

Chapter 106.

Agriculture.

Article 1.

Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Part 1. Board of Agriculture.

§ 106-1: Repealed by Session Laws 1995, c. 509, s. 52.

§ 106-2. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services established; Board of Agriculture, membership, terms of office, etc.

(a) Department and Board Established. – The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is created and established and shall be under the control of the Commissioner of Agriculture, with the consent and advice of a board to be established and named "The Board of Agriculture."

(b) Membership; Qualifications. – The Board of Agriculture shall consist of the Commissioner of Agriculture, who shall be an ex officio member and chairman thereof and shall preside at all meetings, and of 12 other members from the State, so distributed as to reasonably represent the different sections and agriculture of the State. The Commissioner of Agriculture and the members of the Board of Agriculture shall be practicing farmers engaged in their profession. The members of the Board shall be appointed by the Governor by and with the consent of the Senate. In the appointment of the members of the Board the Governor shall also take into consideration the different agricultural interests of the State, and shall appoint members with the following qualifications:

- (1) One member who shall be a practicing tobacco farmer to represent the tobacco farming interest.
- (2) One member who shall be a practicing cotton grower to represent the cotton interest.
- (3) One member who shall be a practicing fruit or vegetable farmer to represent the fruit and vegetable farming interest.
- (4) One member who shall be a practicing dairy farmer to represent the dairy and cattle interest of the State.
- (5) One member who shall be a practicing poultryman to represent the poultry interest of the State.
- (6) One member who shall be a practicing peanut grower to represent the peanut interests of the State.
- (7) One member who shall be experienced in marketing to represent the marketing of products of the State.
- (8) One member who shall be actively involved in forestry to represent the forestry interests of the State.
- (9) One member who shall be actively involved in the nursery business to represent the nursery industry of the State.
- (10) One member who shall be a practicing general farmer to represent the general farming interest.
- (11) One member who shall be a practicing pork farmer to represent the swine interest of the State.

(12) One member who shall be actively involved in the equine industry to represent the equine industry of the State.

(c) Terms. – The term of office of members of the Board shall be six years and until their successors are duly appointed and qualified.

(d) Vacancies. – Vacancies in the Board shall be filled by the Governor for the unexpired term. (Code, s. 2184; 1901, c. 479, ss. 2, 4; Rev., s. 3931; 1907, c. 497, s. 1; C.S., s. 4667; 1931, c. 360, s. 1; 1937, c. 174; 1995, c. 509, s. 53; 1997-261, ss. 15, 16; 2011-145, s. 13.22A(dd); 2013-99, s. 1; 2013-342, s. 1; 2023-63, s. 1.3.)

§ 106-3: Repealed by Session Laws 1995, c. 509, s. 54.

§ 106-4. Meetings of Board.

The Board of Agriculture, herein established, hereafter called "the Board," shall meet for the transaction of business in the City of Raleigh at least twice a year, and oftener, if called by the Commissioner of Agriculture. (1901, c. 479, s. 3; Rev., s. 3935; C.S., s. 4669; 1921, c. 24; 1929, c. 252; 1931, c. 360, s. 2.)

§ 106-5: Repealed by Session Laws 1997-74, s. 1.

§ 106-6: Repealed by Session Laws 1995, c. 509, s. 54.

§ 106-6.1. Fees.

(a) A board or commission within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services may establish fees or charges for the services it provides. The Board of Agriculture, subject to the provisions of Chapter 146 of the General Statutes, may establish a rate schedule for the use of facilities operated by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

(b) Repealed by Session Laws 2011-145, s. 11.2, effective July 1, 2011. (1981, c. 495, s. 10; 1987, c. 827, s. 25; 1997-261, s. 109; 1999-413, s. 5; 2009-451, s. 11.3; 2011-145, s. 11.2.)

§ 106-6.2. Create special revenue funds for certain agricultural centers.

(a) The Eastern North Carolina Agricultural Center Fund is created within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services as a special revenue fund. This Fund shall consist of receipts from the sale of naming rights to any facility located at the Eastern North Carolina Agricultural Center at Williamston, investments earnings on these monies, and any gifts, devises, or grants from any source for the benefit of the Eastern North Carolina Agricultural Center. All interest that accrues to this Fund shall be credited to this Fund. Any balance remaining in this Fund at the end of any fiscal year shall not revert. The Department may use this Fund only to promote, improve, repair, maintain, or operate the Eastern North Carolina Agricultural Center.

(b) The Southeastern North Carolina Agricultural Center Fund is created within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services as a special revenue fund. This Fund shall consist of receipts from the sale of naming rights to any facility located at the Southeastern North Carolina Agricultural Center at Lumberton, investments earnings on these monies, and any gifts, devises, or grants from any source for the benefit of the Southeastern North Carolina Agricultural Center. All interest that accrues to this Fund shall be credited to this Fund. Any balance remaining in this Fund at the end of any fiscal year shall not revert. The Department may use this Fund only to

promote, improve, repair, maintain, or operate the Southeastern North Carolina Agricultural Center. (1998-212, s. 13.2; 2011-284, s. 72.)

