



Georgia Crop Improvement Association

2014 Annual Report

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I've Been Thinking - Year in Review - Terry Hollifield, Executive Director

Welcome to the 70th Annual Membership Meeting of the Georgia Crop Improvement Association. We appreciate your support and participation. GCIA is a non-profit entity organized in 1946 to provide a system of field inspections, approved seed conditioning facilities, and adherence to published seed quality standards - thereby ensuring high quality seed is available to Georgia and Southeastern farmers. The Association is the 4th largest (acres inspected for certified seed) in the United States and the largest east of the Mississippi River.

Whereas traditional seed certification is still the main focus of GCIA, you will see in this Report that the Association provides many additional services to agriculture and agribusiness. The Association is a USDA authorized agent for the National Organic Program, administers the world's only international turfgrass genetic assurance program, provides food safety audits to producers and packers of fruits and vegetables, and provides administrative support to the Georgia/Florida Soybean Association and Georgia Soybean Commodity Commission.

We hope you find this Annual Report to be informative. As Executive Director, I truly appreciate our board of directors, membership and staff and am proud to be associated with such an outstanding organization.

Objectives of the GCIA Seed Certification Program:

- To encourage and cooperate in the development of high quality, known origin seed of superior adapted varieties and hybrids.
- To safeguard purebred seed as developed by our agricultural experiment stations and other qualified plant breeders.
- To protect seed buyers by maintaining an inspection service for certifying only high quality, genetically pure seed of known origin.
- To emphasize the importance and value of high quality seed to farmers.
- To foster the production, distribution and general use of certified seed.

Seed Certification Program - Field Inspections

Inspection of the growing crop is made by official inspectors under the direction of the Seed Certification Program Manager. Certified seed may be defined as seed certified by the Georgia Crop Improvement Association as to origin, adaptation, breeding, seed condition, purity of variety, freedom from disease and noxious weed seed.

Through its certification service, the Georgia Crop Improvement Association enables the farmer to secure the best seed possible for their farm. Seed certification encourages farmers to produce seed of approved varieties; it also protects the buyers of crop seed in that only high quality, superior performing seed are approved for certification.

Certified seed grown in Georgia can be readily identified by the official tag or certificate of the Georgia Crop Improvement Association attached to the container of seed. Certified seed bags must bear the official GCIA emblem or be in branded bags. Certified seed standards of the Association meet or exceed the minimum standards approved by the Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies.

In 2014, GCIA inspected and certified 147,489 acres of cropland & turfgrass as well as printed 2,485,056 certified seed tags. This is a 38% acreage increase over 2013 and even exceeds the 139,278 acres of 2012.

In 2014, GCIA certified thousands of acres of crops and turfgrass. In conducting their inspections, GCIA staff traveled 105,719 miles in 2014. See below for a detailed breakdown.

Commodity:	Certified Acres:
Cotton	30
Miscanthus	554
Pasture Grasses	826
Peanuts	131,174
Small Grains	7,289
Soybeans	1,061
Turfgrass	6,555
TOTAL	147,489

Program or Commodity:	Miles Driven:
Peanuts	49,040
Plants & Buying Points	13,147
Small Grains	9,697
Soybeans	1,990
Turfgrass	31,845
TOTAL	105,719



Approved Seed Conditioning Plants

All certified seed must be conditioned in a GCIA approved facility. The facilities are inspected annually to determine if equipment is properly installed and maintained to prevent contamination between varieties and crops. Approved plant representatives are knowledgeable in plant operations and record keeping. Representatives must also attend a GCIA supported training session. These plants are available for custom cleaning of seed and non-seed products. In 2014, GCIA had 43 approved plants with several conditioning more than one kind of certified seed; see the breakdown below.

Kinds of Certified Seed Conditioned:	# of Plants
Peanuts	23
Small Grains / Soybeans	14
Grass Seed / Forages	4
Foundation Seed	2



Turfgrass Certification - By the Numbers

GCIA's turfgrass certification program is the only quality control offered for protection of the sod buyer, as state and federal laws do not address vegetatively-produced crops. GCIA turfgrass members produce "blue tag" certified sod which is field inspected at least three times each year by experienced inspectors.

