

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2001**

**HOUSE BILL 382
RATIFIED BILL**

AN ACT ADOPTING THE OFFICIAL FRUIT AND BERRIES OF NORTH CAROLINA.

PART I. NORTH CAROLINA'S HERITAGE OF FARMING.

Whereas, North Carolina's economy originated and developed as an agrarian economy with a cornucopia of fruits and vegetables; and

Whereas, the State takes great pride in its rich heritage of farming; and

Whereas, there are still many families who base their livelihood in farming and who are continuing the North Carolina tradition of producing goods from our land; and

Whereas, one of the main sources of agricultural production in the State is the production of fruits and berries of several varieties; and

PART II. THE SCUPPERNONG GRAPE.

Whereas, North Carolina is the home of our nation's first cultivated grape, the Scuppernong; and

Whereas, the Scuppernong grape was named after the Scuppernong River in North Carolina; and

Whereas, British explorers in 1584 and 1585 reported to Queen Elizabeth and Sir Walter Raleigh that the barrier islands of what is now, in part, Roanoke Island were full of grapes and that the soil of the land was "so abounding with sweet trees that bring rich and most pleasant gummess, grapes of such greatness, yet wild, as France, Spain, nor Italy hath not greater..."; and

Whereas, Sir Walter Raleigh's colony discovered the famous Scuppernong "Mother Vineyard" on Roanoke Island, a vine that is now over 400 years old and has a trunk over two feet thick; and

Whereas, the State toast, penned in 1904, references North Carolina as the land "[w]here the scuppernong perfumes the breeze at night,"; and

PART III. THE STRAWBERRY AND THE BLUEBERRY.

Whereas, there are over 1,700 acres of strawberries and over 3,600 acres of blueberries harvested in North Carolina each year; and

Whereas, in 2000, strawberry growers in the State produced 23,000,000 pounds of strawberries, yielding \$17,325,000 in revenues; and

Whereas, in 2000, blueberry growers in the State produced 17,500,000 pounds of blueberries, resulting in an increase in the State's economy of over \$18,000,000 in revenues; and

Whereas, these delicious berries are a good source of vitamins, a number of life-sustaining minerals, and dietary fiber;

Whereas, the blueberry is an antioxidant, which has been proven to reduce cholesterol and lower the risk of heart disease; and

Whereas, each year the Town of Chadbourne in Columbus County hosts the North Carolina Strawberry Festival, which is one of the most celebrated traditions in the State; and

Whereas, the State of North Carolina does not have an official fruit nor an official berry; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Chapter 145 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 145-18. State fruit and State berries.

(a) The official fruit of the State of North Carolina is the Scuppernong grape (Vitis genus).

(b) The official red berry of the State is the strawberry (Fragaria genus).

(c) The official blue berry of the State is the blueberry (Vaccinium genus)."

SECTION 2. This act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 5th day of December, 2001.

Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

James B. Black
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Michael F. Easley
Governor

Approved _____ .m. this _____ day of _____, 2001