

# PECAN COUNTRY NEWS

Volume 27

Spring 2019

## On the Calendar

### Apr 2:

Cent. TX Pecan Program,  
Goldthwaite, TX

### Jun 12-14:

OK Pecan Growers Conf.  
Ardmore, OK

### Jun 20-21:

Tri-State ArkLaMiss  
Pecanference; New  
Roads, LA

### July 14-17:

TX Pecan Growers Conf.  
Frisco, TX

### Aug 28-30:

Dia del Nogalero  
Delicias, Chih., MX

See you  
there!



## Basil Savage celebrates one of life's milestones.

In early March, folks at Savage Equipment along with friends and family from near and far gathered to honor Savage Equipment founder and long-time pecan industry leader, Basil Savage. On a Saturday evening, the Savage showroom was converted into a banquet and birthday party venue with lots of balloons, old photographs, memorabilia and generous helpings of delicious food and amusing stories.

While a video screening three quarters of a century's worth of memories played in the background, guests were able to mingle, reminisce and examine the various mementos of Basil's remarkable life. The evening was a special tribute to Basil Savage's journey from a small-town



kid that was handy with cars and other machines, to farmer, inventor and manufacturing business owner with hundreds of irrigated pecan acres, multiple patents and equipment sales that span five continents. It was quite a unique journey for quite a unique character.

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## Pecan conferences are golden opportunities for growth.

Each year, the pecan folks gather at a variety of conferences across the U.S., and several other countries. These gatherings are great opportunities for growers and processors, novice or experienced, to learn about pecan markets, industry developments, money-saving techniques and the latest in equipment innovations.

In March, the pecan community gathered in Las Cruces, New Mexico and Tifton, Georgia for two of the largest conferences of the year. Some of the largest pecan operations in the world and plenty of the small orchards scattered across the southern U.S. were represented at both of these conferences.

There are only a few more opportunities to attend a U.S. pecan conference in 2019 and only one more of the larger conferences--that being the Texas Conference taking place July 14-17, held this year in Frisco, Texas, just north of Dallas.

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Aerial views of this year's Georgia Pecan Growers Conference.

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# Pecan Folks

Basil's 75th (cont. from page 1)

While the crowd enjoyed a tasty meal, they were treated to a beautiful rendition of "God Bless America" and a recounting of the Savage family's extremely deep roots on this continent, dating all the way back to the Jamestown Colony. There were also the fun and slightly embarrassing tales from

days gone by. Boyhood friends as well as sons and siblings shared some improbable (but mostly true) stories of Basil's knack for spreading a little mischief and a whole lot of hilarity throughout his life. Some things never change.



**Basil Savage planted trees and a future in 1965, the year he designed and built his first tree shaker.**



**Birthday party in the Savage showroom**



**Savage Equipment building in the 1970's & 80's**

Pecan conferences (cont. from page 1)

Then again, there are some great learning opportunities for our *Pecan Country* neighbors in other countries. Mexico has several pecan gatherings each year, including the largest one in Delicias, Chihuahua. It's called Dia del Nogalero, and this year's event will take place 28-30 August.

The South African growers have their annual meeting in November (which is their off season). Usually, they'll host some American pecan experts and equipment manufacturers for their conference. The Australian pecan growers also have an annual conference and orchard tour that takes place in August (a little after their harvest season).

So, no matter where you are in *Pecan Country*, there's probably an opportunity to get together and learn from the experts, hear about discoveries in recent pecan research and check out some of the latest equipment.



**Basil Savage talks pecan production with members of the pecan-growing Ivey family at the Western Pecan Growers Conference in Las Cruces, New Mexico.**

# 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.

### Coming to grips with China

It's a sore spot for some in the pecan community and many other agricultural industries. The tariff war hasn't been helpful.