Inspectors are trained to recognize off-type plants, other species, noxious and objectionable weeds, which can create unsightly, costly problems in turf. GCIA's inspection program ensures that turfgrass is grown under a rigorous set of guidelines designed to promote high quality, true to variety, and weed free turfgrass.

In 2014, GCIA inspected 7,218 acres of turfgrass sod of which over 6,500 acres were certified at season's end. This was an increase of 1,400 acres over 2013 or a 24% increase. The program added two new growers in 2014 for a total of 31. From all accounts, the turfgrass market is coming back strong in both price and acres in production. GCIA expects additional certified acres to be planted in 2015.



GEORGIA CERTIFIED TURFGRASS



The grass this certificate represents was produced in accordance with the published standards of the Georgia Crop Improvement Association, Inc. (GCIA). The GCIA is a non-profit organization that promotes and maintains high quality standards for turfgrass production. This program is a voluntary effort to ensure that turfgrass is produced in accordance with the published standards of the Georgia Crop Improvement Association, Inc. (GCIA). This program is a voluntary effort to ensure that turfgrass is produced in accordance with the published standards of the Georgia Crop Improvement Association, Inc. (GCIA).

GCIA CERTIFIED TURFGRASS

Georgia Crop Improvement Association, Inc.
2423 South Milledge Avenue
Athens, GA 30605-3839
Phone 706-542-2351 Fax 706-542-9387

Certificate Number: 000000

This grass was grown in accordance with a program designed to promote purity by adherence to published standards.

This certificate must be completed and attached to each bill of lading or invoice representing certified sods or sods produced in accordance with the Georgia Crop Improvement Association rules and regulations for production of vegetatively propagated certified turfgrass.

I certify the information provided is true and meets the Georgia Crop Improvement Association requirements for vegetatively / seeded propagated turfgrass certification.

Authorized Representative of Grower: _____

Copies: Original to Buyer (with each delivery)
Pink to GCIA Office (at delivery)
Yellow retained by Grower

*The GCIA Turfgrass Certification Standards are available upon request.

MEMBER OF ASSOCIATION OF OFFICIAL SEED-CERTIFYING AGENCIES

Turfgrass Certification - New For 2014 / 2015

GCIA's turfgrass certification program saw some changes in 2014 which will hopefully prove beneficial to our grower members. First, the annual turfgrass directory was renamed and reformatted; it is now known as the Turfgrass Buyers Guide. The changes were made in order to make it more user-friendly for sod buyers - in particular the homeowner and landscape contractor. The Guide included a complete list of certified acres, variety descriptions and grower contact information, along with available website addresses for growers.

Another project undertaken in 2014 was the GPS Mapping Project (see examples). GCIA began mapping all certified fields in 2014 and will complete this project in 2015. The goal was twofold:
 (1) To provide growers with an accurate map of all certified fields
 (2) To begin building a map database for use by GCIA staff.

In addition to providing maps, GCIA also distributed prefilled PDF application forms to growers based on previous year's acreage.



2015 GEORGIA CERTIFIED TURFGRASS BUYERS GUIDE



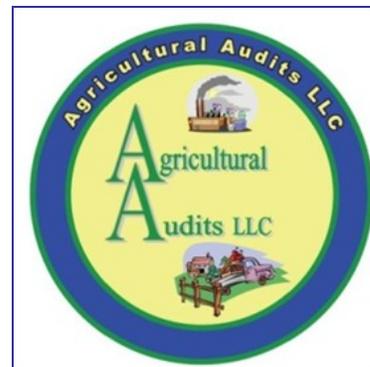
2015 Sod Producers Survey

According to the 2015 Sod Producer's Survey (conducted by Dr. Clint Waltz, UGA Turf Specialist), 50% of growers indicated that they plan to plant additional acres in 2015 which translates to a potential 1,200 additional acres coming into production. The survey also indicates that prices for all varieties are increasing. Additionally, inventory for all warm-season varieties is expected to be lower than commonly experienced for the first five months of the year.

