

# Cultivator

www.AlfaFarmers.org • News from the Alabama Farmers Federation

## Farmers Fare Well As Regular Session Ends

**A**ctions from the Alabama Legislature's 2018 Regular Session will aid farmers and rural families, said Alabama Farmers Federation President Jimmy Parnell.

"Our economy is strong, and this gave legislators the flexibility to address some of the challenges keeping rural Alabama from enjoying the same benefits as our cities and towns," Parnell said.

Federation priorities passed included

- Improving broadband access through the Alabama Broadband Accessibility Act
  - Clarifying existing irrigation tax credits for farmers
  - Increasing flexibility in targeting federal funds to high-impact projects, including irrigation
  - Specifying the current state sales tax exemption applies when a farmer cultivates and harvests an agricultural product on leased or rented land
  - Exempting from state sales tax gross receipts from the sale of pine straw products by the person harvesting the product
- Ag and forestry also fared well in the state's Education Trust Fund (ETF) and General Fund (GF) budgets.

The GF budget funded the Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) program at \$575,000 and provides \$81,403 in matching funds to help Alabama expand on-farm irrigation.

The ETF budget set aside \$5.4 million for the career tech initiative, including \$300,000 for educational programs like Ag in the Classroom.

Read more at [AlfaFarmers.org](http://AlfaFarmers.org).

## Conference Teaches Women To Advocate For Ag



*Dale County's Debbie Baker, right, turned in pop tabs to State Women's Leadership Committee member Ann Whatley of Lee County at the Alabama Farmers Federation's Women's Leadership Conference in Birmingham. At the conference, held April 4-6, over 200 attendees collected pop tabs for charity and learned about Ag in the Classroom and championing agriculture.*

## 2018 Planting Estimates Released

**A**labama farms will grow more winter wheat, cotton and corn this year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's March 29 Prospective Planting report. Peanut acreage is predicted to drop, while soybeans should mimic 2017 acreage.

The report is based on surveys farmers submitted the first two weeks of March. The Alabama Farmers Federation's Carla Hornady said various factors may ultimately change what farmers plant.

"If poor growing conditions in South America create a smaller crop there, U.S. farmers could respond by planting more soybean acres," said Hornady, the Federation's Soybean, Cotton and Wheat & Feed Grain divisions director.

"Weather conditions could change planting decisions, too. If we have a wet or dry spring that prevents farmers from planting an early crop, they could plant

something different later in the season."

Alabama Peanut Producers Association Executive Director Caleb Bristow said less peanut acreage likely results from low prices caused by a plentiful supply of peanuts on hand.

"Spring (peanut) contracts are low, signaling the market does not need a lot of peanuts right now," Bristow said. "Considering higher cotton prices, peanut farmers are looking at other options to cash flow their operations this year."

Read more in the May Neighbors magazine or at [AlfaFarmers.org](http://AlfaFarmers.org).

### Alabama Planting Prospective

- Cotton: 470,000 acres, up 8 percent
- Corn: 260,000 acres, up 4 percent
- Winter wheat: 190,000 acres, up 27 percent
- Soybeans: 350,000 acres, no change
- Peanuts: 160,000 acres, down 18 percent

## Alabama Ag Tour Educates Auburn Students



Twenty-eight Auburn University students learned about the state's agricultural diversity on the Alabama Ag Expedition March 11-16. Tours on the trip, sponsored by the Alabama Wheat & Feed Grain Producers, ranged from row crop to catfish to forestry operations. At Tate Farms in Madison County, State Wheat & Feed Grain Committee member Stewart McGill, right, led a tour.

### Dig Deeper

- More than 70 Alfa Insurance adjusters have been working claims and helping customers after a series of tornadoes and hail hit Alabama March 19.
- Over 90 Young Farmers representing eight counties attended a District 2 meeting in Guntersville March 13.
- Eric and Carry Lovvorn of Cleburne County received a resolution from the Alabama Legislature recognizing them as the 2017 Outstanding Young Farm Family March 20.
- The Alabama Farm-City Awards Luncheon was April 5 in Birmingham. Twenty outstanding students received prizes in poster, essay and multimedia contests, and 13 county committees were honored.

