

The Pecan Grower

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GEORGIA PECAN GROWERS ASSOCIATION

*Evaluating hurricane
after-effects in the
short and long term*

*After the Rain: Rebuilding
from the Ruins of
Hurricane Michael*

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October 2023



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 2023

October 12, 2023

Texas Pecan Growers Association Fall Field Day
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October-December 2023

GPGA Communications Coming to You
Check Your Mailboxes for 2024
GPGA Membership Renewals, GPGA Conference Packets & The Pecan Grower Media Kit!

February 2024

February 23-24, 2024

Southeastern Pecan Growers Conference
Beau Rivage Resort & Casino
Biloxi, Mississippi
Registration Coming Soon

March 2024

March 3-5, 2024

Western Pecan Growers Association Conference
Las Cruces Convention Center, Las Cruces, NM
Registration Coming Soon

March 2024

March 19-21, 2024

Georgia Pecan Growers Association Conference
Georgia National Fairgrounds, Perry, GA
Registration Coming Soon via USPS delivery,
downloadable online at georgiapecan.org or
by register directly online

Happenings at our 2024 show:

Beginners in Pecan Production Course

Calling all new pecan growers (or anyone who is looking for a refresher course)! Dr. Lenny Wells, UGA Horticulturalist & Pecan Expert, and the UGA Pecan Extension Team, will be hosting a Beginners in Pecan Production Course on Wednesday, March 20th, in the Miller-Murphy-Howard Building. The course will run in tandem with the other educational sessions presented on the main day of the conference. The course will be hosted in one of the two conference rooms, while the traditional Conference educational sessions will be hosted in the other conference room. Conference registration will now cover this course and all conference educational sessions offered.

Golf Tournament

This year's golf tournament will be held at **Houston Lake Country Club in Perry, GA on Tuesday, March 19th** with a shotgun start at 10:00 AM. Lunch and beverages provided.

Skeet Shoot Tournament

This year's skeet shoot will be held at **Meadows Gun Club in Forsyth, GA on Tuesday, March 19th** with registration and lunch at 11:30 AM and shooting to start at 12:30 PM.

Welcome Reception (Reverse Raffle Drawing & Silent Auction)

Join us for a Welcome Reception following the first day's events for sponsored cocktails and heavy hors d'oeuvres at the Georgia National Fairgrounds, **Miller-Murphy-Howard building, on Tuesday, March 19th from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM.**

Orchard Tour

This year's orchard tour will be on **Thursday, March 21st.**
Location is still to be determined and announced at a later date.

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ON THE COVER

A Southeast Georgia orchard in shambles following the fierce wind and rain from Hurricane Idalia.

Photo By Andrew Sawyer, Southeast Georgia Area Pecan Agent

The Pecan Grower
Newsletter



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EDITOR'S LETTER



Greetings!

Thanks to all of you who made our Annual Fall Field Day a success just as harvest began. The research and planning team at USDA-ARS in Byron was instrumental in executing this event and we at GPGA are grateful for their work. The day could not have gone so smoothly without the support from our sponsors, so thank you again for investing in GPGA! To all our presenters, participants, and staff, I want to emphasize how much I appreciate your continued commitment to Field Day and our Spring event, our Annual Conference and Trade Show. Information is being released now to help you plan for that event as a sponsor, exhibitor, and attendee, so please watch for more specifics to come!

The season of Fall is always filled with activity both in the orchards and in our offices. It tends to be the most exciting time to promote Georgia Pecans as part of traditional holiday and autumn recipes! However, there is a somber mood now as we reflect on the loss incurred by so many of our growers in the aftermath of Hurricane Idalia, which struck on August 30. Just 5 years ago this month, the Georgia Pecan industry suffered a devastating blow with another storm, Hurricane Michael, in 2018.

Once again, we will rebuild, replant, and reassess. However, in the meantime, if GPGA can be of any assistance to our growers in navigating the process of disaster relief recovery, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to help you as part of Georgia's Pecan Support Team. This group includes GPGA, our researchers at UGA and USDA-ARS-Byron, the Georgia Pecan Commission, UGA Extension, and our state and national legislative teams and national pecan organizations. Together we will move forward to repair, grow and succeed. 🌰

Samantha McLeod



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Multiscan S30P
In-Shell Line Pecan Sorter

EXPERT ADVICE

with Dr. Lenny Wells

Extension Horticulturist, University of Georgia

Evaluating Hurricane After-effects In The Short And Long Term

Our industry has suffered yet another blow with Hurricane Idalia, which charted a course through Southeast Georgia after entering the state near Valdosta on August 30. Pecan orchards in Brooks, Cook, Berrien, Lowndes and Lanier counties suffered catastrophic damage with thousands of trees down and 50-80% crop loss. There was still significant orchard damage outside this area going North and as far West as Irwin County and as far East as Pierce County. However, as the storm moved North the damage became more sporadic. The path of the storm is home to about one-third of the Georgia pecan crop and my current estimate is that this area of the state suffered an immediate loss of about one-third of its pecan crop. However, there may be additional losses that we do not yet see.

When storms such as Idalia beat the trees around, even if the trees remain standing and still hold nuts on the trees, subsequent losses of both trees and nuts often arise with time. The vascular connections within the stems attaching the nuts to the tree can sometimes be damaged even though there is no visible problem. In such a scenario, the water and nutrients needed to finish nut maturation may not reach the nut, which could lead to problems with nut abortion or filling of the nuts. The shucks beating together in the winds also produces significant bruising, which can lead to similar issues.

Additionally, even when trees are not blown down, they can be beaten around and pulled by the wind to the extent that roots below ground are broken or they get pulled up a little, which creates a bulge in the ground at the base of the tree. Often, in such cases, voids are created between the soil below ground and the roots. These air pockets can lead to subsequent root die-back, which translates to tree die-back as much as 2-3 years later.

When trees are blown down, especially those that are younger and can still be manipulated, there is a natural instinct for growers to stand these trees

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up again, considering all the time, money and effort which has gone into getting the trees to this point. However, experience has shown that trees leaning more than 30 degrees are at a strong disadvantage. Most of these, when righted, are blown down again in subsequent storms. Often, the roots that were broken when the tree was pushed over leave the tree lacking enough of a root system to support the remaining top of the tree. Voids in the soil that I mentioned earlier occur when trees are pushed over and righted, which also leads to tree failure in months to years. Such trees, if they survive, rarely produce as well as others.

As a general rule, most trees leaning 30 degrees or more should be removed. There is obviously a lot of nuance to these scenarios based on tree size, severity of broken roots, size of the voids below ground, etc. which determine to what extent, if any, the trees survive or remain productive. Trees 4" diameter or less will likely stand a better chance of survival after righting but there are no guarantees. Regardless of tree size, the

tree will have a better chance of survival when the tops are completely cut out to allow the root system a chance to regrow to be able to support the tree.

I heard a sound piece of advice from a grower the other day who, following Hurricane Michael in 2018, saturated the ground with water again as they were standing up the trees. This effort allowed them to push the roots back into the ground and cover them with soil and likely helped to fill, settle, and seal some of the voids below ground. I don't have any research to make this a recommendation but it makes good common sense and for those determined to save trees, this, along with removing the top of the tree, is likely a good practice if you want to give the tree the best chance of survival. But again, there are no guarantees once a tree blows over.

Following the storm there has also been a lot of justified speculation about the prevention of tree loss by reducing or eliminating irrigation for the first 5 years, reducing fertilizer applications in young trees, the po-

