

PECAN COUNTRY NEWS

Volume 17

Fall 2016

On the Calendar

Oct 17-19:

Western Pecan Prod. Shortcourse; NMSU, NM

Oct 26:

New Mexico Pecan Growers Mtg, Las Cruces

2017

Feb 24-26:

Southeastern Pecan Growers Conv.; Biloxi, MS

Mar 5-7:

Western Pecan Growers Conf.; Las Cruces, NM

Mar 22-24:

National Pecan Shellers Mtg; Tubac, AZ

Mar 28-29:

Georgia Pecan Growers Conf.; Location TBA

We'll see you there!

Savage hosts pecan folks from South Africa

In mid-September, Savage Equipment, Inc. was honored to host pecan growers from South Africa for a few days. Agricultural equipment dealer Werner Hamman played tour guide for two pecan growers Martin Pratt along with Stanley and Alita De Beer. Werner has been the Savage Equipment representative in South Africa for several years. When a couple of his customers wanted to go on a little equipment reconnaissance mission to the U.S., Werner made it happen.

The visitors were able to tour the Savage Equipment plant in Madill, Oklahoma and talk equipment with several members of the Savage team. A real highlight of their visit was an in-depth pecan-growing lesson from Dr. Mike Smith, one of our industry's most knowledgeable experts. Dr. Smith spoke extensively on planting pecan trees and the care and feeding of young trees. He also answered many questions on a wide range of pecan topics.

During their Oklahoma visit, the four enjoyed the hospitality of the Savage family's Hauani Creek Ranch. They were housed in one

of the ranch's lakeside cabins, and were treated to extensive tours of the pecan orchards.

Martin Pratt and wife Jenny live on a large farm and cattle ranch of 5200 hectares (12,800 acres for most of us), which he manages for a private company. They've been there for 28 years. The farm grows and processes sugarcane and has a pecan orchard of 33 hectares (82 acres), which is just coming into production. Martin has recently started a processing plant which is in its second year of operation. He sells the pecan kernel locally but expects to be exporting soon.

Stanley De Beer was travelling with his wife, Alita who also enjoyed the peaceful surround-

Continued on page 2



Martin Pratt, Werner Hamman and Stanley De Beer talk pecan trees.

Storms batter some southeastern pecan orchards

Hurricane Hermine was bad enough. The early September storm damaged several orchards in southeastern Georgia--some not so bad, others with substantial limb breakage and tree loss. Then, just a month later, along came Matthew. Although latter the hurricane backed off somewhat from its earlier Category 4 designation before it reached the pecan orchards of Georgia and the Carolinas, it still packed a significant one-two punch of heavy winds and rain. The damage from the second hurricane appears to be much worse than from the first. In a recent blog post from Dr. Lenny Wells, University of Georgia horticulturist, he states "Damage from Hurricane Matthew appears to be much



Hurricane Hermine crossing Florida

By Naval Research Laboratory Monterey, NASA

Continued on page 2

866-572-8243 info@savageequipment.com

Pecan Folks

South Africa visitors (continued from page 1)

ings of the Savage family pecan farm. They live and farm in the Christiana region of South Africa, along with daughter Jessica (18) and son Bradley (16). The farm is located on one of the country's major waterways called the Vaal River. They took over operation of the farm from Stanley's father, and have been working the land for about 25 years. Including the wild game areas, the farm covers 4000 hectares (9900 acres), growing potatoes, onions and pecans. Their pecan trees range in age from one year to nine. While

potatoes have been the largest part of the operation, Stanley says, "Pecans should take over in five years time when most of our trees reach maturity."

The visit was a valuable learning experience for the team at Savage Equipment and for our visitors from the southern hemisphere. We are encouraged as our understanding of South Africa's pecan business continues to grow, along our friendships with the good folks that are growing the trees and building the industry in that part of the world.



(L-R) Dr Mike Smith, Kenton Stanley, Basil Savage, Jr., Martin Pratt, Basil Savage, Frances Savage, Alita and Stanley De Beer, Werner Hamman, and of course, the ancient *Triple-Tree* of Hauani Creek Ranch.

Hurricane Damage (continued from page 1)

more extensive than that of Tropical Storm Hermine with reports of hundreds to thousands of trees down in many orchards from Appling County up through Tattnall County and into Screven County.

Damage in these and surrounding areas varies from one orchard to the next with some growers reporting minimal damage and others reporting significant tree loss, limb breakage, and loss of immature nuts blown off the tree by the wind."

