

# Neighbors

A Publication of the Alabama Farmers Federation

## Jefferson County Newsletter

PULL-OUT  
VOTER GUIDE INSIDE

NOVEMBER/WINTER 2018

**Egg-A-Rator**

**Ag In The  
Classroom**

**Outstanding  
Ag Students**



# Jenkins Farm's Egg-A-Rator Proves Profitable For Local Restaurant

Each Friday, Barry Jenkins delivers 30 dozen eggs to Chef Jon Holland at The Fig Tree Cafe and Wine Bar on Cahaba Heights Road.

With a highly rated brunch menu featuring items like the Spinach and Mushroom Omelet, Fig Pig Breakfast and the ever-popular Barry's Steak and Eggs, Holland depends on Jenkins' egg shipment to meet customer demands each weekend.

Jenkins and dad Mike, both Jefferson County Farmers Federation board members, designed a portable chicken coop using materials they already had on hand. The coop is easy to move around the fields of their 56-acre family farm and has been deemed "The Egg-

A-Rator." "I started showing lambs in FFA when I was 12 years old, and my love of farming has grown from there," said Jenkins. "Our goal is to grow our egg and poultry business with other restaurants and become self-sustaining."

What started a couple years ago with just one house for 60 chickens has now grown to three houses with over 140 chickens of four different breeds: Redstar, Americana, White Leghorn and Sussex.



In addition to chickens, Jenkins raises heritage pigs for The Fig Tree. Once the piglets are 60 pounds, they are sent to another Jefferson County farmer who cares for the animals until they reach the chef's



Jefferson County Farmers Federation board members Barry and Mike Jenkins have found success selling eggs to local restaurants.

specifications. Jenkins Farm includes a small U-pick blueberry patch, and the father-son duo also raises black Angus cattle. Jenkins has worked with his dad at the family farm on Hayden Mountain since they moved there in 1980. At that time, the land included a 20-acre peach orchard. In

the past, they've also grown various market crops such as beans and squash.

**The Fig Tree Cafe and Wine Bar**  
 3160 Cahaba Heights Rd.  
 Birmingham, AL 35243  
 (205) 249-0312  
[TheBirminghamFigTree.com](http://TheBirminghamFigTree.com)

## Experience Provides Insights For Jefferson County Teachers



Ossie Ware Mitchell Middle School teacher Shannon Summerville bottle feeds a calf at Middleton Dairy in Moss Point, Mississippi.

Seven teachers from Jefferson County were part of a group of 77 educators who participated in the 2018 Ag in the Classroom (AITC) Summer Institute in Mobile. These seven teachers serve students in the Jefferson County and Birmingham school systems as well as the homeschool environment and five after-school programs.

AITC participant Marquita Hall works at the Foundation for Inner City Enrichment, which serves at-risk students in an after-school program in five of Birmingham's public housing sites. She said she was excited to be chosen for this year's institute.

"I was able to implement a curriculum recommended by a presenter at our summer program at each of these sites immediately," said Hall.

Experiencing agriculture through the farm tours reminded Hall of childhood visits to her grandparents' farm in Bessemer.

"(Since the institute), our goals have become to help our students build raised garden beds at each site, understand where their food comes from and eat healthier," she said.

Other Jefferson County AITC participants were Sylvia Edwards and Natalee Smith of Adamsville Elementary School, Aimee Holland of Gresham Elementary School, Alisha Walker of Bush Hills Academy, Shannon Summerville of Ossie Ware Mitchell Middle School and Amy Gattis of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

The AITC Summer Institute is free for attendees. Sponsors include the Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industries and the Alabama Farmers Agriculture Foundation.

**Want to attend the 2019 Ag in the Classroom Summer Institute?**  
 Email JoAnn Wissinger at [smithem@aces.edu](mailto:smithem@aces.edu)

# Auburn Ag Ambassador President Has Jefferson County Roots



Auburn University Ag Ambassador President and Shades Valley High School alum Cam Humphrey, right, interned with Congressman Mike Rogers during summer 2018.

When Cam Humphrey graduated from Shades Valley High School, he didn't expect to be a part of Auburn University's (AU) College of

Agriculture. Three years later, Humphrey is a senior at AU in agricultural economics and is president of the university's Ag Ambassadors program.

"During my visit to Auburn, the dean of the College of Agriculture gave me a tour and told me about the majors available. That's how I got my start in agriculture," Humphrey said. "My career goal has always been to work on Capitol Hill."

Before his senior year, Humphrey interned for a month with both Congressman Mike Rogers in Washington, D.C., and the Alabama Farmers Federation in Montgomery, where he developed a proposal to send future interns to the nation's capital.

Jefferson County Farmers Federation (JCFF) provides scholarships to students studying agriculture at state

colleges. Graduating this year are AU students and scholarship recipients Christian Baker, Rachel Kuntz, Janet Roberts, Thomas Reeves, Caleb Tanner and William Tynes. Baker will continue to receive a scholarship as he starts a master's program.

John Doston Nichols also earned a scholarship starting in the fall 2018 semester.

Former scholarship recipient John Allen Nichols, a 2016 AU poultry science graduate, is pursuing a career in agriculture law.

## JCFF Scholarship Contact:

Secretary Shirley Bodiford  
jcfarmfed48@bellsouth.net

## Board Members Explore Agriculture Diversity During Conference

Six Jefferson County Farmers Federation (JCFF) board members, including President John Morris, toured farms and industries in central and southeast Alabama that spotlighted the state's agricultural diversity. Alvin Anderson and his wife, Kathy, were impressed with their visit to **Golden Boy Foods** in Troy.

"Who knew peanut butter could be the vehicle for so many different flavors?" Anderson asked.

Family-owned Golden Boy Foods was founded in 1979 to sell roasted nuts, raw nuts and dried fruit. Now a subsidiary of Post Holdings, the company supplies organic and conventional peanut and other nut butters, baking nuts, raisins, dried fruits and trail mixes to grocery retailers, food service distributors and bakeries.

JCFF board members Brad Fuller and Rhonda Hughes took the road less traveled to see wildlife and nature

centers throughout the state.

"During our visit at the **Wehle Nature Center**, we learned that this tract of Forever Wild land is managed using controlled burns in the same way it was managed by Native Americans hundreds of years ago," said Fuller.

Located in Bullock County and run by the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the center features conservation and environmental educational exhibits for students and adults.

At the **Wildlife Group** in Tuskegee, Hughes was impressed to see a nursery intentionally planting trees and shrubs that turn annual food plots into perennial habitat for wildlife.

"This type of planning provides cover and improves aesthetics along with being a long-term food source for wildlife," said Hughes, a cattle farmer at Rosser Farms in Bessemer.

Member Johnny Morris



Jefferson County Farmers Federation board members Kathy and Alvin Anderson enjoyed touring Golden Boy Foods in Troy.

was amazed to learn how the Auburn University's Turfgrass Management and Weed Science program maintains the turf on Pat Dye Field during his tour of **Jordan-Hare Stadium**.

"It's unbelievable that the turf can be installed in the morning and is game-ready by the afternoon," Morris said.

New turf from Baldwin County was installed in June for the 2018-19 season.

The tours were part of the Alabama Farmers Federation's Commodity Producers Conference in Montgomery in August 2018.

"As Alabama prepares to celebrate its 200th birthday, we are proud of our role in the diverse history and opportunities provided to the students and citizens of our state through agriculture," said JCFF President John Morris.

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