

Cultivator

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Damp Days Hamper Alabama Harvest

A damp October slowed harvest across Alabama, with farmers like Jimmy Miller of Blount County estimating combines and pickers will still be rolling into December.

"We've had a good production year, but in October, which is normally our driest month, we received over 4 inches of rain," said Miller, who raised peanuts and cotton this year on his family's farm in Snead. "It's been a challenging harvest. We'll harvest cotton two days, then it rains again."

Cotton picked in September was excellent, Miller said. In October, warmer temperatures and additional moisture tacked on more second growth, lowering quality.

Wet fields have stalled combining Miller's final 20 acres of dug peanuts, though he said overall quality has been good.

"Everyone seems to be having weather problems," Miller said. "From a yield standpoint, I feel fortunate. We're probably above average on yields of all crops except peanuts."

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Nov. 5 Crop Progress and Condition Report, 66 percent of the state's cotton crop is harvested. Seventy-eight percent of peanuts are harvested, while an additional 14 percent are waiting to be combined. For soybeans, 69 percent are harvested. Farmers are preparing for 2019, too, with 25 percent of winter wheat planted.

USDA's most recent forecast estimated cotton production at 1.12 million bales, while peanut production is forecast at 668 million pounds.

Skeet Shoot Raises Over \$37,000 For Education



The third annual Alabama Farmers Agriculture Foundation Skeet Shoot raised over \$37,000 for scholarships and agriculture education Nov. 2. Thirty-six teams competed at the annual fundraiser at Selwood Farm in Alpine. Since 2016, the event has raised over \$100,000.

FarmPAC Candidates Victorious

Alabama Farmers Federation members celebrated Nov. 6 victories of FarmPAC-endorsed candidates who won 161 of 163 elections.

Federation President Jimmy Parnell said the results are an endorsement of conservative policies causing regulatory reform and record unemployment.

"Voters sent a strong message supporting economic growth, accountable government and family values," Parnell said. "We look forward to working with the governor, Alabama Legislature and all elected officials to continue moving our state forward."

Gov. Kay Ivey was elected to a full, four-year term. Republicans won all statewide constitutional offices, including Lt. Gov. Will Ainsworth, Attorney General Steve Marshall, Secretary of State John Merrill, State Auditor Jim Zeigler and Public Service Commissioners Jeremy

Oden and Chip Beeker. State Treasurer John McMillan and Commissioner of Ag & Industries Rick Pate were unopposed on the November ballot.

FarmPAC-endorsed candidates also were victorious in contested judicial races, including Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice Tom Parker and Supreme Court Justice, Place 4, Jay Mitchell.

All seven Alabama congressmen were re-elected, and 133 of 135 endorsed candidates won their races for Alabama Legislature.

The Federation recommended a "yes" vote on three of four statewide constitutional amendments. All three passed. Amendment 1 allows public display of the Ten Commandments; Amendment 2 affirms the rights of unborn children; and Amendment 4 reduces expenses associated with late-term special elections for legislative seats.

Hurricane Michael Recovery Begins In Wiregrass

Farmers and property owners are still recovering from Hurricane Michael, a Category 4 storm that hit Florida beaches Oct. 10 before whirling a destructive path through Alabama's Wiregrass region.

The area's cotton crop took a beating, with near 70 mph winds ripping lint from bolls. Wind and rain damaged remaining lint quality, too, in what was expected to be a bumper crop.

Downed fences, scattered cattle, destroyed structures, snapped timber and damaged crops were common sights in the area.

Officials with the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) estimate timber losses at nearly \$20 million in Houston County alone. Aerial surveys conducted by the AFC indicate over 42,300 forested acres were damaged by the storm.

President Donald Trump approved a major disaster declaration for the state Nov. 5. Funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is available in Geneva, Henry, Houston and Mobile counties.

The Alabama Farmers Federation and state officials are working to secure further disaster declarations from Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue. During the Sunbelt Ag Expo in Moultrie, Georgia, following the storm, Perdue and Vice President Mike Pence pledged to help farmers recover.

To assist farmers in the rebuilding process, the Federation also established a relief fund.

