



## IN THIS ISSUE

- \* [Dec 1-2: Briefings on status of broadband connectivity in Western North Carolina.](#)
- \* [Last chance to sign up for Winter Sun Farms; pickups start next week.](#)
- \* [Blue Ridge Food Ventures Holiday Market is Dec 7 - shop local!](#)
- \* [Blue Ridge Food Ventures holiday gift boxes help support local food entrepreneurs.](#)
- \* [A look back at the 2011 AdvantageWest Economic Summit, with photos and video.](#)
- \* [In The News: A roundup of recent news items in the region.](#)
- \* [Mark your calendar for these upcoming events and opportunities.](#)

---

**Coming Dec 1 & 2: Briefings on the status of broadband connectivity in the AdvantageWest region. Sessions take place in Franklin, Fletcher and Burnsville.**

AdvantageWest and leaders in Western North Carolina have proactively worked for more than a decade to assure affordable, high speed connectivity to homes, businesses and community anchor institutions such as public, charter and private schools, community colleges, universities, libraries, nonprofit hospitals, and

---

public health and safety facilities.

But there's more to be done, and that's part of what will be discussed at three identical briefings on Dec 1 and 2 organized by AdvantageWest. Representatives of MCNC and MCNC's commercialization partner, ECC Technologies, as well as private sector and other nonprofit service providers, will participate in the discussion. Dates and locations for these free sessions are:

- Thursday Dec 1, 2-4 pm: Franklin - Macon Campus of Southwestern Community College
- Friday, Dec 2, 10am-12noon: Fletcher - AdvantageWest offices
- Friday, Dec 2, 2-4pm: Burnsville - Yancey Campus of Mayland Community College

Space is limited and pre-registration is required. Contact [Amanda Baranski](#) or call 828.687.7234.

[BACK TO TOP](#)

---

### Last chance to sign up for Winter Sun Farms and enjoy local produce all winter long - pickups start next week. (Gift certificates also available!)

A few shares remain in Blue Ridge Food Ventures' community supported agriculture (CSA) program, Winter Sun Farms - but they're going fast. Once monthly, December through March, members visit one of four convenient locations to pick up a box of local produce prepared and frozen at the height of freshness - items like blueberries, diced tomatoes, chopped peppers, roasted butternut squash and more. It's convenience food at its healthiest - no washing, chopping, slicing, dicing, roasting or pureeing needed!

Pickups start the first full week of December, just in time for holiday cooking:

- \* December 6, 4-6pm at Hand-in-Hand Gallery in Flat Rock
- \* December 7, 8am-1pm and 5-7pm at the Holiday Market at Blue Ridge Food Ventures
- \* December 8, 4-6pm at Grove Arcade in downtown Asheville
- \* December 10, 11am-1pm at Merry Wine Market in Black Mountain

[CLICK HERE](#) for more information. To purchase online, [CLICK HERE](#) and scroll down to the shopping cart. To read recent news coverage of Winter Sun Farms, click: [Asheville Citizen-Times](#) and [Hendersonville Times-News](#)

#### Winter Sun Farms Gift Certificates

Looking for a unique gift idea for WNC family and friends? Give the gift of healthy local produce all winter long with a Winter Sun Farms gift certificate. Sign up at the above links or visit the Blue Ridge Food Ventures Holiday Market on Dec 8 (*see article below*).

[BACK TO TOP](#)

---

### Ready for the holidays? Shop local with Blue Ridge Food Ventures and support our region's food entrepreneurs and natural product-makers.

Let Blue Ridge Food Ventures simplify your holiday gift-giving with these convenient options:

---

\* **Blue Ridge Food Ventures Holiday Market, Dec 7, 9am-1pm and 4-7pm.** Enjoy simple, one-stop shopping at the Holiday Market. Meet the local food artisans, sample their products, then pick out the perfect presents for everyone on your list, from unique hostess and client gifts to treats for the office party. And there's more: The Holiday Market will also feature a selection of local farm-fresh meats, wild-caught salmon, hot bagels and handcrafted cheesecakes - just in time for that evening's dinner! Blue Ridge Food Ventures is located on the Enka Campus of A-B Tech, with plenty of free and convenient parking. [Learn more and get directions here.](#)

\* **Holiday Red Boxes, available online and at the Holiday Market.** Blue Ridge Food Ventures' delicious and festive gift boxes fit every taste. Choose from the Sweet 'n' Spicy Box, including items made at BRFV such as Imladris Farm fruit jam and Pig Polish BBQ sauce; the Hot Box, with items that include Smokin' J's fiery sauces and Lusty Monk hot mustard; the Not Hot Box, with a mellow mix of items like Jack's tropical nut butter and sweet toffee; and the traditional Blue Ridge Flavors Box, packed with perennial favorites, with gluten-free options available. Boxes come in two sizes, and can be shipped anywhere in the US. [Learn more and order online here.](#)

\* **Winter Sun Farms Gift Certificates** (*See article elsewhere in this newsletter.*)

[BACK TO TOP](#)

---

**More than 300 attend the 2011 AdvantageWest Economic Summit - here's a look back, including photo galleries and video from the panel discussion.**

The third AdvantageWest Economic Summit was another great success, thanks to the enthusiasm of more than 300 economic development professionals, business and civic leaders, appointed and elected officials, educators, entrepreneurs, and media representatives. Special thanks to moderator DG Martin and our panelists for the insightful discussion: State Senator Tom Apodaca, former Western Carolina University chancellor Dr. John Bardo, Vice-Chief Larry Blythe of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and State Senator Martin Nesbitt.