§ 106-6.3. Create special revenue fund for research stations.

The Research Stations Fund is established as a special revenue fund within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Research Stations. This Fund shall consist of receipts from the sale of timber and other commodities produced on the Department's research stations and any gifts, bequests, or grants for the benefit of this Fund. No General Fund appropriations shall be credited to this Fund. Any balance exceeding one million dollars (\$1,000,000) in this Fund at the end of any fiscal year shall revert to the General Fund. The Department shall use this Fund only to develop, improve, repair, maintain, operate, or otherwise invest in research stations operated by the Department's Research Stations Division. (2012-142, s. 11.4; 2014-100, s. 13.8; 2021-180, s. 10.4(b).)

§ 106-6.4. Create special revenue fund for certain facilities.

The Agricultural Marketing Facilities Fund is established as a special revenue fund within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Marketing Division. This Fund shall consist of receipts from the lease or rental of property or facilities, admissions, fees, and any gifts, bequests, or grants collected at the Department's farmers markets and agricultural centers. The Department shall use this Fund to develop, improve, repair, maintain, operate, expand, or otherwise invest in the Department's farmers markets and agricultural centers. (2021-180, s. 10.5A.)

§§ 106-7 through 106-8: Repealed by Session Laws 1995, c. 509, s. 54.

§ 106-9: Repealed by Session Laws 1997-74, s. 2.

§ 106-9.1: Repealed by Session Laws 1995, c. 509, s. 54.

Part 1A. Collection and Refund of Fees and Taxes.

§ 106-9.2. Records and reports required of persons paying fees or taxes to Commissioner or Department; examination of records; determination of amount due by Commissioner in case of noncompliance.

(a) Every person paying fees or taxes to the Commissioner of Agriculture or to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services under the provisions of this Chapter shall keep such records as the Commissioner may prescribe to indicate accurately the fees or taxes due to the Commissioner or Department, and such records shall be preserved for a period of three years, and shall at all times during the business hours of the day be subject to inspection by the Commissioner or his deputies or such other agents as may be duly authorized by the Commissioner. Any person failing to comply with or violating any of the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

(b) It shall be the duty of the Commissioner of Agriculture, by competent auditors, to have the books and records of every person paying fees or taxes to the Commissioner or Department examined at least once each year to determine if such persons are keeping complete records as provided by this section, and to determine if correct reports have been made to the Commissioner or Department covering the total amount of fees or taxes due by such persons.

(c) If any person shall fail, neglect or refuse to keep such records or to make such reports or pay fees or taxes due as required, and within the time provided in this Chapter, the Commissioner shall immediately inform himself as best he may as to the matters and things required to be set forth in such records and reports, and from such information as he may be able to obtain, determine and fix the amount of fees or taxes due the State from such delinquent person for the period covering the delinquency. The Commissioner shall proceed immediately to collect the fees or taxes due the State, including any penalties and interest thereon, in the manner provided in this Article. (1963, c. 458; 1993, c. 539, s. 736; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 1997-261, s. 109.)

§ 106-9.3. Procedure for assessment of fees and taxes.

(a) If the Commissioner of Agriculture discovers from the examination of any report filed by a taxpayer or otherwise that any fee or tax or additional fee or tax is due from any taxpayer, he shall give notice to the taxpayer in writing of the kind and amount of fee or tax which is due and of his intent to assess the same, which notice shall contain advice to the effect that unless application for a rehearing is made within the time specified in subsection (c), the proposed assessment will become conclusive and final.

If the Commissioner is unable to obtain from the taxpayer adequate and reliable information upon which to base such assessment, the assessment may be made upon the basis of the best information available and, subject to the provisions hereinafter made, such assessment shall be deemed correct.

(b) The notice required to be given in subsection (a) may be delivered to the taxpayer by an agent of the Commissioner or may be sent by mail to the last known address of the taxpayer and such notice will be deemed to have been received in due course of the mail unless the taxpayer shall make an affidavit to the contrary within 90 days after such notice is mailed, in which event the taxpayer shall be heard by the Commissioner in all respects as if he had made timely application.

(c) Any taxpayer who objects to a proposed assessment of fee or tax or additional fee or tax shall be entitled to a hearing before the Commissioner of Agriculture, provided application therefor is made in writing within 30 days after the mailing or delivery of the notice required by subsection (a). If application for a hearing is made in due time, the Commissioner of Agriculture shall set a time and place for the hearing and after considering the taxpayer's objections shall give written notice of his decision to the taxpayer. The amount of fee or tax or additional fee or tax due from the taxpayer as finally determined by the Commissioner shall thereupon be assessed and upon assessment shall become immediately due and collectible.

Provided, the taxpayer may request the Commissioner at any time within 30 days of notice of such proposed assessment for a written statement, or transcript, of the information and the evidence upon which the proposed assessment is based, and the Commissioner of Agriculture shall furnish such statement, or transcript, to the taxpayer. Provided, further, after request by the taxpayer for such written statement, or transcript, the taxpayer shall have 30 days after the receipt of the same from the Commissioner of Agriculture to apply in writing for such hearing, explaining in detail his objections to such proposed assessment. If no request for such hearing is so made, such proposed assessment shall be final and conclusive.

