



# Georgia Crop Improvement Association

GCIA News Briefs

WINTER 2016



MEMBER  
Association of Official  
Seed Certifying Agencies  
<http://www.aosca.org>

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## I've Been Thinking

- Terry Hollifield, Executive Director

Over the holidays, I attended a few family gatherings. I actually enjoyed seeing everyone and getting the latest news on who is doing what, who retired, who has a new grandbaby, etc. I asked one of my cousins what his son's future plans were after graduating from high school. He graduated early, which implies that he got his "book learning" from his mother's side of the family. My cousin stuck out his chest and proudly announced that his son was attending the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. A few minutes later we blessed the meal and had one unbelievable spread; mashed potatoes, ham, turkey, casseroles galore. A real bounty of food!

All that got me thinking. Those of us fortunate enough to be involved in agriculture are blessed to be part of such a noble profession. Yes, a job in agriculture should be considered a profession. Normally, society considers a profession as "an occupation that requires extensive education or specialized training." Now I ask you, is there an occupation that requires more education than farming or any of the associated agribusiness? If you are a production agriculturist or in an allied business, you know what I mean.

So the next time someone asks you about your son or daughter's career path, stick out that chest and proudly proclaim they are training to be a professional agriculturist.

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## 2016 Soybean / Small Grain Expo set for February 4th

The Georgia/Florida Soybean Association and the Georgia Soybean Commodity Commission present the Soybean & Small Grain Expo on February 4, 2016 at the Georgia National Fairgrounds in Perry.

The Expo provides up-to-date market projections and information on the newest production techniques, as well as remarks from University of Georgia College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences leaders.

Should you have questions or comments, please contact the Georgia/Florida Soybean Association at 706-542-3793. To check out the Expo program, click [HERE](#).

## 2016 GCIA Seed Short Course: Soybeans, Small Grains, Grasses

**January 19, 2016**

Georgia Department of Agriculture Seed Laboratory  
3150 U.S. Hwy 41 S; Tifton, GA 31794



*GDA Seed Laboratory*

- 1:00pm Registration
- 1:15pm Presiding / Welcome  
Terry Hollifield, Executive Director  
Georgia Crop Improvement Association
- 1:20pm Control of Stored Product Pests & Bin Fumigation  
Dr. Michael Toews, Associate Professor - Entomology  
UGA CAES – Tifton Campus
- 2:00pm Seed Treatments  
Lee Stewart, Seed Care Representative  
Syngenta Crop Protection
- 2:30pm Overview of Georgia Seed Law, Rules & Regulations  
Scott Hobby, Seed Regulatory Program Manager  
Georgia Department of Agriculture
- 3:00pm Tour of Georgia Seed Laboratory  
Scott Hobby, Seed Regulatory Program Manager  
Georgia Department of Agriculture
- 3:30pm Requirements of an Approved Seed Processing Facility  
Billy Skaggs & Chase Crawford  
Georgia Crop Improvement Association
- 4:00pm Distribution of Pesticide Credit Forms  
2 Hrs Credit in Categories 21 (Plant Ag), 25 (Seed Treatment)  
1 Hr Credit in Category 10 (Private Applicator)

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**Attendance by an approved representative will fulfill the requirement to attend a GCIA sponsored seed short course once every two years. We hope you and/or your employees will join us.**

**GCIA approved plant representatives are reminded that they must attend a seed short course at least once every two years for the conditioning plant to remain on the approved list.**

**Please confirm registration by email ([joy.mccracken@georgiacrop.com](mailto:joy.mccracken@georgiacrop.com)) or phone (706) 542-2351 before January 11, 2016.**

## Electronic Turfgrass Certificate (ETC) Program Offers New Feature

GCIA  
ETCertificate  
Program

Create ETC

Update ETC

Void ETC

Home

Cert Report

GCIA  
2425 South Milledge Ave  
Athens, GA 30605  
708-542-2351

Click here for report.

Sometimes a request from one can lead to good things for many! This was certainly the case with the GCIA Electronic Turfgrass Certificate (ETC) Program. In talking with Michelle McDonald and Natalie Howard of NG Turf, we realized that while the ETC Program works well for us at GCIA, it could be more useful for our members.

