

Federation Applauds Disaster Aid Package

The Alabama Farmers Federation applauded final passage of a \$19.1 billion disaster package by the U.S. House of Representatives June 3.

"Alabama farmers were hit hard by hurricanes, and families also have been devastated by tornadoes," said Federation President Jimmy Parnell. "We thank Sen. Richard Shelby, Rep. Martha Roby and other members of Alabama's congressional delegation for keeping these concerns at the forefront and President Trump for agreeing to sign this legislation."

The bill provides aid for states affected by 2018 and 2019 disasters, as well as ongoing relief for disasters that occurred in 2017, including agriculture disaster relief for farmers; development grants for small, rural communities; assistance for veterans' health facilities and military construction projects; emergency funds for timber, watershed and wastewater infrastructure needs; and resources to restore highways, aviation facilities and other transit projects.

The Senate approved the disaster relief package May 23.

Roby, whose 2nd Congressional District was battered by Hurricane Michael, has been an outspoken advocate for disaster assistance.

"For eight long months, farmers in the Wiregrass and throughout the Southeast have waited for disaster relief aid after Hurricane Michael devastated the region last October," she said. "I am very proud that Congress has at last delivered this long-overdue assistance, and I am eager to see President Trump sign this bill into law to finally help the many Americans who have suffered extreme devastation in the wake of natural disasters across the country."

Beef Tour Cruises Through Mississippi



Over 50 producers enhanced their cattle knowledge during the Alabama Farmers Federation Beef Tour to Mississippi June 4-7. Tour stops included Ted Parker Grow Yard in the town of Edwards, the NCBA/Zoetis Stocker Cattleman of the Year. From left are Colbert County's Gerald Wallace, Autauga County Farmers Federation President Van Smith, Carl Parker of Ted Parker Grow Yard and Federation President Jimmy Parnell.

USDA Announces Further Trade Relief

Relief is on the way for farmers negatively impacted by trade disruption and retaliatory tariffs.

President Donald J. Trump renewed his commitment to farmers during a May 23 press briefing at the White House.

"On every front, we are fighting for our great farmers, our ranchers, our growers," said Trump, flanked by farm leaders including Alabama's Mike Tate of Madison County, who is National Cotton Council chairman, and American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall, a Georgia farmer.

The relief strategy will support American producers while the administration works on free, fair and reciprocal trade deals to open more markets and help American farmers compete globally.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture will provide up to \$16 billion in programs, which is in line with the estimated impacts of unjustified

retaliatory tariffs on U.S. agricultural goods and other trade disruptions.

The Market Facilitation Program will provide \$14.5 billion in three phases of direct payments to producers. Payments will begin in late July or early August – as soon as practical after Farm Service Agency crop reporting is completed by July 15. If conditions warrant, second and third payments will be made in November and early January.

The Food Purchase and Distribution Program allots \$1.4 billion to purchase surplus commodities affected by trade retaliation, such as fruits, vegetables, some processed foods, beef, pork, lamb, poultry and milk for distribution by the Food and Nutrition Service.

The Agricultural Trade Promotion Program will use \$100 million to develop new export markets on behalf of producers.

Eligibility and payment rate details will be released at a later date.



Rep. Roby, Farmers Talk Wiregrass Ag

U.S. Rep. Martha Roby, center, visited Chris and Monica Carroll on their Dale County farm during a work week in the 2nd Congressional District May 29. They discussed disaster aid and toured the Carrolls' diversified cattle, poultry and row crop farm. Later that week, the congressman's legislative assistant, Caroline Buyak, visited the farms of Jerry Byrd, Carl Sanders and Jonathan Sanders to learn more about issues affecting Wiregrass producers.

Alfa Farmers Welcomes Summer Interns

The Alabama Farmers Federation welcomed summer interns in May. Allison Glenn joined the Destinations Department, where she works on event planning projects, while Taylor Quick joined the Organization Department as an Ag in the Classroom intern.

Lawrence County's Glenn, who studies hospitality and tourism management with an event planning minor, graduates from Troy University in summer 2020. The daughter of Brian and Donna Glenn, she was raised in Hillsboro. Her father serves District 1 on the state board.

A native of West Point in Cullman County, Quick graduates from Auburn University in December in poultry science production with an agribusiness minor. Her parents are Alan and Shannon Quick.

Ag Accolades

Alabama native Mary Walker

has been named Region 4 Deputy Regional Administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Previously, she was the Regional Water Protection Division Director. Before joining EPA, she worked with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division.

A new awards program will recognize Auburn University (AU) researchers and Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) personnel whose work has tangibly affected farmers and the state's agricultural industry. The two inaugural award winners will receive research support from the Alabama Farmers Agriculture Foundation. They will be honored during the Commodity Producers Conference this August.

U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement Coming Soon

The Trump administration has taken a step toward ratifying the new North American trade agreement – the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement or USMCA. Congress has received a draft notice alerting the legislative body that the pact could come soon.

The "Statement of Administrative Action" was sent in late May.

The move represents a procedural

step forward on the path to approve the USMCA. Thirty days must pass before the Trump administration can submit the full legislation to Congress.

The Alabama Farmers Federation has agreed to sign a letter encouraging Congress to ratify USMCA. The letter represents all segments of the U.S. food value chain at national, state and local levels.



FFA Advocates Honored During Convention

Six exceptional proponents of FFA and agriculture were inducted into the Wall of Honor during Alabama FFA State Convention June 5 in Montgomery. From left are Macon County Farmers Federation President Shep Morris, Jack Harris, Sarah Murchison, Whitney Dyess, Chip Blanton and John Ward.



