

Newsletter

Southeastern Game Bird Breeders & Hunting Preserve Association

No. 8, 2020

Update From Cotton Incorporated/Quail Forever Partnership

*As you are in the field preparing to harvest, keep an eye out for
chronically problematic areas*

PUBLISHED ON August 12, 2020

PERRY, Ga. — Cotton in Georgia is looking relatively good across the regions and holds great potential. As you are in the field preparing to harvest, keep an eye out for chronically problematic areas of the field for production. An average to above average year is the best time to look for poor producing areas. Using your crop budgets and average yields broken down per acre, consider these poor areas being removed and how that may improve your field average yields, APH overtime, improved efficiency and sustainability, and less wear and tear and time on equipment from low-to-no yield places. Profit per acre is better than yield per acre.

To help you harness sustainability insights and unleash opportunities for your farm, we have developed a guide to better understand how your management practices intersect with sustainability metrics and potential factors that can influence improved outcomes through working with Quail Forever Precision Ag decisions in the areas of: • Biodiversity • Energy Use Efficiency • Greenhouse Gas Emissions • Irrigation Water Use Efficiency • Land Use Efficiency • Soil Carbon • Soil Conservation • Water Quality.

If you would like help taking a look at your crop health & profitability or consider biodiversity with quail habitat, you or your trusted crop advisor can give Quail Forever Precision Ag and Conservation Specialist a call as complements of Cotton Incorporated and the American Society of Agronomy.

Chaz Holt , CCA| Precision Ag and Conservation Specialist

Quail Forever and Pheasants Forever Inc. | Georgia

m. 406-425-3039 | cholt@quailforever.org

Twitter @agrarian_life

Instagram #agrarianlife

<https://quailforever.org/Conservation/Precision-Agriculture.aspx>

Pest Management Class Teaches Strategies to Get Rid of Rodents

Clemson offers online training on August 20

PUBLISHED ON August 12, 2020

CLEMSON, S.C. — Rats! But if you have them, there's more than one way to dispatch the disease-ridden wretches.

South Carolina pesticide applicators will increase their arsenal against rats and other rodents in an online training offered by the Clemson University Extension Service and Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) on Aug. 20.

“We're tackling the issue of how to control rodents responsibly for human safety without impacting the environment, including the predators who feed on them,” said Eric Benson, an emeritus professor and Clemson Extension specialist whose expertise is Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for urban pests.

An outgrowth of ideas first applied to insects and diseases of crops nationwide in the 1970s, IPM now has spread to all facets of pest control, especially where chemical pesticides are used.

The IPM strategy doesn't use merely a single method but the best combination of methods both to control pests and to minimize harm to the environment.

The latter has become an issue in Kiawah Island, S.C., where some of the native population of local bobcats have died and tested positive for chemicals used to kill rats — likely from having eaten the rodents themselves.

The online training — “Rodent Control: IPM Options” — offers research-based options that are economically viable for pest management companies and their clients and provide effective rodent control while minimizing the risk to non-target animals.

The [online workshop](#) will be held Thursday, Aug. 20 from 8 to 10 a.m. Cost is \$50. The course includes two recertification credits for certified pesticide applicators as well as a certificate of completion.

“Rodents are ubiquitous. This isn't an issue just in one place or just on the coast but wherever people live,” Benson said. “Because Kiawah Island is tracking its bobcat population it has its own biology department and was able to identify active ingredients used in some rat baits. Most towns would never know.”

“Our main target is roof rats. Many other rodents like squirrels and chipmunks are part of the natural environment and an important part of predator food

chains,” he said. “We want rodents in the environment for that reason. We just don’t want rodents coming into areas where we live and eat.”

In addition to Benson, presenters include:

- Donny Oswalt, owner of The Bug Doctor in Alabama, a Clemson Ph.D. graduate with more than 40 years of experience in the pest control business.
- Wildlife biologist Jim Jordan, who keeps track of the Kiawah Island bobcats.
- Ryan Okey, Assistant Director for the Department of Pesticide Regulation, a state regulatory agency housed at Clemson and charged with licensing pesticides and the professionals who apply them.

“Pesticides are an important tool to protect agriculture, the environment, and human health, but without an integrated pest management approach, we can have negative results like what has happened with the bobcats on Kiawah Island,” said Steve Cole, director of Regulatory Services at Clemson. “This educational program will help pest management professionals incorporate other tools to effectively control rodents without having a negative impact on the ecosystem.”

