

# Managing Two Research Stations

RCAS Winter 2013  
Orlando Florida  
February 5, 2013



- ◎ History of Each Station
- ◎ Why Merge?
- ◎ Major Challenges
- ◎ Daily Concerns
- ◎ Benefits of Merger
- ◎ What is on the Horizon
- ◎ Recommendations for a Successful Merger



## RESEARCH STATIONS DIVISION

Working Together for One Cause

NC DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

### OUR MISSION

To manage crop and livestock facilities that serve as a platform for agriculture research to make farming more efficient, productive, and profitable, while maintaining a sound environment and providing consumers with safe and affordable products.

# NCDA&CS Caswell Research Farm





# Swine operation closed in 2003



# 2004 Dairy operation closed



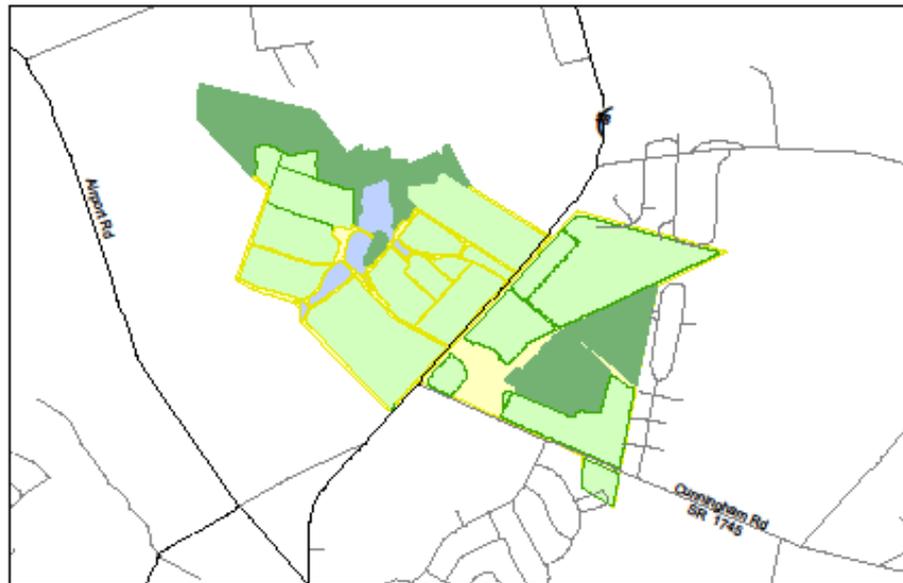


## NCDA&CS Caswell Research Farm

- 12 employees in 2006 at time of merger
- 80 acres of crop research in 2005
- 825 acres of cultivated land
- 1265 total acres including woodlands
- Adequate operating budget
- Farm was slowly starting to attract research
- Major supplier of corn and receipts for the Research Station Division
- Instability regarding land and staff

NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY  
RAYMOND P. CUNNINGHAM CENTER

CUNNINGHAM  
LOWER COASTAL  
RESEARCH STATION  
Lenior County, North Carolina



**MAP LEGEND**

— <all other values>

**TRANSPORTATION**

— Highways

— State Roads

**Land Use**

— Cropland

— Non Crop

— Pond

— Woodland

0 625 1,250 2,500 3,750 5,000 Feet

Prepared By: Deborah Robertson  
Date Prepared: January 23, 2008







# Cunningham / Lower Coastal Station

- Superintendent retired in 2005
- 8 FTEs in 2006 at time of merger plus temporaries and inmates
- 90 acres of crop research in 2005, 338 acres of cultivated land
- 515 total acres including woodlands
- Two operating budgets
  - Cunningham Endowment
  - NCSU operating funds
- Station was well utilized and very secure because of the endowment