"Farmers in south Alabama received an outpouring of support from neighbors and people across the country," said Federation President Jimmy Parnell. "Many asked where they can donate to help farmers who've lost their crops and barns, so we have created a special fund within the Alabama Farmers Agriculture Foundation to accept these gifts."

Donations are tax deductible. Visit AlabamaFarmersFoundation.org to donate or send checks payable to Alabama Farmers Agriculture Foundation to P.O. Box 11000, Montgomery, AL 36191.

"Hurricane Michael devastated crops, homes, barns and livelihoods in the Wiregrass," said Parnell, who is also president of the foundation. "Farmers are resilient, but recovery takes time and money. Alabama farmers are grateful for financial help from friends and supporters — and covet your thoughts and prayers during the rebuilding process."

All funds collected by the foundation through Nov. 30 will be targeted toward farmer losses not covered by a farmowner policy, crop insurance or disaster relief programs.

For more information, contact the Foundation at (334) 612-5525 or email abutts@alfafarmers.org.

Free Beef Handbooks Available For Farmers

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System has released a Beef Handbook to help the state's farmers.

The free handbooks, which discuss herd management strategies from nutrition to herd health and more, will be distributed at Animal Science and Forage Extension meetings over the next year. Farmers can also contact their local Animal Science and Forage regional Extension agent (aces.edu/directory) to get a Beef Handbook or contact Dr. Kim Mullenix at (334) 844-1546.

USDA Collecting Final Crop Production Data

As the 2018 growing season comes to an end, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will contact producers to gather year-end crop production numbers and the amount of grain and oilseeds stored on their farms. NASS will also survey grain facility operators to determine year-end stocks.

Results will be published Jan. 11, 2019. Call the NASS Southern Regional Field Office at (800) 253-4419 to learn more.

OBITUARIES

Lowell Thomas "L.T." Hataway of Letohatchee died Oct. 26. He was 86.

He served on the Montgomery County Farmers Federation board.

Hataway is survived by wife Julianne; children Lowell Clark Hataway (Cindy), Anita Green (David) and Andrea Thompson (Bill); five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Ted Parker of Grant died Oct. 28. He was 88.

He was a past president and longtime board member of the Marshall County Farmers Federation.

Parker was preceded in death by his wife, Joyce.

He is survived by daughter Jana Byrd; sons Alan Parker (Lynn), Greg Parker and Brent Parker; and grandchildren Brittany Cooley (Alex), Parker Byrd, Brady Parker and Alex Parker.

DeLoach Competes In Farmer Of The Year Contest



John DeLoach of Vincent in Shelby County represented Alabama in the 2018 Southeastern Farmer of the Year contest at the Sunbelt Ag Expo Oct. 16 in Moultrie, Georgia. From left are Alabama Farmers Federation President and John and Kate DeLoach.

Commodity Corner

Greenhouse, Nursery & Sod

State Greenhouse, Nursery & Sod Committee members gathered in Spanish Fort for a meeting and tours Oct. 29-30. Members visited Martin's Nursery in Semmes, Oak Hill Tree Farm in Grand Bay and Shore Acres Plant Farm in Theodore. They viewed heritage tree production and over 350 acres of nursery and greenhouses.

-Hunter McBrayer, division director

Beef; Equine; Hay & Forage; Meat Goat & Sheep

Alabama Extension is hosting a Hurricane Michael Recovery Livestock Meeting Nov. 14 at 6 p.m. in Dothan. Topics include grazing and hay quality assessment; animal nutrition and winter feeding; debris removal and fencing; and financial assistance. To learn more, contact Rickey Hudson at (334) 693-2010.

-Brian Hardin, Governmental & Ag Programs Department director

Cotton; Soybean; Wheat & Feed Grain

Mark your calendars for the free Alabama Row Crops Short Course Dec. 13-14, which provides farmers, consultants and Extension agents information on management practices and technologies to increase production. Register by Dec. 7 at aces.edu/go/946.

-Carla Hornady, division director

Pork

On Oct. 30, the EPA proposed new rules implementing the FARM Act Congress passed earlier this year. The rule eliminates the need for livestock farmers to estimate and report emissions from livestock operation manure to state and local first responders under EPCRA rules meant for hazardous emissions releases from industrial sites.

