

Cultivator

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State Appointments For USDA Roles Filled

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced David McCurdy and Chris Beeker as state Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Rural Development (RD) directors, respectively, in Alabama. Both are appointees of President Donald J. Trump.

McCurdy, of Pike Road, began his career with FSA in 1987 and served in various agency roles. The Lowndes County native is involved in his family's third-generation cattle, row crop and timber farm.

The FSA administers farm commodity loan and purchase programs, farm ownership and operating loans and the conservation reserve program. It also provides disaster assistance and administrative support to the Commodity Credit Corporation.

Beeker, of Tuscaloosa, was raised on a Greene County catfish and cattle farm. His experience includes working on the family farm and other businesses.

RD offers loans, grants and loan guarantees to support services such as housing, economic development, health care, first responder services and equipment, and infrastructure.

Alabama Farmers Federation President Jimmy Parnell said the organization welcomes these appointments.

"Alabama, and particularly rural Alabama, is poised for growth," he said. "FSA and RD play important roles in the future of Alabama agriculture and improvements to our rural economies. We look forward to working with David and Chris as they implement programs through USDA that will achieve both those goals."

Youth Show Off Skills During Livestock Contests



The Alabama Farmers Federation and Alfa Insurance sponsored livestock shows during the Alabama National Fair in Montgomery and Greater Gulf State Fair in Mobile Oct. 27-Nov. 5 and National Peanut Festival in Dothan Nov. 3-12. Several hundred youth participated in beef, dairy, goat, sheep and swine events, while learning lessons on responsibility and time management.

Annual Meeting To Hit Capital City

Influential Alabama leaders are slated to headline the Alabama Farmers Federation's 96th annual meeting in the Capital City Dec. 3-4.

U.S. Rep. Robert Aderholt will receive this year's Service to Agriculture award during the Dec. 3 opening session. Aderholt is a member of the House Committee on Appropriations and serves as chairman of the Subcommittee on Agriculture. He has served in Congress for 20 years.

Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey will deliver the closing address Dec. 4, following a reception with FarmPAC donors.

Throughout the conference, silent and live auctions will raise money for the Alabama Farmers Ag Foundation, and caucus meetings will take place.

Monday morning, county Federation and communication awards will be presented, and four finalists will compete

in the Young Farmers Discussion Meet. An ag issues briefing immediately follows.

That afternoon, 500 delegates of the state's largest farm organization will vote on policy recommendations and elect leaders.

Central and Southwest Region vice presidents are up for election, as is the statewide office of secretary-treasurer.

Directors for the Federation's 3rd, 6th, 9th and 12th districts will also be elected. Chairs and district representatives for the Young Farmers and Women's Leadership committees will be elected during business meetings Sunday and Monday, respectively.

Country music star Travis Tritt will entertain the crowd Sunday night. Purchase tickets at ticketmaster.com or by calling (334) 481-5100.

Meal ticket registration closes Nov. 20 at alfafarmers.org.

Dig Deeper



- Orientation for [five new county presidents](#) was Oct. 9 in Montgomery. New presidents are Trip Horne, Barbour; Gerald Dial, Clay; Tony Beck, Crenshaw; Dan Robertson, Perry; and Bill Lowery, Russell.
- [The State Equine Committee](#) toured Storybook Farm in Opelika Oct. 19 to learn more about equine-assisted therapy. Committee members generously donated travel reimbursements to the nonprofit farm.
- [The Alabama TREASURE Forest Association](#) annual meeting was Oct. 26-28 in Florence. Gov. Kay Ivey was recognized for her Monroe County property, one of a record 70 TREASURE Forests certified in 2017. Other stewardship awards were also presented.
- The new [Alfa Equine Sciences Classroom](#) at Judson College in Marion was dedicated Nov. 2. Funded by the Alfa Foundation, the classroom will equip students to be part of the equine industry, which has a \$2 billion economic impact in Alabama.