### Conference Advances Ag Advocacy Skills

The American Farm Bureau Federation is hosting a Women's Communications Boot Camp in Washington July 22-25.

This training is open to all female members interested in building skills to communicate about agriculture and connect with influencers.

Applications are due April 30 at [bit.ly/2GQla0T](http://bit.ly/2GQla0T).

### Events & Deadlines

- **April 15** - Alabama Ag in the Classroom Summer Institute registration deadline
  - [AlabamaAITC.org](http://AlabamaAITC.org)
- **May 1** - Commodity Producers Conference registration opens
  - [AlfaFarmers.org](http://AlfaFarmers.org)
- **May 10-12** - Beef Tour to Texas

## Omnibus Spending Bill Will Benefit Farmers

Provisions to help farmers were included in the \$1.3 trillion omnibus spending bill the U.S. House and Senate passed March 22. The bill funds the government through fiscal year 2018, which ends Sept. 30.

In the bill, the Fair Agricultural Reporting Method Act permanently exempts farmers from reporting air emissions under CERCLA rules. The bill also prohibits enforcing electronic logging device requirements through the fiscal year.

U.S. Sens. Richard Shelby, R-Alabama, and Doug Jones, D-Alabama, voted in favor of the bill, which passed the Senate 65-32.

In the House, the bill passed 256-167. U.S. Reps. Robert Aderholt, Bradley Byrne, Martha Roby, Mike Rogers and Terri Sewell of Alabama supported the bill. Reps. Mo Brooks and Gary Palmer opposed passage.

Other provisions include

- Requiring USDA to fully implement the catfish inspection program within 180 days
- Increasing feral swine surveillance funding by \$5 million
- Providing new flexibility related to studies for irrigation projects
- Increasing funding to expand rural broadband internet

## A.L.F.A. Leaders Visit With State's DC Delegation



The Agricultural Leaders For Alabama (A.L.F.A. Leaders) visited with U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Alabama, during meetings in Washington March 13-16. From left are Perry County's Cooper Holmes, Dallas County's Wendy Yeager, Cullman County's Eli Howard and Shelby. The leaders met with all nine members of Alabama's delegation during the trip.



**JOIN AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY PRODUCERS FROM AROUND THE STATE**

The Alabama Farmers Federation, the state's largest agriculture organization, is bringing its popular Farm & Land Expo to Montgomery this summer, begging the question — is there a better place to market your company?

Held Aug. 4 in conjunction with the Federation's annual Commodity Producers Conference, the Expo is a time for farmers and landowners to network; view the latest technology; shop for new products; and learn techniques to improve their farms' profitability and production yields. Over 1,000 attendees are expected.

With 17 commodity groups represented, the Expo is sure to help your company reach farmers and landowners who want your products.

Through the Federation's partnerships with Alabama TREASURE Forest Association (ATFA) and Alabama Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association (AFVGA), the Expo will draw foresters and horticulturalists.



Over 1,000 attendees are expected to visit the Farm & Land Expo in Montgomery this year.

ATFA helps landowners learn about sound forest resource management, while AFVGA helps individuals learn how to incorporate fruit, nuts and vegetable production on their land.

Make plans now to be an exhibitor on Aug. 4 at the 2018 Alabama Farm & Land Expo! Register online today at [www.FarmandLandExpo.org](http://www.FarmandLandExpo.org).

**WHO SHOULD EXHIBIT?**

- |                                    |                              |   |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Equipment Dealers                  | Associations                 | Rural Real Estate Firms                 |
| Affinity Partners                  | Livestock Health Purveyors   | Environmental & Water Management Groups |
| Insurance & Financial Institutions | On-Farm Technology Companies | Educators                               |
| Ag & Land Consulting Groups        | Plant Protection Specialists | Researchers                             |
| Ag Nonprofits                      | Feed & Seed Producers        | Media                                   |
|                                    |                              | And More!                               |

**WHO WILL ATTEND?**

- Full-time and part-time producers from all areas of Alabama agriculture, including livestock, horticulture and agronomic crops
- Forestry and timber landowners
- Buyers and sellers of farm and hunting land
- Estimated Attendance: 1,000+

[www.FARMANDLANDEXPO.ORG](http://www.FARMANDLANDEXPO.ORG) 

## EXHIBITOR OPPORTUNITIES

Booths include an 8-foot rear drape, 3-foot side drapes and one identification sign. Power, internet and ancillary items may be purchased but are the responsibility of the exhibitor.

