

syncTM Weekly highlights from the North Carolina Department of Commerce



(Left-right) N.C. Dept. of Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll and Claremont Mayor David Morrow watch Gov. Bev Perdue announce that Pierre Foods will bring 500 new jobs to Catawba County.

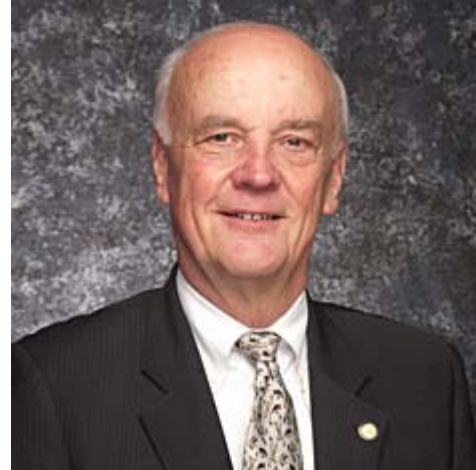
Pierre Foods to bring 500 jobs to Catawba

Gov. Bev Perdue on March 5 announced that Pierre Foods Inc., a national producer of high-quality, fully cooked meats and frozen sandwiches, will expand in Catawba County. The company plans to create 500 jobs and invest \$16.8 million during the next three years in Claremont and retain more than 700 existing jobs at its facility there. The announcement was made possible in part by a \$600,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Uconda Dunn was the developer on this project.

"I am committed to creating new jobs for North Carolina and retaining the jobs we have in our state," said Perdue. "Companies like Pierre Foods know they can build on their hard-won success with North Carolina's skilled workers and top business climate." [Read more.](#)

[Pierre Foods bringing 500 jobs to Catawba County](#) (WNCN - Charlotte, March 5)

[500 new jobs coming to Claremont](#) (Hickory Daily Record, March 6)



SYNC marks one year

Today's edition marks the first anniversary of the N.C. Dept. of Commerce's SYNC newsletter. The past year has been marked by global economic uncertainties and state budget challenges, but there have been many success stories, too. Companies such as Apple, Reser's Fine Foods, Zenta Mortgage Services and Continental Teves continue to locate and expand their businesses in the state.

Success in economic development depends on combining the strengths of many people and organizations to reach a common goal. Your partnership and ongoing support have made and will continue to make North Carolina strong. In the coming year, SYNC will continue to bring you the news and information that build collaborative relationships and help us all stay in sync.

Thanks for reading, and for helping us develop and promote North Carolina as the ideal place for business and innovation to thrive.



(Left-right) N.C. Dept. of Commerce Economic Developer Uconda Dunn, International Trade Director Jean Davis and Sec. Keith Crisco are suited up to tour a company in Brazil.

Commerce, partners explore opportunities in Brazil

N.C. Dept. of Commerce officials, including Sec. Keith Crisco, and leaders of several economic development partnerships statewide recently participated in a trade mission to Brazil. The group met with a number of Brazilian officials and industry leaders to explore increased trade and investment opportunities between North Carolina and the South American country. Commerce partners who also participated in the trade mission were Lincoln County EDC, Cabarrus County EDC and Charlotte Regional Partnership. Representatives from Sabo, a Brazilian company with an office in Lincoln County, also traveled with the delegation.

Commerce announces utility grant funds to help 200 households

N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco today announced that 13 communities received a total of \$830,330 in Community Development Block Grant funds to connect 200 low- and moderate-income households to public water and/or sewer lines.

The Infrastructure Hook-Up Program enables local governments to connect the households to existing public water and/or sewer lines, provided the existing lines were not constructed with CDBG funds. The maximum grant amount is \$75,000.