Continued on Page 12, See Term

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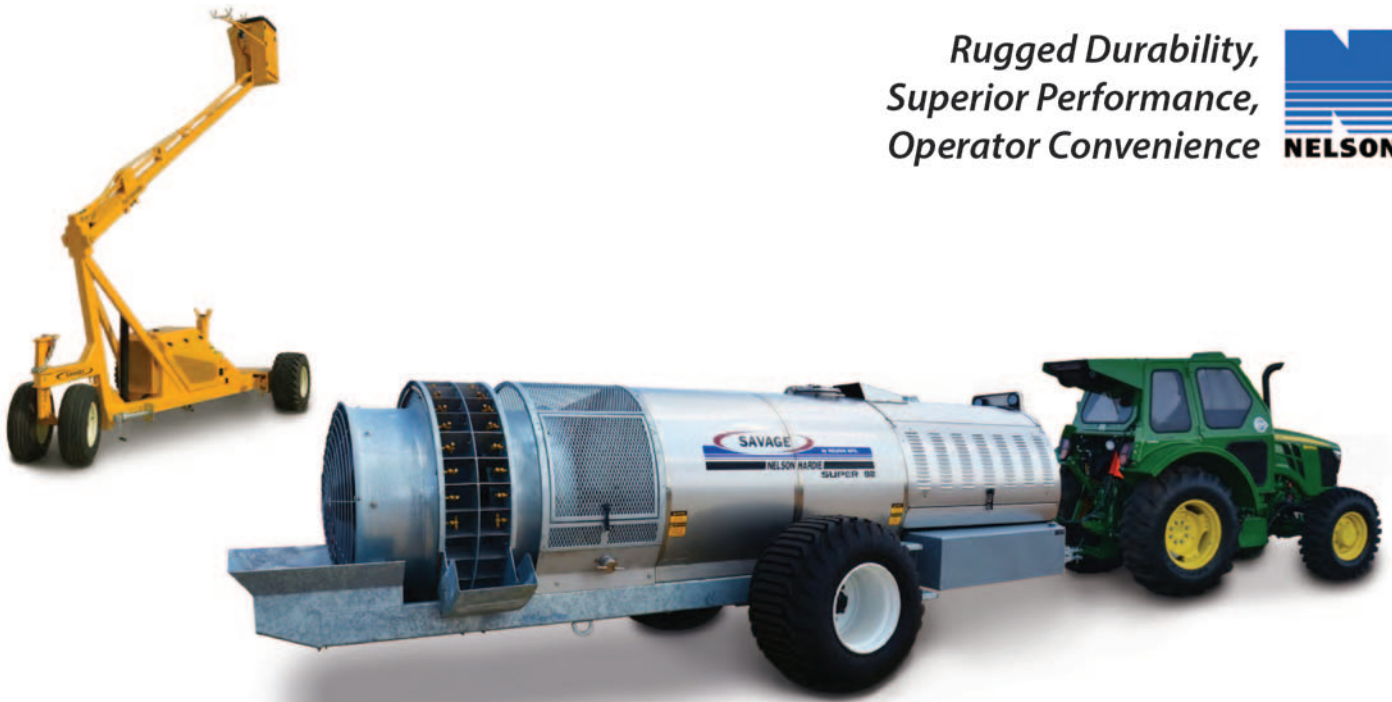


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tential differences between tree loss on drip vs microsprinkler, and moving drip irrigation lines further away from the tree. I'm sure there's something to be learned regarding all these variables from this storm and we will be looking into that. Everyone understandably needs to get trees into production as soon as possible. However, slowing down the growth push on these young trees a little from what we've been doing is probably not a bad idea. Producing large trees above ground without a large enough root system to support it below ground not only presents problems with trees blowing over -- but it also plays a role in a lot of the scorching and stress problems we see early on in the life of young trees.

I know a number of growers who don't irrigate at all for the first 5 years. I wouldn't advocate this approach but I do think there's a lot of room to cut back on irrigation (and nitrogen fertilizer) in those early years. If you don't irrigate at all, you have to truck water to the trees several times per year and if you

don't have the resources in time and labor to do this, in a dry year, it could lead to as much or more tree mortality than a storm. The irrigation schedule we recommend for young trees is based on getting maximum growth from those trees. Perhaps maximum growth in the first 3 to 5 years is not necessarily what is best for the trees. The good news is that we have a lot of room to cut back on water in the early years and still give them enough to keep the trees healthy. The same goes for nitrogen.

There is a fine line between getting the trees into production relatively quickly and pushing the trees too hard. We just need to find that line and it will vary from one orchard to the next based on soil and location. When pondering the approach to growing young trees and/or considering drastic changes to your irrigation system such as changing from microsprinkler to drip, etc., one must also weigh these decisions based on a consideration of how often you expect to deal with a major hurricane or tropical storm. We used to see that

Continued on Page 14, See Term



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The above picture is courtesy of Georgia Senator Russ Goodman in helicopter footage of Shiloh Pecan Farms & Nursery based in Lowndes County following Hurricane Idalia.

Buck Paulk of Shiloh Pecan Farms has some 4,000 acres of pecan trees spread across multiple South Georgia counties and said, “We’ve had damage from other tropical storms, but for us it’s the worst we’ve had in my lifetime...Even if a tree wasn’t blown over or left leaning, I think about half of our crop is on the ground.”

Term Continued from Page 12

planting too deep led to a lot of tree loss because brace roots weren’t established. People started planting with that uppermost lateral root at the surface and we don’t see as many orchards planted too deep now compared to the past. Idalia showed us that when you have 50-80 mile per hour winds on top of 6-10” of rain, a storm has no real preference for trees planted too deep vs those that aren’t, for trees on microsprinkler vs. those with drip, nor for trees that are pushed vs. trees that aren’t. Those conditions are going to create some tree loss no matter what. A lot of it simply comes down to being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

One thing we do see is that hedged trees suffer less damage, largely because they are more compact in size

and smaller in regard to their root systems. This outcome itself suggests that whether you are hedging a 30–40-year-old tree or slowing down a young tree with severe pruning, limited water and reduced fertilizer, keeping that tree more compact and in better proportion with its root system gives it a better chance. Most climatologists suggest that we are not necessarily seeing more frequent hurricanes/tropical storms, but those storms we do see have increased in intensity over the last several years. We, as an industry and as individual growers, should calculate that risk for ourselves and decide the best course of action. As we evaluate what happened, we will be trying to learn from the experience and minimize such losses as much as possible in the future. 🌰



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“Thousands of trees have been lost from the state line up to Berrien and Cook counties. Several large growers have reported an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 trees down from their orchards,”

Dr. Wells reported.

“In this most severely impacted area,” Wells said, percentage of downed trees in damaged orchards range from 30%-80% of total orchard trees. Most of the trees uprooted or left leaning were 20 years and under.”

Photos on these pages 16 & 17 were taken at Hudson Pecan Farms in Irwin and Ben Hill counties in the week following Hurricane Idalia.

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“As the winds push and pull these trees, it’s like grabbing a fence post, and then they topple over, especially trees under ten years old. These trees were loaded with a good crop and they can’t withstand 70 mile per hour winds combined with six inches of rain....If a tree is leaning more than 30 degrees it isn’t viable. We’ll saw off any uprooted trees or leaning trees that we know won’t make it at the trunk, haul them out of the orchard and burn or chip them.”

— Buck Paulk, Shiloh Pecan Farms

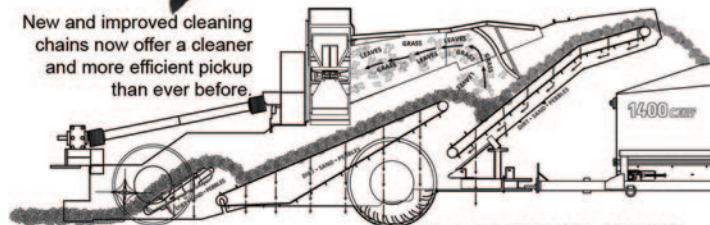
Paulk estimates it will take his farm employees about a month to clean up all of the storm debris in his orchards.

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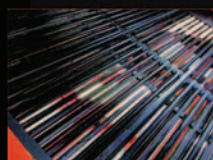
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James Exum of Exum Pecan in Morven, who previously served on the Board of Directors of the Georgia Pecan Growers Association, estimates Idalia uprooted about 400 trees on his 200 acres of orchards.

*“You not only lose the tree, but you lose its future production. It’ll take 20 years to get back to where we were the day before the hurricane.”
Exum stated.*

His wife, Linda Exum, continued, “Some parts of our orchards look like a bomb was dropped on it. Some of this damage James and I will never see the farm recover from in our lifetime. There’s a crop out there still, but we have a lot of cleaning up to do to get to it. Hurricane Michael didn’t do us this bad and we spent six weeks cleaning up from that storm.”



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“In these hardest hit counties, crop loss could range between 50 to 80% depending on the orchard. In the hardest hit areas, it is approaching Michael scale. Those that got hit, got hit bad, but from a state perspective the damage is far less than Michael.”
—Dr. Lenny Wells

Photos on these two pages were taken at Hudson Pecan Farms in Irwin and Ben Hill counties in the week following Hurricane Idalia.



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After the Rain

REBUILDING THE RUINS FROM HURRICANE MICHAEL

Home of Miley & Clair Adams

Camilla, Georgia



Hurricane Michael slammed into the Florida Panhandle as a Category 5 hurricane on October 10, 2018, and wreaked havoc on South Georgia farms at a level unseen before that day. Georgia pecan growers suffered devastating blows to their crop during the peak of harvest season with some orchards reporting 80% tree loss and more.

For Miley and Clair Adams, the ruins of their orchards would forever become part of their family as they salvaged the damaged trees to create beauty within their homestead. The Adams relocated and expanded their home to include the flooring and ceilings throughout the structure with pecan tree wood beginning a year after the storm. Located in Mitchell County, the Adams opened their home to our staff to showcase the beauty of the wood.





The front porch features golden pecan wood in the ceiling.

The home's exterior design has pecan wood ceilings flowing from the carport to the side entrance door and continuing through the interior of the house.



