

Cultivator

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Tropical Storm Strikes Coastal Pecan Crop

A once-promising pecan crop bore the brunt of wind gusts and torrential rain from Tropical Storm Gordon, which downed trees, limbs and ripe pecans when it hit the Gulf Coast Sept. 4.

In Baldwin County, the storm dropped nearly 9 inches of rain. Across the bay in Mobile County, rain totals were lower, though wind damage was more widespread.

"Before the storm, our pecan trees were loaded," said Grand Bay farmer Jeremy Sessions. "Now we could be looking at a loss on the season. We have lots of cleanup to do but are also grateful. We've weathered worse storms."

Several days of sunshine could perk up loaded cotton stalks the storm flattened while drying rain-soaked lint inside cracked bolls, said the Alabama Farmers Federation's Carla Hornady. Twisted and bent stalks make defoliation and harvest more difficult, she added.

"The wind ripped out cotton blooms and open bolls, but our farmers are grateful most bolls were still closed in the storm," said Hornady, the Federation's Cotton, Soybean and Wheat & Feed Grain divisions director. "It offered more protection, hopefully preserving this year's anticipated bumper crops."

Corn harvest should continue once fields dry out, said Hornady, noting wind damage to corn was minimal. Drier fields will also allow farmers to dig peanuts.

The next storm, Hurricane Florence, has formed in the Atlantic Ocean. Hurricane season runs through harvest, ending Nov. 30.



Anne Lanier of Choctaw County won first place in the Alabama Farmers Federation's Sept. 6 Heritage Cooking Contest featuring pork bacon appetizers. From left are Lanier; Pinky Reichert of Coosa County, second place; and Dora Rider of Monroe County, third place.

Lanier Named Best In Bacon Battle

Choctaw County's Anne Lanier brought home the bacon and \$150 by winning the Alabama Farmers Federation's Heritage Cooking Contest in Montgomery Sept. 6.

Her Bacon Pimento Cheese Bites were among 34 dishes prepared by contestants who previously won their county contests, qualifying them for the state competition hosted by the Federation Women's Leadership Division. Entries were required to have bacon as one of the top three ingredients.

"I've never entered any kind of cooking contest before," Lanier said. "I was really, really surprised. I enjoyed seeing the various presentations and how creative the ladies were with bacon."

Lanier's winning recipe featured phyllo shells filled with pimento cheese, topped with Captain Rodney's Boucan Glaze and crowned with bacon. She describes the flavor as cheesy with a

sweet, spicy, salty, bacon taste. She said her recipe is an adaptation of a casserole she tried months ago, adding that finding a recipe where bacon was among the top three ingredients was a challenge.

Coosa County's Pinky Reichert won second place and \$100 for her Mini BLTs. Monroe County's Dora Rider placed third and received \$50 for her Sweet and Savory Bacon Crackers.

Women's Leadership Division Director Kim Earwood said the annual contest spotlights food produced by Alabama farmers. Bacon appetizers are a great way to share delicious recipes for football tailgating activities, fall family events and holidays, she noted.

About 120 attendees sampled savory bacon dishes and listened to Martha Hawkins, founder of Martha's Place, a Montgomery restaurant and catering service, during the event.

Access recipes at AlfaFarmers.org.

Over 900 Field Trials Will Aid Alabama Farmers

Guest column from AAES Outlying Units Director Dale Monks

Over the past year, Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station (AAES) Outlying Units staff conducted over 900 field and greenhouse trials covering beef cattle; row crops; and small fruits and vegetables across commodity and non-commodity variables.

Field trials provide dependable, robust data and are conducted at least three years, often in multiple locations. Locations may be within the AAES system or included in multi-state efforts to address larger, regional issues.

AAES staff appreciates farmers' support of its mission to provide science-based solutions for enhancing Alabama agriculture through checkoff and other research funds.

EPA Experts Discuss Emission Standards



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) staff met with Southeast Kiwi Farming Cooperative partners Aug. 16 in Reeltown to discuss Tier 4 emission standards concerns relating to frost protection equipment. From left are EPA Region 4 Administrator Trey Glenn; EPA Office of Air and Radiation Assistant Manager Bill Wehrum; and farmers Wayne Bassett and Clint Wall.

