
IN THIS ISSUE

- * [Reminder: Showcase your made-in-NC product next week in statewide tour](#)
 - * [Sign up today for Oct 8 'Clean Energy Now' conference for cost-effective green practices](#)
 - * ['WNC Naturally' forum on Oct 9 focuses on moving natural products industry forward](#)
 - * [Deadline is Oct 15 to indicate interest in Economic Innovation Grants Program](#)
 - * [More panelists confirmed for Nov 15 Economic Summit - save the date!](#)
 - * [Memberships still available for Blue Ridge Food Ventures' wintertime CSA](#)
 - * [Good news for Burke County: 230 new jobs coming](#)
 - * [BizBoost program creates/retains 262 jobs in region](#)
 - * [Local companies win \\$174K in federal contracts](#)
 - * [New funding opportunity available for NC small businesses](#)
 - * [Mark your calendar for these other upcoming events and deadlines](#)
 - * [In the news: Filmmaker wins in Venice, plus local communities in the national spotlight](#)
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***Reminder!* Showcase your made-in-NC products in the 'Manufacturing Makes It Real' tour, coming to WNC next week**

There's still time for area manufacturers to participate in the "Manufacturing Makes *It* Real Tour" next week. The celebration of manufacturing in North Carolina will hold rallies at 12 sites across the state, including [PolyChem Alloy](#) in Lenoir on September 27 at 4:30pm and at [Arvin Meritor](#) in Fletcher on September 28 at 8:30am.

Manufacturers can bring their locally made products to either of these locations where the goods will be loaded onto the "Manufacturing Makes *It* Real" tractor-trailer. The tour will continue across the state before reaching a final celebration on October 1 at the State Legislative Building in Raleigh. (Large-scale made-in-NC items such as buses or boats are welcome to join the convoy.) The products will be presented to state leaders and some will be chosen for a NC Museum of History exhibit recognizing North Carolina's diverse and abundant array of products and the people who make them.

All rallies are free and open to the public, and state and local leaders are expected to attend. This celebration of manufacturing in NC is hosted by NC State University's Industrial Extension Service. For more details about how to take advantage of this great opportunity to showcase your products, call 800.227.0264 or [go here](#).

[BACK TO TOP](#)

Sign up today for Oct 8 'Clean Energy Now' Conference, connecting WNC companies and institutions with cost-effective green practices

How can your business or institution cut costs and create a competitive edge through energy-efficiency and clean vehicles? What will your company's next car run on? What resources are available to assist with clean energy projects?

The "Clean Energy Now" conference hosted by Blue Ridge Community College on October 8 is designed to help attendees answer these questions. The event, sponsored in part by AdvantageGreen, will address opportunities related to energy efficiency, renewable energy, and clean vehicles that can enable your business or governmental entity create and sustain a competitive edge. The event starts at 8am with a networking breakfast and ends at 4:15pm with a closing reception.

Participants include Bernhardt Furniture Company, Deltec, NC Dept of Commerce, NC State Energy Office, City of Asheville, FLS Energy, sgblue, Fluidyne, Waste Reduction Partners, PSNC, Duke Energy, Blue Ridge Electric, Altech-Eco, Blue Ridge Biofuels, Caldwell Green Commission, Future Foward, NC CHP Initiative, NC Community College System, and more. [Info or to register](#).

[BACK TO TOP](#)

'WNC Naturally' forum on Oct 9 to focus on moving regional natural products industry forward

"WNC Naturally," an open forum to share and learn about Western North Carolina's role and capacity in the \$600 billion global health and wellness industry, will take place October 9, 12noon until 6:30pm in Marshall. Attendees will have the chance to network with growers, buyers, lenders, funders, business owners, and technical service providers. Cost to attend is \$15 (\$20 at the door) and includes a reception.

The event is produced by the NC Natural Products Association, a nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving, cultivating, and sustainably harvesting and processing NC-grown medicinal plants, and hosted by the Very Small Business Center of the Town of Marshall, which offers a variety of entrepreneurial support services. AdvantageGreen and Blue Ridge Food Ventures' Natural Products division are among the sponsors. [Learn more here](#).

[BACK TO TOP](#)

Deadline is Oct 15 to indicate interest in NC Rural Center Economic Innovation Grants Program

October 15 is the deadline to submit an Intent to Apply form for the NC Rural Center's Economic Innovation Grants Program, which is designed to spur business activity, job creation and public/private investment in North Carolina's rural communities by supporting innovative economic development projects. Proposals are evaluated based on the innovative nature of the project and the project's ability to generate measurable outcomes for business and job expansion. Priority funding areas for this program for 2010-2011 include:

- Rural Manufacturing Innovation
- Growth of the Green Economy
- Community-based Economic Innovation

Within these priority areas, two types of grants are available:

- "Seed" grants address new, creative practices and strategies that are being tested in communities for the first time. Maximum award for these grants is \$75,000.
- "Scale" grants support large-scale projects that have regional implications or that intend to take an innovation proven to be successful in one place, rural or urban, to scale in rural NC. Maximum award is \$400,000.

