

FarmPAC Announces 2020 Endorsements

The Alabama Farmers Federation's political action committee, FarmPAC, announced endorsements for the March 2020 primary elections.

More than 100 Federation leaders including representatives from all 67 counties gathered in Montgomery Sept. 24 to hear from candidates and make recommendations.

Federation President Jimmy Parnell said the meeting is among the most important held by the state's largest farm organization.

"The Alabama Farmers Federation was founded to give farmers a voice in the political process and to advocate for issues important to rural families," he said. "As representatives of rural communities across this state, these county leaders reflect the values, concerns and hopes of many Alabamians."

Those endorsed were:

- Donald Trump – President
- Tommy Tuberville – U.S. Senate
- Brad Mendheim, Alabama Supreme Court, Place 2
- Bill Thompson, Alabama Court of Civil Appeals, Place 1
- Matt Fridy, Alabama Court of Civil Appeals, Place 2
- Mary Windom, Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 1
- Beth Kellum, Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 2
- Twinkle Cavanaugh, Alabama Public Service Commission President

FarmPAC did not make endorsements in every race. Endorsements approved at the meeting will carry through to the general election. FarmPAC reserves the option to make additional endorsements at a later date.

New County Presidents Prep To Serve



Ten new county presidents fine-tuned skills to better serve members during orientation at the Alabama Farmers Federation home office Oct. 8-9. They learned about FarmPAC, the Alabama Farmers Ag Foundation, legal obligations, accounting, media training and more. They also toured the home office to learn about departmental duties. From left are Jamie Lazenby, Lee; Jim Tollison, St. Clair; Mike Harris, Cleburne; and Stanley Sumners, Marshall.

98th Annual Meeting Set For Dec. 8-9

Alabama Farmers Federation members will flock to Montgomery for the 98th annual meeting Dec. 8-9. Meeting registration closes Oct. 23 at AlfaFarmers.org.

Gov. Kay Ivey will address members, and former U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy, a "Fox News" commentator, will close out the general session on the final evening.

The two-day meeting includes business sessions for the Federation's Young Farmers Division and Women's Leadership Division, in addition to electing leadership for the organization's state board of directors.

Board elections will be for secretary-treasurer (statewide); Central Area vice president; and Southwest Area vice president. District elections include directors for District 2, which includes Limestone, Madison and Morgan counties; District 5, which includes Bibb, Fayette, Jefferson, Lamar and Tuscaloosa counties; District 8, which includes Choctaw, Dallas, Greene, Hale, Marengo,

Perry, Pickens and Sumter counties; and District 11, which includes Baldwin, Clarke, Conecuh, Escambia, Monroe, Mobile and Washington counties.

U.S. Rep. Martha Roby, R-Ala., will receive the Service to Agriculture Award, the Federation's highest honor.

Awards also will be presented to distinguished individual Federation members, as well as outstanding county Federations, Women's Leadership committees and Young Farmers groups.

Other events include:

- A concert by country music star Clay Walker. Order tickets at TicketMaster.com
- A silent auction for the Alabama Farmers Agriculture Foundation
- A tribute breakfast memorializing former county leaders who passed away in 2019
- Naming and recognizing Young Farmers contest winners

A new meeting app will also be used during the conference.



Applications Open For ARC/PLC Programs

Enrollment is open for Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2019 crop year. Sign-ups close March 15.

The 2018 Farm Bill reauthorized and updated these U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency (FSA) programs. ARC provides income support payments on historical base acres when actual crop revenue declines below a specified guarantee level. PLC provides income support payments on historical base acres when the price for a covered commodity falls below its effective reference price.

Covered commodities include canola, corn, grain sorghum, oats, peanuts, rapeseed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

Visit your local FSA office to enroll.

Teachers Net Knowledge During Farm Tour

Educators toured Drury Catfish Farm in Greensboro Sept. 27 as part of the Alabama Catfish Culinary Challenge, where culinary teachers will receive U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish to use in recipe development. The Alabama Catfish Producers is sponsoring the project. From left are Sheila Lightfoot of the Limestone County Career Center and farmer Wallace Drury.

