

Mark your calendars for the annual Wadesboro Christmas Parade! This year the parade will be held on Thursday, December 5 at 4:00 p.m.

If you would like to participate in the parade you can find the entry form on the Uptown Wadesboro, Inc. Facebook page or you can get a form at the Chamber of Commerce office, located at 107 East Wade Street, Suite I in Wadesboro, or Wadesboro Town Hall. For questions contact Tami Newell at 704-451-6825.

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Fall Vegetables are In-Season Now!

Fall is in the air and the leaves are finally beginning to change and hopefully the weather will begin to get chilly. Another thing that has changed right now is the variety of locally grown vegetables that are available. As we get into the fall season it's nice to know what fresh vegetables are in season especially with the holidays coming up.

With Thanksgiving right around the corner it will be good to know what you can get for your families. Several of the things that are in season right now are beets, cabbage, carrots, collards, greens, pecans, sweet potatoes and several other things. All these fresh foods would be great to serve at a holiday meal.

One thing that would be great at a Thanksgiving meal is sweet potatoes. There are several dishes that can be made with sweet potatoes. One of my favorite dishes to make with sweet potatoes is a sweet potato souffle. You can also add pecans to the top if you wish, which they are in season as well so it works out well. Below you will find a recipe that shows you how to make the sweet potato souffle. It is an easy dish to make and I have made it in my home with fresh local vegetables.

By Lydia Stegall, Area Extension Agent - Small Farms



How To Make Sweet Potato Souffle

Despite the name, there's really no fancy technique involved in this dish. Here's a brief overview of how it's made. The full recipe is below.

- **Step 1.** Bake the sweet potatoes until the flesh is very tender. Then, peel and mash in a stand mixer or with a hand mixer until the sweet potato flesh is smooth.
- **Step 2.** Beat butter into the potatoes along with brown sugar, granulated sugar, cinnamon, eggs, and cinnamon. Mix in vanilla extract, milk, and salt. Then beat well until smooth. Spoon the souffle filling into a baking dish coated with cooking spray.
- **Step 3.** Make souffle topping. Combine brown sugar, flour, salt, and cinnamon. Then stir in the butter and pecans. Scatter the topping all over the souffle filling.
- **Step 4.** Bake the souffle until the top is golden brown and the casserole is bubbling.

Better Business Bureau Advises How to Avoid Job Scams This Holiday Season

Retailers and shippers traditionally hire seasonal workers to fulfill holiday shoppers' demands, whether online or in person. These jobs are a great way to make extra money, sometimes with the possibility of turning into a long-term employment opportunity. However, they are sometimes not all that they seem.

When looking for seasonal work to help fund holiday purchases and household bills, the Better Business Bureau has some suggestions to make the seasonal job hunt successful. According to the BBB Scam Tracker Risk Report, employment scams were the second riskiest in 2023. Being proactive in finding the right opportunity is key, but be careful when a job just seems too good to be true.

Tips to avoid holiday job scams

- Employers will never ask for payment upfront for a job. Beware businesses that ask applicants to pay for job supplies, application, or training fees. These expenses are the employer's responsibility - and asking for money is a big red flag that something is wrong.
- Be wary of job offers that don't require an interview. Even during the peak hiring season, reputable companies prefer to talk to top job candidates before hiring them. If a job offer is presented without an interview (on the phone or in person) or is offered only via the Internet, question the company's hiring practices and do a little more digging.
- Be wary of big money for small jobs. If an employer promises outrageously good wages for simple tasks such as reshipping packages, stuffing envelopes, or answering phones, this is a red flag. These too-good-to-be-true offers are an attempt to steal your personal information from a fake job application and can cause problems for you for a long time.
- Never work for a company before they hire you. A legitimate company will not ask potential applicants to complete complex projects before making an official offer. Before beginning any work, request an offer letter or written confirmation of what the job entails, including an official start date and compensation details.

Nearly \$130 Million in Food Assistance Provided to More Than One Million NC Children During the Summer

Governor Roy Cooper announced in coordination with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services that more than \$129 million in food assistance has been distributed to more than one million children through the SUN Bucks program during its first summer of operation in North Carolina.

"Too many children face food security in North Carolina, making the summers difficult for families who rely on school meals during the academic year," said Governor Roy Cooper. "The SUN Bucks program has been critical in bridging the gap to help North Carolina children and families get access to the nutritious food they need to thrive during the summer months."

North Carolina is one of only three states in the Food and Nutrition Services Southeast Region who took advantage of the new U.S. Department of Agriculture SUN Bucks program this year. (www.fns.usda.gov/summer/sunbucks) The program, also referred to as Summer EBT, provided grocery-buying benefits to qualifying families with school-aged children during the summer months. Families received a one-time payment of \$120 per eligible child, a critical benefit for the 1 in 5 children in North Carolina who live in households without consistent access to food.

"Healthy food is key to overall health and well-being," said NC Secretary of Health and Human Services Kody H. Kinsley. "The SUN Bucks program fed one million children in North Carolina this summer — helping their growth and development. I'm proud of our team and our partners for working quickly and creatively to make this possible."

The 2024 North Carolina SUN Bucks program was a cross-sector collaboration between USDA, NCDHHS and the NC Department of Public Instruction. The program was made possible by philanthropic partners who stepped in to help cover the administrative cost of the program, including the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation, Smithfield Foods, The Leon Levine Foundation, Dogwood Health Trust, Cone Health Foundation and Brighthouse Financial.

Looking ahead to 2025, NCDHHS has already begun laying the groundwork for another impactful year of SUN Bucks. With aspirations to reach even more families and continue bolstering local economies, NCDHHS is seeking sustainable funding to ensure the program can continue each year. SUN Bucks will need financial support from the legislature and partners to administer the program for 2025 and beyond.

Information for Families The application period for SUN Bucks 2024 closed on Aug. 31, 2024. The first round of issuances went in June to families who were automatically eligible for the program based on their enrollment in Food and Nutrition Services and other programs.

SUN Bucks benefits from Summer 2024 expire 122 days after their "Available" date and can't be replaced. Please go to the SUN Bucks website to learn more about how to find your benefit "Available" date and the expiration date, check your remaining balance and manage your account.

NCDHHS offers several programs to support individuals' access to healthy food, including Food and Nutrition Services (ncdhhs.gov/foodandnutrition) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children: (ncdhhs.gov/childandfamily).

For more information about the FNS program, visit www.ncdhhs.gov/fns; visit www.ncdhhs.gov/ncwic to learn more about WIC.

To apply for FNS benefits online, visit epass.nc.gov.

To learn more about additional food resources, visit www.ncdhhs.gov/foodresources.

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