(d) If no timely application for a hearing is made within 30 days after notice of a proposed assessment of fee or tax or additional fee or tax is given pursuant to subsection (a), such proposed fee or tax or additional fee or tax assessment shall become final without further notice and shall be immediately due and collectible.

(e) Where a proper report has been filed by a taxpayer and in the absence of fraud, the Commissioner of Agriculture shall assess any fee or tax or additional fee or tax due from the taxpayer within three years after the date upon which such report is filed or within three years after the date upon which such report was required by law to be filed, whichever is the later. If no report has been filed, and in the absence of fraud, any fee or tax or additional fee or tax due from a taxpayer may be assessed at any time within five years after the date upon which such report was required by law to be filed. In the event a false and fraudulent report has been filed or there has been an attempt in any manner to fraudulently defeat or evade a fee or tax, any fee or tax or additional fee or tax due from the taxpayer may be assessed at any time.

(f) Except as hereinafter provided in subsection (g), the Commissioner of Agriculture shall have no authority to assess any fee or tax or additional fee or tax under this section until the notice required by subsection (a) shall have been given and the period within which an application for a hearing may be filed has expired, or if a timely application for a hearing is filed, until written notice of the Commissioner's decision has been given to the taxpayer, provided, however that if the notice required by subsection (a) shall be mailed or delivered within the limitation prescribed in subsection (e), such limitation shall be deemed to have been complied with and the proceeding may be carried forward to its conclusion.

(g) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the Commissioner of Agriculture shall have authority at any time within the applicable period of limitations to proceed at once to assess any fee or tax or additional fee or tax which he finds is due from a taxpayer if, in his opinion, the collection of such fee or tax is in jeopardy and immediate assessment is necessary in order to protect the interest of the State, provided, however, that if an assessment is made pursuant to the authority set forth in this subsection before the notice required by subsection (a) is given, such assessment shall not be valid unless the notice required by subsection (a) shall be given within 30 days after the date of such assessment.

(h) All assessments of fees or taxes or additional fees or taxes (exclusive of penalties assessed thereon) shall bear interest at the rate of one half of one percent (0.5%) per month or fraction thereof from the time said fees or taxes or additional fees or taxes were due to have been paid until paid. (1963, c. 458.)

§ 106-9.4. Collection of delinquent fees and taxes.

(a) If any fee or tax imposed by this Chapter, or any other fee or tax levied by the State and payable to the Commissioner of Agriculture or the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, or any portion of such fee or tax, be not paid within 30 days after the same becomes due and payable, and after the same has been assessed, the Commissioner of Agriculture shall issue an order under his hand and official seal, directed to the sheriff of any county of the State commanding him to levy upon and sell the real and personal property of the taxpayer found within his county for the payment of the amount thereof, with the added penalties, additional taxes, interest, and cost of executing the same, and to return to the Commissioner of Agriculture the money collected by virtue thereof within a time to be therein specified, not less than 60 days from the date of the order. The said sheriff shall, thereupon, proceed upon the same in all respects with like effect and in the same manner prescribed by law in respect to executions issued against property upon judgments of a court of record, and shall be entitled to the same fees for his services in executing the order, to be collected in the same manner.

(b) Bank deposits, rents, salaries, wages, and all other choses in action or property incapable of manual levy or delivery, hereinafter called the intangible, belonging, owing, or to

become due to any taxpayer subject to any of the provisions of this Chapter, or which has been transferred by such taxpayer under circumstances which would permit it to be levied upon if it were tangible, shall be subject to attachment or garnishment as herein provided, and the person owing said intangible, matured or unmatured, or having same in his possession or control, hereinafter called the garnishee, shall become liable for all sums due by the taxpayer under this Chapter to the extent of the amount of the intangible belonging, owing, or to become due to the taxpayer subject to the setoff of any matured or unmatured indebtedness of the taxpayer to the garnishee. To effect such attachment or garnishment the Commissioner of Agriculture shall serve or cause to be served upon the taxpayer and the garnishee a notice as hereinafter provided, which notice may be served by any deputy or employee of the Commissioner of Agriculture or by any officer having authority to serve summonses. Said notice shall show:

- (1) The name of the taxpayer and his address, if known;
- (2) The nature and amount of the fee or tax, and the interest and penalties thereon, and the year or years for which the same were levied or assessed, and
- (3) Shall be accompanied by a copy of this subsection, and thereupon the procedure shall be as follows:

If the garnishee has no defense to offer or no setoff against the taxpayer, he shall, within 10 days after service of said notice, answer the same by sending to the Commissioner of Agriculture by registered mail a statement to that effect, and if the amount due or belonging to the taxpayer is then due or subject to his demand, it shall be remitted to the Commissioner with said statement, but if said amount is to mature in the future, the statement shall set forth that fact and the same shall be paid to the Commissioner upon maturity, and any payment by the garnishee hereunder shall be a complete extinguishment of any liability therefor on his part to the taxpayer. If the garnishee has any defense or setoff, he shall state the same in writing under oath, and, within 10 days after service of said notice, shall send two copies of said statement to the Commissioner by registered mail; if the Commissioner admits such defense or setoff, he shall so advise the garnishee in writing within 10 days after receipt of such statement and the attachment or garnishment shall thereupon be discharged to the amount required by such defense or setoff, and any amount attached or garnished hereunder which is not affected by such defense or setoff shall be remitted to the Commissioner as above provided in cases where the garnishee has no defense or setoff, and with like effect. If the Commissioner shall not admit the defense or setoff, he shall set forth in writing his objections thereto and shall send a copy thereof to the garnishee within 10 days after receipt of the garnishee's statement, or within such further time as may be agreed on by the garnishee, and at the same time he shall file a copy of said notice, a copy of the garnishee's statement, and a copy of his objections thereto in the superior court of the county where the garnishee resides or does business where the issues made shall be tried as in civil actions.

If judgment is entered in favor of the Commissioner of Agriculture by default or after hearing, the garnishee shall become liable for the fee or taxes, interest and penalties due by the taxpayer to the extent of the amount over and above any defense or setoff of the garnishee belonging, owing, or to become due to the taxpayer, but payments shall not be required from amounts which are to become due to the taxpayer until the maturity thereof, nor shall more than ten percent (10%) of any taxpayer's salary or wages be required to be paid hereunder in any one month. The garnishee may satisfy said judgment upon paying said amount, and if he fails to do so, execution may issue as provided by law. From any judgment or order entered upon such hearing either the Commissioner of Agriculture or the garnishee may appeal as provided by law. If, before or after judgment, adequate security is filed for the payment of said taxes, interest, penalties, and costs, the attachment

or garnishment may be released or execution stayed pending appeal, but the final judgment shall be paid or enforced as above provided. The taxpayer's sole remedies to question his liability for said fees or taxes, interest, and penalties shall be those provided in this Article, as now or hereinafter amended or supplemented. If any third person claims any intangible attached or garnished hereunder and his lawful right thereto, or to any part thereof, is shown to the Commissioner, he shall discharge the attachment or garnishment to the extent necessary to protect such right, and if such right is asserted after the filing of said copies as aforesaid, it may be established by interpleader as now or hereafter provided by the General Statutes in cases of attachment and garnishment. In case such third party has no notice of proceedings hereunder, he shall have the right to file his petition under oath with the Commissioner at any time within 12 months after said intangible is paid to him and if the Commissioner finds that such party is lawfully entitled thereto or to any part thereof, he shall pay the same to such party as provided for refunds by G.S. 105-407 and if such payment is denied, said party may appeal from the determination of the Commissioner to the Superior Court of Wake County or to the superior court of the county wherein he resides or does business. The intangibles of a taxpayer shall be paid or collected hereunder only to the extent necessary to satisfy said fees or taxes, interest, penalties, and costs. Except as hereinafter set forth, the remedy provided in this section shall not be resorted to unless a warrant for collection or execution against the taxpayer has been returned unsatisfied: Provided, however, if the Commissioner is of opinion that the only effective remedy is that herein provided, it shall not be necessary that a warrant for collection or execution shall be first returned unsatisfied, and in no case shall it be a defense to the remedy herein provided that a warrant for collection or execution has not been first returned unsatisfied: Provided, however, that no salary or wage at the rate of less than two hundred dollars (\$200.00) per month, whether paid weekly or monthly, shall be attached or garnished under the provisions of this section.

(c) In addition to the remedy herein provided, the Commissioner of Agriculture is authorized and empowered to make a certificate setting forth the essential particulars relating to the said fee or tax, including the amount thereof, the date when the same was due and payable, the person, firm, or corporation chargeable therewith, and the nature of the fee or tax, and under his hand and seal transmit the same to the clerk of the superior court of any county in which the delinquent taxpayer resides or has property; whereupon, it shall be the duty of the clerk of the superior court of the county to docket the said certificate and index the same on the cross index of judgments, and execution may issue thereon with the same force and effect as an execution upon any other judgment of the superior court; said tax shall become a lien on realty only from the date of the docketing of such certificate in the office of the clerk of the superior court and in personalty only from the date of the levy on such personalty and upon execution thereon no homestead or personal property exemption shall be allowed.

(d) The remedies herein given are cumulative and in addition to all other remedies provided by law for the collection of said fees and taxes. (1963, c. 458; 1997-261, s. 109.)

§ 106-9.5. Refund of overpayment.

If the Commissioner of Agriculture discovers from the examination of any report, or otherwise, that any taxpayer has overpaid the correct amount of any fee or tax (including penalties, interest and costs, if any), such overpayment shall be refunded to the taxpayer within 60 days after it is ascertained together with interest thereon at the rate of six percent (6%) per annum: Provided, that interest on any such refund shall be computed from a date 90 days after date tax was originally paid by the taxpayer. Provided, further, that demand for such refund is made by the taxpayer within

three years from the date of such overpayment or the due date of the report, whichever is later. (1963, c. 458.)

