



# Georgia Crop Improvement Association



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

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## GCIA News Briefs

WINTER 2022

### I've Been Thinking - Terry Hollifield, Executive Director

One of the really neat things about living in the south is that we have four distinct seasons: winter, spring, summer and fall. Each season has its pluses and minuses. Most of the people I know prefer our fall season to all others. I like and thrive in three of the seasons: spring, summer and fall. One of my common statements this time of year is "I hate winter," and I really do. I simply cannot get warm thus I am constantly agitated, ill, and short tempered.

Now I know there are many who will say that they see no difference in my personality in winter or summer, but I disagree. Actually, there is a condition known as Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD. The SAD part I understand. I am SAD that it is winter. How can anyone be pleasant when you arrive home in the dark? have outrageous heating bills? and have to scrape ice from the truck because the garage is full of used furniture? I have to break the ice in the water troughs that the donkeys use, frozen pipes, everything outside is dead, and the list goes on.

All very depressing. Yes, I agree that we don't mow the lawn in the winter; there are no bugs or snakes; no tornadoes or hurricanes; and the humidity is much lower. That said, we don't have vacations, sun tans or fish fry's in the winter. There is a reason for Independence Day being in the summer; can you imagine fireworks or a grilling out in January?

In closing, to make my point about the adversities of winter, just let me say this – no one retires up north! Before you start to feel sorry for my wretched soul, I have found a way to cope.

*Pictured below is the lovely head wrap I received in our office White Elephant Christmas gift exchange.*



## 2022 GCIA Upcoming Ag Events:



### GCIA Annual Meeting

The 77<sup>th</sup> GCIA Annual Membership Meeting is set for March 16, 2022 at the University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education (1197 S. Lumpkin Street, Athens, Georgia 30602). Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. and the meeting will conclude by 4:00 p.m.

Presenters include:

Sarah Wilbanks – CEO, Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies

John Seymour – SE Regional Vice President, American Seed Trade

Nick Place – Dean and Director, UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

Nathan Smith – Extension Professor and Agribusiness Team Director, Clemson University

Bryan Tolar – Principal, Tolar Capitol Partners, Inc.

Please register for the meeting by calling the GCIA office at (706) 542-2351 or email [becki.hicks@georgiacrop.com](mailto:becki.hicks@georgiacrop.com) before the close of business on Friday, March 11, 2022. Room reservations may be made by calling 706-542-3134. Our meeting code for room reservations is "94254 Georgia Crop Improvement Association".



### Peanut Seed Short Course

The Georgia Crop Improvement Association invites you to attend the 60th Annual Peanut Seed Short Course on Friday, February 25th at the ABAC Georgia Museum of Agriculture. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. Refreshments will be provided at registration and the meeting will adjourn at 12:15 p.m. (lunch will not be served).

We encourage you to attend this meeting as we strive to continue improving our overall peanut program. We have a great lineup of speakers planned including Dr. Scott Monfort, UGA College of Agriculture & Environmental Sciences; Dr. Bob Kemerait, UGA College of Agriculture & Environmental Sciences; Tyron Spearman, National Peanut Points Assoc.; Dr. Jack Davis, JLA Global; Dr. Mark Abney, UGA College of Agriculture & Environmental Sciences and Dr. Eric Coronel, American Peanut Council.

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. Please confirm your registration by email ([becki.hicks@georgiacrop.com](mailto:becki.hicks@georgiacrop.com)) or phone (706) 542-2351.

## 2022 GCIA Upcoming Ag Events Continued:

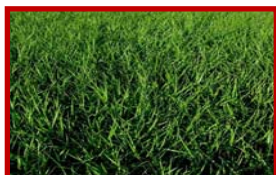


### Small Grain, Soybean, Grass Seed Short Course

The annual seed short course for approved conditioners of soybean, small grain and grass seed will be held Tuesday, March 1st at the Macon State Farmers Market. Registration will begin at 9:00 a.m. and the program will conclude at 12:00 p.m.

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. Max Demott with Syngenta will provide an update on seed treatment, and Rome Ethredge, UGA, will provide a corn, soybean & wheat update. New this year, Jud Turner, attorney & former EPD Director, will address water policy issues pertinent to farmers.

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](mailto:becki.hicks@georgiacrop.com)) or phone (706)542-2351 before Friday, February 25, 2022.



## Upcoming 2022 Ag Industry Events:



- ◆ American Peanut Shellers Association Spring Meeting– March 2  
<http://www.peanut-shellers.org/event-info.aspx?eid=40>



- ◆ Alabama Crop Improvement Association/Southern Seed Certification Association joint membership meeting– March 6-7  
<https://southernseedcertification.org/> \* Call 334-693-3988 for more info!