State Commodity Committee Gears Up For 2018



The State Meat Goat & Sheep Committee met at the Alabama Farmers Federation home office in Montgomery Oct. 12. Policy, farm issues and the 2018 Commodity Organizational Meeting were on the agenda. From left are Charlie Loveless, Calhoun County; Charlie Thompson, Lauderdale County; and Travis Nelson, Randolph County.

Langley Honored In Farmer Of The Year Contest



Chris Langley of Chambers County was honored as Alabama's representative in the Southeastern Farmer of the Year contest Oct. 17 at the Sunbelt Ag Expo in Moultrie, Georgia. From left are Chandler, Elizabeth and Chris Langley; Alabama Farmers Federation President Jimmy Parnell; and Christopher and Chelsea Langley.

Alfa Donates More Than \$99,000 To Fight Cancer

With a think-pink spirit fueling its efforts, Alfa Insurance employees and Alabama Farmers Federation members raised \$99,044 for the American Cancer Society in October.

The organizations have donated more than \$421,300 since 2015 to aid the fight against cancer as part of the Alfa Cares initiative.

Get Ag-tive

- [McMichen Farm](#) in Cherokee County received \$10,000 for winning the 100-bushel soybean contest, sponsored by the Alabama Soybean Producers. The field hauled in a state record 102.1530 bushels per acre.
- [Glenn and Scarlett Riley](#) of Henry County are the National Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year, awarded for their 283-acre Tree Farm and TREASURE Forest.
- Koch Foods Inc.** is investing over \$40 million in a new feed mill in Randolph County. The mill will employ 46 people and generate an annual payroll of nearly \$2 million.
- About 180,000 Alabama farms** enrolled in Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage programs will receive financial assistance for the 2016 crop year, according to the USDA FSA.
- Alfa joined businesses** from across Alabama during the Trick-or-Treat Parade at Children's Hospital Oct. 31. Staff brought Halloween to the hospital by handing out farm coloring books and soy crayons.

Commodity Corner

Horticulture

The Agricultural Guestworker Act proposed by U.S. Rep. Bob Goodlatte, R-Virginia, passed out of committee and has been sent to the House. The bill would replace the H-2A program with an H-2C program, allowing farmers to hire workers for up to 18 months for seasonal labor and 36 months for year-round labor. Learn more at tinyurl.com/H2Cworkers.

-Mac Higginbotham, division director

Wheat & Feed Grains, Cotton and Soybean

In Alabama, only 15 percent of cropland is irrigated, a far cry from 61 percent in Mississippi and 40 percent in Georgia. Auburn University has received more than \$1 million in grants to increase irrigation adoption in Alabama and close producers' irrigation knowledge gap.

-Carla Hornady, divisions director

Pork

The Alabama Farmers Federation supports updating USDA pork grading standards to accurately reflect modern production's commitment to a consistent, high-quality product. Submit public comments for revisions by Dec. 22 at tinyurl.com/PorkGradingComments. The last revision in 1985 does not reflect preferences for current pork products.

-Guy Hall, division director

Equine

Make sure horses are ready for winter by doing preventative maintenance. Fecal egg counts will determine if horses need worming with an anthelmintic to kill bots and tapeworms. Horses may also need vaccinations for equine influenza and rhinopneumonitis, Eastern and Western equine encephalomyelitis and West Nile virus. It's also a good time to check teeth and trim hooves.

-Nate Jaeger, division director

Wildlife

As deer and quail seasons open, remember to practice good hunter safety. Wear orange, use a safety harness, and make sure the firearm safety is activated. For those who harvest a deer, report it through Game Check, the mandatory reporting system of the state Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. Learn more at outdooralabama.com.

-William Green, division director

Peanuts

The Alabama Peanut Producers Association shared farm facts with consumers during the National Peanut Festival in Dothan. Hundreds of kids learned about ag during Kindergarten Day Nov. 6, while attendees tasted products in the Peanut Pavilion throughout the festival.

