



Georgia Crop Improvement Association



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

GCIA News Briefs

WINTER 2020

I've Been Thinking - Terry Hollifield, Executive Director

January and February are hectic times here at GCIA. It seems that all the agricultural commodities have their trade shows, conferences, training sessions, etc. during the winter. Of course the timing makes perfect sense as most farming is in the spring and fall, but do they have to schedule all the events in just two months?

In the month of January GCIA has attended, made presentations and manned trade show booths at a soybean conference, a peanut farm show, an international turf trade show, and we still have another turfgrass show to attend plus an organic conference. I am not complaining; I'm just saying that it is busy down here in the sunny south, but I would not swap the hectic pace for anything. Nowhere on God's green earth can a person associate with friendlier and more helpful people than in agriculture. All of this brings me to the point I want to make.

I have a neighbor who was raised in "the city", gave a decade of his life to the military, and now has moved into our little community to enjoy the country life. He is fascinated with agriculture. He is awed at the way people and entire communities come together to help a neighbor. I have seen these acts of kindness as you have. Helping a neighbor is a way of life found in rural communities. Helping is a culture, a common understanding that characterizes an agricultural community.

Agriculture is going through some very difficult times. Low commodity prices, hurricanes here in the Southeast, slow government disaster aid, tariffs, are all taking their toll on Georgia farmers. The highest filing of farm bankruptcies in 2019 was in Wisconsin followed by Georgia.

I've been thinking that it is time to step forward to help where you can. Most of us can't help those in need of money, but when a neighbor is in trouble, a kind word can go a long, long way.

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MEMBER
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GCIA Annual Meeting - March 10, 2020!

Upcoming Ag Industry Events

The 2020 Georgia Organics Conference and Expo is taking place at the Classic Center in Athens, Georgia February 7-8. Johnny Luke, Organic Program Manager, Jeanne Gonzales, Program Assistant and Billie Dunn, Program Assistant, will be on hand to interact with current organic clients and meet potential new growers and processors. For more information, [Click here for more.](#)



The 2020 Annual Winter Conference of the National Peanut Buying Points Association will be February 14-17 at the Omni Grove Park Inn in Asheville, North Carolina. The winter conference is a great time of networking and learning for the peanut industry. Billy Skaggs, Certification Program Manager, will be representing GCIA at the conference. For more information, visit <http://www.peanutbuyingpoints.org/>.



The 2020 Turf Producers International (TPI) Conference is February 17-20 in Orlando, Florida. Terry Hollifield, GCIA Executive Director, will be attending TPI to meet and network with Georgia sod producers as well as growers from around the country and across the globe. For more information, visit <https://www.turfgrasssod.org/>



Georgia Peanut Research Report Day Held February 5th

The Georgia Peanut Commission's annual Research Report Day was Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2020 at the National Environmentally Sound Production Agriculture Laboratory (NESPAL) at the UGA Tifton campus. The event provided growers and industry representatives an opportunity to hear the latest reports and newest information available on peanut research projects funded by the Commission in 2019.



"The commission works to wisely invest peanut farmers' dollars into research projects across Georgia in an effort to reduce production input costs and improve agronomic techniques," says Donald Chase, GPC Research Committee chairman. "Although some of the findings are preliminary, the projects are exciting and many times new recommendations or observations are announced."

GPC awarded \$653,901 to peanut research facilities in the state during 2019. This effort funds 35 research projects from the University of Georgia, the USDA Agricultural Research Service and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. The research programs primarily focus on peanut breeding, conservation methods, irrigation and water management as well as pest, weed and disease management. All research reports will be available online following the Report Day.

For additional information, visit www.gapeanuts.com.

US turfgrass program strengthens ties in Australia - Lawn Solutions Australia

The International Turfgrass Genetic Assurance Program (ITGAP), the only worldwide turf quality assurance system, has bolstered its partnership with its exclusive Australian agency, AusGAP.

The Georgia Crop Improvement Association (GCIA) administers the ITGAP program. GCIA Certification Program Manager Mr. Billy Skaggs toured Australia recently citing great excitement in grasses available through AusGAP growers as one of the primary reasons for his trip.

“Number one, there’s been tremendous interest in [Lawn Solutions Australia varieties] Sir Grange and TifTuf and as such growers are expanding, planting more hectares,” he said.

Skaggs said he believed there was huge potential in Australia for these grasses. He said ITGAP would continue to support growers through planned trips and making available any necessary resources.

AusGAP, with an exclusive arrangement with ITGAP, ensures AusGAP certified growers meet all areas of compliance under the ITGAP guidelines. AusGAP’s Mick Sutton and LSA’s Joe Rogers chaperoned Skaggs as he inspected AusGAP turf production facilities in NSW and Victoria, and audited the AusGAP program.

Skaggs said the inspections primarily focused on protecting the varietal purity of Sir Grange and TifTuf by ensuring the original stock sources were pure and subsequent plantings remained pure.

The training involved a review of ITGAP processes.

“We’re doing a review of our initial ITGAP specs, our rules and regulations and how we translate that to AusGAP,” he said.

Mr. Sutton strengthened his knowledge of ITGAP and how it relates to the AusGAP program. AusGAP growers’ quarterly self-inspection reports were also reviewed. Skaggs said the audit also aimed to address any knowledge gaps.

