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Weekly highlights from the  
North Carolina Department of Commerce



Gov. Bev Perdue speaks at the Sept. 20 announcement that Cree will add 244 jobs in Durham. With her are (from left) Cree CEO Chuck Swoboda, U.S. Sen. Richard Burr, U.S. Sen. Kay Hagan, U.S. Rep. David Price, U.S. Rep. Brad Miller, Durham County Commissioner Ellen Reckhow (seated behind the governor) and Cree VP of Marketing Greg Merritt.

## Cree to add 244 jobs in Durham

Gov. Bev Perdue announced Sept. 20 that Cree Inc., a global leader in LED lighting technology and products, will expand its manufacturing operations in Durham. The company plans to create 244 jobs over the next two years and invest \$135 million. The project was made possible in part by a state grant from the Job Development Investment Grant program.

"Cree is a homegrown success story," said Perdue. "Not just because they started here and grew into a global leader in efficient lighting technology, but also because North Carolina's top-notch workforce and top-rated business climate helped encourage them to stay, expand and thrive here at home." The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Vivian Powell was the developer on this project.

[Cree to add 244 jobs in Durham](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, Sept. 20)



Gov. Bev Perdue speaks at the Sept. 16 announcement that Empire Foods will create 200 jobs in Halifax County. Empire Foods Chairman Greg Hatem is pictured at right.

## Empire Foods to bring 200 jobs to Halifax County

Gov. Bev Perdue on Sept. 16 announced that Empire Foods Inc., an advanced-technology food processing company, will bring 200 jobs to Halifax County. The company, using technology licensed from N.C. State University, plans to create the jobs and invest \$2.5 million over the next five years. The project was made possible in part by a \$400,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Garrett Wyckoff was the developer on this project.

"These 200 new jobs are the result of North Carolina's exceptional ability to bring together innovation, economic development, our renowned university system and local and state partnerships," said Perdue. "This creative collaboration will also benefit local farmers, successfully combining new production technology with our traditional agricultural heritage."

Empire Foods Inc. is a state-of-the-art food processing company that uses technology to produce shelf-stable food products. The products do not require refrigeration, but maintain the flavor, color and nutrients of fresh food. The company will lease a 35,000-square-foot production facility to be built by the county at the new Halifax Corporate Park. It will produce fruits and vegetables with an initial focus toward military and restaurant markets. In addition to creating jobs at the production facility, the company will purchase



(Left-right) Cree co-founder John Palmour shows a Cree product to Gov. Bev Perdue.

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## Manufacturer to bring 68 jobs to Guilford County

Gov. Bev Perdue on Sept. 17 announced that Baltek Inc., a manufacturer of core materials for the wind energy, mass transit, marine and military markets, will relocate to a new manufacturing facility in Guilford County. The company plans to create 68 jobs and invest \$3.25 million over the next three years in High Point. The project was made possible in part by a \$204,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Rod Forsythe was the developer on this project.

"Creating jobs is my number one priority. North Carolina continues to attract businesses in cutting-edge industries that bring highly desirable jobs to our state," said Perdue. "Our skilled workers, custom training programs and top-rated business climate remain top draws for companies from around the world looking for the best location to succeed."

"The consolidation and relocation of Baltek's activities to High Point is of strategic significance to the business. High Point will provide us a solid basis from which we can continue to competitively serve our customer base into the future," said Pierre Monéton, president of Core Materials of 3A Composites. "We are most appreciative of Gov. Perdue and Sec. Crisco for their dedicated efforts to make this project a reality in North Carolina." [Read more.](#)

[Company announces High Point facility that will employ 68](#)  
(The News & Record - Greensboro, Sept. 17)



fruits and vegetables from local and regional farmers. [Read more.](#)

[Governor announces new venture in Halifax](#)  
(The Daily Herald - Roanoke Rapids, Sept. 17)

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## N.C. among states leading comeback from recession

Texas, North Carolina, Idaho and a handful of other states are leading the nation's crawl out of the worst recession since the 1930s, a USA TODAY analysis finds.

Since the recession officially ended in June 2009, a group of about 10 states that have outperformed the nation almost continuously for 25 or more years again is generating new income at a faster pace than the rest of the nation.

[Energy states, Idaho leading comeback from recession](#) (USA Today, Sept. 21)

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## NCSU to open 'innovation hub'

N.C. State University has its own stimulus plan for the state economy: a new initiative to double the number of private companies it spins off every year, and to boost by 50 percent annually the amount of grants and contracts its faculty and staff win to fund research.

NCSU will open an "innovation hub," where companies can come to gain access to expertise and technology that university researchers are developing, and where faculty and staff can get support to market their technologies or create new companies based on their work, Chancellor Randy Woodson told the Board of Trustees on Sept. 24.

[NCSU: Innovation will rouse economy](#) (The News & Observer, Sept. 18)

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## Economist foresees uneven growth in 2010

The N.C. economy is likely to grow this year, but the recovery will remain uneven and jobs will remain scarce, a UNC-Charlotte economist told The Charlotte Observer Sept. 15.

John Connaughton expects the state's

(Left-right) N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco, Cleveland County Commissioners Chair Jo Boggs, N.C. Rep. Tim Moore, Stuart LeGrand, Bill LeGrand and Gene LeGrand, along with other officials from Cleveland County

## Cleveland Community College breaks ground on LeGrand Center

N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco was on hand Sept. 14 for the groundbreaking of the new LeGrand Center at Cleveland Community College in Shelby. The new building will house the CCC continuing education department, classrooms for Cleveland Early College High School students and space for businesses to hold conferences, workshops, meetings and events. CCC's Board of Trustees, the Cleveland County Board of Education and county commissioners joined together to work as a team, and with the assistance from the LeGrand family, the building is ready for the construction phase.

