

GENERAL SESSIONS

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2026

7:30-8:30 AM: Check-in & Coffee

EDUCATION TRACKS	BUSINESS OPERATIONS	LANDSCAPE OPERATIONS	TREE CARE	PESTS, WEEDS & DISEASES
Location	Guilford D	Guilford E	Guilford F	Guilford G
8:30 - 9:20 AM	Be at Your Best Every Day: 5 Principles to Consistent Sales Success David Fellman, <i>David Fellman & Associates</i>  	Is it Warm in Here? A Practical Approach to Landscaping in Our Changing Climate Bryce Lane, <i>Horticulturalist</i>   	Beneath the Bark: Identification and Management of (Exciting) Wood Boring Beetles Courtney Johnson, <i>NCSU graduate student</i>    	Defeating Persistent Weeds in Landscape Plantings Dr. Joe Neal, <i>NCSU</i>   
9:30 - 10:20 AM	Green Industry Safety Andy Sterlen, <i>NCDOL</i>   	The Dirt on Policy: What Lawmakers Are Planting in Your Industry? Ashley Thomas, <i>Farm Bureau</i>   	Lord of the Flies: Spotted Lanternfly in NC Dr. Kelly Oten, <i>NCSU</i>    	What's New with Your Pesticide Certification and Training Rules Travis Snodgrass, <i>NCDA&CS</i> John Feagans, <i>NCDA&CS</i>   
10:30 - 11:20 AM	Financial Mastery: Navigating Excellence in Accounting and Finance David Whittaker, <i>EquiScope Business Advisors, LLC</i>   	Beyond Plants: Exploring the Elements and Principles of Landscape Design Dr. Jennifer Bradley, <i>UMO</i>  	The Fungus Among Us Laurie Reid, <i>City of Charlotte Arborist</i>    	Beauty and the Feast: Elm Zigzag Sawfly and Other Defoliators of Ornamentals Delaney Serpan, <i>NCSU graduate student</i>    
11:30 AM - 12:00 PM: Lunch, available on a first-come, first-served basis 12:00 - 12:50 PM: Keynote Presentation	Dr. Melinda Knuth, NC State University    Green Means Growth: The Economic Impact of the NC Green Industry North Carolina's green industry is not just about beautification. It's a powerhouse for jobs, economic activity, and environmental benefits. In this session, we'll unpack the findings of the recent NC State / NC Green Industry Council report. By the end of this session, you'll gain a clear understanding of how NC's green industry contributes to the state's economic vitality, what opportunities lie ahead, and what challenges must be addressed to sustain this growth.			
EDUCATION TRACKS	FLORICULTURE	LANDSCAPE OPERATIONS	TREE CARE	PESTS, WEEDS & DISEASES
Location	Guilford D	Guilford E	Guilford F	Guilford G
1:00 - 1:50 PM	Know to Grow: Top Nutritional Issues Dr. Brian Whipker, <i>NCSU</i>   	Soils: What Landscapers Need to Know Dr. Don Edralin, <i>NCDA&CS</i>   	Not Mulch Up Bill Leake, <i>Leake Tree Consulting Services</i>   	Let's Talk About Pesticides and Pollinators Amanda Bratcher, <i>NCSU</i>    
2:00 - 2:50 PM	Planting with Purpose: Making Sustainability Work for Your Business Dr. Melinda Knuth, <i>NCSU</i> 	Don't Feed the Algae: Strategies to Help Stop Growing Blooms Gloria Putnam, <i>NC Sea Grant</i>  	Rooted in Resilience: Managing Trees in Construction Projects Patrick Anderson, <i>Rainbow EcoScience</i>   	Japanese Maple Scale Management in the Landscape Dr. Karla Adesso, <i>TSU</i>    
3:00 - 3:50 PM	Strategies for Insect Control in the Greenhouse Cam Coor, <i>Triangle Chemical</i>  	Not Just Pruning Alan Erwin, <i>Panther Creek Nursery</i>   	Proper Tree Planting Techniques Dr. Keith O'Herrin, <i>NCSU</i>   	Natural Pest Controls Eric Jones, <i>Turf Teacher Inc.</i>    