§ 106-9.6. Suits to prevent collection prohibited; payment under protest and recovery of fee or tax so paid.

No court of this State shall entertain a suit of any kind brought for the purpose of preventing the collection of any fee or tax imposed in this Chapter. Whenever a person shall have a valid defense to the enforcement of the collection of a fee or tax assessed or charged against him or his property, such person shall pay such fee or tax to the proper officer, and notify such officer in writing that he pays the same under protest. Such payment shall be without prejudice to any defense or rights he may have in the premises, and he may, at any time within 30 days after such payment, demand the same in writing from the Commissioner of Agriculture; and if the same shall not be refunded within 90 days thereafter, may sue such official in the courts of the State for the amount so demanded. Such suit must be brought in the Superior Court of Wake County, or in the county in which the taxpayer resides. (1963, c. 458.)

Part 2. Commissioner of Agriculture.

§ 106-10. Election; term; vacancy.

The Commissioner of Agriculture shall be elected at the general election for other State officers, shall be voted for on the same ballot with such officers, and his term of office shall be four years, and until his successor is elected and qualified. Any vacancy in the office of such Commissioner shall be filled by the Governor, the appointee to hold until the next regular election to the office and the qualification of his successor. (1901, c. 479, s. 4; Rev., s. 3938; C.S., s. 4675.)

§ 106-11. Salary of Commissioner of Agriculture.

The salary of the Commissioner of Agriculture shall be set by the General Assembly in the Current Operations Appropriations Act. In addition to the salary set by the General Assembly in the Current Operations Appropriations Act, longevity pay shall be paid on the same basis as is provided to employees of the State who are subject to the North Carolina Human Resources Act. (1901, c. 479, s. 4; 1905, c. 529; Rev., s. 2749; 1907, c. 887, s. 1; 1913, c. 58; C. S., s. 3872; 1921, c. 25, s. 1; 1933, c. 282, s. 5; 1935, c. 293; 1937, c. 415; 1939, c. 338; 1943, c. 499, s. 1; 1947, c. 1041; 1949, c. 1278; 1953, c. 1, s. 2; 1957, c. 1; 1963, c. 1178, s. 4; 1967, c. 1130; c. 1237, s. 4; 1969, c. 1214, s. 4; 1971, c. 912, s. 4; 1973, c. 778, s. 4; 1975, 2nd Sess., c. 983, s. 19; 1977, c. 802, s. 42.10; 1983, c. 761, s. 208; 1983 (Reg. Sess., 1984), c. 1034, s. 164; 1987, c. 738, s. 32(b); 2013-382, s. 9.1(c).)

§§ 106-12 through 106-13: Repealed by Session Laws 1997-74, ss. 3, 4.

§ 106-14. To establish regulations for transportation of livestock.

The Commissioner of Agriculture, by and with the consent and advice of the Board of Agriculture, shall promulgate and enforce such rules and regulations as may be necessary for the proper transporting of livestock by motor vehicle, and may require a permit for such vehicles if it becomes necessary in order to prevent the spread of animal diseases. This section shall not apply to any county having a local law providing for the vaccination of hogs against cholera. (1937, c. 427, ss. 1, 2.)

Part 3. Powers and Duties of Department and Board.

§§ 106-15 through 106-19: Repealed by Session Laws 1997-74, s. 5.

§ 106-20: Repealed by Session Laws 1987, c. 244, s. 1(a).

§ 106-21: Repealed by Session Laws 1997-74, s. 7.

§ 106-21.1. Feed Advisory Service; fee.

The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall operate a Feed Advisory Service for the analysis of animal feeds in order to provide a feeding management service to all animal producers in North Carolina. A fee of ten dollars (\$10.00) shall accompany each feed sample sent to the Department for testing. A fee of seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) shall accompany each feed sample which is to be tested for the presence of fumonisin. (1979, c. 1026; 1989, c. 544, s. 9; 1991, c. 649, s. 1; 1997-261, s. 21.)

§ 106-21.2. Food Bank information and referral service.

The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services may maintain an information and referral service for persons and organizations that have notified the department of their desire to donate food to a nonprofit organization or a nonprofit corporation. (1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1188, s. 2; 1997-261, s. 22.)

§ 106-22. Joint duties of Commissioner and Board.