"North Carolina is committed to helping provide vital utility connections to our needy families statewide," Crisco said. "These funds will ensure that basic hygiene needs are met through enhanced service to 200 deserving households." [Read more.](#)



N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco and a young shopper participate in the Save-A-Lot "scavenger hunt." (Photo courtesy of Cyndi Allison)

Crisco helps open Save-A-Lot in Charlotte

N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco and Charlotte Mayor Anthony Foxx were among those on hand March 4 to celebrate the opening of a new Save-A-Lot grocery store in Charlotte. While there, Crisco and Foxx participated in a grocery "scavenger hunt" with local children.

Save-A-Lot, one of the nation's leading hard-discount grocery chains, operates nearly 1,200 stores in 39 states. The chain is expanding in North Carolina with five new stores, creating a total of 125 jobs throughout the state. During his remarks at the opening, Crisco thanked the store for its commitment to jobs and for its contribution of \$25,000 in gift cards to North Carolina hunger relief organizations. [Read the entry on the event](#) by food blogger Cyndi Allison, who writes the blog Barbecue Master.



(Left-right) Pat Mitchell of the N.C. Economic Developers Association presents Tiffany McNeill of the N.C. Dept. of Commerce with a scholarship



Representatives of the N.C. Dept. of Commerce are shown with participants in the 21st Century Communities Program.

21st Century Communities Program recognizes five counties

The 21st Century Communities Program recently recognized five counties for strategic planning and implementation of economic and community development projects.

Anson, Beaufort, Edgecombe, Graham, and Harnett counties were selected for program participation in 2007 and completed the two-year program in December 2009. During this two-year period, 21st Century Communities Planners Sara Day Evans, Ravin Gore and Brad Hufford were assigned to the counties and facilitated strategic planning processes that led to identifiable and achievable project development. Many projects were infrastructure-related, and included water and sewer improvements, building reuse and restoration, and broadband. Other projects revolved around marketing and tourism development, rural health care, non-profit leadership development and the arts. Nearly \$14 million in funding across the five counties contributed to implementation for many of the projects. Partner funders for these initiatives are the N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Division of Community Assistance, GoldenLEAF Foundation, N.C. Rural Center and the Appalachian Regional Commission. Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll and Assistant Sec. Joseph Crocker presented awards to these counties recognizing these achievements.

Other participating partners are the N.C. County Commissioners Association, N.C. Association of Electric Cooperatives, USDA-Rural Development, N.C. League of Municipalities and the N.C. Community Development Council.

Current program participants are Alexander, Camden, Clay, Nash and Scotland counties. The program will announce its solicitation of new counties this month, according to Mark A. Roberts, director for the Office of Rural Development.

February economic overview released

On March 4, the N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Policy, Research & Strategic Planning Division (PRSP) released its Monthly Overview of North Carolina's Economy for February 2010. This month's report is slightly different than previous months. State and county release dates for January labor force and industry data do not follow the usual monthly schedule because of the longer processing time required for annual benchmarking. As a result, some of the monthly data the division typically report on is not available. As a supplement, PRSP provides a brief overview of the impact of the recession

award.

NCEDA holds MidWinter Conference

The N.C. Economic Developers Association (NCEDA) held its MidWinter Conference March 4-5 at Pinehurst Resort. The theme of this year's conference was "Connecting to State Leadership." Featured speakers included N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco, Director of Business & Industry Development Susan Fleetwood and Finance Officer Mark Poole. Winston-Salem Mayor and N.C. Economic Development Board Chair Allen Joines, and political strategists Gary Pearce and Carter Wrenn also spoke at the conference. During the conference, Tiffany McNeill, client services manager with the N.C. Dept. of Commerce, won the Gov. James E. Holshouser Professional Development Scholarship, which pays for the cost of attending EDI.

NCEDA is the leading statewide association of professional economic developers and their allies in North Carolina. The nearly 600 members work to promote the state and its communities as places for new economic activity.



