

September 2014

# Conecuh

COUNTY FARMERS FEDERATION



## Conecuh County Farmers Federation

The Conecuh County Farmers Federation is a membership organization built by farmers as an advocate for agriculture, family values, and good government to improve life for all the residents of Conecuh County.

Conecuh County Farmers Federation donates annually to the South Central Alabama Chapter of the American Red

Cross. In 2014, the county donated \$2,000. All Red Cross disaster aid is free to recipients and is funded by outright gifts of the American people. They provide funds to replace food, groceries, clothing, shoes and other personal belongings, as well as temporary lodging if needed. Conecuh County averages 25 local disasters each year totaling nearly \$30,000.

### Young Farmers & Women's Leadership Divisions

The Conecuh County Farmers Federation implements programs and develops future leaders through its Young Farmers and Women's Leadership divisions. The Young Farmers Program and the Women's Leadership Division encourage and motivate members to be active in politics, their community and consumer education activities.

Membership in Young Farmers is open to anyone age 17-35 who is a member of the Alabama Farmers Federation. The Federation invites Conecuh County residents to join the program and get involved with this exciting organization.



Above, Conecuh County students Alex Dunn and Brooke House joined more than 90 teenagers from across Alabama for the Alabama Farmers Federation's annual Youth Leadership Conference. The program, held at the Alabama 4-H Center in Columbiana June 30-July 2, fosters agricultural involvement through interactive workshops. It is organized by the Young Farmers.

### Officers & Directors

**Steve Dunn, President**  
**John Cook, Vice President**  
**David Cook, Secretary-Treasurer**  
**Ann Cook, Women's Chair**

#### **DIRECTORS:**

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Greg Davis  
Warren Johnston  
Ron Shumack  
Chip Stacey  
Skip Stacey  
Wayne Thames  
William Ward

### Conecuh Awards Goneke Scholarship

Kelly Goneke, daughter of Donnie and Dona Goneke, was the recipient of a \$1,750 scholarship from Conecuh County Farmers Federation. She will be attending Auburn University in the fall pursuing a degree in poultry science nutrition.



**Check Out Our Website: [www.AlfaFarmers.org/Conecuh](http://www.AlfaFarmers.org/Conecuh)**



James Stanley Cook of Conecuh County built this silage loader in the 1960s. The round things on the front of the tractor would scratch and dig the silage out of the pit, onto the conveyor and load it in the feeding wagon. It can still be seen at Cook's Crossroads.

## Conecuh County Agricultural Impact



In 2010, \$61.3 million was generated through the county's agriculture and forestry production sectors.

Cattle production was the largest agricultural commodity, contributing 6.6 percent of the county's total agricultural and forestry production. The second largest was cotton, which contributed 2.1 percent. The third largest was greenhouse, nursery, and floriculture production, which contributed 1.1 percent.

Timberland accounted for 81.4 percent of the surface land area of the county. Total forestry production contributed to 81.1 percent of the county's total agricultural and forestry production.

## Membership Benefits

For just \$30 a year, Alabama Farmers Federation members can save on products and services they use every day.

Members can save 15 percent off their SouthernLINC bills; receive \$500 bonus cash on each qualifying 2014 and 2015 model year Chevrolet, GMC, or Buick vehicle they purchase or lease; save 15 percent off Sherwin-Williams paint and paint-related products; get a 20 percent discount at participating Choice Hotels; and take advantage of many other numerous benefits.

Plus, Everyday Extras lets members save on dining, shopping, movies and more at other activities than 185,000 retailers nationwide.

Registration for the program is easy and requires a member number and some basic information.

For a full list of benefits, visit [www.AlfaFarmers.org/benefits](http://www.AlfaFarmers.org/benefits).

## Farmers Federation Launches New Website

AlfaFarmers.org has a bold new look and is easier than ever to navigate. Visitors can explore the leadership and the history of the organization; learn about programs, commodity markets and divisions; and find the latest news and events affecting local farmers and Federation members. One of the most popular sections is "Local Flavor," which includes recipes from *Neighbors* magazine. Members can also take advantage of the free online classified section, Trade 'N Post. Take a little time and discover all the new features at AlfaFarmers.org.

# Alabama Cottage Food Law Now In Effect

Alabama's cottage food law, SB 159, which allows for non-hazardous foods to be sold at a person's home, went into effect June 1.

"Passage of SB 159 opens the door for producers to have an additional revenue source," said Mac Higginbotham, director of horticulture for the Alabama Farmers Federation. "Farmers have been selling fruit and vegetables directly to the public from the farm, at farmers markets and roadside stands. Now they can expand to offer additional products to customers. This new opportunity, combined with proper food handling, can lead to some great products for the public to enjoy."

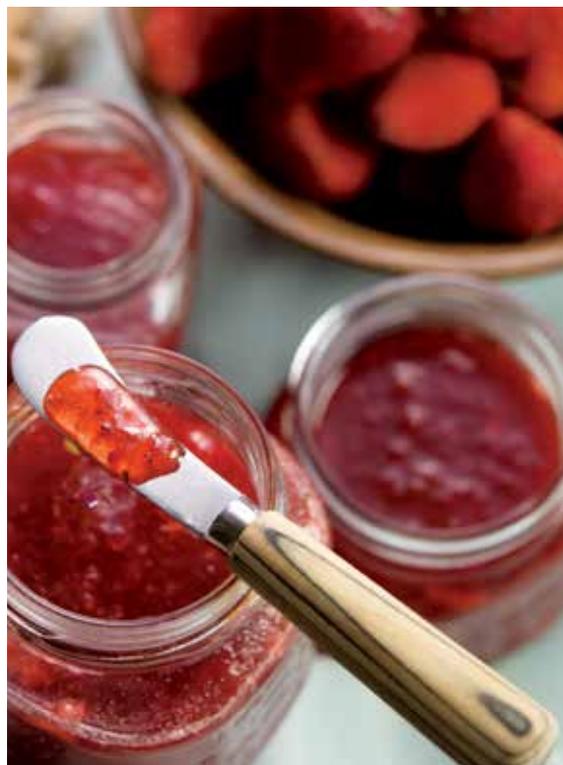
According to the USDA, farmers markets have more than

doubled in the last 10 years. That success has spurred some processors to sell food out of their homes, hence the name "cottage food business."

Although the bill provides another revenue option for farmers, it now caps annual gross sales at \$20,000. Producers must also take a food safety class and register with the Alabama Department of Public Health. Completing the state ServSafe class fulfills the training requirement.

Items producers can sell in-house include baked goods, such as cakes and pies that require no refrigeration; canned jam and jelly; diced herb mixes; and candy.

Contact county Extension offices for more information about operating under the new law.



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