Eligible applicants are units of local government, nonprofit organizations or educational institutions located within North Carolina's 85 rural counties. Also eligible are statewide and regional organizations and agencies serving rural counties. Businesses are not eligible for Economic Innovation Grants. Applicants invited to submit a full proposal will be notified by November 1, 2010, and full applications will be due December 15, 2010. [Learn more here](#) or contact [Brett Altman](#) at 919.250.4314.

[BACK TO TOP](#)

More panelists confirmed for Nov 15 AdvantageWest Economic Summit in downtown Asheville - save the date!

Planning continues for AdvantageWest's next Economic Summit, to be held on the evening of November 15 at Diana Wortham Theatre in downtown Asheville. Once again columnist and UNC-TV host D.G. Martin will serve as moderator for a panel of distinguished high-profile business and political leaders, including NC Lieutenant Governor and Rutherford County native Walter Dalton; 35-year banking veteran Austin Adams, who retired in 2006 as Executive Vice President and Corporate CIO of JPMorgan Chase; and Anita Brown-Graham, Director of NC's Institute for Emerging Issues, a public policy, think-and-do tank that convenes leaders from business, nonprofit organizations, government and higher education to tackle some of the biggest issues facing North Carolina's future growth and prosperity.

This event targets business people, entrepreneurs, economic development professionals and others with a vested interest in business and economic conditions - especially in Western North Carolina. Watch for more details on this popular event in upcoming newsletters, including information on how to register.

[BACK TO TOP](#)

Memberships still available in Winter Sun Farms CSA - sign up today and help these farmers while enjoying local produce this winter

Want to enjoy healthy, locally grown food during the cold of winter? Sign up now for Winter Sun Farms, a program of Blue Ridge Food Ventures, and get a box of fruits and vegetables from local farms, frozen at the peak of freshness, each month from December through March. As a member of Winter Sun Farms, here are some of the local farmers you'll be supporting (and whose produce you'll enjoy through the cold winter months):

- Gail Blate, DeerHaven Hills Farm in Columbus (blueberries)
- Claudine Cremmer, Meadow Cove Farm in Weaverville (zucchini)
- Tom Kousky, Hominy Valley Organic Farm in Candler (green beans, peppers, butternut squash)
- Mollie LeBude, Forest Creek Farm and Nursery in Saluda (butternut squash)
- Steve Morrow, Stump Farm in Hendersonville (tomatoes and crookneck yellow squash)
- Kaleb Rathbone, Rathbone Farms in Waynesville (strawberries)
- Jonathan Rutledge, Flat Creek Farm in Candler (peppers)
- Chris Sawyer and Missy Huger, Jake's Farm in Candler (tomatoes, edamame, eggplant, green beans)
- Larry Stepp, Stepp's Plants in Flat Rock (raspberries, blackberries)
- Ryan Wiebe, Wiebe Farmin' in Burnsville (butternut squash)

Memberships are limited and going fast, so sign up today! [Learn more.](#)

[BACK TO TOP](#)

Good news for Burke County: 230 new jobs coming to Valdese

Two job announcements in as many days mean 230 new jobs in Burke County. Carolina Artisan Group, a joint venture that is a partnership between Art Van Furniture, Michigan's largest furniture retailer, and Kellex Corporation, a furniture manufacturer in Burke County, will bring 200 jobs to Valdese. The partnership will continuously design and develop quality custom and semi-custom living room and family room seating. AdvantageWest was among a number of partners who assisted with this project. [Learn more here.](#)

Meanwhile, Kleen Tech, a company that provides textile-cleaning services to hospitality and industrial clients along the east coast, will build a new process facility in Valdese to accommodate business growth. The company plans to create 30 jobs and invest \$1.17 million during the next three years. The project was made possible in part by a \$54,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The NC Dept of Commerce's Bill Payne, whose office is located at AdvantageWest, was the developer on this project. [Learn more here.](#)

[BACK TO TOP](#)

BizBoost report: 262 jobs created or retained through program aimed at helping small and mid-sized businesses

An innovative program aimed at small and mid-sized companies helped 153 businesses and created or retained 262 jobs in the AdvantageWest region in the first half of this year. Known as BizBoost, the program is part of Gov. Bev Perdue's JobsNOW initiative and provides proven and effective business assistance to vulnerable firms identified through AdvantageWest in partnership with the UNC system's Small Business & Technology Development Center (SBTDC). [Go here for a report of BizBoost activities](#) for January through June. [Learn how to get BizBoost assistance here.](#)

[BACK TO TOP](#)

Local companies win \$174K in federal contracts

From the [North Carolina Military Business Center](#) comes news that three companies in the AdvantageWest region have been awarded Federal government contracts:

- \$115,566 to Greer Outdoor Service in Caldwell County for maintenance of USDA Forest Service mountain bike and horse trails (Dept of Agriculture).
- \$39,975 to a company in Burke County for parts and supplies (Defense Logistics Agency).
- \$19,095 to Wes Cole Land Surveying in Buncombe County for a national forest site survey (Dept of Agriculture).

