

Cultivator

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New Positions For Sessions, Strange

As former U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., was sworn in as U.S. attorney general, former Alabama Attorney General Luther Strange was preparing to take his place.

The U.S. Senate confirmed President Donald Trump's appointment of Attorney General Sessions Feb. 8.

"Sen. Sessions is a friend of Alabama farmers and a steadfast defender of the rule of law," said Alabama Farmers Federation President Jimmy Parnell. "He has a spotless record of pursuing justice as a U.S. attorney, Alabama's attorney general and U.S. senator. The American people are blessed to have someone of Jeff Sessions' character as our nation's chief law enforcement official."

Throughout his career Sessions has maintained a close working relationship with Alabama farmers and rural families. In 1998, he received the Federation's highest honor — the Service to Agriculture Award.

The day after Sessions' confirmation, Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley appointed Strange to fill Sessions' seat in the U.S. Senate.

"As Alabama attorney general, Luther showed leadership at the national level by pushing back against regulatory overreach," Parnell said. "For 20 years, Alabama farmers have enjoyed a close working relationship with Luther, and we look forward to working with Sen. Strange on issues important to our members."

Before being elected attorney general in 2010, Strange was in private practice in Birmingham.

The special election for the U.S. Senate seat will take place in 2018.



Sumter County farmer Pat Buck, left, visits with Alabama Agriculture and Industries Commissioner John McMillan prior to attending educational sessions during the Commodity Organizational Meeting in Montgomery. Nearly 700 farmers attended the event Feb. 7-9.

Meeting Focuses On 16 Commodities

Nearly 700 farmers representing 16 commodities met in Montgomery Feb. 7-9 to help chart the course for the Alabama Farmers Federation.

During the Commodity Organizational Meeting, attendees learned more about their individual commodities, elected leaders and honored outgoing committee members for their years of service.

Hale County farmer Townsend Kyser serves on the Federation's State Catfish Committee, which he said allows him to work directly with other farmers.

"We elect spokesmen to deal with our issues as they arise and help look after our industry," Kyser said. "That allows farmers back home to tend to the daily needs of their farms and commodity."

Special guest speakers addressed the crowd each day during lunch, including Alabama Attorney General Luther Strange in his final speaking engagement before being appointed to the U.S. Senate.

Strange discussed his optimism for fiscal and regulatory reforms under President Donald Trump's administration.

Other lunch speakers were State Sen. President Pro Tem Del Marsh, R-Anniston, and State Senate Majority Leader Greg Reed, R-Jasper.

New members and officers were elected to the Federation's State Bee & Honey; Beef; Catfish; Cotton; Dairy; Equine; Forestry; Greenhouse, Nursery & Sod; Hay & Forage; Horticulture; Meat Goat & Sheep; Pork; Poultry; Soybean; Wheat & Feed Grains; and Wildlife Resources committees. The Alabama Peanut Producers Association held elections during its annual meeting in Dothan Feb. 9.

Read the March issue of Neighbors for a complete list of new committee members. For event photos, go to the Federation's Facebook page or Flickr.com/AlabamaFarmers.

MG&S Committee Sets 2017 Priorities, Budget



The Alabama Farmers Federation's Meat Goat & Sheep (MG&S) Committee met Jan. 16 at the Montgomery home office, led by chairman and Montgomery County farmer Stacey Nestor, center. This group is one of 17 state commodity committees that meets regularly to help shape Federation policy, set priorities for research and develop educational programs for farmers.

Commodity Corner

Catfish

There's good and bad news for catfish farmers this month. The good? Farm-raised catfish processed during December 2016 totaled 27.7 million pounds, up 9 percent from December 2015. Price paid to producers for premium fish was \$1.21 per pound, up 9 cents from December 2015. The bad? Imports of catfish-like species from China, Vietnam, Thailand and other countries in November 2016 were up 42 percent from a year ago.

-Rick Oates, division director

Cotton, Soybeans, Wheat & Feed Grains

EPA federal registration and state registration has been granted for Enlist Duo® herbicide for use on Enlist corn, Enlist soybeans and Enlist cotton.

-Carla Hornady, divisions director

Meat Goat & Sheep

Tuskegee University's Annual Goat Day is Saturday, April 8, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. The theme is "Diseases and Parasites in Small Ruminants: Applied Solutions for Producers." The event includes research presentations, roundtable discussions and field demonstrations. Registration is \$15 before April 1. Visit tuskegee.edu/GoatDay for more details.

