



Southeastern Game Bird Breeders & Hunting Preserve Association Newsletter 2019 No. 5b

2019 Short Course

Our SEGB&HPA Short Course and Meeting at Etowah Valley HPO and Sporting Clays in Dawsonville, GA was a success. Etowah Valley has excellent accommodations as 35 people attended. Participants were treated to sporting clay shoots; and excellent presentations. An exact date for the 2020 meeting has not been set as yet, but we plan to meet in Summerville, SC. The dates will either be the first or third weekends in April, 2020. We are hoping that Brosnan Forest will be able to accommodate our group with a sporting clay shoot on the Saturday of one of those two weekends mentioned above. We hope to confirm the dates and location in forthcoming newsletters.

Georgia: Not Just Peaches and Peanuts

Tour introduces variety of Georgia Grown products

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It should be noted that Georgia leads the South in the production of upland wild game birds, especially Bobwhite Quail and controlled hunting preserves.

SAVANNAH, Ga. — Georgia Grown, the marketing and economic

development program of the Georgia Department of Agriculture, wants everyone to know that the state produces more than just peaches and peanuts. That's why Georgia Grown is hosting international and national media guests, grocery buyer executives, state officials and culinary experts on a first-ever, invitation-only culinary tour of Southern and Coastal Georgia that begins today in Savannah.

Highlights of the three-day tour include farm tours and a visit to the Vidalia® Onion and Vegetable Research Center along with wine-paired meals prepared by celebrity chefs and pitmasters using ingredients produced in Georgia. The event culminates on Wednesday with an exclusive dinner at the Stanley Lodge in Lyons, Georgia.

According to Gary W. Black, Georgia Commissioner of Agriculture, "We have a wide variety of crops across our state that earn recognition for their quality. There's something special about food grown in Georgia. Whether the one-of-a-kind flavor of a Vidalia onion or the sweet taste of Georgia blueberries, these foods contribute to a unique dining experience."

As of 2018, Georgia had 41,600 small, medium and large farms, covering more than 10 million total acres. Crops range from citrus and carrots to beets and brussels sprouts. Because of the variety of crops grown here and a thriving agritourism business, the Georgia Department of Agriculture calls Georgia "Nature's Favorite State."

Vidalia® sweet onions are unique to Georgia and have been grown here for more than 80 years. The name is protected by trademark. The taste derives from the combination of weather, water and soil found within 20 South Georgia counties. Vidalia onions are available from April to August and are widely considered the state's official vegetable. The Vidalia Onion and Vegetable Research Center was established in 1999 in Lyons on land-owned by the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

Blueberries are the number one fruit crop in Georgia. In 2017, the state's farms produced 39 million pounds of blueberries from 18,328 acres, with a total value of more than \$120 million a year. Georgia soil and climate are well-suited for growing blueberries, particularly the Southern Highbush and Rabbiteye varieties.

Georgia has also become a leader in organic farming. In 2016, Georgia had 83 certified organic farms that produced \$48.2 million in certified organic products. The top two certified organic commodities sold in Georgia were chicken eggs, with sales valued at \$33.3 million, and cultivated blueberries, with sales valued at \$4.3 million.

Farming has long had an important role in Georgia, in particular family farms. The growth of agriculture and agritourism today are fueling rural economic development in towns like Metter, another stop on the tour, where the Welcome and Georgia Grown Center provides visitors with a taste of Georgia by showcasing Georgia Grown products from across the state. “With this tour, we hope to showcase the importance of these family farms and how they add significant value to their communities,” said Matthew Kulinski, Georgia Grown program manager. “The best way for Georgians to support our farm families and agricultural sector is to look for Georgia Grown products in grocery stores and on their restaurant menus.”

—Julie McPeake, Georgia Department of Agriculture

When Did GMO Become a Dirty Word?