Trying to gain an understanding of our strained but extremely important relationship with China can seem overwhelming. Trade is just one aspect of this complex relationship between the world's two largest economies and extremely powerful militaries. A two-part series of articles published on Feb 4th and 11th in the Southeastern Farm Press might be a good place to start. The articles are written in a way that most folks (even this author) can understand (Author: Bobby Coats, professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness, University of Arkansas System).

One of the first things to understand about China is that they have a top-down Communist political system and a somewhat free-market economic system, especially when it comes to Hong Kong. The country's leadership sets well-defined national goals and detailed plans to work toward those goals. Where the U.S. governmental system tends to think in 1-to-4 year increments, the Chinese always plan for the long haul, setting goals that will be decades in the realization. One of their current stated goals is to become the largest economic engine in the world, and in terms of GDP, they are not far from it.

The Chinese are also aiming for technological supremacy, and they believe this objective is achievable by 2025. By leveraging economic and technological superiority, once those are achieved, they plan to establish global financial supremacy by 2035 and military supremacy by 2047.

President Trump and Congress are presently faced with defining an array of fiscal, monetary, trade, and national security policies that will protect the interests of the United States and define the U.S. and Chinese relationship

for years if not decades to come.

The article refers to a speech given by Vice President Pence to the Hudson Institute in October of last year. Here is some of what he said.

Over the past 17 years, China's GDP has grown 9-fold; it has become the second-largest economy in the world. Much of this success was driven by American investment in China. And the Chinese Communist Party has also used an arsenal of policies inconsistent with free and fair trade, including tariffs, quotas, currency manipulation, forced technology transfer, intellectual property theft, and industrial subsidies doled out like candy, to name a few. These policies have built Beijing's manufacturing base, at the expense of its competitors – especially America.

China's actions have contributed to a trade deficit with the United States that last year ran to \$375 billion – nearly half of our global trade deficit. As President Trump said just this week, “we rebuilt China” over the last 25 years.

This speech by VP Pence describes many ways China is aggressively implementing their strategic plan. If that is of interest to you, the speech is well worth searching out and reading or listening to. You can find it on the [www.hudson.org](http://www.hudson.org) website.

The Coats article concludes with a discussion of commodity markets, Federal Reserve Chairman comments and the outlook for the U.S. economic outlook for the next couple of years based upon how long it takes to resolve trade issues with China. If you would like a greater understanding of why it is so difficult and so important to reorient our economic relationship with China, you might want to read this article.

### And, speaking of China...

The article, Pecan Production & Market Trends in China, in the March issue of Pecan South (author S. Scott Nadler and Alex Chen) is an eye opener. What? China is working toward being a net exporter of pecans? It would seem so. The

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# More Pecan Pieces

South African pecans (cont. from page 3) article features an extensive time line of the history of pecans in China that begins with sporadic plantings in the early 1900's. Throughout the 1970's and 80's there seemed to be significant experimentation with cultivars to establish which ones were best suited to China's climate and terrain. Things got much more serious after the start of the current century.

During the early part of this period, the Chinese government reported that it had trained over 7,000 people in the care and operation of pecan orchards, while many provinces announced plans for expanding pecan production in order to meet environmental and economic development targets.

This was also when the first pecan cooperative was established which allowed smaller growers to join forces on production and marketing.

In 2014, China announced that it had successfully produced and grafted over 150 million pecan trees to expand Chinese pecan production and that they were on target to become a net exporter of pecans by 2025.

The article points out the historic difficulty of getting reliable data from China, but the trend seems clear. The authors say there is a "very strong probability" that we will see China-grown pecans in stores within the next five years.

## **USDA-NASS Pecan Production Report arrives**

After a delay caused mostly by the well publicized government shutdown, the American Pecan Council-funded Pecan Production Report was released in mid-March. The report presents data on 2018 crop production, yield and bearing acreage for the largest pecan states—Alabama, Arizona, California, Georgia, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. The report lays out in cold hard statistics what most growers were already experiencing in many ways—2018 was a really tough year. Largely due to hurricane devastation and other weather problems in Georgia, and similarly harmful weather in Texas and Louisiana, just about everything was down from recent years.