The expanded design includes flooring and furniture, such as their dining room table, made from pecan tree wood.

Photography by Andrew McBrayer

Clair's classic style showcases the rich texture of the pecan wood flooring through the master bedroom.



Beauty continues into the master bath with pecan flooring.



Georgia's own Cason Anderson with CCA Pecan in Kathleen, Georgia created this side table from pecan trees.





The side entrance of the house features a vaulted, cathedral ceiling made from pecan wood.

Exposed brick backdrop in the kitchen enhances the beauty of pecan wood flooring and ceilings.





Sprayer Coverage On Two Airblast Sprayers

By Andrew Sawyer, Southeast GA Area Pecan Agent, Jeff Cook, Area Pecan Agent/Peach County Agent and Dr. Glen Rains, UGA Engineer

In spraying pecan, coverage is key. In November 2022, we had the opportunity to observe two different air blast sprayers. UGA Engineer Dr. Glen Rains, Peach County Agent Jeff Cook and I met at Lawton Pearsons's orchard with representatives from the Slimline Turbo Mist (Figure 1) sprayer and an Aerofan (Figure 2) air blast sprayer. The purpose was to observe tree coverage of these sprayers, especially the ability to increase coverage in the upper canopy.

The Slimline uses a turbine instead of a traditional fan to produce air flow and volume to move water droplets into the canopy. The turbine compresses the air and then releases it -- producing potentially more air movement and even pressure across all parts of the sprayer head. Water pressure on the Slimline ran at 100 psi compared to 150 psi on the Aerofan air blast sprayer.

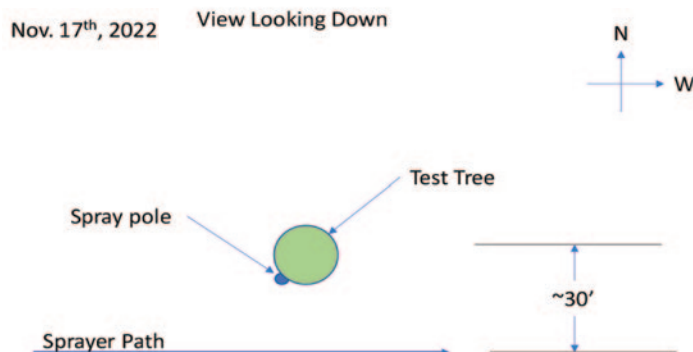


Figure 1. Slimline air blast sprayer



Figure 2. Aerofan air blast sprayer

This test was completed in an old 'Stuart' orchard with trees at 80-foot spacing. We sprayed two times for each sprayer on one side of the test tree. The Aerofan was spraying at 50 gallons per acre and the Slimline was spraying at 34 gallons per acre. Yellow, water sensitive

Continued on Page 26, See Two

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Figure 3. Dr. Glen Rains takes the cherry picker to the top of the test tree to observe the 60-foot spray coverage.

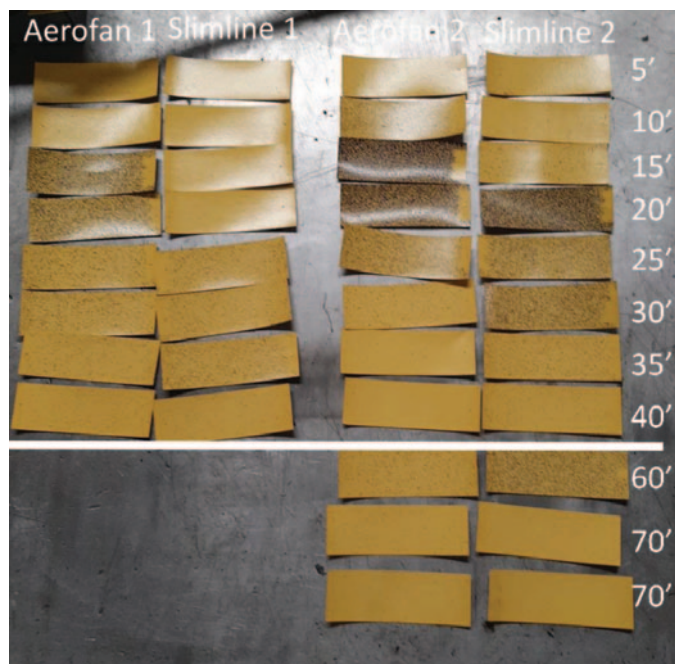


Figure 4. Dye on water sensitive cards shows the spray pattern of each sprayer on its first and second spray.

cards were placed in 5-foot increments on a pole 40-feet into the tree. Additional cards were set in the upper canopy at about 60 – 70 feet using the cherry picker as shown in Figure 3.

In summary, the Slimline appeared to have a shifted deposition plot towards higher heights above the ground compared to the Aerofan sprayer (Table 1). This could be due to the direction of the air blast or the higher air speed due to the turbine as it leaves the nozzle. Both sprayers seem to have approximately a 30-foot height range in which they are providing moderate to high percentage coverage of the foliage ($\geq 10\%$). The water sensitive cards showed the Slimline provided better coverage at higher heights and Aerofan had better coverage at lower heights at their current settings (Figure 4 and Table 1).

Keep in mind, the Slimline sprayer was putting out 34 gallons of water per acre compared to the 50 gallons per acre from Aerofan. Would a 50 gallon per acre provide better spray coverage for the Slimline? This may not be a perfect comparison. Less water per acre is certainly advantageous, but only if potential for scab reduction is maintained.

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Thanks to growers Hudson Jerles and Lawton Pearson, as well as industry representatives for helping set up and evaluate these sprayers.

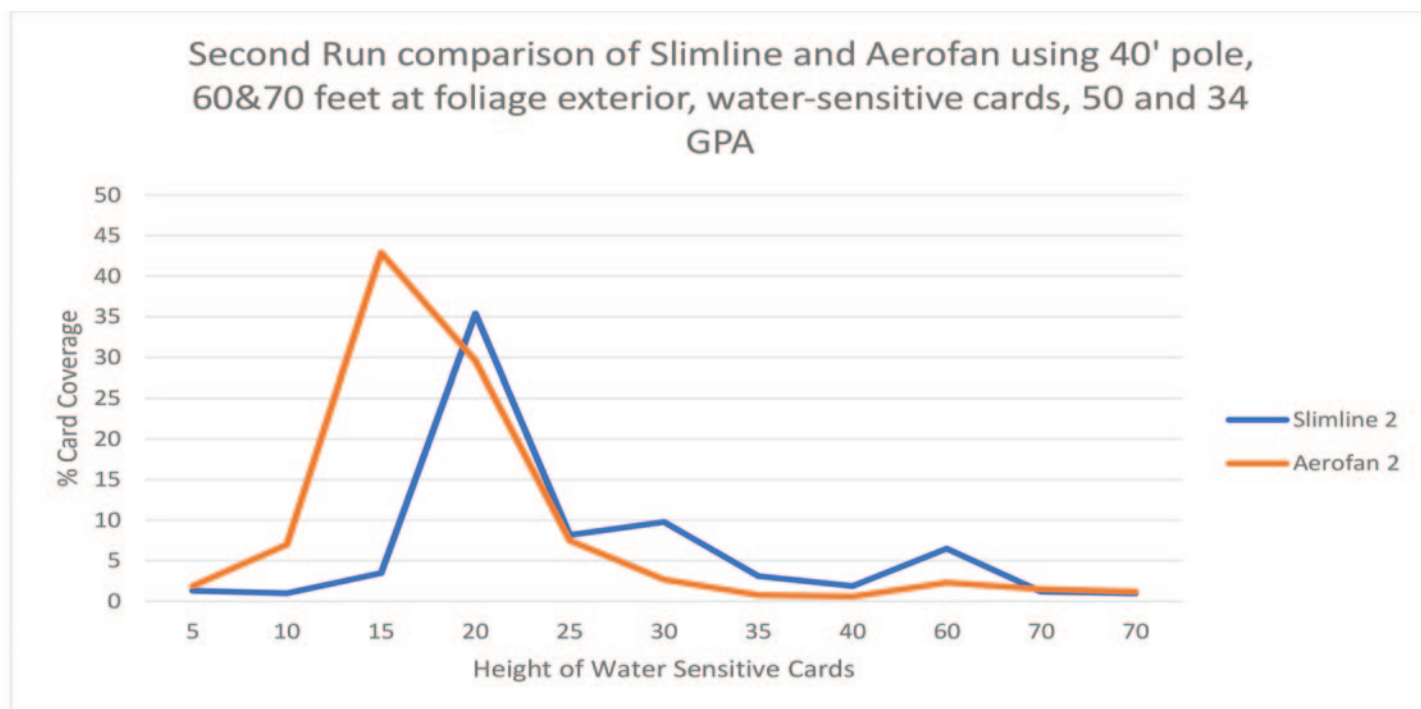


Table 1. Spray coverage at different heights between Aerofan and Slimline Air Blast Sprayers, November 2022, Peach County, GA.