### 10 X 10 Booth Space

- Nonprofit \$150
- Affinity Partner \$175
- Commercial \$400

### 10 x 20 Booth Space

- All Exhibitors \$650

### 20 x 20 Carpeted Booth Space

- All Exhibitors \$1,000



Don't miss this opportunity! Space is limited.

### NEW THIS YEAR!

Join us at the Alabama Farm & Land Expo Stage in the rear of the expo hall for town hall-style presentations. These presentations will cover a wide array of topics and are the perfect opportunity to learn about the newest and best ideas.

### INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Participate in the incentive program that encourages attendees to come by your booth. Attendees are given a passport card requiring a stamp from participating vendors. Once the cards are full, they are entered in a drawing for a prize. Cost to participate is only \$50.



There will be plenty of time to interact with Expo visitors.

## EXPO CONTACT

**Brittany Daniel, Event Project Manager**  
(334) 613-4750 • [bdaniel@alfafarmers.org](mailto:bdaniel@alfafarmers.org)



## EXHIBITOR SCHEDULE

### Exhibitor Move-In Friday, August 3

- 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. (large equipment must be moved in at this time)

### Saturday, August 4

- 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

### Exhibit Hours

#### Saturday, August 4

- 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### Move-Out

#### Saturday, August 4

- 5:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.

## Commodity Corner

### Horticulture;

#### Greenhouse, Nursery & Sod

Produce Safety Alliance grower training is April 18 in Clanton and May 16 in Auburn. These courses satisfy FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirements and cover produce safety, worker health, hygiene, wildlife and developing a food safety plan. Learn more at [afvga.org](http://afvga.org).

-Mac Higginbotham, divisions director

### Beef

The Alabama Farmers Ag Foundation (AFAF) helped sponsor a hands-on calving simulator during the 2018 American Pre-Veterinary Medical Association Symposium at Auburn University March 23-24. Over 800 U.S. and international students, advisers and representatives attended the symposium. Thanks to AFAF's sponsorship, more than 35 students also became Beef Quality Assurance certified.

-Nate Jaeger, division director

### Forestry

Tuscaloosa-based The Westervelt Co. announced construction of a new south Alabama lumber mill. The mill will complement an existing facility in Moundville, the second-largest southern yellow pine-producing facility in the U.S. It will create over 100 new jobs and produce about 250 million board feet annually.

-William Green, division director

### Soybean; Wheat & Feed Grain

Farm Bureau members can save \$100 when registering for INTL FCStone's Top-Tier Grain Producer Risk Academy in Chicago July 23-25. The meeting is tailored for farmers with 2,000 or more tillable acres of corn, soybeans, wheat or canola who want to learn grain marketing and risk management trends. Register with code "AFBF" at [bit.ly/2HYcoem](http://bit.ly/2HYcoem).

-Carla Hornady, divisions director

### Peanuts

The Alabama Peanut Producers Association sponsored a PB&J Party during Auburn University College of Agriculture's Ag Week March 30. Two teams competed to make the most peanut butter and jelly sandwiches in an hour. Two thousand sandwiches were donated to those in Lee and Montgomery counties in need of a nutritious meal.

-Caleb Bristow, division director

### Pork

On April 1, China placed an additional 25 percent tariff on U.S. pork exports in retaliation for tariffs on steel and aluminum shipped to the U.S. China was U.S. pork's third-largest market, with more than \$1 billion shipped to the country in 2017. Hopefully these tariffs will be short-lived as negotiations continue.

