

North Carolina Urban Extension



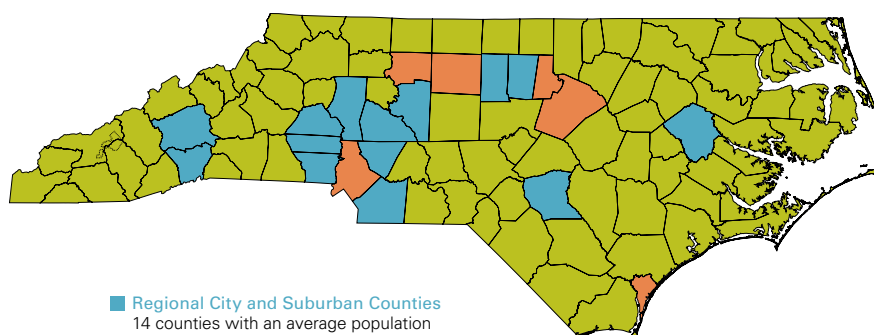
North Carolina is the ninth most populous state in the country with 10.3 million residents. By 2020, that number is expected to exceed 10.6 million. **Currently, over a third of the state's population lives in the six urban counties of Mecklenburg, Wake, New Hanover, Durham, Forsyth, and Guilford.** The majority of future growth is projected to occur in these metropolitan regions and other micropolitan areas of the state.



While the needs of urban areas are not always different from their rural neighbors, the context in which Extension delivers services often varies greatly. **Extension has embraced an increased population size and density, greater diversity of citizens, and the complex organizational environment of NC's urban centers, where multiple partners often work toward similar goals.** And Extension has adapted programs and services to a vastly different physical environment of the city and suburbs.



Through urban extension efforts, we are working to fulfill NC State Extension's vision to be a dynamic and futuristic organization, responding to changes in the social, political, and economic environments of our state.



■ **Regional City and Suburban Counties**
14 counties with an average population density between 250 and 750 people per square mile.

■ **Urban Counties**
6 counties with an average population density that exceeds 750 people per square mile.

■ **Rural Counties**
80 counties with an average population density of 250 people or fewer per square mile.



2018 Highlights

Enriching the youth in Durham County

Kids Voting Durham provides young people in Durham County with an opportunity to vote on the same issues and candidates as adults on Election Day, offering them an authentic election experience at community polling sites and in their schools. In 2018, Durham County Cooperative Extension worked with volunteers and partners to implement a candidate forum and candidate guide (created by youth and answered by candidates) for the 2018 School Board Elections. Students received training as moderators and developed all forum questions themselves. Students who participated in these activities gained new skills and knowledge, with most having an opportunity to develop new leadership skills. **Kids Voting also created an authentic election experience in schools, giving nearly 3,000 students the opportunity to vote in the May election.**



Improving health in Mecklenburg & New Hanover

Extension Master Food Volunteers (EMFV) work closely with county agents to deliver nutrition education and cooking programs, such as Steps to Health, Faithful Families, Cook Smart Eat Smart, and Med Instead of Meds. Volunteers also assist with community-based programs and outreach, including food preservation classes, lunch n' learn workshops, cooking demonstrations, kids cooking camps, and community health fairs. **In 2018, ## EMFVs provided ## hours of educational outreach to Mecklenburg, New Hanover and Brunswick Counties at a value of \$\$\$\$.**



Protecting the environment in Guilford County

Stormwater runoff is one of the leading causes of water pollution in the state. As land is developed, impervious surfaces such as roads, parking lots, and homes replace the natural—and permeable—landscape. Instead of soaking into vegetated ground, rainfall instead becomes stormwater runoff that carries debris, chemicals, and other pollutants into streams and waterways. **Guilford County Cooperative Extension is working to protect local water resources by educating the public on strategies to reduce stormwater runoff.** In 2018, Guilford County Extension partnered with the City of High Point, the City of Greensboro, Guilford County, and Guilford County Soil and Water Conservation District to host the first annual Creek Week. As a part of the week-long event, two free rain barrel workshops were hosted in High Point and Greensboro, drawing nearly 40 residents. All participants gained knowledge about water conservation and planned to use the new rain barrel they constructed to save money and conserve water.



Feeding the future in Forsyth County

Community gardens can enhance healthy food access, environmental quality, education, and social well-being in urban areas.

Cooperative Extension works with over 100 community gardens in Forsyth County. In 2018, Extension staff provided training in English and Spanish for 22 new garden mentors. Training topics included garden organizing, starting and maintaining a community garden, and sustainable horticulture. Extension also supported 68 active mentors through bimonthly meetings, horticultural workshops, technical assistance, and a 'buddy program' pairing mentors for mutual learning. As a result, community garden groups implemented best practices in horticulture, organizing, and diversity and inclusion.



Strengthening communities in Wake County

Over 40,000 children in Wake County are food insecure. Despite this fact, the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) has continuously seen a decrease in the number of youth participating in summer food sites. In 2018, Wake County Cooperative Extension worked with Human Services to initiate an AmeriCorps VISTA program to help increase participation in SFSP through marketing and supporting on-site activities for youth. A total of 18 full- and part-time VISTAs were recruited to support program enhancements across the county.

As a result of these efforts, Wake County served 251,072 meals at 147 sites and increased Wake County's statewide ranking from #38 to #34 in percent need met.



2018 Urban Impacts

31,040 individuals

used extension-recommended best management practices in landscapes, turf, and gardens

19,828 youth

increased their knowledge in STEM (Science, Engineering, Technology, Math)

3,076 adults

including producers, food business owners, etc., improved their knowledge of local food and agriculture

93% of EFNEP participants

(Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program) showed improvement in two or more areas of their diet

860 Extension Master Gardener Volunteers provided 58,789 hours of educational outreach at a value of

\$1.4 million

Data from NC's six urban counties

What We Do

Feed Our Future

- Increasing agricultural awareness and engagement
- Tailoring gardening and food production services to urban environments
- Strengthening local food systems
- Promoting farmland and open space preservation

Enrich the Youth

- Teaching life skills
- Developing future leaders
- Strengthening STEM education opportunities
- Preparing youth for college
- Focusing opioid prevention outreach on youth and their families

Improve Our Health

- Promoting health and decreasing the risk of chronic disease through nutrition education
- Educating families about food safety, food preservation, nutrition, and physical activity
- Certifying retail food managers in food safety practices

LEARN MORE

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Protect the Environment

- Promoting water conservation and protecting water quality
- Improving waste management practice

Strengthen Communities

- Increasing food security
- Promoting physical, mental, environmental, social and financial wellness
- Building capacity of local non-profits
- Leading local impact initiatives to address community issues

| North Carolina's Urban Counties | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| County (Largest City) | 2017 Population Estimates | | People per Square Mile (County, 2010) | NC House Members | NC Senate Members |
| | County | City | | | |
| Mecklenburg (Charlotte) | 1,034,290 | 826,060 | 1,755.5 | 12 | 5 |
| Wake (Raleigh) | 1,023,811 | 449,477 | 1,078.8 | 11 | 5 |
| New Hanover (Wilmington) | 219,866 | 115,261 | 1,058.1 | 3 | 2 |
| Durham (Durham) | 300,865 | 257,232 | 935.7 | 4 | 2 |
| Forsyth (Winston-Salem) | 368,362 | 240,193 | 859.2 | 5 | 2 |
| Guilford (Greensboro / High Point) | 517,197 | 284,816 / 109,849 | 756.4 | 6 | 4 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; NC General Assembly (www.ncleg.net)