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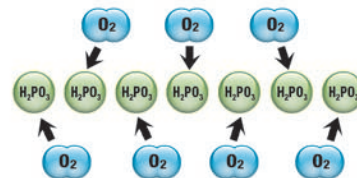
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USDA Offers Disaster Assistance To Farmers And Livestock Producers In Georgia Impacted By Hurricane Idalia

Submitted by USDA

Valdosta, Sept. 12, 2023 – Georgia agricultural operations have been significantly impacted by Hurricane Idalia and related weather events. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has technical and financial assistance available to help farmers and livestock producers recover. Impacted producers should contact their local USDA Service Center to report losses and learn more about program options available to assist in their recovery from crop, land, infrastructure and livestock losses and damages.

“USDA stands ready to assist our Southeast farmers, livestock producers, landowners, and restore farmland, forests and watersheds in the aftermath of Hurricane Idalia,” said Robert Bonnie, Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC). “USDA employees are working diligently to deliver FPAC’s ex-

tensive portfolio of disaster assistance programs and services.”

USDA Disaster Assistance

Producers who experience livestock deaths may be eligible for the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). To participate in LIP, producers will be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent.

Meanwhile, the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) compensates eligible producers for hive loss, stored feed and grazing losses. For ELAP, producers will need to file a notice of loss within 30 days and hon-

Continued on Page 32, See USDA



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eybee losses within 15 days.

Additionally, eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers may be eligible for cost-share assistance through the Tree Assistance Program (TAP) to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes or vines lost. This complements Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program or crop insurance coverage, which covers the crop but not the plants or trees in all cases. For TAP, a program application must be filed within 90 days.

“Once you are able to safely evaluate the impact on your operation, be sure to contact your local FSA office to timely report all crop, livestock and farm infrastructure damages and losses,” said Arthur Tripp, State Executive Director for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Georgia. “To expedite FSA disaster assistance, you will likely need to provide documents, such as farm records, herd inventory, receipts and pictures of damages or losses.”

FSA also offers a variety of direct and guaranteed farm loans, including operating and emergency farm loans, to producers who cannot secure commercial financing. Producers in counties with a primary or con-


tiguous disaster designation may be eligible for low-interest emergency loans to help them recover from production and physical losses. Loans can help producers replace essential property, purchase inputs like livestock, equipment, feed and seed, cover family living expenses or refinance farm-related debts and other needs. Additionally, FSA has a variety of loan servicing options available for borrowers who are unable to make scheduled payments on their farm loan debt to FSA because of reasons beyond their control.

FSA borrowers who have concerns about making their upcoming direct FSA loan installment payment or who have already missed a recent installment payment may be eligible for assistance with cash flow concerns. Borrowers can contact their local FSA office or the FSA Call Center at 877-508-8364 between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. ET to inquire about eligibility.


Risk Management

Producers who have risk protection through federal crop insurance or FSA’s NAP should report crop damage to their crop insurance agent or FSA office. If they have crop insurance, producers should report crop dam-

Continued on Page 34, See USDA



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age to their agent within 72 hours of damage discovery and follow up in writing within 15 days. Additionally, producers who had hurricane and tropical storm coverage through RMA's Hurricane Insurance Protection – Wind Index will receive payments within a few weeks if their county qualified. Please check with your crop insurance agent for more information and updates.

For NAP covered crops, a Notice of Loss (CCC-576) must be filed within 15 days of the loss becoming apparent, except for hand-harvested crops, which should be reported within 72 hours.

“Crop insurance and other USDA risk management options are there to help producers manage risk because we never know what nature has in store for the future,” said Davina Lee, Director of RMA's Regional Office that covers the Southeast. “The Approved Insurance Providers, loss adjusters and agents are experienced and well trained in handling these types of events.”

Producers who have not applied for NAP coverage may still be covered. FSA has updated NAP to remove barriers and establish procedures through which an underserved producer with a CCC-860, Socially Disadvan-

taged, Limited Resource, Beginning and Veteran Farmer or Rancher Certification on file prior to the applicable NAP application closing date will automatically receive basic coverage for any NAP-eligible crops. Like all NAP-covered producers, underserved producers will still need to file a notice of loss and apply for program benefits.

Conservation

FSA's Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) and Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP) assists landowners and forest stewards with financial and technical assistance to restore fencing, remove debris, replace damaged irrigation system, land leveling and more. FSA has updated ECP policy to permit advance payments up to 25% of costs for all ECP practices.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) can play a vital role in assisting producers recover from natural disasters like hurricanes and floods. Through EQIP, NRCS provides financial assistance to repair and prevent the excessive soil erosion caused or impacted by natural disasters.

Continued on Page 38, See USDA

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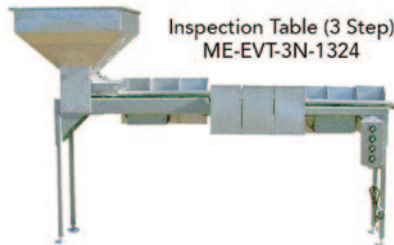
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USDA, Continued from Page 34

NRCS will hold an Emergency EQIP Signup for states affected by Hurricane Idalia and will finalize defining geographic areas and eligible conservation practices, as well as fund assessment needs, based on the disaster zone declarations. Eligible conservation practices will vary by state.

Assistance for Communities

NRCS administers the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program, which assists local government sponsors with the cost of addressing watershed impairments or hazards such as debris removal and stream-bank stabilization. The EWP Program is a recovery effort aimed at relieving imminent hazards to life and property caused by floods, fires, windstorms and other natural disasters. All projects must have an eligible project sponsor. NRCS may bear up to 75% of the eligible construction cost of emergency measures (90% within county-wide limited-resource areas as identified by the U.S. Census data). The remaining costs must come from local sources and can be in the form of cash or in-kind services.

EWP is designed for installation of recovery measures to safeguard life and property as a result of a natural disaster. Threats that the EWP Program addresses are termed watershed impairments. These include, but are not limited to:

- Debris-clogged waterways.
- Unstable streambanks.
- Severe erosion jeopardizing public infrastructure.
- Wind-borne debris removal.

Eligible sponsors include cities, counties, towns or any federally recognized Native American tribe or tribal organizations. Sponsors must be able to provide the local construction share, obtain permits and site access, and agree to perform operations and maintenance of the constructed projects. Willing sponsors must submit a formal assistance request (by mail or email) to the state conservationist within 60 days of the natural disaster occurrence or 60 days from the date when access to the sites become available. For more information, potential sponsors should contact their local NRCS office.

"EWP provides immediate assistance to communi-

Continued on Page 40, See USDA

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USDA, Continued from Page 38

ties to mitigate potential hazards to life and property resulting from disasters and particularly the severe erosion and flooding that can occur,” said Terrance Rudolph, State Conservationist for the NRCS in Georgia. “EWP allows us to work with local sponsors to help damaged watersheds so that lives and property are protected while preventing further devastation in the community.”

More Information

On farmers.gov, the Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool, Disaster-at-a-Glance fact sheet, and Farm Loan Discovery Tool can help producers and landowners determine program or loan options. For assistance with a crop insurance claim, producers and landowners should contact their crop insurance agent. For FSA and NRCS programs, they should contact their local USDA Service Center.

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GPGA'S ANNUAL

By GPGA Staff

More than 250 growers and pecan industry professionals met in Byron, Georgia this year for Georgia Pecan Growers Association's Annual Fall Field Day. This year's event was held at USDA Southeastern Fruit and Tree Nut Laboratory on Thursday, September 7th.

The morning kicked off with a welcome presented by GPGA President, Chris Clough. Georgia Agriculture Commissioner, Tyler Harper, gave an update on Georgia Department of Agriculture along with updates from Hurricane Idalia. Dr. David Shapiro-Illan, USDA Research Leader started the program with an overview of the day.

In the orchard, attendees boarded 10 trams in a set of three rotations to hear research information led by the USDA Pecan Team Researchers. The first rotation was led by Dr. David Shapiro-Illan, Research Leader/ Research Entomologist. Shapiro-Illan discussed microbial biopesticides for control of pecan weevil. At Shapiro-Illan's post, there were three Postdoctoral Research Entomologists. The first postdoctoral was Dr. Kyle Slusher, who discussed entomopathogenic nematodes as a potential biological control option against ambrosia beetles. Following him, Dr. Colin Wong discussed biological control of flatheaded borers using entomopathogenic nematodes and biological control of hickory shuckworm using insect virus. Dr. Cameron Bardsley concluded discussion at this stop with his research of pecan food

safety, microbial transfer, postharvest treatments and sanitizer efficacy.