-Guy Hall, division director

## Search For America's Top Farm Mom Begins

To honor the women who contribute to farms, families, communities and businesses, 10 outstanding farm moms will be honored in a contest sponsored by Monsanto Co.

Each regional winner of the Farm Mom of the Year contest will select a nonprofit in their local community to receive \$1,000.

Community involvement and agricultural advocacy will be taken into consideration.

Entrants must be legal U.S. residents, 18 years of age or older, mother to one or more natural born or adopted children, and farmers.

Nominations close April 30 at [farm-mom.americasfarmers.com](http://farm-mom.americasfarmers.com). Winners will be announced in May.

## OBITUARIES

**Prather Slay** of LaFayette died March 15. He was 92.

Slay served three terms as Chambers County Farmers Federation president and was a founding member of the Alabama Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association.

He is survived by wife Lillian; sons Simmie Slay (Charlene), John Slay and Phil Slay (Kim); daughters Jane Elliott (Rickey) and Mary Terry (Rusty); 15 grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

**John Neighbors** of Alexander City died March 23. He was 88.

Neighbors formerly served on the Alabama Farmers Federation state board and was a Tallapoosa County Farmers Federation board member.

He is survived by wife of 38 years Ruth Ann; daughters Shane Ingram (Steve) and Susan Bryant (Frank); son Al Neighbors (Jan); five grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

**Mary Frank "Frankie" Ponder** of Alexandria died March 17. She was 96.

Ponder served on the Calhoun County Women's Committee for over 50 years.

She was preceded in death by husband W.T. Ponder. She is survived by daughters Linda Findley and Paula Lewis; four grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

## Chelsea Middle School Is Cooking Up Success



Alabama Farmers Federation District Director Phillip Hunter and Area Organization Director David Farnsworth recently presented Chelsea Middle School's Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) with a \$500 check as a reward for selling the most Farming Feeds Alabama cookbooks. The FCCLA fundraiser was sponsored by the Alabama Farmers Agriculture Foundation.

## Youth Excel At Junior Beef Expo



The Alabama Farmers Federation presented the 60th Junior Beef Expo in Montgomery March 15-17 in conjunction with the SLE Rodeo. Travis Booker of Monroe County was one of 175 youth who participated in the expo. For more coverage, read the May Neighbors magazine or visit the Federation's Flickr and Facebook pages.



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## Apply For Specialty Crop Grants By April 20

**G**rant applications for projects that enhance the competitiveness of U.S. specialty crops are due April 20 through the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries (ADAI).

The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines specialty crops as fruits and vegetables, dried fruit, tree nuts, horticulture (including honey) and nursery crops (including floriculture).

Commodity groups, ag organizations, colleges and universities, municipalities, state agencies and ag nonprofits are eligible for the program. The ADAI and a committee of industry representatives will evaluate applications and make award recommendations to USDA.

Recipients will be awarded between \$5,000 and \$25,000.

Projects cannot begin until official agreements are signed, which is expected to happen this October.

Visit [agi.alabama.gov/scbgp](http://agi.alabama.gov/scbgp) to learn more, or contact ADAI's Johnny Blackmon at [johnny.blackmon@agi.alabama.gov](mailto:johnny.blackmon@agi.alabama.gov) or (334) 240-7257.

## Shelby County Operation Named State's Top Farm



John and Kate DeLoach of Shelby County, seated, were named the state's 2018 Farm of Distinction at the Alabama Farm-City Awards Luncheon in Birmingham April 5. The couple, who owns DeLoach Farms, received over \$20,000 in cash and prizes and will represent Alabama in the Swisher Sweets/Sunbelt Expo Southeastern Farmer of the Year contest Oct. 16-18 in Moultrie, Georgia. Shown with the winners are, from left, Harold Kilpatrick, First South Farm Credit; Jim Allen, Alabama Farmers Cooperative; Kenneth Williams, AgPro; Tom Tribble, John Deere; Jess DeLoach; Carl Hunt and Dorman Grace, TriGreen Equipment; and Alabama Farmers Federation President Jimmy Parnell.