COMMODITY CORNER

AFVGA

Fruit and vegetable farmers are busy harvesting as the summer heat moves in. While strawberries are winding down, peaches, tomatoes and other produce are coming into season across Alabama. Visit fma.alabama.gov for a full list of farmers markets, U-picks and more.

-Hunter McBrayer, executive director

POULTRY

The State Poultry Committee met in Cullman County at Tim and Selena Butts' farm May 21 to tour their stand-alone, solar-powered poultry house. Auburn University's National Poultry Technology Center and Tyson Foods Inc. teamed up for the research project. Insights from this project will help identify sustainable practices and new forms of energy for the poultry industry.

-Brian Hardin, Governmental & Ag Programs Department director

ATFA

Liability insurance is critical for landowners, whether you lease land to hunters or have timberland not covered by a farmowner policy. To learn more about the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association's (ATFA) general timberland liability or hunt lease insurance policies for members, visit TREASUREForest.org or contact wmgreen@alfafarmers.org.

-William Green, executive director

BEEF

New beef producers should take advantage of Alabama Extension's Beef Systems Short Course. The mid-August, multi-night course in Clanton will cover forages, nutrition, herd health, reproduction, record keeping, stewardship and economics. Contact Josh Elmore at elmorej@aces.edu or (205) 646-3610 to learn more.

-Brady Ragland, division director

COTTON, SOYBEAN, WHEAT & FEED GRAIN

Alabama Extension, farmers, state agencies and industry professionals will showcase the latest irrigation management practices and associated technologies at a field day June 26 at Posey Farms in Town Creek. Registration starts at 7:30 am. To learn more, contact Brenda Ortiz at bortiz@auburn.edu.

-Carla Hornady, divisions director

PEANUTS

The Alabama Peanut Producers Association is partnering with the Alabama Department of Tourism to offer free packs of roasted peanuts to visitors at all eight Alabama Welcome Centers. Signs will show the free peanuts are provided by Alabama farmers and will encourage visitors to eat more peanuts.

-Jacob Davis, executive director

Events & Deadlines

June 14 - Registration closes for Federation's 47th Commodity Producers Conference in Chattanooga Aug. 1-3

• AlfaFarmers.org

July 16-17 - Southern Cover Crop Conference in Auburn

• cses.auburn.edu/sccc

July 18-20 - Southern Peanut Growers Conference at Panama City Beach

• Register by June 30 at SouthernPeanutFarmers.org

July 30 - Alabama Precision Ag Workshop in Birmingham

• tinyurl.com/PrecisionAg19

Aug. 13 - Registration closes for Alfa Youth Leadership Conference Sept. 30-Oct. 1 in Columbiana

• AlfaFarmers.org

Ag In Action

U.S. beef from cattle of all ages can now enter the Japanese market, thanks to an agreement which removes the previous 30-month age limit. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates this expanded access could increase U.S. beef and beef product exports to Japan by up to \$200 million annually.

A decrease in Alabama bee colonies helped lead to a 14% fall in honey production, USDA reports. Six thousand colonies produced 270,000 pounds in 2018, compared to 7,000 colonies producing 315,000 pounds in 2017.

Obituary

Homer Neal Lewis of Baker Hill died June 1. He was 97.

Lewis was a lifelong proponent of FFA, served on the National Peanut Festival board and was the namesake of Garrett Coliseum's HN Lewis Swine Barn.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Eloise Carroll. He is survived by a daughter, Susan Hinds (Perry); granddaughters Robin Hinds Martin (Steve) and Maj Kathryn Hinds; and great-granddaughters Reagan and Hannah Martin.



Fayette County Farm Visit Heats Up

Alabama Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association Executive Director Hunter McBrayer visited Alabama Sunshine May 8, a Fayette-based hot sauce company that grows its own peppers. McBrayer, left, is pictured with owners Julie Madison and David Smith, siblings who bought the company in 2016.



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Teachers Get A Taste Of Farming

Over 80 teachers learned about Alabama's diverse farm industry at Ag in the Classroom Summer Institute in Florence May 29-31. They attended workshops, received over \$300 worth of classroom resources and toured farms, such as Larry LouAllen's Lawrence County produce farm. Other stops included Spry Mitchell Cattle Farm and Clemmons & Hamner Seed Inc. in Lauderdale County.

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Early Introduction Of Peanuts Can Help Avoid Allergies

Houston County farmer Fred Helms has been growing peanuts 43 years. He said nothing is more important than growing a safe, delicious, nutritious product people enjoy. That's why he and other farmers support research to address food allergies.

"America's peanut farmers, through the National Peanut Board (NPB), have

contributed more than \$25.3 million for food allergy research, education and outreach since 2001," said Helms, an Alabama Peanut Producers Association board member. "Research has proven when peanuts are introduced to infants early, they're less likely to develop a peanut allergy."

For Helms, the research has special

meaning since his daughter and son-in-law, Dusty and Charles McKinley, welcomed a new baby boy to the family.

To celebrate, McKinley and her son, Helms, received a basket of early introduction peanut products. NPB Ambassador George Jeffcoat, a Houston County peanut farmer, and Mary Helms of the Houston County Farmers Federation Women's Leadership Committee made the presentation.

"The new guidelines from the National Institutes of Health encourage introducing peanut foods to infants as early as 4 to 6 months old to help prevent a potential peanut allergy," Jeffcoat said.

A 2015 study also led to new guidelines from the National Institutes of Allergies and Infectious Disease.

Visit PreventPeanutAllergies.com to learn more.



Peanut farmers Fred and Mary Helms are shown with their daughter and grandson, who received early introduction peanut products. From left are Fred Helms; Dusty McKinley and son Helms; and Mary Helms.