

THE NORTHEAST VISION

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NCCAR Signs Construction Bid

After reviewing six construction bids for the first phase of development at NCCAR (NC Center for Automotive Research), NCCAR officials awarded the bid to PLT Construction of Wilson, NC. Earth moving is scheduled to begin in October once the permitting process is complete.

According to Gary Brown, Northampton County Economic Developer, the phase one work will include site grading, infrastructure, construction of interior roadways and the first 2.2 miles of the 4.6-mile ride and handling course. It also includes construction of a portion of



Simon Cobb, COO of NCCAR, and Gary Brown sign the construction bid agreement with PLT Construction.

the integrated vehicle dynamics area and building pads. Completion of this phase of construction will pave the way for research to be underway at the center.

Once NCCAR receives

additional funding, they will proceed with development of the facility. Among other projects, funds will be used for the Chassis Dynamic Laboratory, a research facility that focuses on fuel efficiency and alternative energy systems.

Look inside for information about group tours



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The North Carolina booth at the 2008 International Biotechnology Conference. One client has visited the region as a result of the conference.

2008 Biotechnology Conference

Ray White, VP of Marketing for the Northeast Commission, and David Peoples, Washington County Manager represented the northeast region at the 2008 International Biotechnology Conference in San Diego. The conference provides educational opportunities and the chance to meet with companies interested in doing business in North Carolina's Northeast, a center for agricultural, plant-made biotechnology.

Recent Press Releases:

- **Biotechnology Education Forum for Teachers**—Held at ECSU
- **Planting the Seed** - [NC Business](#) article on agricultural biotechnology
- **Tourism Marketing Gets a Regional Boost**—Familiarization tours sponsored for the travel industry
- **Ventria Bioscience Expands Operations in Washington County**
- **Local Tourism Groups Win Destination Marketing Awards**
- **Chambers of the Northeast Set 2008 Priorities**

Agricultural Biotechnology: A Viable Economic Future for North Carolina's Northeast

The 16 counties of North Carolina's Northeast Region:

- Beaufort
- Bertie
- Camden
- Chowan
- Currituck
- Dare
- Gates
- Halifax
- Hertford
- Hyde
- Martin
- Northampton
- Pasquotank
- Perquimans
- Tyrrell
- Washington

As North Carolina's population continues to grow west of I-95, the northeast region will continue to have the land and technical resources to commercialize biotech crops, functional foods, biofuels, and new biomass technology. Production, commercialization, and processing will occur within 50 miles of the fuel source. This is how we will grow new wealth and develop new jobs for the future.

Agricultural biotechnology will be an integral part of the landscape of North Carolina's Northeast Region in the near and distant future. To accomplish this, NC-NAAB (NC Northeast Alliance for Agricultural Biotechnology) is working closely with the Vernon James Research and Extension Center in Roper to further expand its research, space and staff capacities to open the doors for the center to become the hub of agricultural biotechnology, certification and training, and a botanical extraction incubator for the region and state.

For the future of agricultural biotechnology in the region, we envision commercialization research labs, incubator space, and dormitories at the Center. NC-NAAB also wants to see additional acreage for a new commercialization campus and for crop expansion.

Additional services to be provided by the Center include the development of a Biotechnology Quality Management System, the start-up of a Pilot-Scale Extraction Facility, and additional greenhouse space and research equipment.

The Northeast Commission and NC-NAAB believe that the Vernon James Research and Extension Center can become a multi-discipline and multi-institutional organization and bring in faculty and students from other nearby UNC institutions. By providing land and research space for private companies, the center will enhance its services and build jobs and investment for North Carolina's Northeast Region

allowing the region to maintain its strong agricultural heritage.

Ventria Biosciences recently expanded its operations in Washington County. "The work done by Ventria coincides with the work being done locally by the North Carolina's Northeast Commission which has recently published a study completed by RTI that confirms northeastern North Carolina as a perfect location for plant biotechnology." Vann Rogerson, President/CEO of North Carolina's Northeast Commission states, "By working collaboratively with the NC Biotechnology Center, university researchers, educators, and private companies, we can build our biotech niche, diversify our economy, and expand the capacity for good-paying jobs."



Sage grown by Avoca, a botanical extraction company in Bertie County



NEED and the NC Department of Commerce Exchange Ideas

During September, the NEED (Northeast Economic Developers) group presented highlights of NC's Northeast counties to the NC Dept of Commerce Business and Industry Division. Both groups

learned much about one another during the meeting. Vann Rogerson is shown here presenting an overview of the region and the initiatives that are in process across the region.

