

Cultivator

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Legislation Could Aid Livestock Haulers

Recently introduced U.S. House and Senate legislation could ease new trucking requirements for livestock haulers. The legislation stems from concerns regarding mandatory electronic logging devices (ELDs).

The House Appropriations Committee's bill would extend the ELD exemption and affirm a uniform hours-of-service rule for livestock haulers. The U.S. Fiscal Year 2019 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development funding bill was released May 15 and approved by the full committee May 23.

The Senate is also attempting to address concerns related to hours of service and ELD requirements with the Transporting Livestock Across America Safely Act. It would exempt livestock haulers from federal hours of service requirements until crossing 300 air miles from their origin. The bill, introduced May 23, would allow haulers to take a break during their drive without counting against trucking time, which would stretch from 11 to 18 hours.

U.S. Sen. Doug Jones, D-Alabama, and nine bipartisan colleagues co-sponsored the bill.

Alabama Farmers Federation National Legislative Programs Director Mitt Walker said the bills highlight regulatory relief for farmers and the best care for livestock.

"We're grateful lawmakers are introducing legislation that gives farmers flexibility and prevents undue stress on livestock during transport," Walker said.

Livestock haulers are exempt from ELD mandates until October per the March 22 omnibus spending bill.



Alabama Farmers Federation President Jimmy Parnell was on hand June 5 to congratulate Gov. Kay Ivey as she won the Republican primary election for governor. Ivey was one of 51 FarmPAC-endorsed candidates to claim victories in the primary. FarmPAC is the political action committee of the Federation.

Ivey Victorious In Primary Election

Alabama Farmers Federation President Jimmy Parnell had the privilege of welcoming supporters of Gov. Kay Ivey June 5 as she claimed victory in the Republican primary election for governor. Ivey was among dozens of FarmPAC-endorsed candidates to advance to the November general election.

FarmPAC is the Federation's political action committee.

"Gov. Ivey has done an outstanding job for the state of Alabama, and voters showed their confidence in her steady leadership," Parnell said. "She is a long-time friend of Alabama farmers and forest owners. Our members are committed to helping her win a full, four-year term in November."

Overall, 51 of 78 FarmPAC-endorsed candidates with primary opposition were victorious, while another 19 will compete in runoff elections July 17.

Other FarmPAC-endorsed candidates winning without a runoff were

- Secretary of State: John Merrill (R)
- State Treasurer: John McMillan (R)
- State Auditor: Jim Zeigler (R)

FarmPAC-endorsed candidates advancing to the runoff were

- Lt. Governor: Will Ainsworth (R)
- Commissioner of Agriculture & Industries: Rick Pate (R)
- Alabama Supreme Court, Place 1: Brad Mendheim (R)
- Alabama Court of Civil Appeals, Place 1: Christy Edwards (R)
- Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 2: Chris McCool (R)
- U.S. Congress, District 2: Martha Roby (R)
- State Board of Education, District 2: Melanie Hill (R)

For full election coverage, visit

AlfaFarmers.org.

Commodity Corner

Alfa Honors Alabama Teacher Of The Year

Alabama Teacher of the Year Zestlan Simmons will travel the state in a 2018 Chevrolet Traverse while visiting educators this year, thanks to Alfa Insurance.

The Alabama Farmers Federation covers car insurance for Simmons, who teaches at Booker T. Washington Magnet High School in Montgomery. This is Alfa and the Federation's 22nd year partnering for this program.

Learn more at AlfaFarmers.org.

Access Hunting Liability Insurance Through ATFA

Landowners and hunters can zero in on economical hunting lease and timberland liability insurance as members of the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association (ATFA).

"We want members to have peace of mind when their land is leased to a hunting club or when uninvited guests visit their property," said ATFA Executive Director William Green.

ATFA's hunting lease liability insurance covers landowners, hunters leasing land and hunting club members. Timberland liability insurance protects assets from accidents on private timberland.

Learn more at TREASUREForest.org.

Horticulture

Current or future strawberry farmers are encouraged to attend a Strawberry Growers Meeting at the Morgan County Extension Office June 21 at 5:30 p.m. Virginia Cooperative Extension's Dr. Allen Straw will present. Contact Mike Reeves at reevemd@aces.edu to learn more.

