

TOBACCO

From Page 3

much tobacco they are allowed to grow each year, have been slashed 53 percent over the past three years.

The numerous lawsuits have made cigarette makers cut back on the amount of American tobacco they buy and the prices they offer, leading to quota cuts and a further cut in farmer's income.

But most tobacco farmers remain loyal to their crop and hopeful the situation will improve, despite the many problems facing them.

Edward Newton of Louisburg said he started working in tobacco 25 years ago on his father's farm.

Before the quota cuts, he said he farmed 140 acres of tobacco. Now he grows only 18 acres of tobacco and relies on corn and bean crops to pay his bills. "Finance-wise, (the quota cuts are) like taking a hundred-dollar bill, lying it down and cutting it in half," Newton said. "I've thought about quitting, but it's all I know how to do."

Gesturing with a lit cigar between his fingers, W.C. Smith of Durham, a tobacco farmer for the past 30 years, said the only way he can manage to stay in tobacco business is by renting quota allotments from other quota holders.

Quota owners, some of whom no longer grow tobacco, rent their quota to farmers seeking to grow more than their allotted amount.

Smith said he has to pay a quota owner 25 cents for every pound grown, but farmers in eastern North Carolina are paying as much as 60 cents.

But he said one of the most alarming trends in the industry is the growing popularity of the contract system.

Under this system, a farmer agrees to sell to a cigarette maker at a set price,

bypassing the warehouse auction and the ability to search for a higher price.

"I don't think it's a good system," Smith said. "There's no competition, no chance to put (the crop) on another sale."

"Under the warehouse system, you might have to take (your crop) home and eat it, but you could do that."

Smith said he fears the lack of competition under the contract system will alter tobacco trade's history and culture.

"Average people like a challenge, and farmers like to see who can grow the best crop on the field and put it out on the (warehouse) floor," Smith said.

Despite his fear of this recent industry practice, he said he feels tobacco still has a future in the state. "Tobacco will be here as long as the world stands," Smith said. "There's a demand for it."

Ford Warehouse Manager Tim Shearin said there are several factors that might improve tobacco farmers' situation. He cited increased exports to China, which has the world's largest population of smokers, and the possibility of electing Texas Gov. George W. Bush to the presidency, who is friendlier to the tobacco industry.

"Tobacco's a political crop," Shearin said, tapping his cigarette into the ash-tray by his desk. "(The Clinton administration) has been hard on tobacco."

But Ford Warehouse employee Mann Mullen of Bunn, a fourth-generation tobacco farmer forced to quit in the late 1980s, said the benefits might be too little too late for many small towns in rural North Carolina depending on tobacco.

"All the little towns around here used to be strong when tobacco was strong," he said. "Now, the only ones still strong are those near Raleigh. No one's really sure what the future holds for them."

The State & National Editor can be reached at stntdesk@unc.edu.

CAMERAS

From Page 3

"The town is going to need to do research to figure out how other communities have done it," he said. "The next step will study how to implement this program."

The Safelight Program, started in Charlotte in August 1998, is another place where the camera program has had success.

"We've seen a reduction in accidents on the streets by 27 percent. Red light running has decreased by 40 to 75 percent at each intersection," said Brett Vines, special projects manager.

Vines also said the car has to be going

at least 15 mph to trigger the camera.

"We get the film developed," he said. "Then we view it and throw out the ones where someone was making a right on red or sometimes we can't get a clear picture of the tag, so we throw it out."

Although Vines said tag reading is 80 percent accurate, this method was much more effective than police manpower methods.

"Prior to this, police issued 2,500 tickets per year," he said. "In one year, we issued 44,000 citations and we're only monitoring 32 locations."

There are 32 camera boxes and 20 cameras in Charlotte's program. Occasionally, cameras are switched to other empty boxes.

But Vines said people are aware of

the cameras because there are signs posted at targeted intersections and there is information on the Charlotte city Web site.

Vines also said people can appeal their citation to an independent hearing officer.

"We've had citations dismissed because someone had a medical emergency," he said. "The driver won't earn points on his license or insurance (when issued a citation)."

Town Council member Flicka Bateman said the cameras might be a positive addition to intersections.

"We have so many people in town concerned about residents and speeding that having another mechanism might not be a bad idea," she said.

But Durham Mayor Nick Tennyson said the members of the Durham delegation in the General Assembly were not willing to support a similar program for that county.

Tennyson said the N.C. League of Municipalities is lobbying for the cameras for all cities across the state.

"My committee (the Transportation Communication and Public Safety committee) got the league to back the idea," he said.

"The league is powerful in the sense of its lobbyists. If they do go along with it, it will no longer be a matter of local authority."

The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.

CONVENTION

From Page 3

choice anymore, that both parties are controlled by corporations," she said.

