

PECAN COUNTRY NEWS

Volume 15

Spring 2016

On the Calendar

Jun 2-4:

Oklahoma Pecan Growers Conf.; Tulsa, OK

Jun 16-17:

Tri-State Pecan Conf.; AR-LA-MS; Alexandria, LA

Jul 10-13:

Texas Pecan Growers Conf.; San Marcos, TX

Aug 24-26:

Dia del Nogalero Delicias, Chihuahua, MX

Aug 26:

Arizona Pecan Growers Meeting; Tucson, AZ

Aug 31-Sep 2:

National Pecan Shellers Meeting; Chicago, IL

See you there!



Savage Southwest takes its first steps

A few weeks ago, Savage Equipment, Inc. took its first small steps toward establishing a physical presence in the heart of southwestern pecan country, Las Cruces, New Mexico. We've long wanted to find a way to better support Savage customers in this important region for pecan growing and processing.

While real estate acquisition and construction move forward, we are borrowing a little office space and some equipment staging area from our friends at Inspection Masters in Las Cruces. If you attended the Western Pecan Growers Convention, you were afforded the opportunity to attend the grand opening of Inspection Masters' new facility located at 2320 Westgate Court. Savage Equipment was proud to be able to co-host this celebration. The open house was well attended by many in our southwestern pecan growing family, and the food was both plentiful and delicious. The Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce was also there to help celebrate the ribbon cutting.

Savage's Las Cruces facility will be our third current operating location, the others being our home manufacturing facility in Madill,



Oklahoma and our Savage of Georgia site located in Baconton. When everything is in place, Savage will have a first-class facility for sales and support of pecan equipment. Pecan growers and processors will be able to drop by and "kick the tires" on a piece of equipment they might be considering, and equipment owners will have a place to find parts, expertise and support for their machines. We are very excited about this new opportunity, and we hope our pecan country neighbors will stop by for a visit at our temporary new home.



The new Inspection Masters building (note those Savage machines out back)

The Hackey family's deep roots in the New Mexico soil

By Mike Craig

After my transfer to Las Cruces, New Mexico this year, one of my first trips was a 50-mile drive north to visit with Don Hackey on his family's pecan farm between the small towns of Rincon and Hatch. The origin of their family agricultural enterprise dates back to 1923 when Don's grandfather loaded up his young family in a Model-T Ford and traveled from Pecos, Texas to the area. They came for the opportunity to farm "new land" in the Mesilla Valley. New Mexico had only recently advanced from territorial status to statehood. Working with hand tools, the family and others cleared land, raised cotton and had a small dairy.



Ellie and Don Hackey with granddaughter, Addie in front of their authentic adobe home near Hatch, NM.

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Pecan Folks

Hackey family (continued from page 1)

In 1939, Don's grandfather and most of the family moved back to Texas, but Don's father, Ralph, stayed behind to finish high school, and went on to attend New Mexico State University in Las Cruces. Ralph's senior-year studies were brought to an abrupt halt by the attack on Pearl Harbor and America's entry into World War II. He put his civilian pilot training to good use and went off to train as

a B-24 pilot. From there, he went on to Europe where he would complete 35 combat missions. Ralph and his entire crew managed to accomplish many harrowing missions and survive the dangerous skies over Europe when many of their fellow aviators did not. At war's end, he was honorably discharged in October of 1945, and a few months



Ralph Hackey serving as B-24 Pilot in WW II

later, Ralph was back in southern New Mexico, establishing the farm that is still part of the Hackey family's legacy. Ralph Hackey was eventually able to complete his degree at New Mexico State in 1953 and, now in his 90's, he's still living in the area.

Don Hackey and his wife Ellie now run the family

farm. Ellie handles the farm's accounting and the five children have helped out in various capacities through the course of their upbringing. Their youngest son, Thomas, is now a junior and a star athlete at Hatch Valley High School, and middle son, Roy, is an integral part of the family's agricultural operations. Daughter, Erin is a busy mom living in Tucson, Arizona; and son, Luke is branch

manager at Helena Chemical Company living near the farm with his family. Their daughter, Audrey is currently a junior at New Mexico State University.

