdown of things to do.

1. Enjoy carnival games like can smash and ring toss. And unlike the State Fair, you won’t have to take a giant pink poodle on the roller coaster.

2. You howl, I howl, we all howl for ice cream. Save room for dessert because there will be free Howling Cow ice cream made right here at NC State for all those who attend.

3. Eat lunch for a buck. That’s right, your choice of entrée – two beef soft tacos, a bean or a beef burrito – plus a canned soft drink.

4. Save 30 percent to 70 percent on selected items at the Bookstore’s Campus Appreciation Sale across the breezeway from the Talley Student Center.

5. Save money on out-of-pocket health care costs by filling out your online form for annual enrollment. (If you don’t fill out the tobacco attestation form during the enrollment period, you’ll automatically be moved from the 80/20 level of benefits to the 70/30 level on July 1.) Take advantage of on-site computers to get this done.

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Questions? Contact Rob Stevenson in the Benefits Office at 515-4282 or rob_stevenson@ncsu.edu.