CEU Opportunities The NCNLA applies for continuing education credits from the following entities:

-  **LC** Landscape Contractor License (NC) — Technical CEU
-  **LCB** Landscape Contractor License (NC) — Business CEU
-  **LA** Landscape Architect License (NC)

-  **IC** Irrigation Contractor License (NC) — Technical Irrigation CEU
-  **ICB** Irrigation Contractor License (NC) — Business CEU
-  **PA** Pesticide Applicator License (NC)

-  **ISA** International Society of Arboriculture — Certified Arborist
-  **CPP** Certified Plant Professional

This is an Education schedule preview and is subject to change. The final schedule will be featured online and available in the on-site showbook. NCNLA applies for continuing education units (CEUs) from various state and national entities. For CEU status updates, please visit www.greenandgrowin.com.

Please note that Marketplace attendees will not be able to earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) by walking the trade show floor. In lieu of offering this credit, we will continue to seek credit approval for the sponsored demonstrations.

BUSINESS OPERATIONS, *Guilford D*

8:30 - 9:20 AM

Be at Your Best Every Day: 5 Principles to Consistent Sales Success



Approved: LCB-1.0; CPP-1.0

David Fellman, DFA

Whether it's your full-time job or just one of the many hats you wear as an owner or manager, you are a salesperson. So the question is, are you really functioning at your best in that role every day? It's easy to get sidetracked, to develop bad habits, and even bad attitudes. It's not always easy to maintain your enthusiasm and your commitment to growing your business.

This is a session that will help you to reboot, through 5 Guiding Principles:

1. Have a business-building attitude
 2. Be all about customer service and Customer Maximization
 3. Don't make it all about price
 4. Time really is money, pay attention to how you're spending it
 5. If you have bad customers, do something about it!
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9:30 - 10:20 AM

Green Industry Safety



Approved: LCB-1.0; PA-1.0 A,B,G,H,I,K,L,M,N,O,D,X,K(SA),K(PU); ISA-0.75 Certified Arborist, Urban Forest, BCMA-Management; CPP-1.0

Andy Sterlen, NCDOL

Andy will go over PPE Use: including proper selection, use, and maintenance of personal protective equipment when handling pesticides; Label Compliance: how to read and follow pesticide labels for safe use; Storage & Disposal: addressing safe storage and disposal of pesticides, containers, and rinsate. Learn the procedures for managing pesticide spills or accidents including first aid, safe operation and calibration of pesticide application equipment.

10:30 - 11:20 AM

Financial Mastery: Navigating Excellence in Accounting and Finance



Approved: LCB-1.0; ICB-1.0; CPP-1.0

David Whittaker, EquiScape Business Advisors, LLC

You Create, We will Navigate: Unlocking Sustained Profitability and Operational Excellence- Leveraging Fractional CFO Services for your Business By leveraging Fractional CFO benefits, businesses can optimize their financial strategies without the full overhead of an in-house CFO, making it an attractive option for companies mindful of resource allocation. Owners benefit monthly from actionable data reports utilizing KPI's generated through detailed analytics originating in their Operating System. Receive professional guidance establishing budgets and the advantage of fluid reforecasting in real time. This enables decision makers to adjust pricing models monthly to ensure operational and profitability goals are met. Optimize Your Financial Strategy! Join our session to master budget creation, monthly financial reporting, and enhance your cash flow and cost management with key performance indicators.

FLORICULTURE, *Guilford D*

1:00 - 1:50 PM

Know to Grow: Top Nutritional Issues



Approved: LC-1.0; PA-1.0 L,N,D,X; CPP-1.0

Dr. Brian Whipker, NCSU

Our research and extension focus for the past 25 years at NC State University has been nutritional disorders. Learn how to identify and manage them. This presentation focuses on the basic building blocks of plant nutrition (pH, EC, N vs S, P, Mg vs K, and Ca vs B). Knowing the baseline problems will help you grow better.