It was about sixteen years ago that the Hackey's made their strategic transition from decades of growing row crops to establishing a pecan orchard. It's working out well for them.

Pecan trees now cover



Don Hackey and son, Roy, building on the family legacy

320 acres, with about 260 acres currently in production. The Hackey's are building on a strong family tradition of perseverance, ingenuity and hard work. Their thriving family pecan business is a remarkable tribute to the brave pioneers and patriots that got the whole thing started.

Pecan Market Order update

Things are moving right along for the USDA Pecan Marketing Order. According to the American Pecan Board website (www.pecanboard.com), ballots went out to pecan growers in the fifteen pecan growing states on March 8. From then until March 30th, growers had the opportunity to vote and let their opinion on the Federal Market Order be known. Voters also indicated their average in-shell production over the last four years (2011-2014).

The FMO can be approved in one of two ways. Either two-thirds of those growers voting approving the measure or two-thirds of the volume of produc-

tion voting in approval will cause the FMO to pass.

The qualification for a grower to vote in the referendum is either 50,000 in-shell pounds of average production over the last four years or 30 pecan acres, including planted acreage not yet in production.

As one might expect, the initial mail-out list was incomplete, so some ballots were received late. In order to insure all the right voices are heard, the counting process will take a bit more time. Results of the voting and the ultimate fate of the FMO will likely be known in May. Assuming the voting is favorable, members will be nominating and selecting the 17 people that will represent them

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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.

Some are bullish on tree nuts.

In a March 10 article published in *Western Farm Press* (*Farm leaders bullish on tree nuts despite reduced demand, lower prices*), author Dennis Pollock quotes several California nut growers that are optimistic about the long-term prospects for tree nuts. The article is focused on walnuts, almonds and pistachios, but many of the comments on marketing are instructive to the pecan industry as well.

"I remain bullish on nuts," said Jim Zion, a managing partner with Meridian Growers in Clovis, Calif. Zion says, "It's a fantastic food. It's healthy, and there are still people around the world who don't know what a pistachio is. Nuts are a portable protein, easier to ship than a pork chop or hamburger, and there's burgeoning demand on the sport side."

To bolster demand domestically, the walnut industry has unleashed a barrage of videos on how to use its product – in salads, entrées, and desserts. Strange as it seems, some realized that people simply did not know what to do with a walnut when it came to food preparation.

It seems like the same could be said for the pecan. Of course, those of us who live in pecan country know all kinds of ways to use a bag of pecans. Much of the United States and certainly the rest of the world probably have no clue about all the wonderful, tasty things you can make with pecans.

The other theme of the article deals with the recent drop in prices. The three major California tree nuts have all suffered a decline in price this past year. Pistachios are down slightly--just five percent, but almonds are down twenty percent and walnuts suffered a painful sixty percent drop (see next article). Ever optimistic, the industry leaders that were cited in this article say that the lower prices will open doors to new buyers which will enhance demand over the long haul.

Walnut market doldrums threaten to reduce grower returns in half

A March 4 article, also on the *Western Farm Press* website by Greg Northcutt (same title as above) outlines the dramatic downturn in walnut prices over the past year. It seems that the record crop produced in 2014 was eclipsed by another record harvest in 2015, a whopping 602,000 tons.

As big as it was, the 2015 crop wasn't the only contributor to the current glut of walnuts. The inventory of walnuts remaining in warehouses at the end of the 2014 marketing year on Aug. 31, 2014, totaled a record 83,511 tons (in-shell equivalent). This was the highest carry-over since 2004 and more than twice the 38,568-tons carryover from the 2013 crop.

The average carryover for the past nine years has been under 48,000 tons. Industry analyst Steve Turner says he "...wouldn't be surprised if inventories at the end of the 2015 marketing year exceed 100,000 tons,"

Typically, after delivering their walnuts to handlers at harvest, growers are paid for their crop in a series of installments as the nuts are sold. For instance, depending on the handler, a grower might receive payment for 30-40 percent of the crop delivered to the handler at harvest.

