

# PECAN COUNTRY NEWS

Volume 31

Spring 2020

## On the Calendar

*Amid the COVID-19 uncertainty, everything is subject to change, but here's what the future looks like in early April.*

American Pecan Congress mtg. scheduled for Apr 21 will be rescheduled to Aug.

American Pecan Council mtg. on Apr 22 will be by teleconference.

**Jun 10-12:**  
OK Pecan Growers Conf.; Broken Arrow, OK

**Jun 20-21:**  
Tri-State ArkLaMiss Pecanference **cancelled**

**Jul 12-15:**  
TX Pecan Growers Conf.; San Marcos, TX

See you there!  
(we hope)



## Strategic moves for Savage Equipment

The story of Savage Equipment begins with a goal to build the best quality equipment for the pecan industry at the best prices. We're excited to tell our readers about the next chapter in that story involving some strategic advancements we are implementing to help achieve that goal.

By introducing newer technologies such as laser cutters, waterjets, and robotic welders, we have recently enhanced our manufacturing capabilities at our home location in Madill, Oklahoma. These technologies enable us to craft equipment with a higher level of precision and more consistent, repeatable quality than ever before.

These improved capabilities at our main manufacturing facility allow us to merge manufacturing processes that previously took place at our Georgia and New Mexico plants into the Madill location. We're confident these new cutting-edge technologies and our consolidated manufacturing process will bring new efficiencies to Savage's overall operation and a higher level of quality control for machines going out the door.



Savage Equipment, Madill, Oklahoma

Our people in Baconton, Georgia and Mesquite, New Mexico can now focus exclusively on customer support and sales. In fact, we will be adding sales and service personnel and expanding our inventories at all locations to provide a higher level of service across the country. If you, or someone you know, is interested in becoming a Savage sales or service representative, contact Kenton Stanley at our main office (580)795-3394 [kstanley@savageequipment.com](mailto:kstanley@savageequipment.com); or Billy Brown at our Georgia location (229)787-5115, [bbrown@savageequipment.com](mailto:bbrown@savageequipment.com).

We're sure our Savage Equipment customers will soon see the benefit of these innovations in manufacturing and business operations.

## The farmer's example of hope

In a world hungry for a little hope right now, the farmer stands out as a symbol of perpetual hopefulness. Last year may have been a tough one, but when it's time to plant, farmers get busy planting. They water it, feed it, weed it, pray for it. They fully expect that this year will bring a profitable harvest, and they do everything in their power to ensure that it does. Pecan farmers must be even more hopeful, since they must work expectantly for several years before they see a harvest. Thanks to all the farmers reminding us there's a brighter future ahead.



866-572-8243 [info@savageequipment.com](mailto:info@savageequipment.com)

# Pecan Folks

## We mourn the passing of one of the greats in the pecan-shelling industry.

In late January, Jasper B. Sanfilippo Sr. passed away in his home in Barrington Hills, Illinois. Mr. Sanfilippo used his education in mechanical engineering, his passion for innovation and his visionary leadership to create state-of-the-art machinery and processing facilities, as he greatly expanded his company’s market share over the years. After assuming the helm of John B. Sanfilippo & Son, Inc. from his father in the 1960’s, he served in various leadership capacities—president, CEO, Chairman of the board—until he retired in 2008. These were years of incredible growth for the company, which continues into the present. The corporation is owner of Fisher Nuts and several other major nut brands.

Mr. Sanfilippo was also a respected leader in the pecan-shelling community, and served for a time as Chair of the National Pecan Shellers Association. He and his wife, Marian, were kind and generous hosts to many in our community, including members of the Savage Equipment team. We take this opportunity to honor Mr. Sanfilippo’s significant contributions to the industry and extend our sympathies to his family.



Jasper B. Sanfilippo, Sr.

*Information for this piece was gleaned from the January 31, 2020 news release of John B. Sanfilippo & Son, Inc. and their corporate website.*

## What in the world is a locavore?

If you look it up, you’ll find the online version of Merriam-Webster’s famous dictionary reveals the following.