For advice on how to handle pecan trees that have been pushed over by winds and rain, check out the University of Georgia blog site <http://blog.extension.uga.edu> and find the post dated Sep 6, 2016.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to our *Pecan Country* neighbors that are suffering from the devastating storms.

Swift River Pecan Company hosts Texas growers

Troy Swift, along with family members and employees of Swift River Pecan Company, hosted the Texas Pecan Growers field day following the annual conference in nearby San Marcos. Attendees were treated to a variety of learning opportunities, and this time they weren't only about pecans. In addition to a thriving pecan orchard along the beautiful San Marcos River, the Swift operation includes a first-class lumber mill and kiln.



Texas pecan growers learn about production at the Swift River operation

In fact Troy Swift and his team are into all kinds of enterprises that might surprise you. They sell enormous slabs of beautiful pecan wood along with Live Oak, Cypress, Black Walnut, American Elm, Cedar Elm, Sycamore and others. They also offer one-of-a-kind fireplace mantles, and various custom-carved finished pieces. You'll find pallets of firewood and bar-be-cue wood chunks, and you can even buy jars of local honey. It's quite a range of activity going on at the Swift River place, and the crowd had a wonderful time exploring it all.

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.

The pecan market right here in America

You should check out a very interesting article available online at www.modernfarmer.com, by John Gifford (September 21, 2016). It's entitled "Are Americans About to Go Nuts for Pecans?" (which is enough to grab our attention). The article covers a wide range of topics--too extensive to do it justice here, but here are the highlights.

The article begins by extolling the nutritional value of pecans:

One of the few tree nuts indigenous to North America, pecans are vitamin and mineral powerhouses, providing thiamine, folate, magnesium, calcium, potassium, and zinc, while also containing cholesterol-lowering omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids. They're loaded with antioxidants and an oil content containing surprisingly high levels of oleic acid—the same heart-healthy monounsaturated fatty acid found in olives. Additionally, laboratory tests reveal that gamma-tocopherol, the form of vitamin E found in pecans, has been shown to inhibit prostate cancer cells while not affecting healthy tissues.

Gifford also writes of some new research, by Dr. Luis Cisneros-Zevallos, that is nearing completion at Texas A&M University.

Results so far have shown that pecans decrease fat accumulation in fat cells and reduce inflammation in cells, which makes them potentially useful for the treatment of obesity, and even the prevention of diseases such as cancer.

Stress and disorders can lead to high levels of free radicals in the body. These are reactive molecules that contribute to tissue damage. When free radicals increase, they may induce inflammation, which Cisneros-Zevallos calls "the mother of all big problems you will encounter in diseases, like diabetes, cancer, and Alzheimer's." Consuming antioxidants, then, such as those provided by pecans, can reduce levels of these free radicals, and in doing so, reduce inflammation, helping prevent these diseases.

Pretty exciting stuff and just what many American consumers want to know, but probably don't. Which leads us to a discussion of the challenges of getting the word out about pecans and the importance of the new Pecan Marketing Order. It will help. When you compare the U.S. almond industry's annual production, in the neighborhood of two billion pounds, with pecans averaging less than 300 million pounds (in-shell basis), it's not hard to see why almonds dominate in advertising. Daniel Zedan, of tree-nut marketing firm Nature's Finest Foods, Ltd., says "The sheer volume of the almond crop generates \$20-\$35 million a year for promotion. Pecans can't compete dollar for dollar with almonds or walnuts." In the U.S., pecan trees have been planted at an aggressive rate over the past five years--tens of thousands of acres from Georgia to Arizona. But consumer demand also has tremendous growth potential.

The article ends with some encouraging thoughts from some folks that know a thing or two about pecans.

Cindy Wise of the Texas Pecan Growers Association:

"We're going to see a considerable amount of domestic promotion," says Wise. "There's a tremendous potential to increase domestic consumption."

Hilton Segler, executive director of the National Pecan Growers Council:

"This [the U.S.] is where the real market is, more so than internationally. We feel that demand is not even close to where it will be in the future. There are so many health benefits to eating pecans. We believe they have a very bright future."

Luis Cisneros-Zevallos, Ph.D. associate professor of food science and nutrition at Texas A&M University:

"Until recently, nobody was paying much attention to pecans. For some reason they were under the radar. But with research revealing their ability to be such a powerful dietary tool, pecans are going to have the attention they deserve."

It appears that optimism concerning pecan consumption abounds amongst those in the know.

South Georgia Pecan Company shifting gears

According to an article in the Valdosta Daily Times (Sep 26, by Jason Smith), The 100-year-old South Georgia Pecan Company is shifting focus to better address the retail product market.