The Commissioner of Agriculture, by and with the consent and advice of the Board of Agriculture shall:

- (1) General. – Investigate and promote such subjects relating to the improvement of agriculture, the beneficial use of commercial fertilizers and composts, and for the inducement of immigration and capital as he may think proper; but he is especially charged:
- (2) Commercial Fertilizers. – With such supervision of the trade in commercial fertilizers as will best protect the interests of the farmers, and shall report to district attorneys and to the General Assembly information as to the existence or formation of trusts or combinations in fertilizers or fertilizing materials which are or may be offered for sale in this State, whereby the interests of the farmers may be injuriously affected, and shall publish such information in the Bulletin of the Department;
- (3) Cattle and Cattle Diseases. – With investigations adapted to promote the improvement of milk and beef cattle, and especially investigations relating to the diseases of cattle and other domestic animals, and shall publish and distribute from time to time information relative to any contagious diseases of stock, and suggest remedies therefor, and shall have power in such cases to quarantine the infected animals and to regulate the transportation of stock in this State, or from one section of it to another, and may cooperate with the United States Department of Agriculture in establishing and maintaining cattle districts or quarantine lines, to prevent the infection of cattle from splenic or Spanish fever. Any person willfully violating such regulations shall be liable in a civil

- action to any person injured, and for any and all damages resulting from such conduct, and shall also be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor;
- (4) Honey and Bee Industry. – With investigations adapted to promote the improvement of the honey and bee industry in this State, and especially investigations relating to the diseases of bees, and shall publish and distribute from time to time information relative to such diseases, and such remedies therefor, and shall have power in such cases to quarantine the infected bees and to control or eradicate such infections and to regulate the transportation or importation into North Carolina from any other state or country of bees, honey, hives, or any apiary equipment, or from one section of the State to another, and may cooperate with the United States Department of Agriculture in establishing and maintaining quarantine lines or districts. The Commissioner of Agriculture, by and with the consent and advice of the Board of Agriculture, shall have power to make rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this section; and in event of failure to comply with any such rules and regulations, the Commissioner of Agriculture or his duly authorized agent is authorized to confiscate and destroy any infected bees and equipment and any bees and/or used apiary equipment moved in violation of these regulations;
 - (5) Insect Pests. – With investigations relative to the ravages of insects and with the dissemination of such information as may be deemed essential for their abatement, and making regulations for destruction of such insects. The willful violation of any of such regulations by any person shall be a Class 1 misdemeanor;
 - (6) New Agricultural Industries. – With investigations and experiments directed to the introduction and fostering of new agricultural industries, adapted to the various climates and soils of the State, especially the culture of truck and market gardens, the grape and other fruits;
 - (7) Drainage and Irrigation; Fertilizer Sources. – With the investigations of the subject of drainage and irrigation and publication of information as to the best methods of both, and what surfaces, soils, and locations may be most benefited by such improvements; also with the collection and publication of information in regard to localities, character, accessibility, cost, and modes of utilization of native mineral and domestic sources of fertilizers, including formulae for composting adapted to the different crops, soils, and materials;
 - (8) Farm Fences. – With the collection of statistics relating to the subject of farm fences, with suggestions for diminishing their cost, and the conditions under which they may be dispensed with altogether;
 - (9) Sales of Fertilizers, Seeds, and Food Products. – With the enforcement and supervision of the laws which are or may be enacted in this State for the sale of commercial fertilizers, seeds and food products, with the authority to make regulations concerning the same;
 - (10) Inducement of Capital and Immigration. – With the inducement of capital and immigration by the dissemination of information relative to the advantages of soil and climate and to the natural resources and industrial opportunities offered in this State, by the keeping of a land registry and by the publication of descriptions of agricultural, mineral, forest, and trucking lands which may be

offered the Department for sale; which publication shall be in tabulated form, setting forth the county, township, number of acres, names and addresses of owners, and such other information as may be needful in placing inquiring homeseekers in communication with landowners; and he shall publish a list of such inquiries in the Bulletin for the benefit of those who may have land for sale;

- (11) Diversified Farming. – With such investigations as will best promote the improvement and extension of diversified farming, including the rotation of crops, the raising of home supplies, vegetables, fruits, stock, grasses, etc.;
- (12) Farmers' Institutes. – With the holding of farmers' institutes in the several counties of the State, as frequently as may be deemed advisable, in order to instruct the people in improved methods in farming, in the beneficial use of fertilizers and composts, and to ascertain the wants and necessities of the various farming communities; and may collect the papers and addresses made at these institutes and publish the same in pamphlet form annually for distribution among the farmers of the State. He may secure such assistants as may be necessary or beneficial in holding such institutes;
- (13) Publication of Bulletin. – The Commissioner shall publish bulletins which shall contain a list of the fertilizers and fertilizing materials registered for sale each year, the guaranteed constituents of each brand, reports of analyses of fertilizers, the dates of meeting and reports of farmers' institutes and similar societies, description of farm buildings suited to our climate and needs, reports of interesting experiments of farmers, and such other matters as may be deemed advisable. The Department may determine the number of bulletins which shall be issued each year;
- (14) Reports to Legislature. – He shall transmit to the General Assembly at each session a report of the operations of the Department with suggestions of such legislation as may be deemed needful;
- (15) Repealed by Session Laws 1993, c. 561, s. 116.
- (16) State Agricultural Policies. – Establish State government policies relating to agriculture.
- (17) Agronomic Testing. – Provide agronomic testing services and charge reasonable fees for plant analysis, nematode testing, in-State soil testing during peak season, out-of-state soil testing, and expedited soil testing. The Board shall charge at least four dollars (\$4.00) for plant analysis, at least two dollars (\$2.00) for nematode testing, at least four dollars (\$4.00) for in-State soil testing during peak season, at least five dollars (\$5.00) for out-of-state soil testing, and at least two hundred dollars (\$200.00) for expedited soil testing. As used in this subdivision, "peak season" includes at a minimum the four-month period beginning no later than December 1 of any year and extending until at least March 31 of the following year. The Board may modify the meaning of peak season by starting a peak season earlier in any year or ending it later the following year or both.
- (18) Forests. – Have charge of forest maintenance, forest fire protection, reforestation, and the protection of the forests.

