

Cultivator

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Conference Donations To Help Comfort Kids

Attendees of the Alabama Farm Expo Aug. 5 can not only improve their farm operation by networking with equipment dealers, lenders and other vendors; they'll have the chance to comfort children suffering life-threatening diseases.

The Welcome Wagon for Kids fundraiser at the Commodity Producers Conference and farm expo will benefit Children's of Alabama, which serves the state's 67 counties.

At the hospital, children take rides in little red wagons when moving around the hospital, when they're discharged or when they need entertainment.

Conference attendees are encouraged to donate Thursday, Aug. 3, at registration or Saturday, Aug. 5, at the Children's of Alabama booth in the Alabama Farm Expo.

The Federation's Matthew Durdin said donations will be collected based on field staff areas. The winning area will have a wagon donated in its honor during the conference closing banquet.

"Last year we raised over \$6,400 for Ronald McDonald House in Mobile," Durdin said. "This year, Alfa Insurance service centers and home office employees are donating to the cause, too, so we hope to top our 2016 donation."

A check representing all donations will also be presented to Children's of Alabama at the closing banquet.

Learn more about the expo at tinyurl.com/alabamafarmexpo or by visiting fb.com/alabamafarmers and clicking the "Events" tab.



U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kansas, who chairs the Senate Ag Committee, visited with 100 Alabama farmers July 15 to discuss the upcoming farm bill. Roberts also toured the Gaines family's Autaugaville cotton and peanut farm. From left are U.S. Sen. Luther Strange, R-Alabama; Alabama Farmers Federation President Jimmy Parnell; Harold Gaines; Dan Gaines; and Roberts.

Ideas Help Shape 2018 Farm Bill

Alabama farmers took farm bill concerns to the top when they met with U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kansas, and Sen. Luther Strange, R-Alabama, July 15.

Roberts chairs the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, of which Strange is a member.

The senators visited Harold Gaines' Autaugaville farm before meeting about 100 farmers at the Alabama Farmers Federation Montgomery home office.

"We've been holding hearings all over the country and asking farmers what's working for the farm bill and what isn't," Roberts said. "We hope we can do a farm bill sooner rather than later so farmers can get some predictability and plan."

One farm bill program not working for Gaines and other Alabama farmers is the Stacked Income Protection Plan (STAX) for Upland Cotton. Developed

in the 2014 farm bill to comply with the World Trade Organization, many farmers say the program has its shortcomings.

"We participated in the STAX program for two years, and it was probably the two hardest financial years cotton has been through," Gaines said. "It provided virtually no safety net for us whatsoever, so this year we didn't even participate."

Roberts said priorities for the 2018 farm bill include preserving crop insurance funding and enhancing international trade, a challenge with current spending levels.

Federation leaders also met with Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt July 6.

Pruitt discussed his actions to begin the process of rescinding the 2015 Waters of the U.S. rule.

Parnell Names Farm Bill Committee Members

Alabama Farmers Federation President Jimmy Parnell has targeted a group of farmers to review policy in light of the upcoming 2018 farm bill.

Appointees are Jeremy Calvert, Cullman County; Will Gilmer, Lamar County; Mark Kaiser, Baldwin County; Bob Luker, Talladega County; James Walker, Lauderdale County; and Ricky Wiggins, Covington County. More farmers may be added to the group in coming months.

In other farm bill news, Alabama Peanut Producers Association Executive Director Caleb Bristow testified at a U.S. House of Representatives Ag Committee farm bill listening session in Gainesville in June.

Events & Deadlines

- **July-December** - Quickbooks Classes for Farmers
 - Visit aces.edu/go/734 for locations and dates
- **July-August** - Estate Planning For Farmers and Other Landowners
 - Visit tinyurl.com/farmersstates for dates and registration
- **July 31** - Registration deadline to vote in the primary election
- **Aug. 1** - Farm Service Agency County Committee nominations due
 - fsa.usda.gov/elections
- **Aug. 3-5** - Commodity Producers Conference/Alabama Farm Expo
 - alfafarmers.org
- **Aug. 9** - Farming with Beneficial Insects for Pest Control Shortcourse in Clanton
 - tinyurl.com/insectcontrol
- **Aug. 10** - Primary election absentee ballot applications due
- **Aug. 12** - Auburn University Beef Cattle Conference
 - aub.ie/beef
- **Aug. 14** - Primary election absentee ballots due
- **Aug. 15** - Primary election
 - FarmPAC has endorsed Luther Strange
- **Aug. 19** - Federation Scholarship Reception in Auburn
- **Sept. 21** - Southeastern Hay Contest registration deadline
 - sehaycontest.com

Young Farmers Donate Sweet Corn To Charities



Limestone County Young Farmers (LCYF) picked and donated sweet corn July 7 to area food banks and churches that feed needy families. From left are Brady Peek, LCYF Chairman Ben Maples, Jerry Allen Newby III and State Young Farmers Committee Chairman Jerry Allen Newby.

Commodity Corner

Soybeans

Intern Kelsey Cassebaum attended the Ag Voices of the Future conference in Washington, D.C. July 10-13, courtesy of the American Soybean Association and Valent. As one of eight students and Alabama's only representative, Kelsey learned about federal regulations, ag advocacy and policy making.

-Carla Hornady, division director

Equine

Recently, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture defeated a rider that would continue withholding funding for inspectors in horse packing plants as part of USDA's annual funding bill. This action could allow slaughter to resume if Congress approves the bill. The subcommittee is chaired by Rep. Robert Aderholt of Alabama's 4th District.

-Nate Jaeger, division director

Bee & Honey; Horticulture; Greenhouse, Nursery & Sod

Disaster funds are being sought for producers affected by June's heavy rains. The Alabama Farmers Federation and Ag & Industries Commissioner John McMillan provided Gov. Kay Ivey information about conditions facing farmers. Ivey sent a letter to USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue June 23 requesting urgent assistance.