—[Tom Hallman](#), Clemson University

Should You Order Live Poultry Online?

Hold off on ordering, COVID-related postal delays are causing concerns

PUBLISHED ON August 4, 2020

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. — The COVID-19 pandemic has strained nearly every sector of society, including the postal service. With experts continuing to recommend social distancing, fewer people are frequenting stores, and record numbers are streaming to online venues to shop. Perhaps one of the most surprising items that can be purchased online and delivered through the mail are live chicks, within hours of hatching.

The Poultry Extension Collaborative (PEC), a new collective of poultry specialists from Purdue University, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, North Carolina State University and the University of Maryland, recently published a guide for buying newly hatched chicks online. The team includes:

- [Marisa Erasmus](#), assistant professor of animal sciences, Purdue University.
- [Leonie Jacobs](#), assistant professor of animal welfare and behavior, Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences, Virginia Tech.

- [Prafulla Regmi](#), assistant professor of applied animal welfare, North Carolina State.
- [Shawna Weimer](#), assistant professor of animal and avian sciences, University of Maryland

Erasmus said the ability to order chicks online is not a COVID-19 phenomenon. The service has been around for a long time, but due to the increase in postal traffic and online ordering, the venture has become much riskier for the chicks. “It is better, at this point, to hold off on ordering because there are so many unknowns, and packages are taking much longer to be delivered,” Erasmus added.

Weimer said that she interacts with online groups devoted to poultry enthusiasts and learned about an instance when a shipment of chicks arrived dead.

“I have learned a lot about people and chickens through these groups, and about how much our team is needed,” she said.

Chicks can survive a few days after hatching without food and water through their yolk reserves. But due to high volumes of mail and other uncertainties, it can take longer than 72 hours to deliver the chicks, which endangers their well-being. Other stressors include temperatures that are too high or too low and inappropriate handling or accidents during transit.

In most cases, chicks are placed in a specially ventilated box with padding to absorb feces without any source of food or water. While boxes are labeled to indicate live animals inside, most post office officials are not trained to cope with the handling of live animals.

“Newly hatched chicks require an environment with a high temperature, around 95 degrees Fahrenheit, because they are unable to regulate their body heat,” Jacobs explained.

If ordering live chicks through the mail, buyers should purchase through a National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) certified establishment. An even safer course of action, Regmi said, is to either buy directly from a local hatchery or to have fertilized eggs shipped.

“Investing in a small incubator to help hatch the eggs is safer and, potentially, more cost effective,” Jacobs added. “At this point, people should really start exploring alternatives to having live chicks shipped, whether they are a business or keep chickens as a hobby.”

“As the COVID-19 pandemic develops, hatcheries may become better at preventing or reducing harm to the chicks during transit,” Erasmus added.

For the time being, however, she echoed Jacobs’ suggestion to wait or pursue other avenues to buy chicks.

Also,” she said, “consider the postal workers. They are not used to dealing with live animals, and they especially don’t want to deal with dead ones.”

To read the full PEC publication visit: <https://bit.ly/3jYEslt>.

— Purdue University Agriculture News

NC and SC State Fairs Cancelled

RALEIGH, N.C. – Since March, the North Carolina State Fair and the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services have been monitoring COVID-19 guidance released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services to determine operating plans needed to produce the largest annual event held in North Carolina. After careful consideration and due to the continued uncertainty of conditions come October, the N.C. State Fair will not be held in 2020. The fair was scheduled to take place Oct. 15 through 25.

“I can think of a thousand places I’d rather be today than here delivering this news,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. “The State Fair is a tradition we all look forward to each year. [It’s a vital economic engine for local non-profits, community groups, small businesses and individuals](#). It’s a time for family and friends to come together to celebrate everything that makes North Carolina such a great place to live. We waited as long as we could, hoping the numbers would take a turn and we’d be able to continue with our planning, but each day brought more challenges than solutions.”

The decision to cancel this year’s fair was based on the following:

- safety and health of visitors, vendors, competitors and staff,
- current COVID-19 statistics in the state,
- North Carolina’s pause in Phase II of reopening thus limiting the size of gatherings,
- contracts that cannot be cancelled at the last minute without a financial impact on the N.C. State Fair and the vendor,
- and the long-term financial health of the N.C. State Fair.

