

# PECAN COUNTRY NEWS

Volume 33

Fall 2020

## On the Calendar

**From Oct 2020 until sometime in 2021:**

Due to the uncertainties generated by this pandemic, there's not much of anything on the pecan calendar for the next few months. Here are a few things we hope ARE on the calendar soon: a great pecan harvest, a vaccine, a trade deal with China, an end to masks and some chances to gather with pecan folks in 2021.

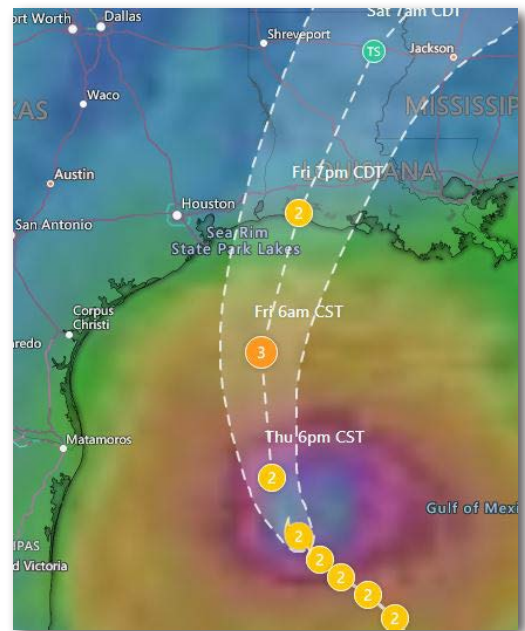


## Hurricanes Sally, Laura and Delta ruin a promising crop.

Georgia pecan growers can surely relate to the heartache felt by many southeastern pecan-growing families this season. Only two years ago, Hurricane Michael blasted its way across much of Georgia's pecan country and devastated a significant portion of the state's large crop along with a multitude of established trees. After years of disappointing harvests, 2020 looked like the year Louisiana and other states were destined for a big crop of pecans. Hurricanes named Laura and Delta changed all of that.

In the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Laura, the Louisiana State University AgCenter estimated pecan losses involving a 34% yield reduction on 3,904 acres, which would mean a state crop loss of more than half a million pounds. According to one local article, some native pecan trees well over a hundred years old were lost. A state champion tree in Beauregard Parish, with a circumference of fifteen feet fell victim to the storm. Just as folks were getting cleaned up from Hurricane Laura, along came Delta following a similar path.

Growing conditions in the southeastern pecan region had been advantageous, helping to produce trees full of pecans for many growers. But sometimes, nature can be downright unfair. A promising harvest turned into disappointment from three powerful hurricanes. Our hearts go out to our Pecan Country friends in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and other states who have suffered so much loss from the storms.



## National Pecan Shellers name Lifetime Achievement Award winner.

The Lifetime Achievement Award is the highest tribute that the National Pecan Shellers Association bestows upon one of its members, and this year that tremendous honor goes to Mr. Bruce Caris of Arizona's Green Valley Pecan Company. According to the NPSA press release, Mr. Caris made the transition from the wine industry to the pecan industry back in 2000. He previously served as Board Member and Chair of the NPSA, and he is currently Vice Chairman of the

American Pecan Council. Bruce serves as the Chief Operating Office for the Green Valley Pecan Company.

We join the rest of the pecan industry in applauding this well-deserved recognition of Bruce's years of stellar service.



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# Pecan Folks

## Meet the Savage Equipment (Madill, OK) Parts Team

It's that season when pecan growers, accumulators and processors are pushing machines and their operators pretty hard. It's also the time of year when speed is critical and losing time waiting on machine parts can get expensive in a hurry. That's why the Savage parts department maintains a really large inventory of parts that we can ship out the same day in most cases.

At the helm of this awesome parts (and purchasing) department is Clay Savage. He has been running this operation since before he was shaving (Well, at least it seems that way). Besides making customers happy, Clay enjoys fishing, golf and mastering the fine art of grilling and smoking meat.



Clay Savage

Also handling parts and purchasing tasks, is Mike Davis,

who has been on the Savage team for about six years. Many of you have likely talked with Mike on the phone about your much needed parts.