2:00 - 2:50 PM

Planting with Purpose: Making Sustainability Work for Your Business



Approved: CPP-1.0

Dr. Melinda Knuth, NCSU

Today's customers care about where their plants come from and how they're grown—and sustainability is quickly becoming a business differentiator. This session will show plant growers and retailers how adopting sustainable practices can reduce costs, improve efficiency, and strengthen customer loyalty. From water and energy savings to smarter marketing and brand positioning, we'll highlight real-world strategies that prove going green is also good for growth.

3:00 - 3:50 PM

Strategies for Insect Control in the Greenhouse



Approved: PA-1.0 L,N,D,X; CPP-1.0

Cam Coor, Triangle Chemical

This session will provide an in-depth exploration of controlling insects from Aphids to Whiteflies, and all those critters (fungus gnats, spider mites) in-between in a greenhouse environment. Participants will learn how to build a comprehensive, sustainable, and effective pest management program.

LANDSCAPE OPERATIONS, *Guilford E*

8:30 - 9:20 AM

Is it Warm in Here? A Practical Approach to Landscaping in Our Changing Climate



Approved: LC-1.0; ISA-0.75 Certified Arborist, Urban Forest, BCMA-Management; CPP-1.0

Bryce Lane, Horticulturalist

Come learn about how climate change is impacting the horticulture world, and identify the practices you can use to mitigate and manage climate change in landscape operations. What is involved in "Climate Smart Gardening"? We will identify new best practices and approaches to consider as we grow, design, install and market plants in the landscape.

9:30 - 10:20 AM

The Dirt on Policy: What Lawmakers Are Planting in Your Industry?



Approved: LCB-1.0; ICB-1.0; CPP-1.0

Ashley Thomas, Farm Bureau

As nurserymen and landscapers, you understand the growing practices that boost your bottom line. But decisions made by elected officials can have just as much impact on your business. How do legislation and regulations shape the future of your industry, and why is it important to be involved? The N.C. Farm Bureau Federation advocates for agriculture across the state to ensure your voices are heard when policies are made. In this session, Ashley will dig into current state and federal issues, highlighting how decisions in Raleigh and Washington, D.C. influence your operations and how you can play an active role in shaping the policies that affect your future.

10:30 - 11:20 AM

Beyond Plants: Exploring the Elements and Principles of Landscape Design



Approved: LC-1.0; CPP-1.0

Dr. Jennifer Bradley, UMO

This session will explore how the fundamental elements of design - color, form, line, texture, and space—interact with the guiding principles of unity, balance, rhythm, emphasis, and proportion to create landscapes that stand out. Whether designing for a residence or a commercial property, attendees will learn how to apply these concepts to elevate curb appeal, strengthen brand identity, and achieve lasting impact. Real-world examples and practical applications from North Carolina landscapes will highlight how thoughtful design goes beyond plant selection to create memorable and functional outdoor spaces.

1:00 - 1:50 PM

Soils: What Landscapers Need to Know



Approved: LC-1.0; ISA-0.75 Certified Arborist, Urban Forest, BCMA-Management; CPP-1.0

Dr. Don Edralin, NCDA&CS

This presentation offers a comprehensive guide to effective soil fertility management for homeowners and landscape professionals. Attendees will learn the step-by-step process of submitting soil samples to the NCDA&CS soil testing laboratory, including selecting the right tools, proper sampling techniques, using homeowner crop codes, and accurately completing sample information sheets. It will also cover how to access reports online and interpret soil test results, along with practical recommendations to address common fertility concerns. Participants will be better equipped to create and maintain thriving, sustainable lawns and landscapes.