-Mac Higginbotham, division director

Meat Goat & Sheep

Many small ruminant sheep and goat management educational events are available this summer. Alabama Extension offers workshops, field days and symposia about internal parasite control and small ruminant grazing management.

Learn more at tinyurl.com/y9luwbuu. A highlight is the National Goat Conference at Tuskegee University Sept. 16-18.

Register at tinyurl.com/GoatConf18.

-Nate Jaeger, division director

Pork

A federal jury awarded \$50 million in damages to 10 neighboring landowners of a North Carolina contract hog farm on April 26, though the state's statutes limit punitive damage to \$3.25 million. The defendant is a subsidiary of Smithfield Foods. This is the first of 26 nuisance cases brought against Murphy-Brown LLC, which said it plans to appeal the ruling.

-Guy Hall, division director

Cotton; Soybean; Wheat & Feed Grain

Bayer completed the acquisition of Monsanto June, 7, following the receipt of all required approvals from regulatory authorities. Federal regulators allowed the agribusiness giants to merge after agreeing to spin off assets worth \$9 billion. Bayer will remain the company name. The acquired products will retain their brand names and become part of the Bayer portfolio.

-Carla Hornady, divisions director

Wildlife

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources recently released its Strategic Surveillance and Response Plan for detecting white-tailed deer that test positive for chronic wasting disease. The goal is to have stringent testing of deer in the area while working to reduce deer density. Learn more at OutdoorAlabama.com.

-William Green, division director

Peanuts

The Alabama Peanut Producers Association (APPA) sponsored the Troy University baseball game against Auburn University May 15 in Troy. APPA board member and Pike countian Billy Hixon threw out the first pitch. Baseball fans also snacked on free peanut samples.

-Caleb Bristow, division director

Alabama Farmers Take On Texas During Beef Tour



Around 50 Alabama farmers trekked to Fort Worth, Texas, for the 2018 Beef Tour May 10-12. Attendees visited 15 stops, including GKB Cattle of Waxahachie. From left are GKB Herdsman Jay Creamer, Alabama Farmers Federation President Jimmy Parnell, James Robert Parnell of Chilton County and Garry Henry of Montgomery County.

Get Ag-tive

- **Census of Agriculture** surveys are due June 15 by mail and July 31 online, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Farmers who produced and sold \$1,000 or more of agricultural product in 2017 should have received a census form. USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service is conducting follow-ups in person and by phone. Learn more at agcensus.usda.gov.
- **National Corn Yield Contest** earlybird applications are available for \$75 through June 29. After, the fee increases to \$110 through July 31. All harvest forms for the National Corn Growers Association-sponsored competition are due Nov. 16, and the winner will be honored during the Commodity Classic 2019 in Orlando, Florida. Register at ncga.com.

Leaders Inducted Into FFA Wall Of Honor



The Alabama Farmers Federation's David Cole and Nate Jaeger were inducted into Alabama FFA's Wall of Honor June 6 during State Convention. From left are Federation Executive Director Paul Pinyan; Cole, the Federation's State Legislative Programs director for the House; Jaeger, the Federation's Beef, Equine, Hay & Forage and Meat Goat & Sheep divisions director; and Federation President Jimmy Parnell. Greg Adams, Brad Willis and Sen. Gerald Dial were also inducted.

Farmers Federation Welcomes Four Summer Interns

The Alabama Farmers Federation welcomed four college students and graduates in May for summer internships.

Troy University's Ginny Bradley, a Clarke County native, is interning with the Soybean and Wheat & Feed Grain Producers. The communications and public relations senior is visiting farms and writing for the Federation's publications, focusing on use of checkoff dollars.

Auburn University (AU) agricultural communications senior Morgan Graham is working with the Federation's Public Relations and Communications Department. She writes and takes photos for Neighbors magazine, manages social media and is working on website-related projects. Graham is from Pike County.

Cullman County's Elizabeth Thompson is interning with the Federation's Organization Department,

where she assists with Ag in the Classroom, ag literacy projects and curriculum development. She is a junior at AU studying agricultural economics.

AU agricultural communications graduate Caleb Hicks is working with the Alabama Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association (AFVGA) for a second summer. He previously interned with the Soybean and Wheat & Feed Grain Producers. Duties include visiting farms, promoting the fruit and vegetable industry, coordinating farmers market programming and maintaining social media. He will also update the AFVGA membership database.