- (19) State forests. – Have charge of all State forests and measures for forest fire prevention.
- (20) Property for State forests. – Acquire real and personal property as desirable and necessary for the performance of the duties and functions of the Department under subdivision (19) of this section and pay for the property out of any funds appropriated for the Department or available unappropriated revenues of the Department, when such acquisition is approved by the Governor and Council of State. The title to any real estate acquired under this subdivision shall be in the name of the State of North Carolina for the use and benefit of the Department.
- (21) State recreational forests. – Have charge of all State recreational forests.
- (22) Property for State recreational forests. – Acquire real and personal property as desirable and necessary for the performance of the duties and functions of the Department under subdivision (21) of this section and pay for the property out of any funds appropriated for the Department or available unappropriated revenues of the Department, when such acquisition is approved by the Governor and Council of State. The title to any real estate acquired under this subdivision shall be in the name of the State of North Carolina for the use and benefit of the Department.
- (23) Administration of North Carolina Century Farms Program. – Administer the North Carolina Century Farms Program, which recognizes farms in the State that have been continuously owned by the same family for at least 100 years.
- (24) Markets Operated by the Department. – Adopt rules and make policies related to markets operated by the Department. All rules in Title 2, Chapter 43, Subchapter L of the North Carolina Administrative Code adopted under the authority of Article 47 of this Chapter, as repealed by S.L. 2021-90, shall remain in full force and effect unless repealed or amended by the Commissioner.
- (25) Metrology Fees. – Set reasonable fees for calibration services and adjustments performed by the Metrology Laboratory Section of the Standards Division. (1901, c. 479, s. 4; Rev., ss. 3294, 3724, 3944; 1917, c. 16; C.S., s. 4688; 1939, c. 173; 1973, c. 47, s. 2; 1979, c. 344, s. 1; 1981, c. 495, s. 9; 1989, c. 544, s. 4; 1993, c. 539, ss. 737, 738; c. 561, s. 116(d); 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 2011-145, ss. 13.25(i), (l), 31.7; 2011-201, s. 1; 2011-391, s. 33(a); 2013-360, s. 13.1(a); 2023-63, s. 5.2.)

§ 106-22.1. State farms.

State-owned farmland, including timberland, allocated to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for the State Farm Program, shall be managed by the Department for research, teaching, and demonstration in agriculture, forestry, and aquaculture. Research projects on the State farms shall be approved by the Department. The Department may sell surplus commodities produced on the farms. (1989, c. 500, s. 107(c); 1997-261, s. 23.)

§ 106-22.2: Recodified as § 143B-344.23 by Session Laws 1998-212, s. 21(a).

§ 106-22.3. Organic Production Program.

(a) The Board of Agriculture may establish rules, standards, guidelines, and policies for the establishment and implementation of a voluntary program for the certification of organically produced agricultural products.

(b) The Commissioner of Agriculture may enter into agreements with the United States Department of Agriculture and may apply for approval, accreditation, certification, or similar authority as may be necessary to comply with the requirements of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990, Public Law 101-624. (1993, c. 147.)

§ 106-22.4. Llamas as livestock.

Any rules adopted by the Board of Agriculture that affect llamas shall not refer to llamas as exotic or wild animals. It is the intent of the General Assembly that llamas be treated as domesticated livestock in order to promote the development and improvement of the llama industry in the State. This section does not prohibit the Board of Agriculture from classifying llamas for animal health purposes in accordance with generally accepted standards of veterinary medicine. For purposes of the section, "llama" means a South American camelid that is an animal of the genus llama. Llama includes llamas, alpacas, and guanacos. Llama does not include vicunas. (1997-84, s. 3.)

§ 106-22.5. Agricultural tourism signs.

(a) The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall work with the Department of Transportation to provide directional signs on major highways at or in reasonable proximity to the nearest interchange leading to an agricultural facility that promotes tourism by providing tours and on-site sales or samples of North Carolina agricultural products to area tourists. The Department shall follow the sign location and placement rules of the Department of Transportation's Tourist-Oriented Directional Signs and Logo Signs programs.

(b) An agricultural facility must be open for business at least four days a week, 10 months of the year in order to qualify for the directional signs provided for in this section. The Department shall assess the facility the actual reasonable costs of the sign and its installation. (1999-356, s. 1; 2014-58, s. 2.)