Dr. Ted Cottrell, Research Entomologist, and Dr. Clive Bock, Research Plant Pathologist led the second rotation. Cottrell began by discussing hickory shuckworm, pecan nut casebearer, pecan budmoth, pecan aphids, pecan weevil and stink bugs. Dr. Clive Bock discussed pecan scab life cycle, spray coverage and disease control, pecan bacterial leaf scorch, and unusual diseases this year.

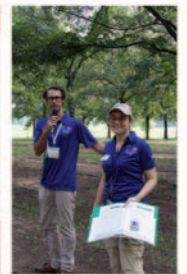
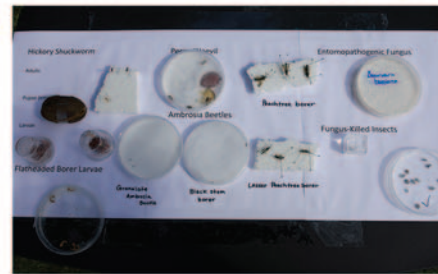
The last rotation for the day was led by Dr. Cristina Pisani, Research Horticulturist. Pisani led a discussion regarding current research projects happening at the USDA Laboratory in Byron. She discussed climate adaptation of pecan trees, effects of nano-fertilizers and hedge pruning. Also, at Dr. Pisani's post, Postdoctoral Research Plant Pathologist, Dr. Jordan Brungardt, discussed pecan scab pathology, molecular biology, bioinformatics and biotechnology.

Following the orchard tour, attendees enjoyed a sponsored lunch at the USDA Research Laboratory. During lunch, growers were able to mingle and network with other growers and industry professionals.

This year's Fall Field Day was a huge success with a great turnout. **GPGA sincerely thanks all of our speakers, sponsors and staff who made this day happen and offers a huge thanks to all who attended!**



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Lamar Continues Service As Chair Of Pecan Commission

Compiled by Amy Howell, Copy Editor, The Pecan Grower Magazine

The Georgia Agricultural Commodity Commission for Pecans, also known as the Georgia Pecan Commission, recently re-elected RG Lamar to serve as its Chairman through the next funding cycle in 2026.

Additionally, Lanair Worsham, Jr., decided to step away from his position on the Commission Board after serving several terms, where he also spent time as Chairman and was a crucial voice for growers. Thank you, Lanair, for your time and service to the Commission and for your unwavering support of GPGA! We appreciate you! The current board consists of the following representatives:

- **R.G. Lamar, Chairman**
Hawkinsville, GA
- **Brenda Evans**
Fort Valley, GA
- **Emory Mixon**
Lyons, GA
- **Greg Leger**
Cordele, GA
- **Roy Goodson**
Leesburg, GA

Advisory members appointed to the Board include **Will Easterlin** of Montezuma and **Cason Anderson** of Kathleen.

The Georgia Pecan Commission funds research, educational and promotional programs in order to increase demand for Georgia pecans and has been instrumental

in supporting the marketing endeavors of the Georgia Pecan Growers Association (GPGA).

Founded in 1995 by Georgia pecan growers, the Commission raises awareness of the nutritional, health and economic benefits of pecans as a regular part of the American diet, resulting in increased sales and trade opportunities for pecan growers in Georgia. . Some of the research projects funded by the Commission with The University of Georgia and the USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) address production practices, disease and insect control, variety development, water management and health benefits of pecan included in diets. Growers recently approved the pecan assessment in 2023 that will run until 2026. The pecan assessment is one cent per pound is applicable to growers with 30 acres or more of pecans in Georgia. The most recent referendum passed with 82.7% of those voting in favor

Continued on Page 48, See Chair



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Chair, Continued from Page 46

of continuing the assessment. Collections are authorized under the Georgia Pecan Commission Marketing Order which must be ap-

proved every three years. This assessment is separate from the Federal Market Order for Pecans Checkoff. Georgia's pecan industry includes growers and shellers, aggregators (businesses that buy from multiple producers and sell in bulk to others) and brokers (who also buy in bulk but sell in response to market demand). The Georgia Pecan Commission works with all of these groups to promote the consumption of pecans domestically and internationally. 🌰



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GPGA will award up to (2) scholarships in the amount of \$500 for the 2024 Academic Year to deserving upcoming and/ or college students. (Verification of enrollment will be a pre-requisite for receiving funds.)

Application Specifications:

- 1.) Applicants should submit a one-page cover page that includes the following information:
 - Name, Mailing Address, County of Permanent residence, Email Address, and Phone Numbers for Contact
 - Parent/Guardian Name and Phone Numbers for Contact
 - High School Attended with Anticipated Graduation Date
 - If the applicant is currently in college, please also list college, as well as declared major
 - List High School or College GPA as of Fall Semester 2023
 - List High School/College/Community Awards, Activities, Work Experience, and Involvement
- 2.) Applicants should submit an essay describing their educational accomplishments and career goals. (Not to exceed two pages, typed)
- 3.) Applicants should include the name, address, phone number, and email address for two (2) professional references. Such references might include teachers, employers, and school administrators, as examples.
- 4.) Award preference will be given to students who reside or attend high school in pecan-growing regions within the state of Georgia.

Submission Details:

Deadline for scholarship applications is January 31, 2024

NO late applications will be accepted.

Winners will be notified in early March.

Mail applications to the following address:

Georgia Pecan Growers Association

Attn: Scholarship Committee

P.O. Box 1367

Tifton, GA 31793



PECAN PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT TIPS

October

- Prepare for harvest by mowing, remove debris and service equipment
- Make fall nickel application to severely deficient trees
- Early harvesting may begin
- Nuts may need mechanical drying
- Market crop
- Continue irrigation as needed
- Prepare site for new planting
- Apply herbicide as needed
- Be aware of pre-harvest intervals for all chemicals applied

November

- Harvest early for top quality and price
- Don't allow pecans to lie on ground for extended period of time
- Market crop
- Prepare site for new planting
- Collect and stratify nuts for planting
- Prevent damage to crop from nuisance wildlife

December

- Continue harvest and marketing of crop if not complete
- Prune and train trees
- Lime, zinc, phosphorous and magnesium may be applied
- Remove debris
- Plant trees
- Service and repair equipment
- Thin overcrowded orchards
- Soil test
- Dig nursery trees



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Washington Update U.S. House And Senate Appropriations Committees Continue Work On Government Funding

By Robert L. Redding, Jr., The Redding Firm

Earlier this year, The U.S. House Appropriations Committee approved the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill in a 34 to 27 vote. The legislation provides a total of \$25.313 billion for programs

under the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee, \$532 million (2.1%) below the FY23 enacted level and \$3.622 billion (12.5%) below the FY24 President's Budget Request.

Included in the bill are pecan provisions proposed by Agriculture Subcommittee Ranking Member Sanford Bishop (GA-02) and supported by the pecan industry. These National Pecan Federation (NPF) supported research initiatives -- pecan processing and pecan genetic research--are in their fourth year of funding. Total funding for Fiscal Year 2023 was \$4 million each for pecan processing and pecan genetic research projects.

For Fiscal Year 2024, total proposed funding is \$4.5 million for pecan processing research and \$4.5 million for pecan genetic research.

Additionally, The Committee expects NASS to continue its ongoing activities at the frequency levels assumed in fiscal year 2023, including barley acreage and production estimates; the Bee and Honey Program; the Chemical Use Data Series; the Floriculture Crops Report; and Fruit and Vegetable Reports, including in-sea-

Continued on Page 55, See Update

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Update, Continued from Page 54

son forecasts for noncitrus fruit and tree nut crops such as pecans.

In the U.S. Senate, a three bill “minibus” that consists of the Transportation Housing, and Urban Development bill, the Military Construction-VA bill, and the Agriculture and FDA bill is currently being considered.

A number of amendments were filed for consideration in this legislation, including one proposed by U.S. Senator Mike Lee of Utah. The proposed amendment attempts to attach the so-called Opportunities for Fairness in Farming Act (or “OFF Act”) to the spending bill. If enacted, this amendment would substantially undermine our members’ ability to promote U.S. agriculture and natural resource-based commodity products. The National Pecan Federation (NPF) along with the American Farm Bureau Federation and 26 other agriculture groups signed on to a letter to Senators Schumer and McConnell opposing this amendment.

National Pecan Federation

Requests Section 32

Purchase for Pecans

The National Pecan Federation (NPF) recently sent a letter to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service advocating for a Section 32 Commodity Procurement Solicitation for pecans. Section 32 of the Funds for Strengthening Markets, Income and Supply Act authorizes USDA to make purchases of commodities experiencing an oversupply situation.

As stated in the letter, the U.S. pecan industry has experienced many challenges in recent years,

from retaliatory tariffs in China to rising input prices, labor shortages and adverse weather. A significant purchase of pecans from USDA would be extremely beneficial to the industry.

USDA will begin considering Section 32 requests in the next fiscal year, which begins on October 1, 2023.