**locavore** *noun*

lō-ke-vōr: one who eats foods grown locally whenever possible

Get it? Carnivore = meat eater, Locavore = local-stuff eater. It’s a thing, and this term has been around for about fifteen years. The motivations for locavores include getting food that is fresher and less processed. But, the primary driver seems to be minimizing the environmental impact of transporting food from way over there to their kitchen or local restaurant. Also, food from local sources should help promote one’s local economy and devote less resources to things like transportation, processing, packaging, refrigeration, and marketing.

For locavores, one generally (not necessarily universal) demarcation for the “local area” is a hundred miles, but this isn’t a hard and fast rule for most folks. There are locavore delivery services for locally raised meat and locavore restaurants that specialize in locally procured fare

of all kinds. On the more traditional side, there’s your tried-and-true road-side stands and farmers’ markets—fruits, veggies, honey, (pecans?), etc.—which abound in many towns, large and small. They’ve been providing local fare since long before there was any such thing as a locavore.

The point is, there are more and more people out there that attach significant value to getting their food from local sources. Why does all this matter to you? Glad you asked. If you’re interested in new avenues for retailing pecans or selling to retailers, you might want to consider markets and restaurants that cater to the locavore crowd in your area. Some grocery stores and natural food stores and co-ops have sections devoted to locally grown items. It’s just a little food for thought (locally grown of course).

The locavore concept may seem a bit strange; but then again, it was only two or three generations back that we all got our food from local sources. We just didn’t know we were eco-friendly locavores.



# Pecan Pieces

## News you can use!

Here's a sampling of pecan-related news available on the internet and some of our favorite pecan publications.

### What has the APC been up to?

In the April issues of our two favorite magazines, Pecan South and The Pecan Grower, American Pecan Council (APC) Executive Director, Alex Ott educates us on all that's been accomplished by the Federal Marketing Order since its inception. Mr. Ott begins with a year-by-year review of the steps that have been taken since USDA approved the FMO that inaugurated the American Pecan Council. The article covers a lot of ground in terms of how the APC has systematically progressed and recent tangible accomplishments for the pecan industry. It's a lot to cover in a brief summary, so many of you will want to read this piece for yourself. Here are a few highlights.

Current projections show that pecan supply will grow at approximately 6% over the next ten years and demand must increase to keep up. It's a good thing APC is on the job, devoting over 75 cents of every dollar to marketing activities. In addition to our Weber Shandwick marketing team, the APC has engaged with Learfield IMG, iHeart Media and Eat Well Global. They have also moved "some influencer marketing in house through the utilization of the renowned platform, Aspire IQ." (I had to look that one up too.) According to their website, Aspire IQ AspireIQ "began with a vision of the future of media built around the hundreds of thousands of talented content creators building a presence on YouTube, Instagram, Blogs, SnapChat, and more." Basically, they help connect businesses with people who have already established a significant (and related) presence on the internet and are able to use their influence to promote products they like.

All these efforts appear to be paying off for pecans. "Since inception of the FMO, consumption has been up 12.5%," which is a significant improvement over pecan consumption trends in previous years.

### Tree nuts making their mark out west

In a February fifth article by the above title (Tree Nut Farm Press e-newsletter), author Logan Hawkes writes about the great year for pistachios wrapping up in California then shifts gears to cover how the southwestern U.S.

region has been making great strides in pecan production in recent times. The article touts the Rio Grande Valley region as a "travel-way for pecans moving in and out of the two states [Texas and New Mexico] and in and out of Mexico..."

Once again New Mexico has been tagged the most likely leading pecan producing state as Georgia continues with setbacks created by Hurricane Michael two years ago and struggles to recover from the storm's relentless fury even after two years of new orchard development.

Officials in Georgia say it may be another two to five years before Georgia's pecan numbers can return to pre-storm harvest levels even as Texas, Oklahoma and even Arizona gain pecan acres over their east coast competitors.

According to New Mexico Pecan Growers Association president, Phillip Arnold, the state's crop was lighter than anticipated due to a decrease in summer rain and an early fall freeze. He said that the state would likely fall short of the USDA estimate of 97 million pounds for 2019, but New Mexico would still lead the nation in pecan production.