Ag In Action

- **The Alabama Catfish Producers** sponsored "Country Music," an 8-part, 16-hour documentary on Alabama Public TV highlighting the amazing history of country music in America. Learn more at aptv.org.
- **Leah McElmoyl and Barrett Gilbert** were selected for Alabama Leadership Initiative Class III. The six-month program exposes leaders to public and private initiatives which strive to meet challenges facing Alabama. McElmoyl, a lawyer from DeKalb County, serves on the State Young Farmers Committee. Gilbert is Alabama Farmers Federation's Area 1 Organization director based out of Limestone County.
- **The Alabama 4-H Foundation** announced "The Center Of It All" campaign for Alabama 4-H Oct. 3. It focuses on expanding 4-H Center infrastructure to help fulfill the mission of providing hands-on learning for all Alabama youth.
- **A wood pellet production plant** is expected to create 85 full-time jobs in Sumter County and about 180 more jobs in logging and transportation. Enviva, the world's largest producer of pellets burned for power production, will ship product on the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway from the Port of Epes.

Get Ag-Tive

Sweet Grown Alabama

applications for members and associates are open. To learn more about the state branding program, contact Ellie Watson at (334) 399-7748 or visit SweetGrownAlabama.org.

2020 Alabama Hemp Program

applications are delayed until the U.S. Department of Agriculture releases its interim final rule. Receive up-to-date information by visiting agi.alabama.gov/industrial-hemp.

Access market prices

on the American Farm Bureau Federation's new website: fb.org/market-prices. It features commodity market futures prices for grains, oilseeds, livestock, dairy and soft products.

African swine fever

has been found in South Korea, making it the ninth Asian country with a positive test. This occurrence further disrupts pork supplies in an area of the world where pork is in high demand.

Long-Awaited USDA Disaster Relief Apps Open

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced agricultural producers affected by natural disasters in 2018 and 2019 can apply for assistance through the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+).

In addition to covering 2018 and 2019 eligible losses such as Hurricane Michael, damages from 2017's Tropical Storm Cindy were specifically included and covered under original WHIP rules.

Eleven Alabama counties were designated as primary natural disaster areas from Tropical Storm Cindy. They are Baldwin, Cherokee, Clarke, Conecuh, Escambia, Hale, Marengo, Mobile, Monroe, Talladega and Washington.

More than \$3 billion is available

through the disaster relief package passed by Congress and signed by President Trump in early June. WHIP+ builds on the successes of its predecessor program authorized by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018.

In addition, the relief package included new programs to cover losses for milk dumped or removed from the commercial market and losses of eligible farm-stored commodities due to eligible disaster events in 2018 and 2019. Prevented planting supplemental disaster payments also provide support to producers who were prevented from planting eligible crops for 2019.

Visit farmers.gov/recover to learn more, or contact your local Farm Service Agency office.

COMMODITY CORNER

GREENHOUSE, NURSERY & SOD

The State Greenhouse, Nursery & Sod Committee sponsored Auburn University Horticulture Department's 2019 Hort Welcome Day. Representatives welcomed freshmen horticulture students, visited with current students and talked with faculty about research and the future of the industry.

-Hunter McBrayer, division director

MEAT GOAT & SHEEP

The Alabama Sheep & Goat Checkoff will conduct a referendum Oct. 22 to determine if the program should be continued for five more years at the current collection rate of 50 cents per head of sheep or goat sold in the state. The program funds sheep and goat research, product promotion and farmer education. Producers will vote between 8 a.m. and the close of business at their local Alabama Cooperative Extension System office.

-Brady Ragland, division director

PEANUTS

The Alabama Peanut Producers Association is hosting the Peanut Pavilion at the National Peanut Festival Nov. 1-10 in Dothan. Farmer's Night is Nov. 4. Come see us to receive peanut samples and recipes. Learn more at NationalPeanutFestival.com.

-Jacob Davis, executive director

FORESTRY

On Sept. 25, the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) upgraded the Fire Danger Advisory to a Fire Alert due to continued drought conditions. During September, 472 fires burned 5,972 acres. While there is no burn restriction, AFC urges everyone to delay outdoor burning until conditions improve.

-William Green, division director

DAIRY

Enrollment for 2020 Dairy Margin Coverage closes Dec. 13. Producers who utilized coverage options in 2019 must certify they're still producing and commercially marketing milk during the 2020 enrollment period. Sign-ups take place at local U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency offices.