New Commission Board Members Sworn In

Mike McArthur from the Chowan County Clerk of Court office was on hand at the July Commission Board meeting to swear in the newest board members, Bo Lewis and Steve Howell. "We welcome the new board members and look forward to working with them," says Ernest Burden, Chairman.

Mr. Lewis currently runs Bo Lewis Videography, a video company for special events, commercials, weddings, etc. In his previous career, he was CEO of the Washington/Beaufort County Chamber of Commerce and spent an additional 10 years as the Production Manager and

Public Relations Director at WITN-7.

After 35 years, Steve Howell retired with distinction from the State Employees' Credit Union where his last position was Sr Vice President/City Executive Roanoke Rapids District. He



Since the last newsletter, Simon Cobb, COO of NCCAR (NC Center for Automotive Research), spoke to a group of university researchers from NC State University, NC A&T, East Carolina University, and Old Dominion University. Simon presented an update on the progress at NCCAR and invited the researchers to use the testing facility for future research projects.

To support the automotive cluster and to recruit companies to the region, Ray White paired up with NCCAR to attend the VIR (Virginia Institute of Racing) Tech show in

Danville, VA and the Energy Expo in Raleigh.

NCCAR began taking construction bids in July 2008 for the first phase of the construction project. The site is scheduled for groundbreaking during October 2008.

In other news, Senator Dole's office announced in a news release committee approval of the fiscal year 2009 Energy and Water spending bill, which includes \$1 million that Dole helped secure for the center to equip the Chassis Dynamic Laboratory, a research facility that focuses on fuel efficiency and alternative energy systems.



Simon Cobb of NCCAR addresses a group of university researchers. Ray White, below, in Michigan



Simon Cobb and Gary Brown, Northampton County Economic Development Director at the Virginia

FAM Tours Market the Region to Group Tour Industry

The Northeast Tourism Group (NET) sponsored group familiarization (FAM) tours of local attractions during April and September of 2008. Invitations went out to tour bus operators, AAA offices in Southeast Virginia, and visitor center operators in North Carolina and Virginia. The week-long tour in

October is co-sponsored by NC Northeast Commission and a grant from the NC Rural Center. The tour showcases regional tourism assets and introduces the travel hosts to some of the smaller towns within the region. This showcase helps promote the region to tour operators as they seek educational and

historical tours to promote to visitors. The FAM tours are part of the hub and spoke tourism initiative that encourages people to stay in larger towns with hotels and accommodations and then take terrific day trips into the countryside or to visit smaller towns. An Outer Banks tour is scheduled for later in the year.



North Carolina's Northeast Commission Board

Continued from previous page

currently serves on the Northampton County Planning Board and the county Economic Development Commission. He also serves his local church on the Administrative Board and serves as Treasurer of the Spring-Lebanon Methodist Men.

The Board of North Carolina's Northeast Commission is made up of representatives from the 16 counties of North Carolina's Northeast

Region. The board members are appointed by the Governor, the Speaker of the House, and the Senate Pro-Tem. The Commission was set up by the legislature to implement economic development for the 16 counties of the northeast region. Current board members are pictured here. Not pictured are board members David Twiddy and Drewery Beale.



Front row l-r: Ernest Burden, Mack Nixon, Jimmie Dixon, Eddie Lynch, Ernie Bowden, Tom Richter, Elsie Hollowell-Pugh.

Back row l-r: Art Keeney, Bob Spivey, Buck Suiter, Phil Hux, Bo Lewis, Steve Howell, Larry Johnson, Fred Yates, Gene Rogers

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We're on the web!

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The North Carolina's Northeast Commission is dedicated to increasing the standard of living for citizens in its 16-county region through tourism, industrial, and business development. Representing: Beaufort, Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, Martin, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell, and Washington.

Your Biotechnology Partnership Begins Here



Members of NC-NAAB, the North Carolina's Northeast Alliance for Agricultural Biotechnology, traveled to the NC Research Campus in Kannapolis, NC to continue forming partnerships for plant biotechnology. The group met with researchers at the Research Campus as well as at the Piedmont Research Station, the Charlotte Research Institute (CRI), and UNC-Charlotte.

One highlight of the trip was a tour of the Dole Foods salad packaging plant where fresh vegetables are transformed into bagged salads.

NC-NAAB will continue to develop collaborations with researchers throughout the state as we develop into the plant biotechnology commercialization center of North Carolina.

Other Highlights:

- Bertie Ag Science High School opened Fall 2008.
- Presented at the Hampton Roads Commercial Real Estate Show
- Biofuels meetings with NC-NAAB, Appalachian State, and Mississippi State were held.
- NEED planning retreat held in October for all 16 counties.
- Vernon G. James Research and Extension Center Vision Plan presented to NCSU and extension agents.
- Biotech Education Forum held in October at ECSU.