Then, the grower would get another payment for 25 percent of the crop in January and again in March before getting paid for the remaining unsold nuts in early June.

As a result, growers don't know the actual price of their crop until the final payment. For the 2014 crop, growers received an average price of around \$1.75 per pound (in-shell).

Prospects for this year's crop prices are much dimmer, Turner notes.

"With a good meat yield and high quality, some growers may receive around \$1 a pound," he says. "But, we'll probably be seeing a lot of grower payments of 50 cents a pound, if not less."

That's getting dangerously close to or below the cost of production for many growers."

More Pecan Pieces

Market order update, continued from page 2 on the American Pecan Council. Get ready.

As with all things involving the government and mobilizing a large group, it takes real money to keep this process rolling. From the beginning, growers, shellers, and vendors have been generous in their funding support. Cash donations amounted to around \$300,000. American Pecan Board members, all volunteers, paid out-of-pocket expenses of about \$120,000. The APB's attorneys have done pro bono work to the tune of about a million dollars. And yet, the cupboard is almost bare. If you're willing and able to make a contribution to the effort, please send a check to The American Pecan Board, 10600 State Hwy 21 E, Caldwell, Texas 77836. The Pecan Board is an IRS 501(c) 6 organization; so your contribution is deductible as a business expense. And, thank you for the investment in our industry's future.

Pecan shows & such

When it comes to the annual **Western Pecan Growers Association Conference and Trade Show** in Las Cruces, New Mexico, you just never know what to expect from the weather--warm, cold, wet, dry, windy (probably). In early March, in New Mexico, don't count on the weather. One thing you can count on is a great show, with lots of active participants, vendors, pecan equipment, good information and really good food. The 2016 conference did not disappoint. About 600 people attended the event at the Hotel Encanto. And yes, the rain and wind threatened to put a severe damper on the



Jesse Diaz sharing expertise with pecan growers

festivities. Thankfully, it never really materialized. The conference was a huge success, thanks to the outstanding efforts of John White and the rest of the conference management team. Congratulations on a well run show and congratulations to the Western Pecan Growers Association celebrating their 50th Anniversary year.

In late March, the Georgia National Fairgrounds in Perry was the site of the **Georgia Pecan Growers Association's annual conference**. It was another huge success, from the golf tournament and reception at the Houston Lake Country Club to the wealth of knowledge dispensed in a variety of seminars. Of course there was an abundance of vendors and shiny new pieces of pecan equipment to examine and discuss.

The educational offerings included tree hedging from a western perspective and another evaluating hedging's effect on scab control in the southeast. Other topics included the advantages of herbicide rotation, scorching in young trees, insect control, early season scab control and some of the latest happenings in pecan research. If you didn't make it to the conference, make sure to get it on your calendar for next year. Those Georgia Pecan folks know how to put on a great event.

Up next in the pecan conference world is the annual conference in Oklahoma, June 2-4. This year's affair will be held in Tulsa. Then, a couple weeks later, Alexandria, Louisiana will be the site for the Tri-State Pecan Convention. It includes growers from Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi. The Texas Pecan Growers will gather in San Marcos this year on July 10-13. Arizona holds their conference in Tucson, and this year's meeting will be on August 26. Many of our Pecan Country friends in Mexico will be attending the 20th annual Dia del Nogalero in Delicias, Chihuahua during August 24-26.



Featured Equipment

Savage Row-Vac tips

We're a little proud of our new 8960 Row-Vac. If you've got one, you already know how well it picks up leaves and sticks and what a relatively easy time your harvester has picking up what's left.

Here are a few things that will help your Row-Vac keep doing a great job:

1) Operate with the side rubber flaps about 2" above the ground to allow sufficient airflow.



- 2) Use the hydraulic flow control valve to keep flapper wheels rotating a little faster than the Row-Vac wheels.
- 3) Get the Row-Vac level front-to-back by adjusting the lever forward or aft (located under front safety shield).
- 4) When the Row-Vac is not in use, block it up or use the piston lock to make sure the rubber flaps are not bent out of shape for an extended period of time.
- 5) Call or email if you have questions or if you need a Row-Vac operators manual: info@savageequipment.com

A passion for service in the heart of Pecan Country

If it's a machine, it will eventually break down. And when you depend on that machine for your livelihood, breakdowns can generate a lot of stress. After all, it's money we're talking about.