-Mac Higginbotham, divisions director

Catfish

Alabama Catfish Producers Chairman Sid Nelson and state committee member Thed Spree met with Gov. Kay Ivey July 12. Three catfish processors were also represented. The meeting covered the catfish industry's economic impact in west Alabama and industry issues, including catfish too large to market.

-Mitt Walker, division director

Pork

An upswing has been noted in Seneca Valley Virus (SVV) for grow-finish hogs, as well as sow and boar market animals. Infected pigs may have blisters around the nose, mouth and hooves. Alert your veterinarian immediately if signs appear. Pigs with illness or active SVV lesions should not be marketed or shown. Visit swinehealth.org/fact-sheets/ to learn more.

-Guy Hall, division director

Peanuts

The Southern Peanut Farmers Federation launched PeanutProgramWorks.com and produced a video to showcase Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program benefits in the 2014 farm bill. PLC provides market stability for peanut farmers, and the video demonstrates its necessity in the upcoming farm bill.

-Caleb Bristow, division director

Isolated Case Of Atypical BSE Detected In Alabama

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced July 18 an isolated case of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), a neurologic disease of cattle, in an 11-year-old cow in Alabama.

BSE in this animal is atypical — meaning it's a spontaneous occurrence and unconnected to other animals or management practices.

Families and shoppers can have confidence the beef supply is safe. The affected animal at no time presented a risk to the food supply, or to human health in the U.S. The diagnosis is confirmation of the effectiveness and efficiency of surveillance and testing programs in Alabama and the U.S.

Please direct questions to State Veterinarian Dr. Tony Frazier's office at (334) 240-7253.

Picking Up Blueberry Insight In Chilton County



Alabama Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association Executive Director Mac Higginbotham visited Jason Powell, whose family owns Petals from the Past in Jemison, July 13. They discussed blueberry varieties and effects of recent rain on crops.

In Other News

- **A total of \$92,400** was donated to ranchers who suffered from wildfires in Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas and Colorado earlier this year. Fifty-nine counties and 13 individuals contributed \$67,400. The Alfa Foundation gave \$25,000.
- **Drought-related assistance applications** through the NRCS are due July 28. Contact a USDA service center to learn more.
- **Henry County's Glenn and Scarlett Riley** are finalists for the National Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year award. Online votes and judges determine the title. Vote daily until Aug. 1 at treefarmssystem.org/2017-otfy.

Alfa Member Perks App, Ford Benefit Launch

Thanks to the new Alfa Farmers Member Perks smartphone app, Alabama Farmers Federation members can save at businesses, restaurants and attractions around the corner or around the country.

Alfa Perks locates and notifies users of local, county-specific benefits when traveling. The app compliments the local member benefits program and offers savings at 840 retail locations statewide. To claim a benefit, show the Alfa membership card, which is available on the app.

National benefits are also available on the app, such as discounts at Papa John's Pizza, Costco and various amusement parks.

Download the free Alfa Perks app from Apple's App Store, Google Play or Microsoft Marketplace.

Members can also take advantage of the newest member benefit — a discount on Ford and Lincoln vehicles.

Ford dealerships across Alabama offer the exclusive \$500 Bonus Cash offer from Ford and \$750 Bonus Cash offer from Lincoln on most new eligible 2016, 2017 or 2018 vehicles.

Visit alfafarmers.org/perks to access the offer. Find complete details online at fordspecialoffer.com/farmbureau/al or talk to a local Ford dealer.

Interns Meet Industry Leaders In Montgomery



Alabama Farmers Federation interns met with industry leaders in Montgomery this month. They visited the Alabama Poultry & Egg Association, Alabama Agribusiness Council, Alabama Rural Electric Association, Alabama Ag Credit, Alabama Forestry Commission, Department of Ag & Industries, First South Farm Credit and the Alabama Cattlemen's Association (ACA). From left are Caleb Hicks, Ellie Isbell, ACA's Erin Beasley, Kelsey Cassebaum and John Allen Nichols.

Summer Farm Visits In Full Swing



Federation Cotton Division Director Carla Hornady visited Monroe County Farmers Federation President Ronnie Joe Jordan July 18. The cattle and row crop farmer said he's currently catching up on spraying cotton. He told Hornady several days of sunshine perked up his crop after weeks of rain.



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Programs Seek To Honor Historic Alabama Farms

Applications for three programs that recognize historic Alabama farms are available through the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries. The application deadline is Aug. 25.

The Bicentennial Farm Program is for farms owned by one family for at least 200 years. The program was created to honor Alabama's bicentennial in 2019.

A Century Farm has been in one family continuously for at least 100 years and has current agricultural activities. It must include at least 40 acres of land and be owned by the applicant or nominee.

A Heritage Farm has operated continuously as a family farm for at least 100 years. The farm must possess interesting and important historical and agricultural aspects, including one or more structures at least 40 years old. It must be at least 40 acres of land owned and operated by the applicant, an Alabama resident.

For more information, contact Amy Belcher at (334) 240-7126 or apply under the "Forms" tab at agi.alabama.gov.

David's Catfish In Atmore Named Best In Bama



David's Catfish House in Atmore was named Bama's Best Catfish Restaurant in the second annual contest, which the Alabama Catfish Producers sponsors. Judges sampled catfish at four locations before selecting Bama's Best. David's also won the People's Choice Award. From left are Catfish Farmers of America President Townsend Kyser of Hale County; restaurant owners Elliott and Rob Faircloth; Alabama Catfish Producers Chairman Sid Nelson of Sumter County; "Absolutely Alabama" host Fred Hunter; and the Alabama Farmers Cooperative's Jim Allen.