Find information on [contract opportunities here](#) and federal [business opportunities here](#).

[BACK TO TOP](#)

Funding opportunity for NC small businesses now available through Board of Science and Technology's Matching Funds Program

The NC Board of Science and Technology has announced the release of the FY 2011 solicitation for the One NC Small Business Phase I SBIR/STTR Matching Funds Program. The program provides matching grants to North Carolina companies that have received a Phase I SBIR or STTR grant during the program's solicitation period. Companies whose principle place of business is in North Carolina and who receive a Phase I SBIR or STTR grant between July 1, 2010, and June 30, 2011, are eligible to apply.

Unlike in FY 2010, companies that have previously received a matching grant under the program **ARE eligible to apply for a matching grant**. Matching grants will be awarded to eligible companies on a first-come, first-served basis until funding is exhausted. In its five-year history, the Matching Funds Program has awarded more than \$15 million to more than 200 small businesses throughout North Carolina. [Learn more here.](#)

[BACK TO TOP](#)

Mark your calendar for these other upcoming events & deadlines

Oct 5, 6-9pm: Starting Your Specialty Food Business - AB Tech, Asheville. Class for anyone thinking about starting to package, bottle, label and sell their favorite recipe, or for those looking to start a new business but want to study the market first to determine what the next big thing will be. Five sessions. [Go here to register](#) (scroll to bottom of page).

Oct 6, 7pm: Bill McKibben, described as "the nation's leading environmentalist" - Warren Wilson College Chapel. Free public event is part of Warren Wilson's 2010 Sustainability Speakers Series presented in partnership with AdvantageGreen and the AB Tech Global Institute for Sustainability Technologies. This is an opportunity to hear one of the country's best known environmentalists and the author of books that have shaped public perception and public action on climate change, alternative energy and the need for more localized economies. [More info here](#).

Oct 21, 2pm: AdvantageWest Board of Directors Meeting - AdvantageWest Offices. Regular bimonthly meeting of the 21-member Board of Directors. Open to the public. Call 828.687-7234 for more information.

Oct 27: CEC Letters of intent due to AdvantageWest. Communities interested in pursuing status as a Certified Entrepreneurial CommunitySM should notify AdvantageWest by Oct 27. CEC Leadership Training is Nov 3-5. [Contact Pam Lewis](#).

[BACK TO TOP](#)

In the news: Director of film made in Haywood wins big in Venice, local communities make national spotlight, 'Cooking Light' chooses Blue Ridge Food Ventures-made product...and more

-*Zimbio.com*: Director Monte Hellman, who filmed "Road to Nowhere" in Haywood County last summer, wins a career achievement award at the 2010 Venice Film Festival. [See photos here](#). Info about the festival [here](#).

-*Budget Travel*: Brevard is named third-best in annual ranking of "Coolest Small Towns in America." [More here](#).

-*Washington Post*: Bryson City and Cherokee take the national spotlight in a travel article on glamping ("glamour camping"). [More here](#).

-*Cooking Light*: The Bamboo Ladies pickles, made at Blue Ridge Food Ventures from bamboo grown in Wilkes County and beyond, is an Artisanal Winner of the magazine's 2010 Taste Test Awards following a year-long search for the most delicious, nutritious items among hundreds. The full list of winners is in the October magazine, now on newsstands.

Tryon Daily Bulletin: Polk County celebrates achievement as a Certified Entrepreneurial CommunitySM. [More here](#).

[BACK TO TOP](#)

Got news?

We welcome your announcements about economic development activities within the 23-county region of Western North Carolina. Submit news for consideration to the [newsletter editor](#). AdvantageWest reserves the right to modify submissions to conform to editorial guidelines, space constraints, timeliness and other circumstances.

Editor's note: AdvantageWest is transitioning to a new newsletter system. Thank you for your patience as we work out bugs in the new process. If you have problems with newsletter delivery or other concerns, please [contact us](#).



AdvantageWest is the regional economic development partnership serving the 23 westernmost counties of North Carolina. Chartered by the state General Assembly in 1994, AdvantageWest is a nonprofit, public-private partnership governed by a 21-member board of directors. Our program of work focuses on advanced manufacturing, entrepreneurial development, agribusiness, and the green economy. AdvantageWest also maintains the WNC Film Commission.

AdvantageWest Economic Development Group - 134 Wright Brothers Way - Fletcher, NC 28732 - 828.687.7234
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