-Russ Durrance, division director

COTTON

Cotton pickers are rolling, and we've enjoyed almost uninterrupted sunshine and low humidity. It's great picking weather but is very dry across the Southeast. Cotton fluffed beautifully, and much is harvest-ready, nearly so or is already in a module. Only a few thousand bales have been reported from classing offices. Color grades are good, but staple, mic, strength and uniformity trend slightly lower than normal.

-Carla Hornady, division director

Federation Hires Nichols As Agriculture Counsel

The Alabama Farmers Federation welcomed attorney John Allen Nichols to its External Affairs Department in September. Nichols, who interned with the Federation since May 2017, serves as agriculture counsel.

Nichols graduated from Faulkner University's Jones School of Law in 2019 and is admitted to the Alabama State Bar. He earned a degree in poultry science from Auburn University in 2016.

In his new role, he will provide legal advice and service to the Federation; draft legislation; monitor and review regulations to ensure compliance; draft, review and negotiate contracts; and research issues.

Nichols and wife Lucy live in Auburn.

Events & Deadlines

Oct. 22-24 - Alabama Landowners Conference in Prattville

- TREASUREforest.org

Oct. 30-Nov. 2 - National FFA Convention in Indianapolis

Nov. 1-10 - National Peanut Festival in Dothan

- NationalPeanutFestival.com

Nov. 8 - 4th annual AFAF Skeet Shoot in Alpine

Nov. 21-22 - Alabama Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association Conference in Clanton

- Register by Oct. 21: AFVGA.org

Nov. 22-28 - Farm-City Week

Dec. 8-9 - Alabama Farmers Federation annual meeting in Montgomery

- Register by Oct. 23 at AlfaFarmers.org



DeKalb County Farmers Help FFA Programs

Dekalb County Farmers Federation (DCFF) supports FFA with an annual donation to all county ag departments. In September, Geraldine High School (GHS) officers updated DCFF on their projects. From left are GHS FFA Secretary Brooke Bell, GHS FFA President Kaylie Hanrahan, DCFF President David Bailey and GHS FFA Adviser Ben Johnson.

Obituary

James J. Peak Jr. of Double Springs died Sept. 13. He was 93.

Peak was a former Alabama Farmers Federation state board member and received the Alfa Senior Leader Award in 2006.

He is survived by his wife of 70 years, Vivian Lovelady Peak; son James H. Peak; daughter Donna Peak Boshell; five grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.



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Libraries To Receive Ag Books

Alabama Farmers Federation county leaders received copies of "Right This Very Minute" Sept. 24 through Alabama Ag in the Classroom to share with school libraries. The book shares the celebration of food and farming to inspire readers of all ages to learn where their food comes from. From left are Clay County's Larry Upchurch and the Federation's Amanda Butts.

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Drought Dries Up Hope For A Good Harvest

Drought conditions continued into October for Alabama. According to the Oct. 3 Drought Monitor, over half of Alabama suffered drought. The remainder was abnormally dry.

Record-breaking heat and limited or no rainfall this summer and early fall damaged crops, leading to concerns about yields and grade quality. The Alabama Farmers Federation's Carla Hornady said yields will vary across the state, depending on which fields received sporadic showers. Parched earth made it difficult for peanut farmers to dig the legumes.

Drought also caused farmers to delay planting winter vegetables.

Livestock farmers may feel the effects this winter through a hay shortage. Most have already begun feeding hay.

Producers can check out the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Livestock Forage Program at fsa.usda.gov and the Pasture, Range and Forage Insurance Program at rma.usda.gov for assistance.

Alabama Extension has also launched AlabamaDrought.com as a resource.



Annual Meeting Season Comes To A Close

The Crenshaw County Farmers Federation (CCFF) annual meeting was Sept. 12 in Luverne. Members heard from Alabama Farmers Federation Southeast Area Vice President George Jeffcoat of Houston County and District 10 Director Steve Stroud of Pike County. Statewide candidates and representatives also spoke about upcoming elections. From left are Stroud, Jeffcoat, CCFF Women's Leadership Committee Chair Ashley Holladay, CCFF President Tony Beck and CCFF Young Farmers Chair Sterling Sasser.