Thompson and Hicks are both scholarship recipients through the Alabama Farmers Agriculture Foundation.

All interns will work through the Federation's Commodity Producers Conference in August.

Events & Deadlines

- **June 18** - Registration closes for Alabama Farmers Federation Commodity Producers Conference Aug. 2-5 in Montgomery
 - AlfaFarmers.org
- **June 30** - Registration closes for Southern Peanut Growers Conference July 19-21 in Miramar Beach, Florida
 - SouthernPeanutFarmers.org
- **July 1** - Forage Spokesperson Contest application deadline
 - tinyurl.com/ForageContest18
- **July 17** - Primary runoff election
- **Aug. 4** - Alabama Farm & Land Expo in Montgomery
 - Exhibitor registration closes July 15 at FarmAndLandExpo.org
- **Sept. 6** - Federation Heritage Cooking Contest in Montgomery
- **Nov. 2** - Alabama Farmers Ag Foundation Skeet Shoot

OBITUARIES

Eric Obie Cates Jr. of Searcy died April 7. He was 99.

Cates was active in the Butler County Farmers Federation, and his Persimmon Ridge Farm was named the state's first Alabama Bicentennial Farm in 2017.

He was preceded in death by wife Louise Braswell Cates. He is survived by three daughters, Linda C. Roquemore (Ted), Jean C. Blackmon (Larry) and Ann C. Boutwell (John); son Eric Obie Cates III (Anne); 11 grandchildren; and 25 great-grandchildren.

Tyler McClendon of Jasper died May 2. He was 30.

He was involved in Walker County Young Farmers and was Walker County Cattlemen's Association president.

He is survived by fiancée Kalissa Gann; parents Billy and Jennifer McClendon; and grandmother Wilene Sherer.

Orval Ponders of Phil Campbell died May 16. He was 92.

Ponders served on the Franklin County Farmers Federation board.

He is survived by wife Marge Hutcheson Ponders; children Barry Ponders (Joyce), Sherry Oden (Joey) and Belinda Wimberley (Joey); stepdaughter JoAnn Sparks; six grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

Honeybee Colony Loss Increases To 40 Percent

U.S. beekeepers lost 40 percent of managed honeybee colonies between April 1, 2017, and March 31, 2018, an almost 7 percent increase from the previous year.

Greater colony mortality during winter pushed the loss rate higher — 30.7 percent from October to April,

up from 2016-17's record low of 21.1 percent.

Summer colony mortality was also tracked. Beekeepers lost 17.9 percent of managed colonies, similar to 2016-17.

The acceptable loss rate according to beekeepers is 20.6 percent, up from 18.7 percent in 2016-17.

Blount County Kids Day On The Farm



Alabama Peanut Producers Association (APPA) staff shared peanut facts with 850 second graders at the 2018 Blount County Kids Day On The Farm May 18. APPA Executive Director Caleb Bristow taught the students how peanuts are grown, harvested and processed at the annual interactive farm day.



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U.S. House Farm Bill Gets Second Vote June 22

The U.S. House has a second chance to pass a massive farm bill June 22, following a 198-213 defeat May 18.

Alabama Farmers Federation President Jimmy Parnell said the group remains hopeful Congress will reach an agreement to reauthorize food, conservation and agricultural programs.

"This legislation is essential to Alabama's farm families and the state's overall economy," Parnell said. "Farming is an inherently risky business. Farmers face factors beyond their control, including weather, natural disasters, disease and trade barriers. The farm bill is critical to helping our farmers mitigate those risks."

Alabama Democratic Rep. Terri Sewell voted "no," while Republican Reps. Bradley Byrne, Martha Roby, Mike Rogers, Robert Aderholt, Mo Brooks and Gary Palmer voted "yes." Rogers sits on the House Agriculture Committee and sought input from the Federation and its members while working on the farm bill.

The U.S. Senate is expected to unveil its version of the farm bill soon.

Farm Tours Highlight Ag In The Classroom



Seventy-seven schoolteachers headed south to Mobile County for Ag in the Classroom (AIRC) Summer Institute May 30-June 1. Attendees received \$275 worth of teaching materials, as well as continuing education units during the event. They also heard from AIRC grant recipients and visited local farms. Stops included Middleton Dairy, Driskell Farms, Oak Hill Farms and Sessions Farm Markets, where Art Sessions, right, spoke to the group.