-Caleb Bristow, division director

Events & Deadlines

- **Nov. 20** - Meal ticket registration closes for Federation annual meeting Dec. 3-4 in Montgomery
 - alfafarmers.org
- **Nov. 29** - Alabama Forage Conference in Eufaula
 - bamabeef.org/forage
- **Nov. 30** - Precision Ag Planter Clinic in Shorter
 - tinyurl.com/PrecisionAg17
- **December-February** - Alabama Agriculture Outlook meetings
 - Visit tinyurl.com/AgOutlook18 for locations and dates
- **Dec. 3** - Travis Tritt concert at the Federation's 96th annual meeting
 - ticketmaster.com
- **Dec. 4** - FSA County Committee election ballots due at local FSA offices
 - fsa.usda.gov/elections
- **Dec. 12-13** - Alabama Row Crops Short Course in Auburn
 - alabamacrops.com
- **Dec. 14** - Wiregrass Soil Health Field Day in Daleville
 - Call (334) 894-5581 to register
- **Dec. 15** - Lawrence County Soil Health Field Day in Town Creek
 - Call (256) 974-1176 to register
- **Feb. 6-8** - Federation Commodity Organizational Meeting in Montgomery
 - Early-bird registration ends Jan. 8 at tinyurl.com/CommOrg18

OBITUARIES

Fall Farm Tour Features Turfgrass Production



Lee County Young Farmers (LCYF) visited Ben Ingram's turfgrass and row crop farm during the group's fall farm tour Oct. 14. From left are LCYF Secretary Markie Hageman, LCYF Chairman Daniel Mullenix, Alabama Farmers Federation Area 7 Director Preston Roberts and Ingram.

Robert DuPriest of Salem died Oct.

2. He was 81.

DuPriest was active in the Lee County Farmers Federation.

He is survived by wife Audrey; two sons; one daughter; three grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and stepchildren.

John Goodson Jr. of Brent died Oct. 20. He was 90.

Goodson was a longtime Alabama Farmers Federation state board and Bibb County Farmers Federation board member.

He is survived by wife Jean; one son; three daughters; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren.

Shoot Aims To Help Ag Foundation



More than \$35,000 was raised during the 2nd annual Alabama Farmers Agriculture Foundation Skeet Shoot Nov. 3 at Selwood Farms in Alpine. Funds raised by the 36 teams will support scholarships, Ag in the Classroom and other educational programs. From left, Mike Wood looks on while his brother, Tim, shoots.



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Wage Rate Corrections To Help Farmers, Forestry

The U.S. Department of Labor has corrected wage requirements for the state's H-2B workers following an appeal by the Alabama Farmers Federation and Alabama Department of Labor.

The new rates for forest and conservation workers are about 25-33 percent lower than previously published and more in line with other Southern states.

Federation President Jimmy Parnell said the revised rates are good news for Alabama's nursery and forest industries.

"We received numerous calls from forest owners concerned about steep increases in wage rates," he said. "They rely on H-2B labor for tree planting and other physically demanding jobs. Some told us they would not be able to plant trees this winter at the published rate, and others said it could cost landowners an additional \$25-\$30 per acre."

Parnell thanked Alabama's Department of Labor and congressional delegation for responding to the concerns of farmers and forest landowners.

Read more at alfafarmers.org.

Byrne Digs Into Industry Issues During Ag Tour



U.S. Rep. Bradley Byrne dug into ag facts and issues during his annual Ag Matters Tour in Alabama's 1st Congressional District Oct. 16. Tour stops included Anthony Faggard's Mobile County cattle farm, United Bank in Atmore in Escambia County, Scott Saucer's Monroe County row crop farm and Summerdale Peanut Co. in Baldwin County. From left are Alabama Peanut Producers Association Executive Director Caleb Bristow, Byrne and Saucer.