NG Turf asked if we could make it possible for them to generate their own field harvest report, as opposed to having to call the GCIA office for updated numbers.

We thought it was a great idea and felt that other ETC users might also find such a report useful. As a result, we asked our IT folks and they made it happen.

To generate the report, users can log into the ETC website and look on the navigator on the left. Click the “Cert Report” hotspot. A dropdown calendar will open up on the next page so the user can select start/end dates for the report. The report generates into CSV, which for most users will open up in Excel.

If you haven’t used this feature yet, give it a try and let us know what you think. If you’re a turfgrass grower not on the ETC program, contact Becki Hicks in our office and she can give you all the details. And thanks again to NG Turf for the good suggestion!

## GCIA Goes On The Road in 2016!

Over the first few months of 2016, GCIA staff will be participating in a number of ag industry events and trade shows. If you’re attending one of these events, we hope you will stop by.

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|-----------|---|
| Jan 7-9   | Southeast Regional Fruit & Vegetable Conference<br>Savannah International Convention Center, Savannah Georgia<br>For more information, visit <a href="http://www.seregionalconference.com">www.seregionalconference.com</a> . |
| Jan 21    | Georgia Peanut Farm Show<br>University of Georgia Tifton Campus Conference Center, Tifton Georgia<br>For more information, visit <a href="http://www.gapeanuts.com">www.gapeanuts.com</a> .                                   |
| Jan 27-29 | Georgia Green Industry Association WinterGreen Conference<br>Infinite Energy Center, Duluth Georgia<br>For more information, visit <a href="http://www.ggia.org">www.ggia.org</a> .   |
| Feb 12-15 | National Peanut Buying Points Association Annual Winter Conference<br>The Peabody Hotel, Memphis Tennessee<br>For more information, visit <a href="http://www.peanutbuyingpoints.org">www.peanutbuyingpoints.org</a> .        |

## Georgia's 2016 Legislative Session Preview - Bryan Tolar, Georgia Agribusiness Council

As lawmakers prepare to return to Georgia's State Capitol in January, they are already meeting with agribusiness leaders about some of the challenges ahead. The biggest among these is the need to strengthen the program that provides sales tax exemptions on farm inputs purchased by "qualified agricultural producers." GATE (Georgia Agriculture Tax Exemptions) has been a very successful program that helps keep Georgia's largest industry on level footing with neighboring states. It is well administered by the Georgia Department of Agriculture and backed up with tax audits by the Georgia Department of Revenue. There are over 35,000 current GATE card holders.

As with any program, education is key. The Georgia Agribusiness Council has been active since the very beginning, engaging agribusinesses, farmers, ag associations, legislators and others to establish a culture of compliance with the GATE law and associated regulations. Lawmaker concerns about reported GATE card abuses have triggered important discussions about making changes to tighten the program.

It's important to note that changes have already started in recent months. The Georgia Department of Agriculture has been conducting telephone interviews while reviewing the qualifications of over 10,000 GATE card holders. This has resulted in over a hundred cards being revoked. In addition, the Georgia Department of Revenue has two auditors dedicated to reviewing purchases made by GATE card holders. Retailers could also be included in future audits. If you have a GATE card, be prepared for follow-up from these two state agencies.

Lawmakers have shown great interest in considering new steps to better ensure the program is being used by those with a major stake in farm production and processing. Possible changes could include:

- Increasing the GATE card fee to establish a higher barrier of entry, thus deterring applications.
- Requiring a tax identification number or social security number on each application. This would aid in cross-referencing with other tax documents.
- Increasing the \$2500 required sales threshold to a higher level in an effort to better capture those in production agriculture.
- Increasing the documentation requirements on retailers, which the Council opposes.
- Consideration of allowing ag processing energy to be subject to a local 2% excise tax, which the Council also opposes. Ag energy is currently exempt from such local taxes and we oppose changing this provision.

Those not following the GATE program parameters are responsible for the dialogue that is now underway. We have often stated that program abuse is the surest way to having the program go away. Working together for compliance, we can make some changes and protect the program for the long haul. It only takes a few bad apples to really mess up this program. Everyone needs to do their part to keep them out of the barrel and we welcome your support.

