

# SOUTHEAST GEORGIA PECAN PRESS

*The Official Newsletter of the UGA Cooperative Extension  
Pecan Agent Team*



*Washington County*

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## 2023 SOUTHEAST GA PECAN CROP

*By: Andrew Sawyer, Southeast Georgia Area Pecan Agent*

Seventy days before harvest, we had a good crop in our trees. Most estimates are losses of around 40% of the crop from August to harvest. Growers reported “pops” found during harvest and in cleaning plants. In the last GPGA magazine, Dr. Wells covered the causes of kernel fill, shuck decline, sticktights and sprouting.

In Southeast Georgia, much of our issue was kernel fill. The most common cause of this is lack of water in August and September. This scenario hit us hard in 2023 undoubtedly. You can also have poor kernel fill resulting from poor pollination. If pecan trees do not receive pollen from other compatible pecan trees, the tree will pollinate itself. Self-pollination results in poor kernel fill. Late freezes cause damage to the tissue of flowers and / or catkins. This ultimately leads to pollen reduction.

Another reason for our poor kernel fill was Hurricane Idalia. After leaving Blackshear, we observed tree loss from Idalia in western Appling, Montgomery, Toombs and Tatnall County. These areas had wind and rain. We know that heavy winds damage the root system, and the connection of the pecans to the stem. Those pecans received less water and nutrients following Idaila. They remained on the tree and otherwise looked healthy. That quality loss is not be apparent until harvest.

# VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS

*By Robyn Stewart, Lincoln County Extension Agent*

## What is a value-added product?

Per the U.S.D.A, a value-added product is defined as:

1. A change in the physical form of the product
2. The production of a product in a manner that enhances its value
3. The physical segregation of a commodity or product in a manner that results in the enhancement of the value of that product

Examples of value-added products may be through additional processing, such as shelling nuts, creating pecan butter or baked goods, or through specific production methods like organic, naturally grown, and so on.

## Benefits of value-added products

On average in the U.S., farmers only bring home about 10-12% of each dollar spent at the grocery store- imagine how business profitability would change if that number was 20%, 30% or 40%! The primary benefit of value-added products is that they provide an avenue for a producer to increase revenue. This happens in a number of ways – it can maintain cash flow in seasons where sale of raw products is slow, it can increase the selling price per unit of the product, and it can generate new markets or avenues for sales for your operation.

## Pitfalls of value-added products

When done correctly, value-added is an excellent way of improving profitability on a farm- but it is not without risk. Common concerns include food safety and the expense of inputs required to add value (processing space, energy, time, labor, waste, equipment). Value-added products also often fall under different federal or state labeling, licensing, and recordkeeping regulations that must be met.

## Pricing

In order to assess whether a value-added product is effective in improving your profitability, you have to do the legwork. Regardless of how you choose to price your goods, be sure to account for all of your operating costs and provide yourself enough profit to sustain your operation. Be sure to consider your target margin of profit. This number may vary, with low margin for high volume customers, high margin for small orders, and a margin you refuse to drop below. Be sure to calculate your breakeven volume at your desired price to ensure you will be able to recover your costs of production.



## 2024 UGA COUNTY PRODUCTION MEETINGS

**January 29** - Tattnall/Evans County

**February 1** - Grady County

**February 7** - Peach County

**February 8** - Toombs/Treutlen/Montgomery County

**February 13** - Cook County

**February 14** - Crisp County

**February 15** - Colquitt County

**February 20** - Sumter County

**February 21** - Thomas County

**February 22** - Laurens County

**February 27** - Appling County

**February 28** - Brooks County

**March 7** - Ben Hill/Irwin/Wilcox County

**March 12** - Mitchell County

**March 13** - Berrien County

**March 14** - Dougherty County

**March 25** - Emanuel County

*All meetings will be at noon except Peach and Dougherty Counties.  
For details regarding location and exact time for each meeting, please  
contact the county extension office for that county.*



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## Upcoming Events

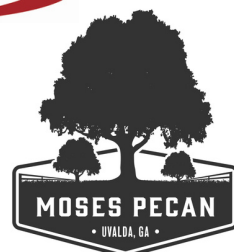
February 23-24, 2024 — **Southeast Pecan Growers Conference**, Biloxi, MS.

March 3-5, 2024 — **Western Pecan Growers Association Conference**- Las Cruces, NM.

March 19-21, 2024 — **Georgia Pecan Growers Association Conference**, Perry, GA.



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