We're also grateful to the following for their generous support: Murphy Electric Power Board (Gold Sponsor); Forest Commercial Bank (Silver Sponsor); Ashe County, Asheville Savings Bank, City of Asheville, Jackson County, Macon County Economic Development Commission, Polk County, PSNC Energy, SBTDC, Yancey County Economic Development Commission (Supporters); Allegra Printing, Biltmore Wine Company, Highland Brewing, JB Media Group, KP Communications, The Lofts at Reynolds Village, PSAV Presentation Services, Renaissance Asheville Hotel, Swain County, U-Save Car and Truck Rental (Friends).

**Miss the Economic Summit? Or just want to take another look?**

Photo galleries: Click [HERE](#) and [HERE](#)

Video of the panel discussion: Click [HERE](#)

Sample media coverage of the event: Click [HERE](#)

[BACK TO TOP](#)

---

**In The News: A roundup of recent news items around the region.**

---

Check out the [AdvantageWest News Room](#) for links to stories such as these:

- [Asheville Citizen-Times](#) profiles Blue Ridge Food Ventures natural products manufacturing client CoCoChi SkinFood and food business clients Fire from the Mountain and Imladris Farm.
- [McDowell News](#) reports on expansion of Baldor Electric Company, adding 41 new jobs.
- [USA Today](#) features videos of WNC farmers and how they balance farm life and business.
- [Washington Post](#) features Watauga County's Gideon Ridge Inn.
- **Job Announcements:** Nypro Asheville announces new product line expansion and new job; Sonoco Plastics to bring 35 jobs to Haywood County; Gourmet Group cabinet maker to hire 136 in Rutherford County.
- **Announcements of Honors and Awards:** Valdese Economic Development Investment Corp recognized by Gov Bev Perdue; NCSEA honors Waste Reduction Partners with 2011 Community Leadership Award; Brevard reality series announces cast members; Asheville based Integritive makes WorldBlu's 2011 list of Most Democratic Workplaces.
- [Business Insider](#) places Henderson County among the top 20 American cities and counties that could be "the next Silicon Valley."
- [Manufacturing Today](#) profiles Mills Manufacturing, a leader in the manufacturing of parachutes

[BACK TO TOP](#)

---

### Mark your calendar for these upcoming events, including Electric Vehicle Test Drive Event and Homecoming Job Fair.

\* Dec 1, 9am-12pm: Electric Vehicle Test Drive Event (Location: Eaton Plant, 221 Heywood Rd, Arden). Organized by the Land-of-Sky Clean Vehicles Coalition, Eaton and the NC Division of Air Quality, this free event will give the public an opportunity to test drive an electric vehicle, plug in to Eaton's newly installed DC Fast Charge Station, and learn about efforts in WNC to introduce plug-in EVs into the marketplace, install charging stations, and support local job growth. Email [Brian Taylor](#) or call 828.251.6622 to RSVP and reserve a test-drive slot.

\* Dec 1 & 2: Broadband Connectivity Briefings (Locations: Franklin, Fletcher, Burnsville). (See article elsewhere in this newsletter.)

\* Dec 6, 7, 8, 10: First Winter Sun Farm Pickups. (See article elsewhere in this newsletter.)

\* Dec 7: Blue Ridge Food Ventures Holiday Market, 9am-1pm and 4-7pm (Location: BRFV, located on the A-B Tech Enka Campus). (See article elsewhere in this newsletter.)

\* Dec 8, 2pm: AdvantageWest Board of Directors Meeting (Location: AdvantageWest Offices). Regular bimonthly meeting of the 21-member Board of Directors (*note: this is one week earlier than usual*). Open to the public. For more information, contact Assistant Corporate Secretary [Amanda Baranski](#), or call 828.687.7234.

\* Dec 29, 10am-3pm: 6th Annual Homecoming Job Fair (Location: Biltmore Square Mall, Asheville).

---

Showcasing employment opportunities in advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and other growth industries in Western North Carolina. [LEARN 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. An archive of past AdvantageWest newsletters can be found [here](#).



*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, the green economy, and the Western North Carolina Film Commission.*

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

[www.advantagewest.com](http://www.advantagewest.com)