### Pecans in South Africa

If you're interested in an expansive overview of the challenges, triumphs and dreams of the pecan industry in South Africa, the March issue of Pecan South magazine would be a worthy source. In a wide-ranging fifteen-page article, Managing Editor Catherine Clark enlightens us on this complex story with considerable insight. Her research for the piece included extensive travel across this unique and colorful country last November, including numerous conversations with growers, large and small, as well as other leaders of the pecan industry. Through the dialogue with many growers, processors and others, you get a clearer picture of the history and culture of the pecan-growing community in South Africa.

Although their history with pecan growing dates back to the late 1800's, the industry is mostly comprised of people that are relatively new to pecan growing and processing. The South African Pecan Nut Producers

Continued on page 4

# More Pecan Pieces

Ag Labor (cont. from page 3)

Association, or SAPPA, is the organizing body for the industry helping growers navigate the many issues inherent in growing pecans. Growers in South Africa struggle with many of the same challenges that U.S. pecan growers face, such as securing reliable water sources and finding consistent, reliable labor. They also strive to find the right cultivars for their environment and experiment with the right methodology for hedging and proper tree spacing.

These same growers face a few interesting issues that are unfamiliar to American growers such as Zebras trampling young pecan trees in certain regions of the country. Not many growers in the southern U.S. have trouble with baboons tearing up sprinkler systems or breaking into farm vehicles. South African farmers also deal with the threat of government expropriation of their land without compensation. It's a real issue, although some farmers consider it an unlikely possibility.

The piece also includes some graphics illustrating the significant statistics on the pecan industry in South Africa, including the following:

- Pecan acreage is estimated at just under 100,000 acres. (SAPPA)
- 580,00 nursery trees were planted in 2018 (SAPPA)
- 85% of pecan production goes to China
- In 2018, 40,937,000 pounds were produced

Through the data gathered by a third-party consultancy, the American Pecan Council estimated that South Africa could produce around 145 million pounds by 2027, comprising more than 10 percent of the world supply.

Clearly, South Africa's pecan growers and others in the industry have big plans for the future and the energy and drive to bring those plans to fruition.

## Container versus bareroot pecan trees

In the March issue of Pecan South, our friend, George Ray McEachern applies his substantial knowledge and experience to answering your questions about the pros and cons of container trees vs. bareroot trees. Dr McEachern is a horticulture professor and resident sage of all things pecan at Texas A&M University.

Dr. McEachern begins his article with a little history.

Historically there were three options for planting a pecan tree: pecan seed, a nursery grown grafted

variety tree or a seedling tree, which would be grafted two or three years later.

The "seeds in place" system went the way of the Bron-tosaurus decades ago because it was "too slow, too difficult to keep the little trees alive and too expensive." For smaller orchards, the other two systems are still in use, but for large operations, the nursery-grafted tree has become the standard way to go. Originally, these trees were exclusively of the bareroot variety, but about forty years ago, some nurseries in the southeastern U.S. began to grow trees in 4-gallon plastic containers, using sprinkler irrigation.

Fast forward to the year 2020, there are many nurseries now growing pecan trees in containers. A grower now has the choice of planting a container tree versus a bareroot tree. The two systems look alike from the graft up, but the roots are quite different.

McEachern goes on to describe how the root systems differ between the two choices. Bareroot trees have a more substantial taproot system relative to the scion above, and this taproot stores more food for the plant. They can be bundled in moist packing material and wrapped in burlap



Planting bareroot trees in Oklahoma

to allow shipping over long distances. Container trees tend to have a lot of feeder roots, compared to bareroot trees but less overall mass in the root system. The roots of container trees often form a "circle of roots in the bottom of the plastic container, and these roots can be large." The large number of feeder roots and the overhead irrigation and slow release fertilizer systems tend to produce large

Continued on page 6

# Featured Equipment

## The Silverline family of pecan processing equipment has a new member.

Over the past couple of decades, the Savage Silverline has established itself as the industry standard in pecan processing. These industrial-quality, stainless steel machines are now employed in shelling plants throughout many parts of the world. This year, Savage is proud to introduce the newest member of the Silverline family: the

Model 148S, Meat Sizer. This fast, powerful machine is already in use helping nut processors improve their bottom line and speed up their production. The interchangeable screens will sort nut-meats into two, three, four or more sizes. These sizing screens can be swapped out quickly. The discharge chutes can be moved to expel nuts in almost any direction around the circle. You will really appreciate the speed, ease-of-use and the rugged durability of this new machine. Call, email or drop by to discuss how the new 148S can enhance your nut-shelling operation.