-Guy Hall, division director

Wildlife

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) was found in a second deer in Mississippi. The 18-month-old, free-ranging male white-tailed deer was emaciated and behaving abnormally. It was euthanized Oct. 8. This is the closest case to Alabama, which banned importing members of the deer family in 1973. Alabama's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has tested nearly 8,000 deer since 2002. CWD has not been detected in the state.

-William Green, division director

Peanuts

National Peanut Festival attendees received information about growing peanuts and peanut nutrition Nov. 2-11 in Dothan. They also tasted peanut products in the Alabama Peanut Producers Association Peanut Pavilion.

-Caleb Bristow, division director

Events & Deadlines

- **Nov. 15-16** - Alabama Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association Conference and Trade Show in Clanton
- **Nov. 17** - Final Jr. Beef Expo validation in Centreville
 - jrbeefexpo.com
- **Nov. 16-22** - National Farm-City Week
- **Dec. 2-3** - Alabama Farmers Federation's 97th annual meeting in Montgomery
 - *Conference registration closes Nov. 19 at AlfaFarmers.org.*
- **Dec. 4** - Alabama Catfish Division update meeting in Demopolis
- **Jan. 11-16** - American Farm Bureau Federation annual convention in New Orleans
- **Jan. 14** - Inauguration Day
- **Jan. 30-Feb. 1** - Gulf States Horticultural Expo in Mobile
 - gshe.org
- **Feb. 5-7** - Federation Commodity Organization Meeting in Montgomery
 - *Earlybird registration closes Jan. 8 at AlfaFarmers.org. Online registration closes Jan. 22.*

On The Move In Ag

- **Three Alabamians** graduated from Peanut Leadership Academy Class X. Nathan Bartl of Lillian, Josh McCoy of Midland City and Jeremie Redden of Seale locked in leadership skills during the yearlong program.
- **Jordan Stowe** was named the 2018-19 National FFA Southern Region vice president during the group's annual convention in Indianapolis Oct. 24-27. The Auburn University student is an Enterprise native.
- **David Reeves** of Morgan County was appointed Alabama's commercial grower representative on the Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium. Auburn University is new to the group, which connects producers, researchers and Extension to strengthen the South's small-fruit industries.

New County Presidents Ready To Take The Lead



A new crop of county presidents is ready to lead after completing Alabama Farmers Federation County Presidents Orientation Oct. 11-12. The 12 leaders received media training, toured the home office and soaked up responsibilities to effectively guide their local Farmers Federations. From left are Jeremy Brown, Montgomery County; the Federation's Steven Blackmon; Chris Thomas, Hale County; Ashton Cottingham, Bibb County; and the Federation's Brian Hardin.

Forest-Focused Tour In Dothan



The Alabama Farmers Federation's State Forestry Committee toured International Beams in Dothan Oct. 25. Using high-tech pressure, adhesive and Southern yellow pine lumber, the plant manufactures super-strength materials for commercial construction. From left are plant operations manager Karl Aicher, Monroe County's Philip Hardee and Federation Forestry Division Director William Green.



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EPA Extends Dicamba Registration Two Years

Dicamba registration is extended two years, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced Oct. 31.

The extension is for over-the-top (OTT) use controlling weeds in fields for cotton and soybean plants genetically engineered to resist dicamba.

This action was determined by input from and extensive collaboration among EPA, state regulators, farmers, academic researchers, pesticide manufacturers and other stakeholders. Label changes include

- Two-year registration (until Dec. 20, 2020)
- Only certified applicators may apply dicamba OTT
- Prohibiting OTT application on soybeans 45 days after planting and cotton 60 days after planting
- Decreasing OTT applications for cotton from four to two
- Applications allowed one hour after sunrise to two hours before sunset

Visit tinyurl.com/EPAdicamba to learn more.

Byrne's Annual Tour Shows Impact Of Ag, Forestry



U.S. Rep. Bradley Byrne, R-Fairhope, visited the Street family's row crop farm near Fairhope in Baldwin County Oct. 24 on his annual two-day Ag Matters tour of the 1st Congressional District. Other tour highlights included Dairyland Nursery in Mobile County, the Escambia County row crop operation of David Womack and Kevin Holland, a forestry roundtable and visits to logging sites. From left are Eric Street, Byrne and H.V. Street.