The medical, agricultural, and environmental fields all have GMO products

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STORRS, Conn. — Do you know someone with diabetes? While most people may associate GMOs with food products, their use actually began in the medical field with insulin.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved GMO insulin for use in October of 1982 after rigorous testing, clinical trials, and review. Prior to that, diabetics used insulin obtained from the pancreas of cattle or swine. Supplies were dwindling, and there was fear that the insulin shortage would result in negative health ramifications for patients. The recombinant DNA technology used, that we now refer to as GMOs, provided a safe and effective alternative. In fact, GMO insulin is a closer match to human insulin, and patients who could not tolerate insulin from a cow or pig can utilize GMO insulin without negative side effects.

Despite the benefits of GMOs, 80% of respondents to the 2018 Food and Health Survey Report from the International Food Information Council Foundation are confused about food or doubt their choices because of conflicting information. The report found that context of GMOs influenced consumer judgment. The Pew Research Center found that 49% of Americans think genetically modified foods are worse for one’s health. In short, many people may fear or be suspicious of GMOs, but there is a history of important effects that most people would applaud. Insulin is such a case.

Scientists create GMOs by changing the genetic code of a living being in

some way. Plant and animal genetics have been altered for thousands of years through breeding. New technology lets scientists select a specific trait, instead of changing the entire genetic makeup. The medical, agricultural, and environmental fields all have GMO products.

Accepting or rejecting GMOs is an individual decision. However, all decisions consumers make should be based on facts. An overwhelming majority of scientists believe that GMOs are safe, according to the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine. Information from science-based sources can be hard to find in the flood of information available on the Internet.

With that in mind, experts in agriculture, health and natural resources at the University of Connecticut (UConn) have established a web site (<https://gmo.uconn.edu/>) providing science-based information to help consumers make their own decisions about GMOs.

A handful of food products have approved GMO versions sold in the United States. These include: apples, canola, corn, papaya, pineapple, potatoes, salmon, soybeans, squash, and sugar beets. Insect resistant and herbicide tolerant crops are the two most common features in GMO varieties. Only specific varieties have a GMO version in many of these products, for example, the Arctic apple. The Flavr Savr tomato was introduced in 1994 as the first GMO food product, but is no longer sold because it lacked flavor. Consumers benefit from GMOs. Although the benefits aren't always noticeable when you're browsing the grocery store, they include:

- Improving food safety of products,
- Lowering consumer food prices,
- Protecting food supplies from insects,
- Limiting food waste on the farm and in your fridge,
- Reducing the carbon footprint needed for food production, and
- Keeping the environment healthy.

Despite the benefits, negative perceptions about GMOs are wide-spread. Consumer knowledge and acceptance of GMOs has not matched the pace of adoption by the agricultural community. Experts in the field concur that GMO communication campaigns have failed to answer the “what’s in it for me” question for the public. The majority of campaigns only cite the benefits to farmers, and feeding a growing global population. Consumers commonly reference changes to nutritional content, or the creation of allergens as concerns with GMOs, although there is no evidence of either.

I notice negative perceptions about GMOs in the supermarket, when foods are labeled as non-GMO even though it's impossible for them to contain GMOs. Salt doesn't have any genetics to modify, although you'll find some salt labeled as non-GMO. Cat litter is another example of a product that can't have GMOs, but is labeled non-GMO.

Companies place the non-GMO label on their product as a marketing tool, either feeding off the fear generated by misinformation, or the demands of their consumers. People without a clear understanding of GMOs spread misinformation on the Internet. Much of what is shared lacks science-based facts and the rigors of peer review. A common tactic is connecting scientists to biotechnology corporations. Ironically, many of the campaigners in the anti-GMO movement are paid to share these messages.

Consumers should form their own opinions about GMOs from the wealth of available science-based information and experts. Instead of accepting and spreading misinformation, shouldn't we ask more questions, and turn to reliable sources instead?

— Stacey Stearns
UConn Extension

Research on Viral Transmission in Feedstuffs

New studies looking at how to prevent the spread of foreign animal diseases through feed

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We know that insects, rats and mice, our game birds, pets, and humans can be mechanical vectors of game bird diseases. What about the feed?