Fair officials determined holding a fair that abides by the CDC and NCDHHS recommendations would not be possible. “We looked at so many different factors,” said Fair Manager Kent Yelverton. “From social distancing, face masks, temperature checks and capacity limits to the true minutia most wouldn’t think about until you are in the moment like social distancing on our shuttle buses, cleaning carnival equipment between riders, overlapping food lines and stringent cleaning schedules. To offer anything less than what fairgoers have come to know and love would be a disservice to our community and to us. There is no halfway when producing a fair. The people, the lights, the rides, the smells, the music...all of that contributes to an atmosphere that can only be felt during a

fair.”

August 16 marks the 60-day window until the planned opening day of the 2020 fair. The decision to cancel is being made now to mitigate expenses for an event that likely would not be able to open. The N.C. State Fair costs around \$6.8 million annually to produce. Many contracts currently in place have a 60-day stipulation for cancelation with no penalty. The N.C. State Fair is a self-supporting enterprise that has had 186 events canceled, resulting in an estimated \$2.3 million loss in revenue since February.

“The heart of the N.C. State Fair has always been and will continue to be our ability to showcase North Carolina agriculture. To stay true to that commitment, we will be holding our Junior Livestock Show and State Fair Horse Shows in October,” Troxler said. “By utilizing both the Graham Building and Expo Center and spreading the junior show out through all 11 days of what would have been the fair dates, we will be able to host a livestock show that allows for proper social distancing. These kids have worked so hard all year to show at the State Fair, and I’m glad we’ve found a safe way to make that happen.”

The N.C. State Fair Division will now shift gears to focus on hosting year-round events that can abide by CDC and NCDHHS guidelines and looking toward the future of the 2021 N.C. State Fair. “I can assure you we will be hard at work planning a great 2021 State Fair,” Troxler said.

The N.C. State Fair has operated as the premiere agricultural exhibition in the state since 1853. This year’s cancelation is not without precedent. From 1861-1868, the N.C. State Fair was canceled due to the Civil War and Reconstruction. In 1918, the N.C. State Fair was canceled due to World War I. In 1926 and 1927, there was no fair due to reorganization after the North Carolina Agricultural Society, the then-fair’s operating board, was disbanded. The most recent cancelation was due to World War II from 1942-1945.

The 2021 N.C. State Fair is slated for Oct. 14-24 at the North Carolina State Fairgrounds in Raleigh.

—Andrea Ashby, NCDA&CS

Preparing for Hurricane Season During COVID-19

As cases continue to increase, the South faces another hazard

PUBLISHED ON July 21, 2020

ATHENS, Ga. — Hurricane season is stressful for millions of Americans every year, but this year comes with an additional hurdle: the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cases of the novel coronavirus are skyrocketing across the U.S. More than 3.4 million people have tested positive for the virus, and over 137,000 have died. The South, which began aggressively reopening before many other parts of the country, has been particularly hard hit by this second wave, with many states seeing record increases in positive test results and deaths.

As COVID-19 cases continue to increase, the South faces another hazard in what experts are predicting to be a more active than normal hurricane season. The University of Georgia's [Marshall Shepherd](#) tells you what you need to know about preparing for the brunt of storm season during a global pandemic.

Hurricane season 2020 is already shattering records, and it's only July.

The average hurricane season has about 12 named storms. Typically, the sixth forms around late August or September. This year's formed in early July, something Shepherd says is stunning. Experts are predicting up to 20 total storms this season.

"As I often say, it really only takes one bad hurricane in a given year to be memorable," said Shepherd, Georgia Athletic Association Distinguished Professor and director of the UGA's [Atmospheric Sciences Program](#). "But given the fact that we do suspect a more active season this year, it puts a little bit more value on people being ready and prepared."

Preparation for storms will look different this year.

People often get what Shepherd calls "hurricane season amnesia." Having not experienced a powerful storm in a few years, they forget how devastating the impact can be and don't adequately prepare.

"For me, the most useful aspect of these seasonal predictions is to really start to get people to think about what they would actually have to do if they needed to evacuate and perhaps go to a shelter and have to deal with COVID. I think that there is an extra layer of concern and an extra layer of forethought needed in how people prepare."