Dale said she participated in what protesters termed a "Day of Action," in which they blocked a local highway until Philadelphia police removed them.

She said she spent 50 hours incarcerated as a result of the incident, including four hours in custody on a bus.

The Philadelphia police filed five charges against Dale, including resisting arrest and highway obstruction.

Dan Gurley, N.C. Republican party director and a GOP delegate, said state delegates had been caught in the protests on their way to a dinner.

"These groups were doing demonstrations at key intersections," Gurley said. "The bus which I was on was forced to detour in an almost complete circle around the city."

"We arrived just as the demonstration

was winding up. (The protesters) were doing their chants and blocking traffic. Then they see we're from North Carolina and start heckling us, chanting 'Jesse Helms,' 'suits,' and 'you stink.' We kind of watched in an amused way."

Protesters were also present at the Democratic National Convention, though less vocal and in smaller numbers than their East Coast counterparts, said Scott Falmlen, executive director of the N.C. Democratic Party.

"You knew they were there, but we were fairly removed from them," he said.

But Shockman said extensive media coverage of the protests at both conventions demonstrated to Republican and Democratic delegations alike that protesters were determined to influence politics.

"Politics is the master science," he said. "Politics determines everything else in this country."

The State & National Editor can be reached at stntdesk@unc.edu.

LENOIR

From Page 3

"I don't go during lunch because it takes so long," she said. "It takes about 20 minutes."

Therrell said it will be convenient to have more packaged food in the area. "It's especially smart downstairs because it's supposed to be grab-and-go anyway," she said. "If you want to spend some time, you go upstairs."

Mainstreet Lenoir is also attempting to serve students more quickly by building a grab-and-go center where Ram Treats was previously located.

The new center will sell salads, sandwiches, cappuccino and other small items. "It'll be like a mini quick-mart,"

Freeman said.

Construction on the center, which includes knocking out walls, installing new tile and building the structure, started in July and will last another six to eight weeks.

"The whole process started way late," Freeman said. He said the selection of a theme and administrative haggling held up the project. "We should have started it earlier," he said.

But much of the construction will be done after regular service hours to minimize the nuisance to students.

"Students already have enough to deal with," Freeman said. "We're trying to make it as easy as possible."

The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu.

LSAT

What LSAT course did students at the top 25 law schools take?

All Others

1997 Bruken-Golding Research Study of students at the top 25 law schools who prepared for the LSAT using a course.

KAPLAN 75%

LAST CHANCE FOR THE OCTOBER EXAM.
Class begins August 29th. Visit our new center on Rosemary Street!

KAPLAN

Chapel Hill Office Now Open On Rosemary Street
1-800-KAP-TEST
www.kaplan.com • AOL keyword: kaplan
*LSAT is a registered trademark of the Law School Admission Council.

Enjoy what's left of summer on our patio!
Great food & drink specials daily! Good times nightly!!!

- Tuesday - Night Vision "House DJ"
- Wednesday - "Splash" - Hip-Hop/Reggae
- Thursday - Bands - Vibe Merchant & Starpoint 8/24
- Friday - Salsa Dancing
- Saturday - Starlight "HouseDJ"

18 to Party - 21 to Drink
137 E. Franklin St.
Bank of America Plaza • Chapel Hill • 933-6133

HIDEAWAY
Restaurant & Nightclub

the Daily **GRIND** espresso cafe

WE SERVE A MEAN BEAN

Reality Check #1: The average adult will spend over half of their waking hours at work.

So call up a friend and relax over a cup of coffee or tea today, while you still have time.

Brought to you by The Daily Grind, serving Carolina's finest coffees and locally baked pastries since 1993. Located in the heart of campus—just head for the green and white awnings in the Pit.

Now featuring Cosmic Cantina burritos and Mediterranean Deli foods.

Cosmic Cantina
HEALTHY LOWFAT LATE NIGHT
It's what we do best!

Independently owned and operated.

there's a better textbook experience

Discounted Books
Fast Delivery
100% Secure Site

Play the Break Away Sweepstakes!
Sponsored by American Express®
Snag your choice of a killer vacation with a friend to Europe, Cancun or Park City, Utah.

VarsityBooks.com

No Purchase Necessary. The Varsity Books "Break Away" Sweepstakes begins on August 10, 2000 and ends on October 3, 2000. To enter by mail send your name, address, City, State and Zip to: The Varsity Books "Break Away" Sweepstakes, PO Box 612, Wynnewood, PA 19096-0612. Sweepstakes entries must be postmarked by October 3, 2000 and received by October 10, 2000. One entry per envelope. For a complete set of rules, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to RealTIME Media, PO Box 603, Wynnewood, PA 19096-0603. Vermont residents need not include postage. Void where prohibited.