If it's not Mike on the other end of the phone, it's probably Alan Keatts, who has been with Savage since 2017. Alan came to us with a strong history in manufacturing and logistics.

And rounding out the Savage Parts Department is Jared Mathis, the newest and youngest whipper-snapper on the team. He's another avid fisherman and enjoys piloting his own boat around Lake Texoma.

Now, you have some faces to go with the voices on your parts request phone calls. They're all looking forward to serving you.



Mike Davis



Alan Keatts



Jared Mathis

## What in the world is a locavore?

If you look it up, you'll find the online version of 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. 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 the locavore's kitchen or local restaurant. Also, food from local sources tends to help promote one's local economy and requires less resources for things like processing, packaging, refrigeration, and marketing. For locavores, one generally (but not necessarily universal) demarcation for the "local area" is a hundred miles. There are locavore delivery services for locally raised meat and locavore restaurants that specialize in locally procured produce of all kinds. On the more traditional side, there's your tried-and-true road-side stands and farmers' markets offering fruits, veggies, honey, (pecans?). 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 who attach significant value to getting their food from local sources. If you're interested in new avenues for retailing pecans or selling to other retailers, you might want to consider markets and restaurants that cater to the locavore crowd in your area. Some grocery stores, natural food stores and co-ops have sections devoted to locally grown items. Just a little food for thought (locally grown of course).

## Pecan folks actually gathered in person

Leave it to the intrepid pecan growers of Alabama to buck the trend and hold an actual in-person event. On August 11, they held a Pecan Field Day at Auburn University's E.V. Smith Research Center in Tallassee. Savage of Georgia's own Billy Brown was there to witness the rare opportunity to visit face-to-face with pecan folks. Way to go! And, we're glad to see the responsible social distancing taking place at the outdoor event.



# 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.

### Attracting pecan consumers

In the September issue of Pecan South you will find a thought-provoking article by Dr. Charles Rohla entitled *Pecan Industry Incentives Can Attract Consumers*. Dr. Rohla is the Manager of the Center of Pecan and Specialty Agriculture at the Noble Research Institute in Oklahoma. His expansive article discusses several avenues the pecan industry could pursue to increase domestic consumption of pecans and pecan products along with ways to use pecan byproducts to improve profitability for those that grow and process pecans.

First and foremost, we have to move pecans beyond the holiday market that we are consistently stuck in. We must take advantage of the health benefits that pecans have over other nuts and move into the snack and health food market. I do believe that with the American Pecan Council's efforts we are seeing pecans viewed differently than in the past, but I feel there is still a lot of work to do to take us to the level of peanuts and almonds.

Dr. Rohla laments that the pecan industry generally fails to make efficient use of the byproducts of pecan production, the way the almond industry and others have been doing for many years.

Several items could and should be developed into sell-able by-products. We could establish a market for pecan shells as mulch for landscaping, or compost pecan trash from the cleaning process for potting media (or even incorporate it back into the orchards as organic matter), or process pruning waste into wood pellets for wood-burning stoves, meat smokers, and grills. Some companies are marketing products such as pecan oil, pecan butter, and pecan milk; however, these products are really only known within the industry. These pecan products are neither often found on grocery store shelves nor utilized by major food companies in their goods.

Rohla also delves into the current trend toward "sustainable" agriculture and how the pecan industry can

capitalize on this trend by developing a...

...“Life-cycle analysis” (carbon footprint) so that we can document this capture and quantify the amount of carbon we as pecan growers remove from the atmosphere, as well as the environmental benefits that occur within the orchard through our management practices.

Dr. Rohla also advocates for industry marketing changes such as “country of origin” labeling to separate U.S. pecans from those produced in other countries much like the American beef industry has done.

The article contains some great food for thought as our industry strives to improve profitability during these uncertain times. Thankfully, many of Rohla's suggestions align well with initiatives the American Pecan Council is undertaking. We can all do our part to help.

### Looking ahead for harvest

You will find another article with wide-ranging implications in the August issue of The Pecan Grower magazine. Dr. Lenny Wells' article by the above title covers everything from Georgia's production outlook to the impact of Mexico-grown pecans on U.S. growers.

