

SUMMER
2026



NEWSLETTER

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MEMBER



MEMBER

From the Director's desk

I hope everyone is having a good summer, and your crops are doing well. 2026 has been a busy year for the GCIA team. Our field staff inspected small grains back in the spring, as well as completed the first round of turfgrass inspections. Our administrative staff had a busy spring as well including the printing of certified peanut seed tags in preparation for the planting season.

Regarding peanuts, we saw a significant reduction in the number of tags printed this year. We printed approximately one million fewer peanut seed tags this spring as compared to 2025. While this was expected, it doesn't minimize the impact on our budget.

In addition, we know that a reduction in tags printed will certainly result in fewer certified peanut acres applied for this year. Our staff is still processing applications for peanut field inspection, so we do not have a firm number yet. That said, I anticipate peanut acres will be down by at least 25,000 acres.

For a little context, GCIA has had a record number of certified peanut tags printed and acres applied for the last several years with last year hitting a record at almost 150,000 acres. This was due primarily to a reduction in cotton and corn planted in the state. Simply put, planting peanuts was the best option financially for Georgia farmers over the last several years. The result – too many peanuts in the marketplace which brought prices down.

This year, prices were better for corn and cotton, and growers opted to plant more with fewer acres going to peanuts. Overall, this is good for the market and hopefully better for the growers. Peanut planting rotations had gotten too short with many farmers planting peanuts after peanuts – sometimes three years in a row. Getting back to a more normal rotation should reduce disease pressure and benefit growers in the years to come. Hopefully, fewer peanut acres will mean better prices.

So, what does this mean for GCIA? Can we survive such a reduction in revenue? The answer is simple – yes, we will weather this downturn just fine. How? Due to the thoughtful guidance and preparation of our board of directors and the hard work and dedication of our staff.

Over the years, our executive committee and board of directors have guided us to be conservative in our budget estimates and frugal with our spending. They have been a tremendous help to me during my time as executive director, and I greatly appreciate their encouragement and support.

Additionally, our staff has continued to work diligently to generate additional revenue to supplement seed certification. Our certified turfgrass acres continue to grow steadily each year, and our outside service programs such as organic certification, food safety audits, and royalty assessments are thriving as well.

In closing, I want to thank all our members & clients – seed producers, turfgrass growers, organic producers and our food safety clients – for your ongoing support of our programs. Also, thanks to our outstanding staff for all you do. It takes all of us working together to meet our mission and achieve our goals.

Billy Skaggs
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2026 UPCOMING AG EVENTS

GCIA Buying Point Training



You are invited to join us on Tuesday, August 25, 2026, for our annual Peanut Buying Point Training Session. Again this year, we are meeting at the Georgia Federal-State Inspection Service Offices in Albany. The address is 951 Pecan Grove Drive, Albany, Georgia. Thanks in advance to Ms. Teresa Cox for hosting us. PLEASE NOTE: Registration will begin at 1:00 pm, and the program will begin at 1:15 pm. We will be discussing requirements for handling certified seed as well as the application process.

Speakers include Tyron Spearman, National Peanut Buying Points Association & Dr. Jack Davis, JLA Labs. The program will conclude by 3:30 pm.

Buying Points: A buying point must appoint a representative knowledgeable of GCIA rules to be responsible for the buying point's compliance with the published rules governing certified seed production, handling and storage. The GCIA representative(s) must attend a training session offered by GCIA no less than once every two years. A peanut buying point is any facility that receives and/or stores certified peanut seed. Each approved buying point location must have an onsite representative. A representative may not be responsible for overseeing more than one location.

Please RSVP by August 21st by email to becki.hicks@georgiacrop.com & leslie.wright@georgiacrop.com or by phone: 706-542-2351

American Peanut Shellers
Association- Pre Harvest
Meeting- August 17-19
Albany, Georgia
Click here for more info:
[Pre Harvest Meeting](#)



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA



Turfgrass Research Field Day- August 5
Griffin, Georgia. Click here for more info:
[Urban Ag Council](#)

Sunbelt Ag Expo- October 20-22 Moultrie, Georgia
Click here for more info: [Sunbelt Ag Expo](#)



Georgia Crop Improvement Association Celebrates First Graduate of AOSCA Inspector Credentialing Program



Athens, Georgia — Georgia Crop Improvement Association is proud to announce that a participant from its program has successfully completed the AOSCA Turfgrass and Small Grains Inspector Credentialing Program, marking a historic milestone as part of the first-ever cohort to earn this distinguished certification.

Developed by the Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies (AOSCA), this inaugural credentialing program establishes a new national standard for inspector training in turfgrass and small grains. The program is designed to ensure consistency, accuracy, and excellence in field inspection processes that support the integrity of certified seed.

Participants completed comprehensive training covering key areas such as varietal purity, field inspection procedures, disease identification, and certification standards. By earning this credential, these inspectors have demonstrated a high level of expertise and commitment to maintaining the quality and reliability of seed certification programs.

“This program represents a significant advancement for our industry,” said Billy Skaggs, Executive Director. “We are proud to have our team among the first in the nation to complete this rigorous training and contribute to strengthening confidence in certified seed.”

The following individual from Georgia Crop Improvement Association successfully completed the program: Alex Gilreath

For more information about the AOSCA Inspector Credentialing Program, visit www.certifiedseed.org.



Pictured: Alex Gilreath & Terry Hollifield, GCIA



GCIA attends AOSCA 2026 Annual Meeting



The annual meeting of the Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies (AOSCA) was held June 15-18th in Golden, CO. Billy Skaggs, Alex Gilreath, & Terry Hollifield attended the meeting representing GCIA. Blake Fleeman & Doug Batchelder of Georgia Seed Development attended and represented their foundation seed program. North Dakota State Seed Department and South Dakota Crop Improvement Association served as the hosts of the 2026 annual meeting.

On Tuesday, June 16th, the annual AOSCA awards banquet was held with Mr. Billy Skaggs being the emcee of the event. Mr. Skaggs recognized everyone who participated in the AOSCA Academy and the ICP Training. Serving as AOSCA President for 2025-2026 year, Mr. Michael Bouck with Utah Crop Improvement Association awarded each participant with an award for completing each training.

Mr. Terry Hollifield provided AOSCA members with a presentation on conditioning plant inspections. This presentation covered many key areas to ensure quality and identity of seed when being conditioned. He also pointed out the importance of why we as certification agencies should do plant inspections each year. This topic was very educational for everyone in the room and in closing we had a great discussion after Mr. Hollifield's presentation.

Thanks to North Dakota State Seed Department and South Dakota Crop Improvement Association for the great hospitality, and thanks to the AOSCA staff for their hard work and preparation. It was a great meeting! To see more photos from the annual meeting please visit <https://aosca.org/>.



Pictured: Michael Bouck, Utah Crop Improvement & Alex Gilreath, GCIA



Pictured: Alex Gilreath, Terry Hollifield & Billy Skaggs, GCIA



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Eddie Ott, NG Turf

Albert Rogers, Premium Peanut

Caleb Weaver, Olam Peanut Shelling Company

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Terry Crane, Food Safety Program Manager

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Alex Gilreath, Certification Program Associate

Jeanne Gonzales, Organic Certification Specialist

Regina Holt, Organic Certification Specialist

Becki Hicks, Certification Administrative Assistant

Terry Hollifield, Senior Consultant / Inspector

Austin Redmond, Field & Conditioning Plant Inspector

Daniel Tinsley, Organic Inspector & Technical Reviewer

Leslie Wright, Certification Administrative Assistant