Events & Deadlines

- **Sept. 16-18** - National Goat Conference in Tuskegee
 - tinyurl.com/GoatConf18
- **Sept. 20** - Alabama Farmers Ag Foundation (AFAF) scholarship dinner in Auburn
- **Sept. 25** - Alabama Farmers Federation Policy Development Meeting in Montgomery
- **Sept. 28-Oct. 8** - Alabama National Fair in Montgomery
- **Oct. 3-5** - West Alabama Symposium on the Management of Invasive Species in Livingston
 - Contact Mandeé Carrier at (205) 652-5105 to learn more
- **Oct. 8-9** - Alfa Youth Leadership Conference in Columbiana
- **Oct. 14-16** - Alabama Landowners Conference in Prattville
 - Register by Sept. 28 at TREASUREForest.org
- **Oct. 16-18** - Sunbelt Ag Expo in Moultrie, Georgia
- **Nov. 2** - AFAF Skeet Shoot in Alpine
- **Nov. 15-16** - Alabama Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association Annual Conference and Trade Show in Clanton
 - Registration opens Sept. 24 at AFVGA.org

Get Ag-tive

- **The 2019 Ag Innovation Challenge** will award \$145,000 in startup funds to innovative food and agriculture entrepreneurs. Applications for the contest, sponsored by the American Farm Bureau Federation, are due Sept. 24 at fb.org/join.
- **Pecan growers** can replant and replace trees through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Tree Assistance Program as they recover from impacts of 2017 weather events. Eligible growers must have suffered a mortality loss on a stand over 7.5 percent but less than 15 percent, adjusted for normal mortality.
- **The U.S. Forest Service** is seeking nominations to fill four positions on the Southern Region Recreation Resource Advisory Committee. The committee reviews fee proposals for forests in 13 states and Puerto Rico. Nominations are due Oct. 1 at fs.usda.gov/main/r8/recreation/racs.
- **Rural e-Connectivity** needs are highlighted on a website the USDA unveiled recently. USDA will spend an additional \$600 million expanding rural broadband infrastructure in unserved rural areas and tribal lands in the coming months. Submit comments on rural high-speed internet at usda.gov/broadband.

Tax Credits Available To Help Implement Irrigation

Agricultural operations can apply for a higher income tax credit for irrigation equipment, fuel conservation and reservoir costs, thanks to 2018 state legislation.

Eligible Alabama taxpayers may claim one credit for qualifying equipment purchased and installed during tax years 2012 through 2017, one tax credit for 2018-2022 and one credit for tax year 2023 or beyond.

The Alabama Farmers Federation's David Cole said Alabama irrigation has room to grow, especially in comparison to neighboring states.

"Georgia and Mississippi have over

1.5 million acres of irrigated land. In comparison, Alabama has approximately 150,000 acres of irrigated farmland," said Cole, the Federation's State Legislative Programs Director for the House. "We hope these incentives encourage our farmers to invest in irrigation infrastructure. If Alabama grew to 1 million acres of irrigated farmland, it would be equivalent to the economic impact of two auto manufacturers."

To learn more, contact the Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industries at irrigation@agi.alabama.gov or visit agi.alabama.gov/irrigation.

Commodity Corner

Horticulture;

Greenhouse, Nursery & Sod

Alabama Public TV's (APT) most recent "Spotlight On Agriculture" highlights aquaponic and hydroponic production, along with specialty crops like peaches, kiwifruit and berries. Watch the episode Sept. 23 at 4 p.m. on APTV.

-Brian Hardin, Governmental & Ag Programs (GAP) Department director

Hay & Forage

Enter the Southeastern Hay Contest by Sept. 20. Seven category winners will receive cash prizes, and the overall winner will receive \$1,000, plus the use of a Massey Ferguson rake or mower for one season. Entries are \$22 per sample and must be submitted in coordination with a local Extension agent. To prove your hay is the best, visit sehaycontest.com.

-Brian Hardin, GAP director

Peanuts

Peanut Leadership Academy applications are due Oct. 15. Participants in the 18-month class will develop leadership, networking and public speaking skills. Candidates must derive their primary livelihood from farming, produce peanuts, attend all five sessions and be ages 22-45. Visit southernpeanutfarmers.org to apply.

-Caleb Bristow, division director

Pork

Around 38,000 pigs have been culled in China since the African Swine Fever (ASF) epidemic was reported Aug. 3. Since some feed ingredients could transmit diseases like ASF between countries, producers should review biosecurity protocols and feed with veterinarians and suppliers. ASF does not affect humans, public health or make pork unsafe.

-Guy Hall, division director

Cotton

Farms that do not have a generic base that will be converted to seed cotton base can enroll eligible commodities in ARC/PLC programs by Sept. 28. Access the Farm Service Agency's full notice of the extension at tinyurl.com/ARCPLC18.

-Carla Hornady, division director

Wildlife

New hunters are encouraged to participate in the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division's Adult Mentored Hunting (AMH) program. AMH provides new hunters a one-on-one opportunity with an experienced hunter. Applicants must be at least 19, have a valid driver's license and be new to hunting or have limited experience. This season's first event is Oct. 27. For more information, visit outdooralabama.com.