As for GCIA certified grass, the survey indicates an eight year trend of increasing average prices with the typical extra cost ranging from \$0.01 to \$0.06 per square foot, averaging \$0.03; this translates to up to \$30.00 on a 500 square foot pallet.

Agricultural Audits, LLC

As a subsidiary of GCIA, Agricultural Audits (AA) utilizes the expertise and experience of GCIA staff (many of whom are ISO approved auditors) in the auditing and inspecting of the USDA organic program as well as conducting food safety inspections. In addition, Agricultural Audits performs royalty assessment audits in coordination with Georgia Seed Development and the University of Florida. AA's management and inspectors have an extensive agricultural knowledge base including production and marketing.



Good Agricultural Practices Program:

The Georgia Crop Improvement Association Good Agricultural Practices Program (GAPP) is an inspection/auditing program established by the Georgia Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association to verify that good agricultural practices are followed during production, packing and shipping.

The Georgia Good Agricultural Practices Program:

- Requires the use of environmentally safe practices
- Requires the use of tested water
- Requires a safe & healthy environment for workers
- Requires sanitary handling and packing practices
- Promotes the use of food security precautions.

2014 Food Safety Audits:	# Performed
Packing House	38
Ranch	85
Harvest Crew	40
Cooling & Cold Storage	10
Storage & Distribution	5
Greenhouse & HAACP	4
GAPP &/or Primus	12
TOTAL	193

Agricultural Audits, LLC works in conjunction with the Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, the Georgia Department of Agriculture and the University of Georgia College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences - Food Science and Horticulture Departments.

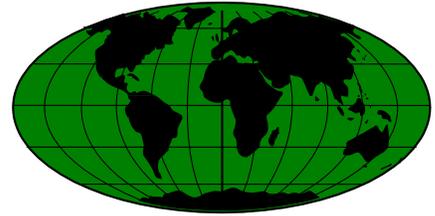
Organic Certification Program:

The Georgia Crop Improvement Association is a USDA National Organic Program accredited agency. GCIA's Organic Certification Program is committed to environmentally sound and economically viable food production. Additionally, the Program encourages the preservation of natural resources, the improvement of soil quality through organic, sustainable farming practices and seeks to foster the production of healthy livestock as well as poultry. See the breakdown of organic audits by category and state in the table below:

2014 Organic Clients:	Alabama	Florida	Georgia	North Carolina	Total by Category
Farm	2	2	30		34
Greenhouse			2		2
Handler		1	16	1	18
Poultry			1		1
Processor	1		35		36
Processor / Handler			1		1
GRAND TOTAL	3	3	85	1	92

International Turfgrass Genetic Assurance Program

Administered by the GCIA, the largest certifier of U.S. grown turfgrasses, the International Turfgrass Genetic Assurance Program (ITGAP) ensures that certified grasses are grown, inspected and sold under rigorous protocols that promote ongoing purity and uniformity.



ITGAP is a proven, quality assurance program that monitors production sites worldwide to ensure that turfgrasses are produced under a rigorous set of rules and guidelines. Certified turfgrasses are proven performers, and ITGAP protects the purity of those grasses against contamination, weeds and other species during production. The result is high quality, consistent performance and confidence in the end result. ITGAP was created by Dr. Earl Elsner, Mr. John Hope, and Mr. Terry Hollifield and instituted in 2000 by the Georgia Crop Improvement Association. Currently, Mr. Don Roberts and Mr. Steve Batten serve as the primary ITGAP Inspectors.

2014 ITGAP Participants / Countries include:

Brazil (2); China (2); Mexico (4); Portugal; South Africa; Thailand.