2:00 - 2:50 PM

Don't Feed the Algae: Strategies to Help Stop Growing Blooms



Approved: PA-1.0 A,L,N,D,X; CPP-1.0

Gloria Putnam, NC Sea Grant

Algae are photosynthetic organisms naturally found in aquatic environments. Under the right conditions, they multiply to high concentrations called blooms. Some blooms are blue-green algae capable of producing toxins that can cause skin irritation, illness or in rare instances death in pets, livestock and people. These blooms are known as harmful algal blooms or HABs. Since 2015, HABs appear to be on the rise in North Carolina come learn more about algae and blooms and what you can do.

3:00 - 3:50 PM

Not Just Pruning



Approved: LC-1.0; ISA-0.75 Certified Arborist, Urban Forest; CPP-1.0

Alan Erwin, Panther Creek Nursery

Pruning is more than just making a few cuts—it's a foundational practice that influences tree health, structure, and long-term value. In this hands-on session, we'll go beyond the basics to explore the why behind the how. The instructor will bring live tree specimens to demonstrate techniques in real time, guiding attendees through the different steps of pruning and decision-making in the field.

From understanding growth habits and timing, to examining how production practices influence pruning needs, this session digs into the details that often go overlooked.

TREE CARE, Guilford F

8:30 - 9:20 AM

Beneath the Bark: Identification and Management of (Exciting) Wood Boring Beetles



Approved: LC-1.0; PA-1.0 G,I,L,N,T,D,X; ISA-0.75 Certified Arborist, Urban Forest, BCMA-Science; CPP-1.0

Courtney Johnson, NCSU graduate student

The Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) and emerald ash borer (EAB) are two invasive, wood-boring beetles that threaten hardwood trees in natural and planted forests. While EAB was detected in NC in 2013, ALB has not yet been found in our state - but it is getting close! Learn about the biology, identification, and management of these two pests and how you can help stop them.

9:30 - 10:20 AM

Lord of the Flies: Spotted Lanternfly in NC



Approved: LC-1.0; PA-1.0 G,I,L,N,D,X; ISA-0.75 Certified Arborist, Urban Forest, BCMA-Science; CPP-1.0

Dr. Kelly Oten, NCSU

The spotted lanternfly isn't a fly at all— but it's wreaking havoc everywhere it goes. This talk explores spotted lanternfly biology, host plants, potential damage, and management options to consider as it continues to spread in our state.

10:30 - 11:20 AM

The Fungus Among Us



Approved: LC-1.0; PA-1.0 G,I,L,N,D,X; ISA-0.75 Certified Arborist, Urban Forest, BCMA-Science; CPP-1.0

Laurie Reid, City of Charlotte Arborist

Finding mushrooms on or near trees can be a sign of decay or structural issues. In this session, we will explore key fungal species arborists should recognize in the field. You'll learn to identify the signs and symptoms of common decay fungi and understand their impact on tree health to help you make informed tree care decisions.

1:00 - 1:50 PM

Not Mulch Up



Approved: LC-1.0; ISA-0.75 Certified Arborist, Urban Forest, BCMA-Management; CPP-1.0

Bill Leake, Leake Tree Consulting Services

What is up with mulch? Is it good or bad, profitable or just an esthetic for our clients. Lets take a wider look at mulch as a landscape tool.

2:00 - 2:50 PM

Rooted in Resilience: Managing Trees in Construction Projects



Approved: LC-1.0; ISA-0.75 Certified Arborist, Urban Forest, BCMA-Management; CPP-1.0

Patrick Anderson, Rainbow EcoScience

Construction and development projects pose significant challenges to tree preservation, yet with the right strategies, trees and infrastructure can coexist. This session explores best practices for managing trees before, during, and after construction—from site planning and tree protection zones to post-construction recovery and monitoring.

3:00 - 3:50 PM

Proper Tree Planting Techniques



Approved: LC-1.0; ISA-0.75 Certified Arborist, Urban Forest, BCMA-Management; CPP-1.0

Dr. Keith O'Herrin, NCSU

Planting is the most important time in a tree's life, and you only get one chance to do it right. Learn correct tree planting techniques for several different types of stock (e.g., balled-and-burlapped, plastic pots) so that the trees you plant will live for decades or longer.