Continued on page 4

More Pecan Pieces

South Georgia Pecans, continued from page 3

Rather than focusing on selling directly to consumers of pecans and companies that use pecans for ingredients, the company has begun focusing on selling pecan products in retail, Vice President Jeff Worn said. This means South Georgia Pecan Company products will be available at groceries and other places, including amazon.com.

In our last issue of Pecan Country News we told you about South Georgia Pecan's introduction of their pecan butter. New ideas that are being developed include a nut cluster product, pecan milk, pecan flour and pecan oil.

The new products are produced in-house "to go more direct to the consumer, to be able to keep products at a reasonable price."

To increase the production that these new value-added products will require, the company is building an 80,000-square-foot building in El Paso, Texas, which they expect will help improve output by 50-75 percent.

Agriculture has become the top user of UAVs

It may seem unlikely, but unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) are beginning to find a real home on the farms of America. In a Sep 6 Farm Press Blog post, Hembree Brandon tells us more about it. Sometimes referred to as "drones", these technological marvels have gone from expensive military systems, to toys for big boys, to valuable tools for several industries--especially agriculture.

All this has been facilitated by development of more powerful processors, more sophisticated sensors, guidance systems, cameras, etc., and affordable pricing.

So rapid has been the proliferation of UAVs — many thousands were received as gifts this past Christmas — that the Federal Aviation Administration had to formulate new rules for their licensing and operation.

If you're wondering how someone might be able to apply this technology to their pecan farm, answers can be found in a variety of places.

In 2015, Mississippi State University was selected by the FAA to lead a consortium of 13 universities in operating a national center for research on unmanned aircraft systems, encompassing a wide range of applications, from agriculture to homeland security.

So, what can you do with a UAV? The ability to collect and apply data is becoming a larger and larger part of modern agriculture. You may want to read an article referred to by Brandon in his blog post. It's entitled "Six Ways Drones Are Revolutionizing Agriculture" and it's available on MIT's Technology Review website. Author Michael Mazur first makes the case for why UAVs are needed in agriculture.

With the world's population projected to reach 9 billion people by 2050, experts expect agricultural consumption to increase by nearly 70 percent over the same time period. In addition, extreme weather events are on the rise, creating additional obstacles to productivity.

Agricultural producers must embrace revolutionary strategies for producing food, increasing productivity, and making sustainability a priority. Drones are part of the solution, along with closer collaboration between governments, technology leaders, and industry.

Mazur then explains six applications that "drones" can provide to help with agricultural planning and strategy based on real-time data gathering and processing. Not all of the applications would be applicable to the pecan industry but many of them are. The six applications are...

1. Soil and field analysis
2. Planting (Yes, actually putting seeds in the ground.)
3. Crop spraying
4. Crop development monitoring
5. Irrigation (map out precise moisture levels)
6. Crop health assessment

Mazur sees a future where UAV applications "might involve fleets, or swarms, of autonomous drones that could tackle agricultural monitoring tasks collectively, as well as hybrid aerial-ground drone actors that could collect data and perform a variety of other tasks."

Will increase in pecan acres lead to busted market?

In a Jun 29 article with the above title, Dr. Lenny Wells speaks to concerns he often hears on how the large increases in pecan acreage will affect the market. Of course, the answer he explains depends on your level of optimism.

Featured Equipment

A classic is resurrected down under

A couple of months back we got an email from a pecan farmer in New South Wales, Australia by the name of Geoff Bugden. He told us about two very old savage harvesters that he had purchased second hand about ten years ago. He thought the machines were “pretty old” and could be some of the first Savage harvesters brought to Australia and adapted for harvesting Macadamias. He said one of the machines spent about ten years of its life wedged into a gully after it rolled down an embankment and fell in.

We did a little research of our own and figured out the harvesters were built way back in late 1983 and 1984. That’s right--over thirty years old. What Geoff likes about

these harvesters are how easy they are to work on and keep running. A boilermaker by trade, Geoff found it a fun challenge to modify these two. As for the names (“La Niña & El Niño”), he doesn’t really know the origin, but he says, “...that’s what was written on the machines when I purchased them so when I cleaned them up and painted them, I had the names printed on them for memory’s sake.”

The harvesters remind us of those highly modified roadsters that cruised the streets in years gone by.



Why buy a new sorter?

Let’s face it--a pecan sorter is a significant investment. But, like most investments worth making, there’s a payoff, and in the case of the newest Inspection Masters pecan sorters, the payoff in speed and labor savings can offset the cost in a short time.