Other legislative issues on the horizon include: budget funding efforts to continue rebuilding UGA Extension staff and specialists; establishing parameters on the use of drones for agriculture and other purposes; interest in GMO labeling; and issues related to new biotech plant varieties.

The Georgia Agribusiness Council is pleased to be at the State Capitol each day during the legislative session and engaging our 950+ member companies in the issues impacting our diverse industry. We welcome your support of the Council as we serve in this capacity. For more information on GAC, please visit us at [www.ga-agribusiness.org](http://www.ga-agribusiness.org).

## Don't Miss the Seed Industry Seminar at GA Peanut Farm Show

The Georgia Peanut Farm Show & Conference is set for Thursday, January 21st in Tifton. One of the highlights of the Show is the Seed Industry Seminar which will begin at 10:35 a.m. in the Small Auditorium at the Tifton Campus Conference Center. Kevin Calhoun of Birdsong Peanuts will kickoff the program followed by:

Update on Seed Quality and Quantity for 2016 Planting  
Terry Hollifield, Ex. Dir., Georgia Crop Improvement Assn.  
New Improvements at the Plains Foundation Seed Center  
Dr. Roger Boerma, Ex. Dir., Georgia Seed Development  
Varieties Currently in Production and on Horizon  
Dr. Bill Branch, Peanut Breeder, University of Georgia  
Dr. Barry Tillman, Peanut Breeder, University of Florida  
Dr. Corley Holbrook, Peanut Breeder, USDA/ARS  
Timely Advice for Growers  
Dr. Scott Monfort, University of Georgia Peanut Agronomist  
Updates on Current Breeding Research  
Dr. Marshall Lamb, National Peanut Research Lab  
The Peanut Genomic Initiative  
Dr. Steve Brown, Ex. Dir., The Peanut Foundation



The Industry Seed Seminar is sponsored by American Peanut Shellers Association, Southern Peanut Farmers Federation, The Peanut Foundation, and the Georgia Peanut Commission.

## 2016 Georgia Sod Producers Survey

In November, the [Georgia Urban Ag Council](#) conducted their 22nd consecutive survey of sod producers. The purpose of the survey was to determine the status of inventory levels and projected price changes for spring 2016. The survey offers provides a wealth of information and can be viewed on the GCIA website by clicking [HERE](#).

Seventeen producers participated by online and telephone survey, representing farm sizes which were:

- less than 300 acres (8 participants)
- 300 to 600 acres (3 participants)
- 601 to 900 acres (3 participants)
- more than 900 acres (3 participants)

Regarding GCIA-certified turfgrass, 2016 had 15 producers representing 88% of the respondents with some certified grass on their farm. Eighty-seven percent of these growers charge a premium for certified grass. The remaining growers either do not place an added value on certified sod or do not participate in the certification program.

In 2016, the typical extra cost ranged from 1.0 to 7.0 cents per square foot and averaged 4.0 cents. This translates to between \$5.00 and \$35.00 on a 500 square foot pallet. Disregarding 2013 which had an anomaly in value of certified grass, for 2016 the high end of the range was up relative to the past five years. The lower end has remained constant at 1.0 cent per square foot. The average price rising indicates more certified producers are increasing the value of their grass. The consumer should consider this an accepted cost to ensure varietal purity of a perennial species.



# Georgia Crop

## Improvement Association

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Phone: 706-542-2351  
[www.georgiacrop.com](http://www.georgiacrop.com)

### **OFFICERS**

Ernie Purcell, John B. Sanfilippo & Son, Inc.  
President

Jaimie Allen, Pike Creek Turf, Inc.  
Past President

Lane Morrell, Plantation Seed Conditioners, Inc.  
1st Vice-President

Ken Morrow, The Turfgrass Group, Inc.  
2nd Vice-President

### **DIRECTORS**

John Bowen, John Bowen Turf Company

Kevin Calhoun, Birdsong Peanuts, Inc.

Ben Copeland, Jr., Super Sod / Patten Seed

Larry Cunningham, R.L. Cunningham & Sons, Inc.

Blake Fleeman, Georgia Seed Development

Scott Grimsley, Birdsong Peanuts, Inc.

Ricky Hartley, Golden Peanut Company, LLC

John Raley, R&R Seed Farms, Inc.

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### **STAFF**

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