-Nate Jaeger, division director

Pork

Recent media reports about a bacon shortage were based on misinformation. While frozen pork belly inventories were at a record low in December 2016, the U.S. Department of Agriculture predicts U.S. pork producers will increase production by 5 percent in 2017. So continue to enjoy your bacon every day!

-Guy Hall, division director

Horticulture

Producers interested in learning about horticulture topics may participate in monthly webinars from the Commercial Horticulture Extension Team. Watch live online the last Monday of every month, or watch the archived webinar on Extension's Beginning Farmer website. Find the schedule online at tinyurl.com/Horticulture2017web.

-Mac Higginbotham, division director

Peanuts

A recent review of over 20 studies showed eating a handful of peanuts daily is associated with decreased stroke risk. It also concluded eating more peanuts may reduce risk of cardiovascular disease, cancer and death caused by respiratory disease, diabetes and infections.

-Caleb Bristow, division director

Precision Ag Research

Guest column from AAES Outlying Units Director Dale Monks

Today's Precision Agriculture (PA) is highly specialized. Several 2017 Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station (AAES) projects funded by Alabama producers will investigate the combined use of aerial drones, soil moisture sensor automation, sprayer calibration and real-time crop measurements.

This research will help improve farms, because final yields are only as good as the least precise decision. We hope this makes farmers more confident about investing in PA technologies.

OBITUARIES

Bruce Bush of Eufaula died Jan. 24.

He was 65. Bush was part of the Barbour County Farmers Federation board of directors and the county Cattlemen's Association. His Bush Farms was named Alabama Farm of Distinction in 2003.

He is survived by his wife of 41 years, Billie; daughter Tara Williams (Clay); and two grandsons.

Ella Caraway of Louisville died Jan. 17.

She was 82. Caraway was active in the Barbour County Farmers Federation's Women's Leadership Committee, Alabama Ag in the Classroom and the county Farm-City committee.

She is survived by her husband, Charles; sons Chuck (Myrlene), Chris (Joann) and Chet (Holly); daughters Margaret Sanders (Ronnie) and Marie Jones (Jason); 17 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

Thomas Curry of Pinckard died Feb. 8.

He was 64. Pinckard was a Dale County Farmers Federation board member.

He is survived by his wife, Brenda Mallory Curry, who serves as Dale County Women's Leadership Committee chair; step-children Woodie Shaver (Julie), Yancy Shaver, Kelley Shaver and Brent Shaver (Melissa); and three grandsons.

Horace Allan Lamberth of Rockford died Jan. 21.

He was 62. Lamberth was a member of the Coosa County Farmers Federation board of directors and the county Cattlemen's Association.

He is survived by his wife of 42 years, Debra; daughter Tiler Allison Daniel (Ryan); and a granddaughter.

Find details on contributing memorials for the departed at alfafarmers.org.

New Requirement For Applying Certain Herbicides

Farmers and applicators who plan to use auxin herbicides on dicamba or 2,4-D tolerant crops must attend mandatory training this spring.

The Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries instated the requirement in January.

"It's extremely important for farmers to be aware of this change — without the training, you may be unable to use your normal herbicide treatment plan," said Carla Hornady, Alabama Farmers Federation Cotton, Soybeans and Wheat & Feed Grains divisions director.

The four-hour training through the Alabama Cooperative Extension System will cover technical application methods, tank cleanout, new chemistries and ways to reduce herbicide drift.

Commercial applicators will receive pesticide recertification, and certified crop advisors will receive points.

A meal will be provided. Cost is \$10. View the list of training dates and locations online at aces.edu/go/707. Registration is required.

For more details, email Trey Cutts at trey.cutts@auburn.edu.