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GCIA Food Safety Programs

Food Safety Programs in Cooperation with the Georgia Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association [Learn More](#)

Welcome to Georgia Crop Improvement Association

The Georgia Crop Improvement Association is an organization of seed producers who are interested in growing and making available to the public, through certification, high quality seeds and propagating materials

Available Publications

Catalog of Certified Varieties and Producers of Planted Crops

- How to Become a Certified Seed Grower
- Officers Directors Employees
- Turfgrass Buyers Guide
- GCIA Newsletter Jan/Feb 2015

New for 2015 - The GCIA Website now has a fresh, professional appearance that better represents the mission and interests of our members. The site will feature a search engine which will allow visitors to efficiently find what they are looking. It will be built with “responsive design” which determines what type of platform a visitor is using (such as desktop computer, smart phone or tablet) and will adjust so that viewing and using the site is much easier. Visit often to see more updates & additions!



Georgia/Florida Soybean Association

2425 South Milledge Avenue, Athens Georgia 30605
Phone: 706 542-3793 Fax: 706 542-9397

GCIA continued to provide administrative services to the Georgia / Florida Soybean Association, including membership, annual meeting coordination and correspondence with the American Soybean Association. In January 2014, GCIA coordinated the annual Georgia / Florida Soybean & Small Grain Expo at the Georgia National Fairgrounds in Perry, Georgia. With over 120 in attendance, the program featured informative presentations from Dr. Nathan Smith, UGA CAES Economist; John Anderson, American Farm Bureau; Dr. Zenglu Li, UGA CAES Soybean Breeder; and Dr. Ralph Lassiter, Dow AgroSciences.

Georgia Soybean Commodity Commission



In March 2014, GCIA secured funding to provide administrative services to the Georgia Soybean Commodity Commission. In the first year, GCIA fulfilled a number of duties for the Commission, including:

- Creation of a quarterly soybean newsletter distributed to approximately 400 Georgia soybean growers and allied industry professionals,
- Design of a new Commission exhibit which was featured at the Georgia Farm Bureau Annual Convention and Georgia Young Farmer Convention,
- Composed articles for the Farmers & Consumers Market Bulletin, Farm Bureau News, and Georgia Agribusiness Council regarding Commission funded research,
- Assisted the United Soybean Board compliance auditor over several months to provide all required documentation; prepared 2014 annual budget and submitted to USB,
- Petitioned for grant proposals; planned & coordinated review of grant proposals; requested summary reports from all grant recipients.

Training Opportunities

Each year, GCIA hosts a variety of training opportunities for its members. Such activities provide GCIA staff with the opportunity to interact with and address questions/concerns with the membership. GCIA training ensures that all members have the information and knowledge to conduct their business within the GCIA Standards – which, in turn, results in the farmers and consumers of Georgia receiving the highest quality seed and turfgrass available. In 2014, over 250 GCIA members & guests attended the following: Peanut Seed Short Course; Soybean / Small Grain Seed Short Course; Peanut Buying Point Training; Turfgrass Representative Training; Annual Membership Meeting; Board & Executive Committee Meetings; and Inspector Training.



Georgia Crop

Improvement Association

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Athens, Georgia 30605 www.certifiedseed.org

OFFICERS

Jaimie Allen, Pike Creek Turf, Inc.
President

Aaron McWhorter, North Georgia Turf, Inc.
Past President

Ernie Purcell, John B. Sanfilippo & Son, Inc.
1st Vice-President

Lane Morrell, Plantation Seed Conditioners, Inc.
2nd Vice-President

DIRECTORS

Kevin Calhoun, Birdsong Peanuts, Inc.

Joe Campbell, Golden Peanut Company, LLC

Ben Copeland, Jr., Super Sod / Patten Seed

Blake Fleeman, Georgia Seed Development

Scott Grimsley, Birdsong Peanuts, Inc.

Ken Morrow, Sod Atlanta, Inc.

John Raley, R&R Seed Farms, Inc.

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Joy McCracken, Administrative Assistant for Seed Certification

Kristi Medford, Administrative Assistant for Ag Audits

Marie Sidwell, Operations Manager

Billy Skaggs, Seed Certification Program Manager