**Model 148S Meat Sizer**



**Model 3160 40-ft In-shell Sizer**

## Need a LARGE in-shell sizer?

Would you like to Supersize that order? If you need to size a lot of pecans in a hurry, you might consider the Savage 3160, 40-ft Sizer. The sizing reel is sixty inches in diameter and, as you might have guessed, it's forty feet long. As you can see, it's possible to sort quite a few sizes over that length. Call or email us today and we'll help you get just the right sizer for your cleaning plant. We also have the Stick Removers, Stone Removers, Aspirators, Dehullers and just about anything else you might require.

# Just Plain Nuts

Container vs. Bareroot (cont. from page 4)

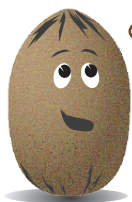
scion variety tops.

With either type of nursery tree, McEachern recommends cutting the scion back 50 percent at planting to create a balanced root-to-shoot ratio. Experiments at Mississippi State University in the 1970s found no difference in growth rate and survival when the circle of roots at the bottom of the container were pruned back and when they were left alone. For bareroot trees, the idea is to cut off enough root to fit into the hole, but leave as much as

possible.

McEachern's bottom line is simply this.

Today, when all is said and done, there is no difference in tree growth when pecan orchards are planted with bareroot or container grown nursery trees. However, container trees will require diligent irrigation and weed control, while properly planted bareroot trees can survive and grow with normal attention to management.



**I wonder how the Coronavirus experience will change us?**

*It may seem difficult to see anything good in the viral scourge that's now wreaking havoc on our world—physically, emotionally and economically.*

*But maybe, just maybe, a few positive things will come from this shared experience. For one thing, we've become much more aware of how diseases spread and the part we can play in minimizing transmission. It's also comforting to see many people reaching out to express compassion toward their neighbors. Teachers and students, along with grandparents and grandkids are figuring out how to be more connected through modern technology. Our government and medical authorities will be much better prepared to face the next virus threat that comes along. These past few weeks have definitely brought about some things we never thought we'd see. Cue the Twilight Zone music.*

- Toilet paper and hand sanitizer shortages. Really?
- Folks lining up at 6-ft spacing to check out at the grocery store while wearing masks.
- Times Square and the Las Vegas Strip devoid of humans.

*To all our friends out in Pecan Country, we want you to know we're still at work—still crafting the best equipment we know how to make, and looking forward to the day we can all get back together. In the meantime, we count our blessings and carry on.*

**If you'd like a copy of Pecan Country News delivered to your email in-box each quarter, send an email to [pecancountry@savageequipment.com](mailto:pecancountry@savageequipment.com). Feel free to pass this little newsletter along to friends and family.**

*For any of our Pecan Country neighbors that might be stuck at home in a COVID-19 quarantine, here's a recipe borrowed from our friends at [ILOVEPECANS.ORG](http://ILOVEPECANS.ORG) (aka the National Pecan Shellers). Just the thing for binge-watching old movies.*



**Buttered Pecan Popcorn**

**Ingredients:**

- 8 cups popped popcorn (about ½ cup unpopped)
- Nonstick cooking spray
- ½ cup pecan pieces
- 2 Tbsp. butter
- ⅓ cup light corn syrup
- ¼ cup instant butter pecan pudding mix (dry)
- ¼ tsp. vanilla

**Directions:**

Preheat oven to 300 degrees. After popping, discard unpopped popcorn kernels. Spray a 17"x12"x2" roasting pan with nonstick cooking spray. Place the popped corn and pecans in the pan. In a separate pan, heat butter and corn syrup, then stir in pudding mix and vanilla. Pour mixture over popcorn. Bake in oven at 300 degrees for 16 minutes, stirring halfway through baking. Remove pan from oven and turn mixture onto a large piece of foil. When cool, break into large pieces and serve.