First the good news:

...based on the orchards I have seen and the many conversations I have had with growers, the crop potential for 2020 in Georgia is better than we've seen in a number of years.

After Hurricane Michael wiped out the 2018 crop and took a large portion of the 2019 crop with it, most trees seem to be making a strong comeback.

Wells sees a Georgia pecan crop of 90-to-100 million pounds as a possibility.

The article also addresses the season's pecan management challenges, such as scab (a rotation of Miravis Top and Elast/Tin is his preferred prescription), aphids, mites and nematodes. Dr. Wells also goes into some detail on how to handle Zinc deficiencies, addressing both soil-applied Zinc and foliar sprays.

The last section of the article, entitled The Global Marketplace, addresses industry concerns about trade difficulties with China and the “flood of nuts from Mexico” that have a large influence on pricing. Wells describes the “sour taste in the

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# More Pecan Pieces

Looking ahead for harvest (cont. from page 3)

mouths” of growers that are paying assessments that partially help to market nuts from south of the border. He encourages readers to investigate the discussion on this topic at a University of Georgia blog post from July 7 at <https://site.extension.uga.edu/pecan/>.

Dr. Wells concludes by advocating for Georgia growers to take marketing efforts into their own hands and pushing for new markets for pecans. He also would like to see pecans being better presented to consumers at the retail end. “All the social media in the world won’t help if the pecans in stores are dark and wafery.”

## Sharing the burden for pecan research and promotion

If you think it’s unfair that U.S. pecan producers have to pay an assessment on their pecans, while those who import pecans from south of the border don’t, you have plenty of company. A solution is in the works. On September 22, the U.S. Agricultural Marketing Service entered a Proposed Rule into the Federal Register. It’s called the Pecan Research, Promotion and Information Order. For months, industry leaders working with and through the National Pecan Federation (NPF) have petitioned the U.S. Department of Agriculture to establish a new Research and Promotion Program for the pecan industry.

The Proposed Rule is twenty-nine pages long, but the essence of it is simple enough. The Rule would make an assessment of two cents for in-shell pecans and four cents for shelled pecans chargeable to both domestically produced pecans and those that are imported. U.S. growers and handlers will not pay more than they are currently paying in assessments to the American Pecan Council (APC). All the additional funds for research and promotion will come from pecans that are imported. At current levels of importation, this will provide an additional four to six million dollars that the industry can devote to research and promotion of pecans. There are some exemptions in the Proposed Order.

Producers who produce domestically and importers that import less than 50,000 pounds of in-shell pecans (25,000 pounds of shelled pecans) on

average for four fiscal periods (the fiscal period for which the exemption is claimed and the previous three fiscal periods) would be exempt.

The Proposed Order also details the establishment of the American Pecan Promotion Board and how nominations, appointments, terms of office, etc. would work. The stated purpose of the Board is “to strengthen the position of pecans in the marketplace, maintain and expand markets for pecans, and develop new uses for pecans.” The Board would consist of seventeen members—ten domestic producers and seven importers.

What’s next? We are now in the comment period for this proposed rule. Stakeholders have until November 23 to make their opinions known. The NPF encourages pecan growers to send messages of support for the proposed rule. You can send comments on the proposed rule via the Federal e-rulemaking portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>. You will need to enter the document number, AMS-SC-20-0013-0001 into the search window, and this will take you to the appropriate section where you can click the comment tab.

## Opportunities for US Pecans in Taiwan Snacking Industry

Amid a lot of bad news and uncertainty regarding Asian markets for pecans, there is some good news regarding exports to Taiwan. In an article by Katherine Lee, USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, posted on [pacificnut-producer.com/2020/09/21](http://pacificnut-producer.com/2020/09/21), you can read more about it.

Taiwan pecan imports rose by 74 percent (by volume) in 2019, making Taiwan the second largest Asian market for U.S. shelled pecan exports. Though the number is still small, the Taipei Agriculture Trade Office believes there is strong room for pecans to expand in the market, particularly led by the snacking sector.