AMES, Iowa — With research confirming that swine viruses can be transmitted through feed and feedstuffs, new studies are looking at how to prevent the spread of foreign animal diseases, such as African swine fever, via these vehicles. Based on new research, the Swine Health Information Center, the National Pork Board, the National Pork Producers Council and the American Association of Swine Veterinarians have revised the information for feed holding times.

The Institute for Feed Education and Research, the public charity of the American Feed Industry Association, helped fund the research that resulted in the updated information that provide the best and most current understanding of viral survivability in feedstuffs and details for mitigating

risk to domestic herds.

“The science on viral transmission through feed and feedstuffs is still relatively young, but it has yielded some interesting and potentially useful information on mitigating the spread of costly viruses, such as ASF,” said Paul Sundberg, DVM, Swine Health Information Center executive director. “This includes recognition that not all imported feedstuffs are manufactured and handled in the same way. It’s important to know whether ingredients are produced under biosecure conditions and how they were shipped.”

The new details decrease holding times over the initial estimations, which were calculated in October 2018 based on the available research, and give additional assurances of further viral degradation if the feed ingredients are contaminated.

“Variations of the same feed components might cause disparity in holding time confidence,” said David Pyburn, DVM, National Pork Board senior vice president, science and technology. “For example, according to research using Senecavirus A (Seneca Valley virus), which is suggested to have the longest holding time of studied viruses, increasing holding times by an additional 30 percent would give an opportunity for 99.999 percent degradation of contaminating viruses.”

More research would be needed to confirm that the results could be extrapolated to other feed ingredients in like classes to those studied. The updated information shows new holding times details for general informational and educational purposes. They should not be considered as to be recommending or advocating any specific course of action.

Mean Holding Time for 99.99 percent Degradation
Days at 4° C (36.9° F)
Days at 15° C (59° F)
Days at 30° C (86° F)

Conventional Soybean Meal 1435226
DDGS 49418226
Vitamin D 392626
Lysine 781313

“Continued diligence on feedstuffs origin, the manufacturing processes, the shipping methods and ‘born on date’ is essential,” said Liz Wagstrom, DVM, National Pork Producers Council chief veterinarian. “Feedstuffs manufactured, sealed, handled, and shipped under biosecure conditions produces an ingredient free of pathogens and reduces the risk of post-processing contamination, resulting in little to no risk to animal health.”

For example, vitamins and amino acids are typically shipped in sealed or secure containers. Anything produced under unknown conditions or unsealed can pose an animal health risk. Imported soybean meal and DDGS are often transported in non-sealed or non-secure containers. Knowing the origin of ingredients and the disease status of the region or country is essential.

“The feed industry is a committed partner in the effort to prevent foreign

animal diseases from entering the U.S. through imported feed ingredients,” said Leah Wilkinson, vice president for public policy and education for the American Feed Industry Association. “This additional information on holding times is helpful. We encourage dialogue with your feed ingredient or feed supplier to discover all of the measures that have been put in place to supply a safe product.”

Complete information on the research leading to the holding time calculation and the document, U.S. Pork Industry Organization Provide ‘Options’ for Handling Imported Feed Ingredients, are available at swinehealth.org.

The National Pork Board has responsibility for Checkoff-funded research, promotion and consumer information projects and for communicating with pork producers and the public. Through a legislative national Pork Checkoff, pork producers invest \$0.40 for each \$100 value of hogs sold. Importers of pork products contribute a like amount, based on a formula. The Pork Checkoff funds national and state programs in advertising, consumer information, retail and foodservice marketing, export market promotion, production improvement, science and technology, swine health, pork safety and sustainability and environmental management. For information on Checkoff-funded programs, pork producers can call the Pork Checkoff Service Center at 800-456-7675 or check the Internet at pork.org.