Continued on Page 56, See Update

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Update, Continued from Page 55

**Senator Tuberville (R-AL) Introduces
Farmers' Market Expansion Act**

U.S. Senator Tommy Tuberville (R-AL) recently introduced legislation titled the "Farmers' Market Expansion Act," that would include pecans and other tree nuts in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP).

The SFMNP provides fresh, nutritious, locally grown fruits, vegetables, herbs and honey to eligible low-income seniors. National Pecan Federation Chairman Larry Don Womack commented in Senator Tuberville's press release on this legislation stating: "The National Pecan Federation greatly appreciates Senator Tuberville's work on this legislation to include tree nuts in the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. Pecans, which are the only major tree nut indigenous to North America, are extremely nutritious. Including pecans in the SFMNP will help pecan producers by opening new markets while giving consumers improved access to a healthy and delicious product."

**U.S. DOL and U.S. DHS Propose New
H-2A Regulations**

On September 12, 2023, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) announced the issuance of a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), Improving Protections for Workers in Temporary Agricultural Employment in the United States. The NPRM proposes to amend the regulations governing the certification of temporary employment of nonimmigrant workers employed in temporary or seasonal agricultural employment and the enforcement of the contractual obligations applicable to employers of these nonimmigrant workers.

On September 18, 2023, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) released a new proposed rule to "Modernize H-2 Program Requirements, Oversight, and Worker Protections". This proposed rule provides new whistleblower protections, enhances consequences for charging prohibited fees for visa workers, and eliminates the requirement that workers who receive H-2A visas can only change to employers that use the E-Verify system to check workers' legal status.

Earlier this year, House Committee on Agriculture Chairman Glenn "GT" Thompson (PA-15) and Ranking Member David Scott (GA-13) announced a bipartisan agriculture labor working group to address labor issues. Members of the working group were selected from current Agriculture Committee members and aim to represent every sector and geographic region of American agriculture. The working group recently released a survey to gauge producer opinions on agricultural workforce issues, which they will use to compile an interim report analyzing the current H-2A program as well as a final report with recommendations. 🌰



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Georgia Pecans Participate At Destination Ag Day

By Jacey Pella, Communications & Events Intern, GPGA

ABAC's Georgia Museum of Agriculture hosted Destination Ag Day on September 16, 2023. GPGA's communications and events intern, Jacey Pella, had the opportunity to attend along with other commodity groups to advocate and educate children and their families on the lifecycle of pecans, the health benefits of a pecan, and where they could find pecans in their local communities. This was an amazing opportunity to connect with the Tifton area. There were a little over 200 guests that attended the Destination Ag Day. Destination Ag is a program provided to give

children hands on experiences with a variety of Georgia's commodities and grow awareness of agriculture and natural resources most pressing issues like land and water conservation. 🌰



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Sunnyland Farms Honored With The goBeyondProfit 2023 Champion Award

Submitted by goBeyondProfit

goBeyondProfit, a first-of-its-kind business leader initiative that inspires business generosity, announced in September that it has honored Albany-based Sunnyland Farms and its CEO, Alex Willson, with the **goBeyondProfit Champion Award**.

This year marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of Sunnyland Farms, a 1,760-acre pecan farm and manufacturing company. Sunnyland Farms, and its CEO Alex Willson were nominated and selected for this award by fellow Georgia business leaders for their comprehensive, generational approach to generosity.

Across the decades, the Willson family has invested deeply in the people surrounding their business by providing quality jobs to generations of families as well as offering support to the local non-profits serving the needs of the Albany community.

"From the earliest days when my grandparents first launched the business, we have tried to play our small part in helping the greater community that is southwest

Georgia," said Alex Willson, CEO of Sunnyland Farms, "Where there's a need, we try to help fill it."

By infusing a people-first commitment into every aspect of company life they proved resilient over the years, weathering hurricanes that damaged thousands of acres of land and a recent kitchen fire that threatened to shut the company down during their busiest season.

"Sunnyland has always been 100% committed to our employees," said Willson. "We make sure they know we have a vested interest in them, not only inside the company but also outside of their job as well. Whether that's about offering training and promotion opportunities or shift flexibility to spend more time with their families, it's about creating a team and a family that can work together for a lifetime."

Past award winners include Gas South, Creature Comforts Brewing, H.J. Russell & Company, Aflac,

Continued on Page 59, See Award



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Award, Continued from Page 58

W&A Engineering, Cox Enterprises, Herschend Enterprises, Chick-fil-A, Signature FD, Vector Global Logistics, and Goodr.

In an interview with goBeyondProfit, Alex Willson shared the inherent challenges of running an agricultural manufacturing business as well as the leadership shifts required to instill generosity strategies into every aspect of business life. The full interview is available at www.gobeyondprofit.org/champion

“Anyone who comes into contact with Sunnyland Farms will be struck by the remarkable humility they demonstrate given their extraordinary contributions,” said goBeyondProfit president Megan McCamey. “What began as an ardent commitment to southwest Georgia has grown into a global example of enduring and evolving business generosity.”

Notable historic and ongoing contributions:

- Albany Museum of Art
- Albany Symphony Orchestra
- Annual Partner in Excellence: Martin Luther King Elementary
- Annual Fundraising Partner: Boys & Girls Club of Albany
- Helping Hands End Hunger with Phoebe Putney Hospital
- University of Georgia, The Willson Center for Humanities & Arts
- University of Georgia, Willson International Honors Scholar Program
- Willson Hospice House

About Sunnyland Farms

Sunnyland Farms is a 1,760-acre farm nestled in the heart of Pecan Country (Albany, Georgia). Since 1948 we have been the premier provider of gourmet Georgia Pecans, Nuts, Chocolates, Dried Fruits, Candies, and assortments of gifts for all occasions. Our incredible gourmet, Heart Healthy and Kosher certified snacks and pecans for sale are the perfect treat for yourself and perfect for gift giving.

About goBeyondProfit

goBeyondProfit is a statewide alliance launched by business leaders for business leaders to spur corporate generosity and improve people's lives. To submit a nomination for future goBeyondProfit Champions, visit the goBeyondProfit website. 🍪

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Southeast Georgia Holds Pecan Field Day

By Mary Mikelyn Bruorton, Communications & Events Coordinator, GPGA

On September 13th Appling County Extension hosted their annual Southeast Georgia Pecan Field Day in Baxley at the Appling County Extension Office to a record number of attendees. The date and location were changed due to Hurricane Idalia, which passed through the area on August 30th, the same day this field day was originally scheduled. However, the September 13th date proved to be a huge success with over 120 in attendance.

Growers, researchers, and other industry professionals gathered to learn more about the pecan industry. This year's event offered equipment viewing and reports from the University of Georgia (UGA) researchers and other UGA industry partners.

Matt Tucker with Lasseter Equipment and Cole Byers, a graduate student with UGA Ag Engineering, opened the program discussing new drone technology that can distribute spray chemicals to an orchard. Attendees then went outside to see a demonstration of how to operate the drone.

Andrew Sawyer, Southeast Area Pecan Agent, led a discussion on his findings on different herbicides used for pecan trees. Dr. Lenny Wells, UGA Horticulturist, gave an update on this year's pecan season after the effects of Hurricane Idalia and discussed orchard thinning. Dr. Aburba Barman, UGA Pecan Entomol-

ogist, led a discussion on insect management in pecan orchards. The last speaker of the event was Jason Mallard, UGA Water Agent. Mallard led a discussion on the current research and management of pecan irrigation.

The Southeast Georgia Pecan Field Day ended with a delicious sponsored lunch, which gave more opportunities for growers and vendors to network. Shane

Continued on Page 61, See Day

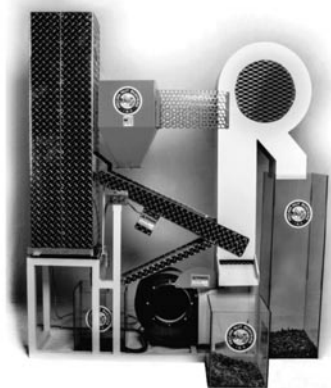
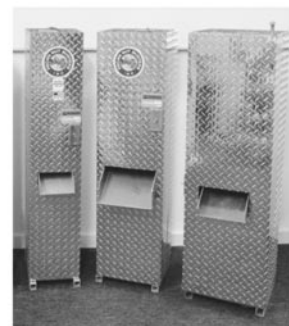
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Day, Continued from Page 60


Curry, Appling County Extension Agent, and his team hosted a fantastic and successful event. GPGA would

like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of the Southeast Georgia Pecan Field Day! 🌰



Cole Byers, a graduate student at UGA, speaks about drone technology.