Anyone who has been around agriculture for very long knows that finding and keeping competent, reliable laborers can be difficult. When you need the labor for just a few months out of the year, it gets even harder. A good quality sorter can really help alleviate the problem.

Let us introduce you to the Inspection Masters Dual-Spectrum Plus. “Dual Spectrum” refers to the fact that this sorter “sees” in both the visual spectrum and the near infrared spectrum. As sorters have been able to do for many years, the machine identifies bad pecans and other objects that are the wrong color. The near infrared spectrum allows the machine to also sort out objects that are the right color but the wrong texture, such as dirt clods, small rocks, sticks and stick-tights that are similar in color to good pecans. This makes an enormous difference in the ability to clear out unwanted objects from your pecans.

Inspections Masters has been concentrating on the task of sorting pecans for a couple decades now.

They produce pecan sorters in two sizes. The PS6K is capable of sorting 6000 pounds per hour and the PS12K can handle 12,000 pounds per hour. Both machines use the same technology and hardware, but the larger machine has a wider field of view and twice as many air valves to eject unwanted pecans and other debris.

Among the many improvements in the latest version of the machines, is a 50% larger imaging area that identifies many more unwanted objects. The new machines also have a faster computer processor, better lighting and the added ability to evaluate objects based on size and shape. The touch-screen interface is easy to use, can be presented in English or Spanish and offers many options for fine tuning and saving your sorting parameters. If you’d like to learn more, we’d be glad to tell you all about them--just call.



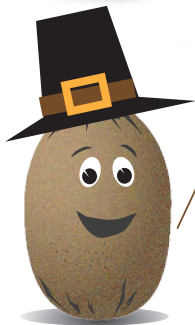
Just Plain Nuts

Pecan market (continued from page 4)

Foremost on this list of considerations would have to be our export market, which as everyone knows is currently driven by China. China's economy has many people concerned but the Chinese demand for pecans has remained strong in the face of this downturn in their economy.

Wells explains that, although international politics

could mean "all bets are off," the fundamentals of a solid market in China are in place and "aggressive marketing of pecans is taking place in India, Turkey, and South Korea among others." He also speaks positively about the new Federal Marketing Order. "With the FMO, pecans now have a significant way to launch a national marketing campaign on par with some of the other tree nuts, which have reaped great rewards with their own programs."



The fourth Thursday in November is set aside each year for feasts of turkey, green bean casserole, football and pumpkin pie (or pecan). There's some interesting history behind this very American holiday we call Thanksgiving.

- It was the fall of 1621 when the feast was held that launched the whole thing. It included about 50 Pilgrims and 90 Wampanoag Indians, and it went on for three days. The newcomers weren't called Pilgrims until a couple centuries later. They called themselves Saints.
- Thanksgiving didn't become a national holiday until over 200 years later! Sarah Josepha Hale convinced President Lincoln in 1863 to make Thanksgiving a national holiday. It took her 17 years of letter writing to make this happen. Now THAT'S persistence. Interesting side note--she also wrote the song "Mary had a little lamb."
- What was on the menu? Historians tell us there was probably no turkey (what?). They likely ate deer, ducks, oysters, lobster, eel and fish. They probably ate pumpkins, but not pumpkin pies (sadly, no pecan pie either).
- The early settlers gave thanks by praying and abstaining from food, which is what they planned on doing to celebrate their first harvest in 1621, until the Wampanoag Indians got involved and (fortunately for us!) turned their fast into a three-day feast!

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. Feel free to pass this newsletter along to friends and family.

This yummy recipe is shared by Pecan Country reader, Darla Regner. It's a favorite of her grandmother Dora Savage (1882-1955, and yes, related to the Savage Family of Madill, OK). Darla tells us that once people taste it, they want the recipe. So here it is. It's a great choice for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays (which are much closer than you think).

Grandma Dora's Pecan Dream Bars

Part 1: Melt 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter in a microwave in a 9" x 13" glass pan. Add 1/3 cup powdered sugar and 1 1/4 cups of flour and mix this to form a crust on the bottom of the pan. Set aside.

Part 2:

Add together:

- 4 eggs (lightly beaten)
- 3 cups of brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 4 tablespoons of flour
- 2 cups of chopped pecans
- 1 cup of coconut
- 2 teaspoons vanilla

Mix this together and pour on top of the crust (Part 1). Bake at 425 for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 325 and continue cooking for 25 minutes. Put foil on the top to keep them from getting too brown. Turn the oven off and leave the pecan dream bars in the oven overnight, or for at least one hour. (This caramelizes them and makes them chewy.)

They cut better if completely cool.