Shepherd suggests adding masks, hand sanitizer and disinfectant products to emergency supply kits. Some organizations are dramatically reducing shelter capacity to provide more space for social distancing between families and encouraging people to seek shelter with family members, if possible. But if you do end up evacuating to a shelter, personal protective equipment will be crucial to help prevent sickness. If you can, keep your distance from others who aren't in your household. But most importantly, wear a mask.

You should also keep tabs on whether your typical evacuation area is a COVID-19 hotspot and have alternative locations in mind if it is. "Certainly all counties are dealing with this, but if you look at various states, some counties are hotter than others in terms of hotspots, so maybe that's not a place that you would evacuate to, even though in the past it might've been a place you would go.

“There’s a double whammy here in terms of the most vulnerable regions to both COVID and hurricanes,” Shepherd said. “I think it’s probably more important than ever that people are thinking about the duality of the threat here.”

Many relief agencies have already pivoted to largely online disaster training and are working to find alternative lodging like hotels for evacuees where possible.

“One thing to keep in mind is that hurricane season does really start peaking and ramping up in August, September and October. The second week of September is the peak of the season. I’m an optimist by nature, so my hope is that we will start to see somewhat of a less-risky coronavirus environment as the hurricane season starts to ramp up,” Shepherd said. “But that’s certainly no guarantee.”

–Leigh Beeson, University of Georgia

What type of Insects Live in Soil?

Insects can be both beneficial and harmful to agricultural land

Insects can carry and become live vectors of diseases

PUBLISHED ON July 21, 2020

MADISON, Wis. — Soils are fantastic places to find insect specimens because of the relation between insects’ daily routines and the subsurface. The Soil Science Society of America’s (SSSA) July 15th Soils Matter Blog explores the life of various insects and how they impact soils.

Blogger Beverly Alvarez Torres explains, “insects are part of the predator’s community that control the population of others. On the other hand, many of the terrestrial animals have an insectivorous diet granting a key role to insect’s populations as food source in the food chain.”

“At times, insect life on agricultural land can be harmful for crops,” says Alvarez Torres. “Some farms use pest biocontrol. Knowing the problem insect, farmers introduce an insect that eats the pest, and not the crop. This ecological service by insects is a way to control pests in a natural way at the same time preventing excessive application of pesticides to kill them.”

In Puerto Rico, *Caculos* pests are harmful to sugar cane, as the adults create tunnels to the host plant to have food during the day while they’re protected in the soil at night. Another pest, citrus root weevil, is a concern for citrus producers. The weevils bore holes in roots and stems, reducing crop yield.

Insects are beneficial for soil’s physical condition through their life cycles, and they play a role in the soil nutrients as well. To learn more about soil-dwelling insects, read the entire blog

post: <https://soilsmatter.wordpress.com/2020/07/15/what-type-of-insects-live-in-soil/>

The Soil Science Society of America (SSSA) is a progressive, international scientific society that fosters the transfer of knowledge and practices to sustain global soils. Based in Madison, WI, SSSA is the professional home for 6,000+ members dedicated to advancing the field of soil science. It provides information about soils in relation to crop production, environmental quality, ecosystem sustainability, bioremediation, waste management, recycling, and wise land use. Follow SSSA on Facebook at [SSSA.soils](https://www.facebook.com/SSSAsoils), and Twitter at [SSSA_Soils](https://twitter.com/SSSA_Soils). SSSA has soils information on www.soils.org/about-soils, for teachers at www.soils4teachers.org, and for students through 12th grade, www.soils4kids.org.

–Soil Science Society of America

Secretay's Corner

How can we convince some folks that the Corona-19 virus is for real? I recently read an article that should be publisized in all college campuses. A man in his 30's developed a fever of 104.5 F. His wife took him to an emergency room where he began to have seizures and convulsions. He developed a blood clot in one of his legs and he underwent an operation that resulted in the loss of his leg. After he spent a few days in ICU, he died.

I urge everyone to practice the recommended safety rules until this virus is over. Remember the polio epidemic? It was stopped with a vaccine. Let's hope will have a Covid-19 vaccine before 2021.

Happy and Safe Hunting

Dr/ Gary S. Davis, Exec. Sec.

SEGB&HPA

www.segamebirds.us