“We’re reviewing those documents to make sure that if there’s a question that we didn’t get on the first time around we catch it this time, whether it’s identifying a weed, whether it’s questions about care or cultural practices – we just want to go through those reports and make sure that we’re getting them [growers] the information they need and it’s also to make sure that we have a good record of what’s being grown,” he said.

“These varieties are important to this area, they’re important to the growers and we certainly want to make sure that all the propagations are authorized, that it’s on record and that we have a location for everything so that we don’t get grasses out there that don’t meet our quality standard.”

Pictured (L-R): Troy Muscat of Active Turf, Skaggs, Mick Sutton of AusGAP and Charlie Muscat of Active Turf.



UGA Ag Forecast Highlights

- Sharon Dowdy for CAES News

This year's forecasts for peanuts, poultry, pecans, cotton and other Georgia crops were presented by University of Georgia agricultural economist Adam Rabinowitz during the first of five Georgia Ag Forecast events held across the state. Farmers and others in the agricultural industry met at the Georgia Farm Bureau Building in Macon, Georgia.

Following is an overview of the 2020 Ag Forecast.

PEANUTS

Demand for Georgia peanuts should remain flat for the fourth year in a row and farmers can expect a price of \$400 per ton for the protein-packed crop. Record production in 2017 continues to limit price movement for peanut producers as ending stocks remain high.

PECANS

Georgia pecan production will remain low compared to seasons pre-Hurricane Michael. Production is, however, expected to be slightly higher than the post-hurricane 2018-2019 crop season, as farmers are still recovering. Trade wars continue to suppress exports to China, Vietnam, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Hong Kong.

COTTON

U.S. cotton acreage and production is expected to decrease in 2020. Uncertainties in the cotton market are expected due to ongoing trade negotiations and the slowing down of the global economy. Farmers are encouraged to consider strategies to improve productivity or cut costs.

CORN, WHEAT AND SOYBEANS

The trend of growing more corn, less wheat and less soybeans will continue in 2020. Corn prices should rise significantly despite export competition. Resolution of trade disputes is expected to produce opportunities for all three crops.

Summarized from an article by Sharon Dowdy; UGA CAES News Editor.

Source: [UGA CAES Media Newswire](#).

Landscape Pro University - January 29th

Landscape Pro University (LPU), powered by Georgia Urban Ag Council and SiteOne Landscape Supply, brings seminars and training to industry professionals, providing the tools needed to raise industry standards and provide the best service to customers - tools that can help drive profits and set companies apart. LPU takes place on January 29, 2020 at the Cobb Galleria Centre.

Five educational tracks will be taught by UGA and other and industry experts from specific fields (hardscape, irrigation, landscape lighting). In addition, LPU is offering a review course for the Georgia Pesticide License Exam. Check out the latest products and services, try things out, get answers to your questions, and get to know the people behind the products.

For schedule, course descriptions, and registration, visit: www.urbanagcouncil.com/landscape-pro-university.



Seed Short Course - February 12th at GSD



GEORGIA SEED
DEVELOPMENT

The annual seed short course for approved conditioners of soybean, small grain and grass seed will be held Wednesday, February 12th, 2020 at Georgia Seed Development in Athens. Becki Hicks, GCIA Administrative Assistant, will register attendees beginning at 12:30 pm, and the program will conclude at 4pm.

At the short course, you will hear from Billy Skaggs, Certification Program Manager, on conditioning facility requirements, and Jenny Wren with the Department of Agriculture will provide an overview of Georgia seed law, rules and regulations. Raynor Churchwell of Georgia Farm Bureau will provide an update on issues related to Glyphosate, Terry Hollifield, Executive Director, will review recent changes to Georgia Noxious Weed List, and Dr. Roger Boerma and his team will provide a tour of their facility.

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. Please confirm your registration by email (becki.hicks@georgiacrop.com) or phone 706 542-2351 before Monday, February 10th.

Special thanks to Dr. Roger Boerma, Blake Fleeman and the Georgia Seed Development staff for hosting the 2020 GCIA Seed Short Course. We greatly appreciate their hospitality!

GA PESTICIDE CREDIT

2 hrs Cat 21: Plant Ag
2 hrs Cat 25: Seed Treatment
2 hrs Cat 10: Private Applicator

Peanut Seed Short Course set for February 26th

The 2020 Peanut Seed Short Course will be held on Wednesday, February 26th at the Georgia Museum of Agriculture (1392 Whiddon Mill Rd, Tifton, GA). Please note this is new location. Registration will begin at 8:30am, and the program will conclude at noon. As you will see below, we have a good lineup of speakers for this year, and we hope you will make plans to join us.

Dr. Scott Tubbs - Peanut Production Update

Dr. Adam Rabinowitz - Peanut Market Forecast

Don Koehler - Georgia Peanut Commission Update

Dr. John Shugart - GA Dept of Ag Tifton Lab Update

Dr. Marshall Lamb - National Peanut Research Lab

Dr. Tim Brenneman - Advances in Seed Treatment

GCIA approved plant representatives and buying point representatives are required to attend a seed short course once every two years for the conditioning facility or buying point to remain on the GCIA approved list. If you are unsure if you are required to attend this year, contact Becki Hicks at 706-542-2351.

We hope you and/or your employees will join us. Please confirm your registration by email (becki.hicks@georgiacrop.com) or phone 706 542-2351 before Friday, February 21st.

GA PESTICIDE CREDIT

2 hrs Cat 21: Plant Ag
2 hrs Cat 25: Seed Treatment
2 hrs Cat 10: Private Applicator





Georgia Crop

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