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Texas Pecan Growers Hosts 102nd Annual Conference And Trade Show

By Mary Mikelyn Bruorton, Communications & Events Coordinator, GPGA

The Texas Pecan Growers gathered in Denton, TX on July 30th - August 2nd for their 102nd Annual Conference and Trade Show. With 107-degree heat outside, it was the perfect week to stay inside the conference center to network with other growers, exhibitors and to learn from the experts and researchers presenting educational seminars throughout the show.

This year's show kicked off with the 12th Pecan Listening Session. The Listening Sessions were hosted by Texas Pecan Growers Association and Texas A&M University. This session gave growers from different regions opportunities to discuss their problems and needs for the pecan industry. After the listening session, the trade show floor was open and all attendees gathered in the main exhibit hall for the Welcome Reception on Sunday, July 30th. Growers were able to network with other industry partners and discuss everything pecan-related.

Starting the first day of Conference educational seminars was the well-attended Mini Pecan Short Course hosted by Texas AgriLife Extension. After the short course, the National Pecan Federation hosted a Meet & Greet coffee hour with U.S. Congressman Ronny Jackson of Texas. In addition, that evening, the National Pecan Federation also hosted a Fundraising Reception for the Pecan Political Action Committee (PAC).



The educational seminars were well-rounded with a plethora of information for growers of all sizes and operations. Dr. Charles Suh and Dr. Lindsey Perkin with USDA-ARS in College Station debuted their findings on

Continued on Page 63, See Texas



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pecan weevil pheromone research. The next steps that Suh and Perkin want to take for their pecan weevil research is to test weevils collected directly from canopy, analyze weevil pheromone lurs and develop diagnostic tool to fingerprint weevils from different areas in the U.S.

The last session held before lunch on August 1st was the TPGA Business Meeting. TPGA presented four awards to growers and extension agents in Texas as follows: TPGA Small Grower of the Year to Michael Willard of Sequin, TX; TPGA Large Grower of the Year to The Culers Family of Comanche, TX; TPGA Innovative Grower of the Year to Camp David Pecans (David and Margie Nordt) of Millican, TX; and TPGA Extension Agent of the Year to Joel Arce of El Paso, TX.

After lunch, educational seminars continued with The American Pecan Council (APC) and the American Pecan Promotion Board (APPB) giving updates on their marketing effects in the U.S. and internationally. APPB shared two of their campaigns with growers. One of the campaigns partners with the following media outlets: All Mixed Up, Buzzfeed, Pioneer Woman, Good Housekeeping and Country Living. The other campaign they presented was the upcoming Pecan Taco Truck. This campaign will showcase how pecans are nutritious and are uniquely suited for a beloved taco dish that's gone plant based.

The Conference concluded with an orchard tour of Raptor Ag in Marietta, Oklahoma. Raptor Ag is a com-

Continued on Page 64, See Texas

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Texas, Continued from Page 63

mercial improved pecan operation. In 2022 Raptor Ag planted over 100,000 pecan trees over five weeks and has plans to grow even more. The group toured where they have planted their trees and the Raptor Ag team discussed why they chose the varieties for their lands, how

they planted and what their process will be going forward for their trees.

Thanks to the Texas Pecan Growers Association staff for hosting such a successful event!



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Phone: 229-382-2187 – Fax: 404-393-9298

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The Georgia Pecan Growers Association  is a growing, dynamic organization striving to serve the Georgia Pecan industry and meet the needs of our members. Whether you are a grower, supplier, consumer or industry supporter, GPGA welcomes your support of Georgia's Pecan industry through our membership. The GPGA needs your continued support for research, education, marketing and development for the pecan industry in 2024.

Voice of the Industry

GPGA is a founding member of the National Pecan Federation, which houses the Pecan Political Action Committee and allows pecans to lobby in Washington D.C. through one of the agricultural industry's top lobbying firms, The Redding Firm.

GPGA represents your interests at all agriculturally-focused legislative events, both state and national, in order to affect policy.

Education

The Pecan Grower magazine & *The Pecan Grower* eNewsletter are the official publications of GPGA. They provide both time-sensitive news along with the latest research and production management updates for anyone involved in the pecan industry.

GPGA's Annual Trade Show & Educational Conference provides an outlet for networking, industry updates, and new educational information, aiding growers in pesticide credits for application licensing, and more.

GPGA's Fall Field Day showcases hands-on research outcomes from the nation's leading pecan research teams in unique research-based orchards.

Marketing & Promotions

GPGA Staff promotes Georgia Pecans at:

- Domestic & regional trade shows
- International trade shows
- Outbound trade missions
- Inbound trade missions
- Ag field days

GPGA markets Georgia Pecans through:

- Chef camps & partnerships
- Georgia's Museum of Agriculture
- Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)
- Traditional Media (TV ads, billboards)
- Samples Distribution program (at Georgia Welcome Centers, expos, trade shows)
- Georgia Pecan Supplier List

Member Resources

- Graphic Design assistance for ad development
- Educational Resources through our website
- Free subscription to *The Pecan Grower* magazine & *The Pecan Grower* eNewsletter
- Full time staff ready to assist you with all production and marketing needs
- Free admission to GPGA's Fall Field Day

Commercial Membership

Commercial members are critical to the success of the GPGA. Commercial members receive their company contact listing on georgiapecan.org, as well as premium booth placement as an exhibitor at the annual conference, admission for 2 to Fall Field Day, and a year's subscription to *The Pecan Grower* magazine and *The Pecan Grower* eNewsletter.

Please complete the form on the following page and return with payment to GPGA:

By Mail: Georgia Pecan Growers Association; PO Box 1367, Tifton, GA 31793

By Email: sheila@georgiapecan.org

By Fax: 404-393-9298

By Phone: 229-382-2187

Information for joining GPGA can also be found on our website www.georgiapecan.org. A 2024 Membership Card will be mailed out to you for admittance to 2024 Fall Field Day upon receipt of membership payment.

JOIN USTODAY!

The Georgia Pecan Growers Association (GPGA) needs *your* continued support for research, education, marketing and development for the pecan industry in 2024.

You will receive:

- ✓ A one-year subscription to the six-issue *The Pecan Grower* magazine
- ✓ Voting rights in our Board of Director elections (Grower Members only)
- ✓ Our staff available to assist you
- ✓ Free admission with lunch to Georgia Fall Field Day in September 2024



Name for membership card: _____

If requesting additional memberships, please copy and complete form for each submitting member

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email Address _____

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Please mark the option that reflects your individual or business membership

☐ Grower, 30 acres or more, \$200

☐ Farm Manager, \$60

☐ Grower, 29 acres or less, \$100

☐ Commercial Membership, \$250

☐ Non-grower supporter, \$75

☐ Out of State supporter, \$75

Check this box if you would like to receive an invoice from us. ☐

*****The 2024 GPGA membership card will be mailed upon receipt of your payment. Credit card payments can be made online at the www.georgiapecan.org website or by calling our office 229-382-2187 or by mailing this sheet to us.***



Marketing Updates From The American Pecan Council (APC) And American Pecan Promotion Board (APPB)



Submitted by The American Pecan Council

From Insights to Impact: Growing Pecan Awareness and Affinity Among Healthcare Professionals

Over the past year, the collective efforts of the American Pecan Council (APC) and partners have culminated in a surround-sound success for America's pecan growers and processors. APC's collaborative endeavors to reach healthcare professionals (HCPs), fueled by passion and perseverance, have established APC as a trusted resource. Through ongoing investment in the healthcare professional audience over the past few years, the APC has gained a robust and growing network of influential health and nutrition professionals who are now primed for even more meaningful engagement and education. Strategic activations with this priority audience have resulted in meaningful perception change and new ways to tackle the addressable barriers that remain.

Our recent survey provided a comprehensive snapshot of healthcare professional perspectives, preferences, and sentiments when it comes to pecans¹. Consumption and recommendation of pecans is increasing among RDs as HCPs value pecans and identify taste and flavor, nutrition profile, and satiety as the main reasons that pecans appeal to consumer audiences. The APC's targeted health professional engagements have improved knowledge and likelihood to recommend pecans, knowing and understanding the unique nutrient attributes and the heritage story has increased and RDs are more likely to recommend and share information about pecans with their audiences. Some RDNs are not quite familiar with some important benefits of pecans and others do not differentiate between nuts, this shows there is continues opportunity to improve the value of HCPs place on pecans through education and engagement. This can be accomplished by:

- o Maintaining consistent engagement with priority

healthcare professional audiences

- o Create positive experiences and personal connections with pecans/pecan growers as one way of helping HCPs see pecans as more than just another nut.