PESTS, WEEDS, & DISEASES, *Guilford G*

8:30 - 9:20 AM

Defeating Persistent Weeds in Landscape Plantings



Approved: LC-1.0; PA-1.0 H,L,D,X; CPP-1.0

Dr. Joe Neal, NCSU

Perennial vines and woody weeds are persistent and hard to control in landscape plantings. But there are tools and strategies to successfully and selectively remove many of these pernicious pests. Many will require extra effort. We will discuss how to get rid of those weeds too. Dr. Neal will discuss effective herbicide and non-chemical options for controlling perennial vines, woody seedlings, and established woody weeds in landscape plantings. Selective and non-selective herbicides, selective application methods, as well as mechanical control will be discussed.

9:30 - 10:20 AM

What is New with Your Pesticide Certification and Training Rules



Approved: PA-1.0 A,B,G,H,I,L,M,N,O,T,D,X; ISA-0.75 Certified Arborist, Urban Forest, BCMA-Science; CPP-1.0

Travis Snodgrass, John Feagans NCDA&CS

This session will cover everything you need to know about the background, implementation, and enforcement of the new NCDA&CS certification & training rule changes for pesticide applicators. These changes include new formalized and required training for those being supervised by a licensed applicator, recordkeeping for training, new regulations for supervision, changes to license categories, additional training required for all NC pesticide license holders, and several other changes.

10:30 - 11:20 AM

Beauty and the Feast: Elm Zigzag Sawfly and Other Defoliators of Ornamentals



Approved: LC-1.0; PA-1.0 G,I,L,N,T,D,X; ISA-0.75 Certified Arborist, Urban Forest, BCMA-Science; CPP-1.0

Delaney Serpan, NCSU graduate student

This talk will provide an overview of native and invasive defoliators in North Carolina, including elm zigzag sawfly. Learn about the identification and management of key pests in landscape settings.

1:00 - 1:50 PM

Let's Talk About Pesticides and Pollinators



Approved: LC-1.0; PA-1.0 K,L,N,O,D,X; ISA-0.75 Certified Arborist, Urban Forest, BCMA-Science; CPP-1.0

Amanda Bratcher, NCSU

There is a lot of misinformation about pesticides and how pesticides impact pollinators and the environment on the Internet. The research shows that 'pesticides impact pollinators and insects, but it's the "how" that people usually need help with. We are here to talk about the basic facts about pesticides for green industry professionals: mainly covering what pesticides are; how to read a label; how to learn more about pesticides and pesticide safety; and some basic Integrated Pest and Pollinator Management strategies.

2:00 - 2:50 PM

Japanese Maple Scale Management in the Landscape



Approved: LC-1.0; PA-1.0 G,I,L,N,D,X; ISA-0.75 Certified Arborist, Urban Forest, BCMA-Science; CPP-1.0

Dr. Karla Adesso, TSU

This presentation will cover Japanese maple scale biology, identification, biological and chemical control. It will also cover management plans for scouting, prevention and clean-up of heavy infestations.

3:00 - 3:50 PM

Natural Pest Controls



Approved: LC-1.0; PA-1.0 L,N,D,X; ISA-0.75 Certified Arborist, Urban Forest, BCMA-Science; CPP-1.0

Eric Jones, TurfTeacher Inc.

This course is about using natural controls in nature to help us with pest management. An in-depth overview of natural pest control methods and their role in integrated pest management (IPM) programs. Participants will learn how to identify common pests and apply effective biological, cultural, and mechanical controls as alternatives to traditional chemical pesticides.

Topics include the use of beneficial insects (e.g., lady beetles, parasitoid wasps), microbial pesticides (e.g., *Bacillus thuringiensis*), habitat manipulation, traps, and organic-approved materials. The course emphasizes pest monitoring, thresholds, and environmentally sound decision-making to minimize pesticide resistance and protect non-target organisms, including pollinators.

By the end of the session, applicators will understand how to incorporate natural controls into their pest management plans to improve efficacy, sustainability, and regulatory compliance.