Upcoming Events

- **Feb. 24** - Precision Agriculture Workshop on soil sensors at E.V. Smith Research Center in Shorter
 - bit.ly/2jkF04H
- **March 3** - Registration deadline for Alabama Farmers Federation's Women's Leadership Conference April 5-7 in Birmingham
 - cvent.com/d/5vqf1b
- **March 3-5** - Federation's Young Farmers Conference in Montgomery
 - cvent.com/d/8vqfvc
- **March 4-5** - Alabama Horse Fair in Montgomery
 - alabamahorsecouncil.org
- **March 7-10** - Federation's Washington Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.
 - cvent.com/d/rvq5hp
- **March 10** - Precision Agriculture Workshop on sprayers at E.V. Smith Research Center in Shorter
 - bit.ly/2kN6cKL
- **March 16-18** - SLE Livestock Expo and Rodeo in Montgomery with Junior Beef Expo March 17
 - slerodeo.com
- **March 21** - National Ag Day
 - agday.org
- **April 1** - Scholarship applications due for Alabama Farmers Agriculture Foundation and Alfa Foundation programs
 - alfafarmers.org
 - alfainsurance.com

Tag, Trailers, Titles And More In Area 8



Around 40 Alabama Farmers Federation members from across Area 8, which covers southeast Alabama, attended a Jan. 23 meeting in Ozark. Speakers discussed tags, trailers, titles, Alfa Health, Federation membership benefits and road safety.

Production Meetings Focus On 2017 Peanut Crop

Alabama peanut farmers are invited to attend one of eight peanut production meetings held across the state this month.

"At these meetings, farmers will learn important information about market outlook and crop management," said Caleb Bristow, Alabama Peanut Producers Association executive director. "It's always worth the time investment to learn more about our industry, and there's a free meal for attendees."

For more details, call (334) 792-6482 or email cbristow@alpeanuts.com.

- **Feb. 21** - 11 a.m. at The Lighthouse Restaurant, 12495 Co. Rd. 23, Irvington and 5:30 p.m. at Baldwin County

Farmers Federation, 21332 AL-59, Robertsdale

- **Feb. 22** - 11 a.m. at Grace Fellowship Church, 1412 E. Nashville Ave., Atmore
- **Feb. 23** - 11 a.m. at Sportsman's Lodge in Selma and 4 p.m. at E.V. Smith Research Center, 4725 Co. Rd. 40, Shorter
- **Feb. 24** - 11 a.m. at North Alabama Agriplex Center, 1714 Tally Ho St. SW, Cullman
- **Feb. 28** - 11 a.m. at Shane's Rib Shack, 8 North Point Pkwy., Enterprise and 6 p.m. at Wiregrass Research & Extension Center, 167 State Highway 134 E, Headland

Hornady, Dee Receive New Appointments

Carla Hornady of the Alabama Farmers Federation recently accepted a three-year appointment to the Sunbelt Agricultural Expo Executive Board.

Hornady is the Federation's Cotton, Soybeans and Wheat & Feed Grains divisions director. She is filling the spot held by Jimmy Carlisle, who retired from the Federation in 2013.

Pickens County farmer Annie Dee was recently selected to serve on the Soybean Innovation Lab (SIL) Advisory Board.

Dee is a partner in Dee River Ranch near Aliceville, a family-owned and -operated 10,000-acre diversified farm. SIL exists to build profitable, resilient and food-secure smallholder farming communities worldwide.

Good Job, Gogue



On Jan. 30 during an Alabama Farmers Federation board meeting dinner at the Montgomery home office, Federation President Jimmy Parnell, right, presented Auburn University President Dr. Jay Gogue with a resolution recognizing his contributions to Alabama agriculture. In September 2016, Gogue announced plans to retire after over a decade leading the land-grant institution.



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Online Registration Open For WLC, Farm-City Luncheon Tickets

FarmHer, GMOs, Ag in the Classroom and food blogging will be featured during the Alabama Farmers Federation's Women's Leadership Conference in Birmingham April 5-7.

Marji Guyler-Alaniz, founder and president of FarmHer, will deliver the keynote address April 5. FarmHer, originally a photography project, has grown to include a show on RFD-TV, an online community and FarmHer merchandise.

"Marji really highlights the work women do on the farm, and I think our members will appreciate her message," said Federation Women's Leadership Division Director Kim Ramsey.

On April 6, the conference luncheon will also feature the Alabama Farm-City awards to recognize outstanding students and county Farm-City committees. Tickets will be available online. Find more details at alfafarmers.org.

The conference registration deadline is March 3. For more information, including an agenda, visit cvent.com/d/5vqf1b.

Celebrating 96 Years Of Growth And Service



The Alabama Farmers Federation and Alfa Insurance celebrated Federation Day — the organization's 96th anniversary — Jan. 31 at the Montgomery home office. The Board of Directors handed out koozies with a timeline of important Federation and insurance company events and distributed ice cream to home office employees, who also participated in a trivia contest about the Federation.