

# Feels Agriculture 'Fared Well'

RALEIGH — Commissioner of Agriculture Jim Graham said today that the industry of agriculture in North Carolina fared very well in the 1977 General Assembly.

"We feel short of getting what we really needed but I am generally pleased with the response we got this year," Graham said. "We had significant support for several capital improvement projects and after these were funded we missed out on several program areas that were really needed."

The most significant area of concern this year was marketing," he continued. "Funds for local farmers markets included \$830,000 for the regional market at Asheville, \$50,000 for Fayetteville, \$25,000 for a local market at Carrboro and \$200,000 for a Cherokee market. Other capital improvement projects funded were Dorton Arena repairs, \$650,000; diagnostic

laboratory in Monroe, \$200,000; and \$225,000 for roof repairs at the Raleigh Farmers Market. Research stations received \$40,000 and state farms \$175,000.

"Funds for agricultural programs included \$100,000 for the fire ant and Japanese beetle control programs; \$56,000 for surveillance of Aujeszky's disease in swine; and \$2.4 million for the boll weevil eradication program to begin in May of next year if federal funds are provided for the rest of the program."

"Agriculture will also be affected in the area of new and amended laws. Probably the most important law passed for agriculture this year was the fertilizer law," Graham continued. "This will completely replace the old law which was drawn in 1947. The rewriting was necessary to carry many amendments made to the old law in the past 30 years. The major change was the elimination of the fertilizer grade list permitting com-

panies to sell any registered material containing twenty or more units of nutrient."

"Also in the area of soil nutrients a soil additives law was adopted for the first time. This law was drawn to protect the state's farmers from preparations not subject to our fertilizer laws but claiming to benefit soils. It requires the registration of all such materials, permits the Commissioner of Agriculture to require proof of claims made and spells out penalties for violation of the law."

"In specific areas of concern, the general assembly this year also passed bills for the improvement of the bee and honey industry in the state and amended the boll weevil law," he continued.

"In the Bee and Honey Law, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture was given the responsibility for protecting and providing service to the growing honeybee industry in the

state. This law is particularly directed at preventing the introduction and spread of diseases of bees.

"The amendments to the Boll Weevil Law came in support of the pending program for the eradication of the boll weevil from the cotton crop in the state. It gives the Commissioner of Agriculture powers to control the movements of materials likely to be carriers of boll weevil of all cotton in elimination zones."

"Other agricultural

legislation will affect the use of agricultural equipment as collateral for loans, regulate the sale of pen-raised quail for food purposes, amend the regulation of livestock markets and change requirements for commercial pesticide applicators and aerial pesticide applicators.

"There are several projects really needed for the industry of agriculture," Graham said, "but with the endless demands upon the tax dollar bills of North Carolina, we are fortunate to get what we did this year."

### CARD OF THANKS

The Family of Wayland E. Howell would like to express their sincere appreciation to our many friends and relatives for their many acts of kindness shown at the death of our loved one. For the cards, visits, food, gifts, flowers and especially your prayers, also the Rescue Squad Keith Hasket & Helen Mae Murray for their service. May God's riches blessings continue to be with each one of you.

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## Food Takes Less

By JOHN SLEDGE  
N.C. Farm Bureau Federation

Consumers in this country — both farmers and non-farmers — spent nearly \$200 billion for food last year.

Although this is a record large amount, the total represented only 16.8 per cent of the disposable, or after tax, personal income of the American people. This is down from 17.1 per cent the previous year and is the lowest percentage since 1973. In 1966 the figure was 18.1 per cent and 20 per cent in 1960.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the rise in unit food prices last year was 3 per cent, the smallest such increase in several years.

USDA also revealed that the average family, consisting of 3.2 people, spent \$1,895 for food in 1976. Of that amount, the report showed that farmers received only \$749, which represents a decline in the farmers' share of about \$25 from the 1975 figures.

While their share of the consumers' food dollar decreased in 1976, farmers spent 9 per cent more in 1976 to produce the nation's agricultural commodities. Total production expenditures last year rose to \$89 billion.

Meanwhile, middlemen, who transport, process, and merchandise food, increased their share by \$54 to \$1,145 in 1976, according to USDA.

Unlike farm prices which go up and down, all of the factors that are a part of the retail cost of food — transportation, packaging, advertising, processing, retailing, labor and taxes — all go one way and that is up.

Wheat is a good example of fluctuating farm prices. Selling at around \$2.00 to \$2.25 per bushel in recent weeks, farmers fall far short of even meeting production expenses. Yet, the price of bread continues to climb.

## Participation Is Encouraged

An invitation to coastal commercial and sports fishermen to tell how the state can help them was issued recently by Howard N. Lee, Secretary of the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development.

During August and September, Lee will seek out advice from coastal fishermen in a variety of ways, including meeting with them on their boats, in face-to-face meetings and at group meetings.

"The commercial fishing industry and commercial and sports fishermen have

been ignored too long by state government. I'm not making any promises about what we can accomplish through these meetings. But I believe before things are going to get better, we've got to have the input and advice of the people our programs are affecting," Lee said.

He added, "We still are administering basically a 1950's and 1960's program, which is not satisfying the 1970's needs of the commercial fishermen. The fishing industry is changing and the state commercial fishing program needs to change with it."

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