## Georgia Seed Development and Georgia Crop Improvement Association 2022 Summer Internship



Georgia Seed Development (GSD) along with Georgia Crop Improvement Association (GCIA) are sponsoring summer internships for rising junior or senior undergraduate students majoring in one of the plant or crop sciences, agribusiness, agricultural economics or a related discipline. The goal of the internship is to provide students an opportunity to learn about plant breeding programs and activities, cultivar development and commercialization, seed and turfgrass production, ornamental plant propagation, certification, and foundation seed and plant programs. Students will visit and be exposed to UGA plant breeders, regional seed companies, seed conditioning facilities, turfgrass farms, plant nurseries, and the Georgia State Seed Lab. Students will work alongside GSD and GCIA staff to observe the entire process of taking a new cultivar to market and the certification activities required to ensure a high-quality product is available to the seed company, the farmer, and ultimately, the consumer.

Internship credit hours are available dependent upon the chosen course of study and the student's department and major professor or advisor; students are encouraged to consult with their academic advisor prior to applying for the GSD/GCIA summer internship.

The summer internship will run from mid-May to early August and is based in Athens, GA. The internship will be salaried to work for 10 weeks at 40 hours per week, plus all work related travel expenses. A term paper, highlighting student's experiences and knowledge gained, will be due to GSD/GCIA upon completion of the internship.

To apply, students should submit a completed application, a transcript, current resume, and a statement of purpose on how he/she would benefit from the internship program. In the statement of purpose, the applicant should identify a major professor or other faculty member who would be willing to serve as a reference. Once an applicant is selected, he/she will meet with GCIA, GSD, and appropriate faculty to develop their specific goals and activities. Applicants should submit all materials by **March 31, 2022** to:

**Mrs. Erin Montgomery**  
**Georgia Seed Development**  
**2420 South Milledge Avenue**  
**Athens, Georgia 30605**  
[erin.montgomery@gsdc.com](mailto:erin.montgomery@gsdc.com)







## GCIA's Organic Program Continues to Grow

What exactly is organic certification? Organic certification verifies that a farm or handling facility located anywhere in the world complies with the USDA organic regulations and allows the operator to sell, label, and represent their products as organic. While the USDA administers the National Organic Program (NOP), they do not routinely conduct the onsite inspections of these facilities. Instead, USDA NOP relies on agencies and organizations to conduct organic inspections. GCIA is a USDA NOP Accredited Certifying Agent (ACA).

Johnny Luke serves as the Organic Program Manager. In his role, Mr. Luke reviews client applications, makes inspection assignments and conducts many onsite inspections. Jeanne Gonzales and Billie Dunn provide administrative support for the program. Sean Cunard and Billy Skaggs assist in conducting inspections of organic farms and handlers. Matthew Young serves as the final reviewer of completed inspections. GCIA utilizes a contract inspector, Daniel Tinsley, to assist with inspections.

GCIA's organic program continues to grow. Since 2021, the program added 45 new clients - an increase of over 30%. For more information, visit [www.georgiacrop.com/organic](http://www.georgiacrop.com/organic).



Recently, GCIA's Billy Skaggs and GSD's Blake Fleeman attended the 2022 Turf Producers International (TPI) Conference San Diego, California. In addition to Skaggs, several GCIA turfgrass members attended, including representatives from Buy Sod, North Georgia Turf, Super-Sod and The Turfgrass Group. While there, Skaggs had the opportunity to meet and network with turfgrass producers from across the country. One of the highlights of the event was the Field Day which was hosted by American Sod Farms, which has a forty-year legacy of serving the southern California market. For more information, visit <https://www.turfgrassod.org>.





# Georgia Crop

## Improvement Association

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### OFFICERS

Blake Shepard, Mixon Seed Service

President

Ken Morrow, The Turfgrass Group, Inc.

Past President

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

1st Vice President

Jutt Howard, North Georgia Turf

2nd Vice President

### DIRECTORS

Bill Bullard, Birdsong Peanuts

Kevin Calhoun, Birdsong Peanuts

Chad Chandler, Olam Peanut Shelling Company, Inc.

Ricky Hartley, Golden Peanut & Tree Nuts

Brian Ogletree, Ogletree Seed, Inc.

Reed Rogers, Golden Peanut & Tree Nuts

Chris Roquemore, Super Sod / Patten Seed

Drew Watkins, Sunbelt Turf Farms

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### STAFF

Terry Hollifield, Executive Director

Mark Collier, Field & Conditioning Plant Inspector

Terry Crane, Food Safety Program Manager

Sean Cunard, Field & Conditioning Plant Inspector

Billie Dunn, Outside Services Program Assistant

Jeanne Gonzales, Organic Program Assistant

Becki Hicks, Certification Administrative Assistant

Leslie Wright, Certification Administrative Assistant

Thomas Kessler, Field & Conditioning Plant Inspector

Johnny Luke, Organic Certification Program Manager

Marie Sidwell, Director of Operations

Billy Skaggs, Certification Program Manager