-William Green, division director

On The Move In Ag

- **Tim Wood** of Selma has been appointed to the Alabama Conservation Advisory Board. Wood, who represents Congressional District 7, is the general manager of the Central Alabama Farmers Cooperative.
- **Scott Angle** has been appointed director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Angle is president and CEO of the International Fertilizer Development Center in Muscle Shoals.
- **Paul Pinyan**, the Alabama Farmers Federation executive director, will chair the Rural Subcommittee of Gov. Kay Ivey's "Alabama Counts!" 2020 Census Committee. The committee will prepare Alabama for maximum participation in the census.

OBITUARIES

Charles Turner Jr. of Geneva died Sept. 1. He was 77.

Turner served on the Alabama Farmers Federation state board and was past vice president of the Alabama Peanut Producers Association. He was also past president of the Geneva County Farmers Federation.

He is survived by wife of 56 years Sharon; daughters Cindy (Joe) Mosley and Charlotte Miller; and six grandchildren.

S.O. "Bud" Kemp of DeArmanville died Aug. 12. He was 97.

Kemp was an honorary Calhoun County Farmers Federation board member after actively serving 48 years.

He was preceded in death by wife of 76 years Mildred Gerline McComb Kemp, daughter Charlotte Ann Kemp Sellars and grandson Kenneth Mark Hicks. He is survived by daughter Gayle Kemp Hicks, four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Rex Boutwell of Basin died Aug. 3. He was 80.

Boutwell served over 25 years on the Coffee County Farmers Federation board.

He is survived by wife Betty Boutwell; daughter Kim Boutwell; son Keith (Brenda) Boutwell; grandson Chase (Brittany) Boutwell; and great-grandson Porter Boutwell.

Ag In Action

- **Bayer can officially integrate Monsanto** into its company, following the former's sale of certain assets to BASF. The name Monsanto is expected to officially disappear in the future, while familiar brand names like Dekalb and Asgrow should remain after the merger.
- **Tyson Foods Inc.** has acquired Keystone Foods for \$2.5 billion. Keystone is the largest supplier of chicken nuggets to McDonald's and has operations in the U.S., Asia and Australia. Keystone had \$2.8 billion in sales and earnings before interest, taxes and debt payments of \$282 million in fiscal year 2017.

Extension Workshops Help Interpret Tax Reform

A series of workshops simplifying and interpreting the Tax Cuts & Jobs Act is available for individuals and business owners. Register at tinyurl.com/ExtTax18.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System hosts the workshops, which cost \$15 for individuals and \$60 for accountants (and includes 3.5 hours of CPE).

Topics include child tax credits, tax brackets, deductions, depreciation and estate tax changes.

Remaining dates and locations are

- Sept. 10 — Tuscaloosa
- Sept. 11 — Florence
- Sept. 19 — Fairhope
- Sept. 27 — Montgomery

Shrimp Sale Success At Home Office



Lee Jackson from Lowndes County sold Alabama-grown shrimp at the Alabama Farmers Federation home office in Montgomery Aug. 30. Alfa Insurance and Federation employees purchased shrimp ahead of Labor Day weekend and college football kickoffs. From left are Senior Financial Systems Analyst Rocco Arnold and Jackson.



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USDA Details Trade Aid Package For Farmers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has detailed how \$6.3 billion in aid will assist farmers whose markets are disrupted through trade retaliations.

At \$1.65 per bushel, soybean farmers will receive \$3.6 billion in direct payments through the Market Facilitation Program (MFP). Other payments include pork, \$8 a head; cotton, 6 cents per pound; corn, 1 cent per bushel; milk, 12 cents per hundredweight; sorghum, 86 cents per bushel; and wheat, 14 cents per bushel.

Farmers may apply after harvest when they can report 2018 production. Rates depend on the severity of trade disruption and adjustment to trade patterns. The first payments are based on 50 percent of a farmer's 2018 production. If a second payment is approved, USDA will determine the amount.

MFP payments are capped per person or legal entity at a combined \$125,000 for corn, cotton, sorghum, soybeans and wheat. MFP payments for dairy or hogs are capped at a combined \$125,000. Learn more at AlfaFarmers.org.

Roundtable Talk Focuses On Rural Broadband



Anne Hazlett, assistant to the secretary for Rural Development at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, held a roundtable discussion with state agency and agricultural leaders Aug. 30 at the Alabama Farmers Federation's Montgomery home office. Rural broadband and high-speed internet connectivity anchored the discussion. From left are Alabama Rural Development Director Chris Beeker, Hazlett and Federation President Jimmy Parnell.