Carroll keynotes manufacturing summit in Charlotte

On March 3, N.C. Dept. of Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll gave the keynote address at the Charlotte Chamber's 2010 Manufacturing Summit. Carroll presented Gov. Bev Perdue's 2010 Agenda and the importance of her priorities to North

on North Carolina's labor force and industry employment. Analysis related to all other data is consistent with previous monthly reports. [Read the overview.](#)

Among the findings:

- Employment decreased by more than a quarter million during the recession; unemployment spiked.
- Metropolitan, micropolitan and rural areas were all negatively impacted by the recession.
- The unemployment rate in all 100 counties increased significantly during the recession.
- 248,000 nonfarm payroll jobs were lost during the recession; manufacturing employment declined by 95,500.

Neal speaks at "State of Clayton" seminar

N.C. Dept. of Commerce Assistant Sec. Katharine Neal was one of the featured speakers at the State of Clayton Seminar. Nearly 200 of the area's leaders in business, industry and government came together for the seminar, which explored the moves and decisions that have helped Clayton grow into a strong small town. [Read more.](#)

Two communities awarded funds

The N.C. Dept. of Commerce Finance Center has awarded grants to two N.C. communities. The Town of Granite Falls has been awarded an Industrial Development Fund grant to assist in the construction of a 750,000 gallon water storage tank on behalf of Merchants Distributors, Inc (MDI). The \$500,000 grant will be used to increase water storage capacity and will enable MDI to create up to 150 high-paying jobs over the next five years.

Also, Halifax County has been awarded an Industrial Development Fund (Utility Account) grant to extend sewer from Reser's Fine Foods to the Halifax Corporate Park and on to the Perdue hatchery facility. The \$500,000 grant will be used to provide sewer access to the corporate park, the regional airport and the hatchery, and will enable the park to attract new job and investment opportunities. This project is Phase II of the Halifax sewer system upgrade which is providing increased sewer capacity to Reser's Fine Foods. As a result, it is anticipated that 500 jobs will be created with a new taxable investment of just over \$60 million.

Workshop looks at climate change adaptation

The ["Ask the Climate Question Workshop"](#) took place March 2-3 at the McKimmon Center at N.C. State University in Raleigh. Speakers, including N.C. Dept. of Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll and University of North Carolina President Emeritus William Friday, discussed the impact of climate change and strategies for adaptation. [View presentations from the workshop.](#)

Carolina's business climate. He also dedicated his remarks to his two late grandfathers, who are part of North Carolina's proud manufacturing heritage with Thomasville Furniture and Carolina Mills.

Zaytoun elected to 7x24 Exchange board

N.C. Dept. of Commerce Economic Developer Ellis Zaytoun was recently elected executive vice president of the [7x24 Exchange Carolinas Chapter](#). 7x24 Exchange is the leading knowledge exchange for those who design, build, use and maintain mission-critical enterprise information infrastructures. 7x24 Exchange's goal is to improve end-to-end reliability by promoting dialogue among these groups.

Metrics from B&I Division

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Division of Business and Industry (B&I) that illustrate some of the recent activities of the Division. The metrics include the number of new economic development projects assigned to B&I development staff; the number of economic development project announcements; the number of announced jobs created and capital invested; the number of interactions existing industry staff had with businesses throughout the state; and the number of contacts received by the Business Link North Carolina/Business ServiCenter.

Jan. 1 - March 8, 2010

New projects assigned:	89
Projects announced:	15
Jobs created:	2,317
Capital invested:	\$243.9M
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	203
Calls to the Business ServiCenter:	4,389

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [Pierre Foods adding 500 jobs in western N.C.](#) (Business Week magazine, March 8)
- [Solar, wind project viable in N.C.](#) (The Charlotte Observer, March 8)
- [Governor visits city to promote program that helps small businesses get loans](#) (The Winston-Salem Journal, March 8)
- [What states and cities are doing to help small businesses](#) (The New York Times, March 4)
- [Rowan-Cabarrus to offer FastTrac program](#) (The Salisbury Post, March 4)
- [Luxury comes in green, too](#) (Charlotte

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Building Location:
301 North Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC 27601-1058

Mailing Address:
4301 Mail Service Center
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