— National Pork Board

UGA Extension Hosts Annual Southern Women in Ag Workshop

Hands-on trainings during the two-day workshop held in Tifton
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TIFTON, Ga. — University of Georgia Cooperative Extension hosted the Southern Women in Ag (SWAG) Advanced Cattle Workshop this week designed for women and taught by female agricultural leaders in Georgia. Hands-on trainings during the two-day workshop held in Tifton, Georgia was led by UGA Extension Agricultural and Natural Resources agents Stephanie Butcher (Coweta County), Tammy Cheely (Glascocock County, Hancock County, Warren County), Carole Knight (Bulloch County), Lucy Ray (Morgan County), and Pam Sapp (Jefferson County); along with Katie Hammond, superintendent at UGA’s Northwest Research and Education Center in Calhoun, Georgia; and Jennifer Tucker, assistant professor in the

UGA Department of Animal and Dairy Sciences.

The sessions provide tools and lessons to assist women on their farms and to help them step out of their comfort zones.

“The agriculture industry is a male-dominated industry. Sometimes that can be very intimidating to females coming in, or they may not feel comfortable asking questions in mixed company,” Knight said. “This workshop provides them with a comfortable place to experience things that maybe they haven’t had a chance to.”

Held at the Animal and Dairy Science Farm and Blackshank Farm on the UGA Tifton campus, lessons included how to handle and move cattle through a working facility. Participants learned also about the bovine reproductive system with the help of a calving simulator.

The UGA Extension agents taught the attendees how to use basic farm tools, such as how to drive a tractor, hook up to a trailer and operate various pieces of farm machinery.

“Some of these lessons can be used beyond just a cattle operation. Knowing how to change oil and check pressure in tires, those are types of things that go a long way in all areas of agriculture,” Sapp said. “It’s important to remember that some of this stuff just comes as second nature for men. Their fathers taught them how to do this and they can just do it. That’s not necessarily the case for women in our industry. Just having an environment where there’s no pressure helps.”

Knight and Tucker hosted a forages and fencing session that introduced participants to soil sampling, hay sampling, types of fencing and how to interpret soil and forage analysis. A pasture walk took place at the Blackshank grazing paddocks and highlighted the fencing infrastructure currently under construction as part of the Better Grazing Program Southern Location. Partial funding for the fencing demonstration area was provided through the Georgia Commodity Commission for Beef.

“Even if they are scared to step out of their comfort zone, we will push them out of their comfort zone,” Knight said. “We have a lot who come through who say they don’t want to do something, but we’re like, ‘No, but you’re going to. That’s why you came, to learn.’ We make everybody take a turn doing the hands-on activities. Really, I think they appreciate that, to be pushed to do things they wouldn’t have before.”

Media training is an important component of these workshops. Butcher, who is a member of the Dairy Alliance Scientific Advisory Board, has experience conveying her story to the general public. She wants to help other agricultural professionals develop that same confidence when they’re talking

to a newspaper reporter or giving an interview in front of a camera. “I enjoy teaching others about agriculture, especially those who are not from an agricultural background. I felt strongly that we needed to include something in our SWAG program to cover this, because many times producers are comfortable working with livestock, but they’re not nearly as comfortable talking with people about what they do,” Butcher said. “The purpose of the media training is to give these women tools they need to be able to discuss what they do with people who are two or three generations removed from agriculture.”

When Butcher isn’t teaching agriculture programs, she is a farm wife and mother on her family’s dairy farm where they care for 330 Holsteins and Jerseys. On weekends and during harvest season, she can be found feeding calves or helping with the local 4-H dairy heifer show team.

Funding for the program is provided by the Georgia Commodity Commission for Beef.

For more information about the program or upcoming events, see www.ugabeef.com or www.georgiaforages.com.

–Clint Thompson, University of Georgia

Secretary's Corner

A special thanks go out to Etowah Valley for an excellent site for our 2019 meeting. In addition, many thanks go out to the SEGB&HPA members and non-members who attended our meeting who donated items for our auction which brought in over \$1500. AND last but not least, many thanks go to Dalton and Lucille Mauney who donated \$500 at last year's meeting, and also this year's meeting. Although they are retiring, we hope you will continue to attend our meetings.

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