Taiwan imports of U.S. tree nuts in general also reached a record high in 2019, and pecans have some catching up to do, to become a major contender in that market. Almonds and walnuts together accounted for about 82 percent of imports and pecans claimed a distant fourth at 4 percent, behind pistachios (14 percent). Still, pecan imports of 403 tons makes it a significant export market. As recently as 2015, U.S. pecan exports to Taiwan

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# Featured Equipment



**Savage machines are built to meet the challenges of harvest season.**

Savage's Side Sweeper and V-Sweeper will improve your bottom line by making the rest of your nut harvest operations more efficient. You'll get more nuts to market quicker. They are hydraulically operated, and hoses are simple to connect. The rotating tine bars consist of heavy-duty, formed steel and individual rubber fingers so the machines are able to power through grass and reach down deep to move the nuts. The free-floating sweeper heads perform well in uneven terrain. The Side-Sweeper clears a

10-foot swath and is often used in tandem with the Savage 3-point blower. The V-sweeper sweeps a 13-foot-wide path and can be used in conjunction with the Savage Row-Vac or Row Harvester. The two sweeper heads retract to a vertical position, as shown below, making it easier to transport, especially in tight spaces.

You can see these two workhorse sweepers in action at the Savage website, [www.savageequipment.com](http://www.savageequipment.com) and our YouTube channel, [Youtube.com/savageequipmentinc](https://www.youtube.com/savageequipmentinc).



**Side Sweeper 7510**



**V-Sweeper 7520**



# Just Plain Nuts

Pecans in Taiwan (cont. from page 4)

were only 197 tons. The most common way pecans are imported and used in Taiwan is as shelled halves, either fancy mammoth or junior mammoth in size.

There is an education challenge to be overcome.

Although more and more consumers consider pecans as a health food full of good fats and fiber, they are not familiar with its distinctive flavors and uses in cooking. Even in Chinese, the different translations between walnuts and pecans are often unclear or inconsistent. Consistent widespread

sampling and education can convey product uniqueness and bridge the pricing barrier.

*Taiwan is an island nation of about 24 million people that lies roughly 100 miles off the coast of the People's Republic of China. At the conclusion of the civil war that led to the Communist takeover of China (1949), the defeated government of the previous Republic of China and many others fled to the island and eventually established Taiwan as a separate nation. Its legitimacy as a nation is contested by the Peoples Republic of China.*



## Nutrition facts

Calories	390
Fat	24g
Sat Fat	5g
Sodium	80mg
Carbs	39g
Fiber	5g
Protein	11g

## Toasted Oat and Pecan Smoothie

We found this intriguing recipe on the American Pecan website, [www.americanpecan.com](http://www.americanpecan.com). You'll find loads of great recipes to share including this one submitted by Brandon Matzek of Kitchen Konfidence.

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup raw pecan halves
- 1/2 cup old-fashioned oats
- 1 cup whole milk\*
- 1 cup whole Greek yogurt\*
- 2 bananas, cut into slices and frozen
- 3 Tablespoons maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Pinch of kosher salt
- Grated nutmeg, for topping (optional)
- Pecan pieces or pecan halves, chopped (optional)

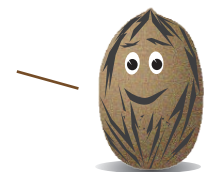
### Method:

Preheat an oven to 350 degrees F. Place oats and pecan halves on a rimmed baking sheet, and bake in the oven, stirring occasionally, until toasted and fragrant (12 to 15 minutes). Let cool completely.

Add toasted oats and pecans to a blender, and blend until finely ground. Add milk, yogurt, frozen bananas, maple syrup, cinnamon, vanilla and a pinch of salt, then blend until smooth. Divide between 2 glasses and top with grated nutmeg and pecan pieces or pecan halves, chopped if using. Enjoy immediately.

\* You may use lighter milk and yogurt if desired.

*Sounds like a great idea for a nutritious breakfast.*



If you've got a pecan story, a good, clean joke or a pecan recipe you'd like to share, send it along to [pecancountry@savageequipment.com](mailto:pecancountry@savageequipment.com). We love to hear from our Pecan Country neighbors.