§ 106-22.6. Exercise of enforcement powers.

When any board, commission, or official within the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has the authority to assess civil penalties, such authority shall not be construed to require the issuance of a monetary penalty when the board, commission, or official determines that nonmonetary sanctions, education, or training are sufficient to address the underlying violation. (2013-265, s. 5.)

§ 106-22.7. New and emerging crops program.

The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is authorized to create a program to advance and promote new and emerging crops. If the Department creates a new and emerging crops program, the Department shall merge its research initiative in bioenergy research into the program. (2018-5, s. 12.5(a).)

Part 4. Cooperation of Federal and State Governments in Agricultural Work.

§ 106-23. Legislative assent to Adams Act for experiment station.

Legislative assent be and the same is hereby given to the purpose of an act of Congress approved March 16, 1906, entitled "An Act to provide for an increased annual appropriation for agricultural experiment stations, and regulating the expenditure thereof," known as the Adams Act, and the money appropriated by this act be and the same is hereby accepted on the part of the State for the use of the agricultural experiment station, and the whole amount shall be used for the benefit of the said agricultural experiment station, in accordance with the act of Congress making appropriations for agricultural experiment stations and governing the expenditure thereof. (1907, c. 793; C.S., s. 4689.)

Part 5. Cooperation Between Department and United States Department of Agriculture, and
County Commissioners.

§ 106-24. Collection and publication of information relating to agriculture; cooperation.

(a) The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall collect, compile, systematize, tabulate, and publish statistical information relating to agriculture. The Department is authorized to use sample surveys to collect primary data relating to agriculture. The Department is authorized to cooperate with the United States Department of Agriculture and the several boards of county commissioners of the State, to accomplish the purpose of this Part.

(b) The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall biennially collect information on water use by persons who withdraw 10,000 gallons per day or more of water from the surface or groundwater sources of the State for activities directly related or incidental to the production of crops, fruits, vegetables, ornamental and flowering plants, dairy products, livestock, poultry, and other agricultural products. The information shall be collected by survey conducted pursuant to subsection (a) of this section and in accordance with Title 7 United States Code Section 2276 (Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act). The Department shall develop the survey form in consultation with the Department of Environmental Quality. The Department shall report the results of the water use survey to the Environmental Review Commission no later than July 1 of each year in which the survey was collected and shall provide a copy of the report to the Department of Environmental Quality. The report shall include recommendations about modifications to the survey, including changes in the gallons per day threshold for water use data collection. The report shall provide agricultural water use data by county. If the county is located in more than one river basin, the report shall separate the county data to show agricultural water use by river basin within the county. If publication of county or watershed data would result in disclosure of an individual operation's water use, the data will be combined with data from another county or watershed. (1921, c. 201, s. 1; C.S., s. 4689(a); 1941, c. 343; 1975, c. 611, s. 1; 1979, c. 228, s. 1; 1997-261, s. 25; 2008-143, s. 2(a); 2013-265, s. 6; 2015-241, s. 14.30(u).)

§ 106-24.1. Confidentiality of information collected and published.

All information published by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services pursuant to this Part shall be classified so as to prevent the identification of information received from individual farm operators. All information generated by any federal agency received pursuant to this Chapter that is confidential under federal law shall be held confidential by the Department and its employees, unless confidentiality is waived by the federal agency. All information collected by the Department from farm owners or animal owners, including, but not limited to, certificates of veterinary inspection, animal medical records, laboratory reports received or generated from samples submitted for analysis, or other records that may be used to identify a person or private

business entity subject to regulation by the Department shall not be disclosed without the permission of the owner unless the State Veterinarian determines that disclosure is necessary to prevent the spread of an animal disease or to protect the public health, or the disclosure is necessary in the implementation of these animal health programs. (1979, c. 228, s. 3; 1993, c. 5, s. 1; 1997-261, s. 26; 2002-179, s. 8; 2013-265, s. 7; 2015-263, s. 31; 2018-113, s. 2.)

§§ 106-25 through 106-26.2. Repealed by Session Laws 1979, c. 288, s. 2.

§ 106-26.3. Declaration of policy supporting sound science in agriculture.

The General Assembly hereby finds and declares that it shall be the policy of this State to support and promote sound science in agriculture. For purposes of this section, "sound science in agriculture" means the use of science-based agricultural practices, technologies, or biological systems supported by research or otherwise demonstrated to lead to broad outcomes-based improvements, including such critical outcomes as increasing agricultural productivity and improving human health through access to safe, nutritious, affordable food and other agricultural products, including organically produced foods and products, while enhancing agricultural and surrounding environmental conditions through the stewardship of water, soil, air quality, biodiversity, and wildlife habitat. Further, the General Assembly finds and declares that it is in the interest of the people of this State to use sound science in agriculture to meet the needs of the present and to improve the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, while advancing progress toward environmental and economic goals and the well-being of agricultural producers and rural communities. (2015-263, s. 3.)

§§ 106-26.4 through 106-26.6. Reserved for future codification purposes.