At Savage Equipment, we do our very best to craft machinery that will last for years without wearing out. And, when Murphy's Law works its way into harvest season, we do our best to respond quickly. In both Madill, OK and Baconton, GA (and soon in Las Cruces, NM), we keep an enormous stock of parts for all of our machines. When you call for a part, chances are very good that we have it. If we do, chances are even better that we'll get it shipped out the same day.

Our Savage of Georgia folks are leading the way with another effort to support our customers when they need it most. Our Baconton office has dedicated service vehicles and dedicated, experienced technicians that will come right to your barn, orchard or processing facility to get your machine back up and running as quickly as possible. Alan Kent has been around farm equipment his whole life, and has a wealth of repair experience. He's spent decades working on tractors and various agricultural machinery (and he's got a cool service truck). His son, Bryan, works in our Georgia parts department and has been well trained in providing service for Inspection Masters pecan sorters.

So, when Murphy's Law takes over, and you don't have the time or ability to bring your machine in or repair it yourself, you know who to call.



Alan Kent grabbing a few supplies from his service truck. An experienced mechanic with a well equipped truck is a powerful combination when you're in a jam.



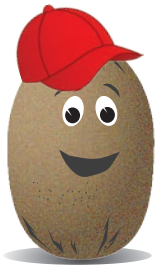
Bryan Kent has the experience and knowledge it takes to service your Inspection Masters sorter. (And he has a cool new service van, too.)

Just Plain Nuts

Pecan Country keeps on growing.

From very humble beginnings, we now share our little newsletter with well over a thousand homes and businesses scattered from one end of *Pecan Country* to the other. Okay, that's still fairly humble, but we're glad to know that, with every issue, we're reaching a few dozen more

folks. If you know of someone that might like to receive this publication, please pass it along to them or have them send us an email. If you have a pecan story or some useful information you'd like to share with your *Pecan Country* neighbors, we'd definitely like to hear from you (pecan-country@savageequipment.com). We're always looking for great pecan family stories and yummy pecan recipes to pass along. Thanks for taking a look.



Batter up! It's baseball season once again, so let's take a look at a few famous baseball folks, and some of the interesting things they said.

- "He's got power enough to hit home-runs in any park, including Yellowstone."

Manager Sparky Anderson, on Willie Stargell

Yogi Berra said a lot of things that make you go, "hmm".

- "Slump? I ain't in no slump. I just ain't hitting."

- "You can observe a lot by watchin'."

- "You can't think and hit at the same time."

- "Ninety percent of the game is half mental."

Yogi Berra

- "The secret of managing is to keep the guys who hate you away from the guys who are undecided."

Casey Stengel

- "Baseball is almost the only orderly thing in a very unordered world. If you get three strikes, even the best lawyer in the world can't get you off."

Bill Veeck

You can find these two quick recipes and lots of others on the Texas Pecan Growers website, tpga.com!

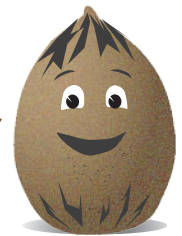
Jalapeño Pecan Balls

Ingredients:

8 ounces cream cheese, softened
3 tablespoons jalapeño pepper jelly
½ cup very finely chopped pecans

Directions:

Mix together well the cream cheese and jelly. Chill. Form into balls. Roll in finely chopped pecans to coat.



Toasted Pecans (+)

Ingredients:

1 cup pecans
1 tablespoon butter, melted
Salt, to taste

Directions:

In a medium sized mixing bowl, mix pecans, butter and salt. Place pecans in a shallow pan and place in a 400 degree F. oven. Cook for 10 minutes, stirring every 2-3 minutes. Cool. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

(+) For an extra kick, try adding one of the following to the mixing bowl:

½ teaspoon garlic powder
½ teaspoon dried basil leaves
2-3 drops Tabasco
2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce

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