



North Carolina Strawberry Association

MEDIA ADVISORY

Date: May 12, 2014

WHO: The strawberry season is in full swing in May, and Mother Nature is providing major challenges. Farmers expect extremely high volumes the first three weeks of May. Consumers will find some of the sweetest berries in years due to the cooler weather. Consumers are encouraged to get out on the farms and help pick this delicious crop. Make it a fun outing for friends, family, church or work groups.

WHAT: A record amount of strawberries are expected to be available and ripe for the picking during May. North Carolina growers have the potential to realize \$22 million in sales. But the nature of this season's crops and high yields in a shortened time-frame pose significant challenges to growers. "What we're seeing down east, where the season starts in North Carolina, is that berries are ripening all at once rather than gradually over a period of time," according to Dr. Barclay Poling, executive director of the N.C. Strawberry Association. "It will also put tremendous pressure on our farmers to get the crop harvested."

The N.C. Strawberry Association is encouraging consumers to pick berries and give to the needy, and they have a chance to win \$500. For those who pick berries and give some away to a food pantry, soup kitchen, nursing home or other place or person of need, they have a chance to win \$500. Visit the NC Strawberry Facebook page (www.facebook.com/ncstrawberry) and post a photo of your experience. Be sure to include a caption with your name, farm where you are picking, the charity you donated the berries to along with their phone number. Be sure to "Like" our page. The winning post will receive a \$500 cash prize and an invitation to the Southeast Strawberry Expo at the Pinehurst Resort in Pinehurst, North Carolina (Nov. 17 – 19, 2014.)

WHEN: Strawberry season is May with very high volumes the first three weeks. Anytime is great but Mondays through Wednesdays are great harvest days with less traffic.

WHERE: Across North Carolina! The NCSA farm locator is available at <http://www.ncstrawberry.com/growers.cfm>.

WHY: North Carolina farmers need help in getting the word out about this season's crop. Local farmers add value to our economy and money spent in our communities is returned to our communities. There are few things better than just-picked strawberries from our local farms!

INFO: To arrange for an interview with either Dr. Barclay Poling, executive director of the N.C. Strawberry Association, or with a farmer near you, please contact Leah Chester-Davis at lchesterdavis@earthlink.net or 704-617-3329 or contact Dr. Poling directly at 919-418-9687.