# Why merge?

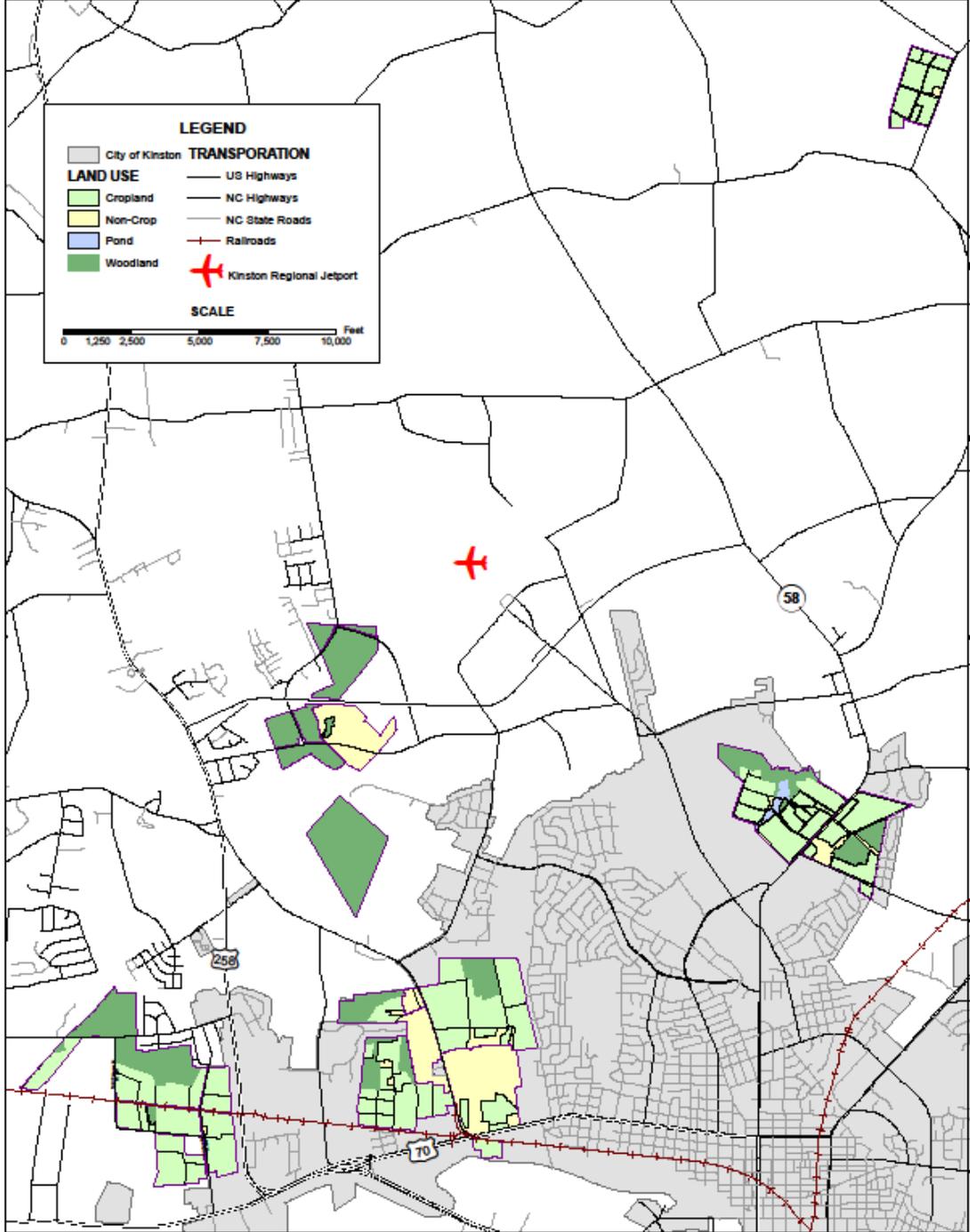
- Research Stations as a whole were being evaluated for efficiency
- The formal idea was proposed to “Provide an option for requested budget cuts and/or increased efficiency”
- Retirement of NCSU Superintendent presented an opportunity to consolidate 2 stations under one superintendent
- Opportunity for NCDA&CS and NCSU to practice partnership in a tangible way
- Caswell had labor and Cunningham desperately needed additional labor for tobacco and horticulture
- Proximity – offices are 6 miles apart.

**LEGEND**

 City of Kinston	<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>
 Cropland	US Highways
 Non-Crop	NC Highways
 Pond	NC State Roads
 Woodland	Railroads
	 Kinston Regional Jetport

**SCALE**

0 1,250 2,500 5,000 7,500 10,000 Feet



# Major challenges



- Very strong station identities
- Some of the staff did not want change
- Tight budgets at Cunningham / Lower Coastal
- Staff reorganization has taken time
- Rewarding staff that have stepped up and shouldered much more responsibility has proved to be very difficult
- Multiple Budgets, HR departments, Purchasing, and administrative tasks
- Some staff have had difficulty transitioning from livestock operations to grain and horticulture research

# Daily Goals



- Staff development, encourage and empower supervisors & employees.
- Split time between 2 offices, 2 office assistants, 6 budgets, and research crops in 4 areas
- Routinely ask and listen to staff for ideas to improve operation, relationships, and morale
- Make decisions that provide direction to our staff and support for researchers
- How to enable staff or better utilize our current resources

# Benefits of the merger

- Researchers have expanded their projects across stations for different soil types or situations
- Significantly more research acres in Kinston now than before  
170 research acres in 2005  
**310 research acres in 2012**
- Improved agronomic practices
- Research plots managed more consistently and uniformly
- Leadership skills developed
- More efficient operations
  - Sharing a mechanic has increased efficiency and saved money
  - Sharing equipment has improved operations
  - Combining staff has increased productivity and timeliness





## What is on the horizon for us?

- **AMPLIFY Agrosphere Modeling for Producing Large Increases in Food Yield**  
Multi-disciplinary project with the goal to increase yields in major crops  
A new research initiative on 60 acres at Cunningham
- Determine research placement within crop rotations as research increases
- Creative ways to increase receipts
- Develop leaders - more leadership training for myself and others
- Continue to build unity and morale
- Recruit research projects to better utilize the greenhouse and organic land
- Build new infrastructure or repair aging infrastructure
- Trade land to consolidate farms and increase our capacity to host research

# Recommendations for a successful merger

- Must have leadership to make the transition
- Focus on the end goal and expect adversity
- Plan on resistance to change from every direction
- Compensate those employees that have stepped up their performance

# Possibilities

Significant savings and growth of your research program can happen if you have underutilized / underdeveloped resources and you can tap into those resources.

Even if you are not planning to merge or consolidate look for **POTENTIAL**. That is the best place to Develop , Improve, and Increase Efficiency.

Questions?

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# Stevia

Zero calorie sweetener