The project is estimated to cost about \$18.7 million with participating groups sharing the cost.

[Cleveland Community College breaks ground on \\$18.7 million LeGrand Center](#) (The Shelby Star, Sept. 16)

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## Talecris 'tops off' Clayton expansion

Talecris Biotherapeutics' \$270 million expansion in Clayton is officially topped off.

On Sept. 15, about 150 Talecris employees, contractors, and state and local officials used permanent markers to sign a steel beam that now sits atop the frame that will become the company's new fractionation facility. The "topping off" ceremony is a construction industry tradition considered good luck for a new building. N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco and Clayton Mayor Jody McLeod were among the speakers at the celebration.

[Talecris 'tops off' Clayton expansion](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, Sept. 16)

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## Solicitation open for Board of Science and Tech's Matching Funds Program

The N.C. Board of Science and Technology is pleased to announce 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. Additional information, including the FY 2011 solicitation, is available on the board's [Web site](#).

economy to increase 0.8 percent over 2009, he said during his quarterly economic presentation, delivered at UNCC's uptown campus.

That's a downgrade from his earlier reports: In June, Connaughton predicted 2.2 growth; in March, he said the state's economy was likely to grow by 3.5 percent over 2009.

"The national economy has been able to put together four consecutive quarters of expansion, while the North Carolina economy has struggled to put two quarters of growth together," he said.

[Economist: It's going to be a bumpy ride in N.C.](#) (The Charlotte Observer, Sept. 16)



(Left-right) N.C. Dept. of Commerce Legislative Director Rita Harris, Director of Foreign Operations Derek Chen and N.C. Defense Business Association Executive Director Joy Thrash

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## Commerce participates in Fort Bragg briefing

N.C. Dept. of Commerce Legislative Director Rita Harris and Director of Foreign Operations Derek Chen attended an event sponsored by the XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg, which included a command brief by LTG Frank Helmick. This brief provided information on Fort Bragg's mission, operations within the XVIII Airborne Corps, domestic missions, and how the corps is able to mobilize and deploy when crises occur or as directed by the Pentagon or FORSCOM.

In addition, Helmick cited numerous metrics related to Fort Bragg. The base supports the largest population of civilians and soldiers of any U.S. Army base in the world, and boasts the largest economic impact, which is estimated at \$9.3 billion annually. It also ranks number one among Army bases in terms of its libraries, airfields, railroad lines and retail facilities.

The group attended additional briefings on outload nodes, green ramp activities, and an airborne operations demo which included over 1,100 paratroopers and a heavy equipment drop.

## Registration open for Rural Partners Forum

Registration is now open for the Rural Center's Rural Partners Forum, scheduled for Nov. 4-5 at the North Raleigh Hilton. This two-day event will focus on strategies to combat recession, grow jobs and create wealth in North Carolina's rural communities. Topics include traditional industries that are reinventing themselves to survive in the global economy, growth potential in new economic sectors, such as clean energy and biotechnology, and place-based strategies to build on existing strengths. [Learn more.](#)

## Entrepreneurship Summit takes place in Wilmington

The 2010 N.C. Entrepreneurship took place Sept. 19-20 at the Hilton Wilmington Riverside Hotel. N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco was the keynote speaker, discussing North Carolina as "The Entrepreneurial State," on Sept. 20.

The summit is a working collaboration of leaders from across North Carolina to create 'homegrown' jobs. This year's summit, "Keys to NC's Economic Future," was the fourth statewide gathering to celebrate and work for small businesses and high-growth entrepreneurs. Panel discussions included "Financing Entrepreneurship in Challenging Economic Times" and "Entrepreneurship is Economic Development." PPD Executive Chairman Fred Eshelman was the recipient of the N.C. Entrepreneur Hall of Fame award. [Read more.](#)

[Entrepreneurship Summit gives start-ups some advice, encouragement](#) (The Star-News - Wilmington, Sept. 20)

## Event to showcase International Logistics

The Small Business Center of Cape Fear Community College will host an event on International Logistics Oct. 1 in Wilmington. Participants will learn about the N.C. port tax credit, e-cargo tools, trade events, and global trade opportunities. Featured speakers will include N.C. Dept. of Commerce International Trade Division Director Jean Davis, N.C. Ports Community Economic Development Director Jimmy Yokeley, and Assistant Commissioner for Small Business George Millsaps. [Learn more.](#)

## 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 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 - Sept. 20, 2010

New projects assigned:	306
Projects announced:	88
Jobs created:	11,465
Capital invested:	\$2.27B
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	1,002
Calls to the Business ServiCenter:	16,960

## N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [State unemployment drops to 9.7 percent](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, Sept. 17)
- ['Our pipeline is full.' N.C. Secretary of Commerce says about jobs](#) (WRAL Tech Wire, Sept. 20)
- [Elizabethtown, NC Aviation, Econ Dev meeting](#) (The Bladen Journal, Sept. 16)
- [Charlotte mayor: Growing exports is a key to growing jobs](#) (The Charlotte Observer, Sept. 16)

**(919) 733-4151**

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

Mailing Address:  
4301 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-4301

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