- o Prioritize strategic education opportunities and materials to fill knowledge gaps that exist related to:

- Pecans' unique nutrition attributes
- Versatility, and convenience
- American Heart Association Heart-Check Certification
- Differentiation of pecans from other nuts and competitor products
- Culinary needs, taking advantage of taste and flavor through reputable partnerships and new recipes
- Pecan portion size
- Proper pecan storage

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Activations That Shaped the Year: A Comprehensive Overview of Achievements

The APCs Pecan Powerhouse Network grew by 349% to 3,163 members, with the informative quarterly newsletters garnering above-industry average open and click rates of 42% and 5.6%, respectively. Throughout the year, over 720 diabetes professionals participated in insights surveys. We learned that diabetes professionals are highly aware of nuts' role for individuals with diabetes or pre-diabetes, and respondents recommend at least one type of nut to their clients and patients primarily for healthy snacks and blood glucose management. This represents an opportunity to showcase pecans' top-notch nutrition, irresistible taste, and convenience to this audience.

In the food service space, the APC executed and promoted sales of two pecan salads in approximately 1,000 healthcare food service facilities across 44 states.

¹. American Pecan Council, Today's Dietitian Follow-up Health Professional Survey, 2023

American Pecan Promotion Board Taco Trucks Serve Up Real-Time Sampling Opportunity

To cap off the summer, the American Pecan Promotion Board (APPB) activated custom branded taco trucks at popular farmers markets in Dallas, Atlanta and Chicago. Consumers sampled Al Pastor-style Pecan Tacos, driving in-person trial while highlighting pecans versatility and showcasing how they serve as a nutritious, natural, plant-based protein.

On-site consumer feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many remarking how they couldn't believe the tacos were made with pecans as the flavor and texture tasted like traditional Al Pastor tacos. Consumer feedback included, "This just changed my life and the

Respondents of our food service insights survey revealed the attributes that make pecans worthwhile to food service professionals included taste and flavor, nutritional elements, versatility, satiety, and convenience. Future engagements with food service professionals should focus on providing education and tailored messaging around these pecan attributes.

A pecans and diabetes podcast was produced with a potential reach of over 21,000 healthcare professionals and through strategic partnerships with six healthcare professionals with influence, the APC successfully sponsored 16 new pieces of content, amplifying pecan messages across nutrition topics, meal and snack ideas, and the heritage story to reach an audience of over 900K. To round everything off, the APC attended two healthcare professional conferences, connecting with over 2400 professionals, achieving over 46k impressions, sharing over 3000 pecan samples and 4600 pieces of branded swag, resources, and recipes. 🥜

way I think of pecans!" and "I'm vegan so I've had a lot of vegan meat alternatives, and I'm just shocked this is pecans!"

Maximizing Reach with Surround Sound Impact

To inspire trial beyond the taco trucks, local influencers from each market attended the taco truck, captured content and then headed back to their kitchens to create an original pecan as a plant-based



Smoky Chipotle Pecan Burrrito Bowl
by Dominique Williamson



protein recipe inspired by the pecan taco they sampled.

Additionally, to drive recipe inspiration in local

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See Marketing**

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markets, we developed a nationally distributed article with plant-based pecan protein recipes, featuring the influencer partners' recipes. The article has been featured in local newspapers across the country, helping to maintain media momentum for the consumer activation. To amplify our activation, APPB deployed both local and national paid social support. Maximizing foot traffic to the trucks, APPB launched geo-targeted posts in each market in the days leading up to the taco truck event. Additionally, APPB promoted the pecan-protein taco via social media nationally throughout August and September.

Recent marketing efforts have also positioned pecans as the go-to solution for all back-to-school needs, highlighting how pecans are the perfect choice for on-the-go snacks, nutritious and delicious dinners and a wholesome breakfast. The campaign focused on penetrating local markets across the country, activating across print, online, radio and broadcast channels.

APPB secured local broadcast segments hosted by Colleen Burns who touted pecans as the perfect component for easy dinners and back-to-school snacks, highlighting recipes throughout the segments which aired in 17 markets.

In print and online, APPB featured the Mac and Cheese with Pecan Breadcrumbs, along with the Superfood Pecan Energy Bars recipes in an article distributed to local newspapers. The feature also spotlighted pecans as the ideal nut to keep on hand to incorporate into favorite meals and after-school snacks. Meanwhile, APPB

POWER BACK-TO-SCHOOL WEEKNIGHT FAMILY MEALS WITH PECANS



reached consumers via local radio stations across the country, encouraging them to keep pecans top-of-mind during the back-to-school season for easy weeknight meals and on-the-go snacks.

As a result of this campaign, APPB successfully kept pecans top-of-mind while families are returning back to busy routines and recipes that work for the whole family, helping to drive pecan usage and trial during this important season. 🌰

Stone Mountain Pecan Company

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USDA's New Crop Insurance For Tropical Storms Benefits Producers Impacted By Idalia

Submitted by USDA

WASHINGTON, Sept. 20, 2023 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) recent expansion of its hurricane crop insurance policy to cover tropical storms this year has already provided farmers with \$85.4 million to help them recover from Hurricane Idalia. USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) rolled out the new Tropical Storm Option for its Hurricane Insurance Protection-Wind Index (HIP-WI) Endorsement earlier this year after working directly with farmers to improve coverage. Additionally, through HIP-WI, producers have received \$84.8 million in indemnities for hurricane-related losses for a total of over \$170 million in crop insurance payments that will directly help farmers and rural communities recover from Hurricane Idalia. This coverage was unavailable this time last year.

"I commend farmers and their organizations for reaching out to RMA to discuss new coverage, and our staff for promptly working on creative solutions to make this coverage a reality," said RMA Administrator Marcia Bunger. "This is just one of many examples of farmers and RMA working together to improve the lives of farmers and the rural economies that depend upon agriculture."

So far, indemnities by state include:

- Georgia: \$72.7 million for hurricanes, and \$5.7 million for tropical storms;
- Florida: \$12.1 million for hurricanes;
- North Carolina: \$40.1 million for tropical storms; and
- South Carolina: \$39.6 million for tropical storms.

Earlier this year, RMA added the Tropical Storm Option to this endorsement to cover named tropical storms, as reported by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), with maximum sustained winds exceeding 34 knots and precipitation exceeding six inches over a four-day period.

Farmers do not need to file a claim to receive payment. If a county is triggered, then the Approved Insurance Provider will issue a payment in the coming weeks. Producers can find a list of triggered counties on RMA's Product Management Bulletins webpage. This is in addition to coverage provided under a farmer's crop policy. The standard notice of loss and claims process applies to these policies, and Approved Insurance Providers are working to process these claims.

HIP-WI was first available for purchase for the 2020 hurricane season and covers a portion of the deductible of the underlying crop insurance policy when the county, or an adjacent one, is hit with sustained hurricane-force winds from a named hurricane based on data from the National Hurricane Center at NOAA.

The HIP-WI endorsement, including the new Tropical Storm Option, is available in select counties in Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Vermont, and Virginia.

During the past three years, HIP-WI has been a successful risk management tool for many in effected areas, with nearly \$736 million paid in indemnities to date.

More Information

Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents, and producers interested in HIP-WI or the Tropical Storm Option should contact an agent. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the RMA Agent Locator. Learn more about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at rma.usda.gov or by contacting your RMA Regional Office. 🍌



LET'S *taco bout* PECANS

To cap off the summer, the American Pecan Promotion Board (APPB) activated custom branded taco trucks at popular farmers markets in Dallas, Atlanta and Chicago. Consumers sampled Al Pastor-style Pecan Tacos, driving in-person trial while highlighting pecans versatility and showcasing how they serve as a nutritious, natural, plant-based protein.

"This just changed my life and the way I think of pecans!"

"I'm vegan so I've had a lot of vegan meat alternatives and I'm just shocked this is pecans!" "

"No way this isn't pork!"



APPB attending Dallas Taco Truck

Lets make it at home

BEYOND THE TACO TRUCKS

Vegan Pecan Al Pastor Tacos

Serving Size: 4-6 tacos

Cook Time: 35 minutes prep, 10 minutes cook

Ingredients:

- 2 lb. chopped pecans
- 8 dried guajillo peppers
- 8 cloves garlic minced
- 7 oz. chipotle peppers in adobo (1 can)
- 1 tbsp. sugar
- salt and pepper to taste

Toppings and Garnishes:

- cilantro
- onion
- lime
- pineapple
- served on 6" flour or corn tortillas

Process:

- Soak pecans in a bowl, covered with boiling water for at least 30 minutes (or overnight for softer texture)
- Drain pecans and put them into a food processor and pulse until you have meat like crumbles. (Be careful not to over process or you will end up with pecan butter)
- Chop onions, garlic, and guajillo peppers very fine
- Add oil to a skillet and saute your onions until transparent (about 203 minutes)
- Add in the garlic and cook for 1 more minute
- Sprinkle salt and pepper to taste and stir to combine
- Add in chipotle peppers in adobe and cook or 1 more minute
- Add in the crumbles pecans and stir very well to combine
- Remove from heat and serve on top of tortilla
- Top with cilantro, onion, lime and pineapple

The Pecan Grower THANK YOU, ADVERTISERS!

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