Nutrition and Human Health: The N.C. Research Campus

**The Need:** Traditional North Carolina industries such as tobacco and textiles have declined in recent years, and with this decline, the jobs that underpinned many of the state’s communities disappeared. Perhaps nowhere in North Carolina is this trend more apparent than Kannapolis, a once-thriving textile town where the closing of textile mills cost thousands of jobs. New industries are needed to provide jobs and revitalize North Carolina communities.

**Serving the Need:** It seems likely that College of Agriculture and Life Sciences programs figured into the equation when David Murdock, Dole Food Co. owner, decided to revitalize Kannapolis with a $1.5 billion investment that will create the North Carolina Research Campus. After all, the campus will include the North Carolina State University Institute for Fruit and Vegetable Science, where research, education and extension programs will focus on agricultural commodities such as high-value fruits and vegetables. When Dole opened a new salad packaging plant in Bessemer City in early 2007, Richard Dahl, Dole president, said the company is concentrating operations in North Carolina in part because of the opportunity to partner with NC State and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

**Impact beyond North Carolina:** The development of the North Carolina Research Campus at Kannapolis is expected to create 35,000 jobs. But beyond jobs, we will learn from the research at the campus what we need to eat – the nutritional content of our foods -- to live longer, healthier lives. And we will develop foods with this nutritional content. And while people around the world will benefit from this knowledge, North Carolinians are likely to benefit most directly. Through our Extension programs, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences will help North Carolinians use the research from our Institute for Fruit and Vegetable Science to grow new high-value fruits and vegetables. And the Dole Food Co. will provide a market for those crops.

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