For the first time since 2006, Georgia was displaced from being first in pecan production, a distant second behind New Mexico. Georgia's utilized production was only slightly over half of what it has been for the past couple of years. Texas also suffered a dramatic drop in production for the 2018 season largely due to weather issues. While every state was down somewhat in utilized production, Georgia and Texas suffered the most. A decrease in price per pound added to the woes of most pecan producers and decreased the overall value of utilized production, which was down 40 percent from the 2017 crop year.

The 5-page report is available on the internet at <https://usda.library.cornell.edu/>. When you get there, type "pecan production" into the search window. The release date for the report was March 14, 2019.

## **Elevating the pecan nutrition message in 2019 and beyond**

An article with the above title, contributed by the American Pecan Council in the March edition of Pecan South, lays out the many ways the American Pecan Council is working to expand the profile of American-grown pecans.

The 2018 launch of American Pecans, The Original Supernut brand to consumers was rooted in three core traits of pecans—taste, heritage and nutrition. There's a reason for this. Our research has shown that today's consumers, particularly our target audience of Gen X and Gen Y moms, care about providing their families wholesome, tasty meals using locally-sourced ingredients.

The nutrition aspect of the campaign is the lead storyline. It seems most consumers aren't aware of the nutritional advantages of pecans even though they tend to see almonds and pistachios as "health food". As part of the campaign to remedy this, "the APC is pursuing research that investigates the health benefits of pecans, with the intention that future marketing efforts will promote the results to the increasingly large contingent of health-conscious consumers."

One outlet for delivering the nutrition message is through partnering with supermarkets' registered dieti-

# Featured Equipment

## The Savage Vision is the fast and affordable pecan sorter

Anyone who has been around pecan cleaning and processing for very long knows the difficulty of removing stick-tights, dirt clods and small sticks from the harvested pecans. Reliable seasonal labor can be nearly impossible to find and retain, not to mention the expense and personal issues that sometimes arise. Savage has a great solution.

Savage Vision in-shell sorters do an amazing job removing stick-tights, sticks, pebbles, and even the occasional shotgun shell. Dual-spectrum technology identifies and ejects far more unwanted material than any single spectrum sorter. This allows your Savage Vision sorter to significantly increase cleaning plant throughput. No more slowing down your entire cleaning operation because a large amount of pecan-sized debris must be removed by hand. With almost all foreign objects removed from your final product, you will need very few people on the final inspection belt, significantly reducing labor costs.

Operators enjoy the user-friendly set-up and how simple it is to adjust to changing product characteristics. The touchscreen control screen is designed with the non-technical English or Spanish-speaking operator in



mind, but still offers an impressive degree of control and flexibility. Operators also like the ability to move the control panel around to the most convenient location to suit their purposes.

The Vision sorter digitally evaluates each item for color, infra-red reflectivity, size and shape. Based on user-set levels for these criteria, the computer classifies each item as “accept” or “reject” and rejected items are air-blasted into an alternate channel for separate processing or disposal. Operators are able to save up to nine different sets of sorting parameters for future use on batches of similar pecans. This machine can accomplish all of this at flow rates of up to 15,000 pounds per hour.

Give us a call or come visit with us about your pecan sorting needs and let us show you what the Savage Vision sorter can do for your nut-cleaning operation.



Vision Sorter mounted on  
Savage 3644 Sorting Table

# Just Plain Nuts

Elevating the pecan (cont. from page 4)

tians. Yes—there is such a person—they're some of the folks you see offering product samples to grocery store customers and maybe a simple recipe or information on why the product would be a healthy purchase. To assist these folks in telling the story, APC developed "The Original Supernut Retail Dietitian Toolkit" to help retailers move pecans "from a once-a-year purchase to a year-round staple."

And that's not all! You too can be an advocate for the industry by putting the APC's Digital Toolkit to use

within your own sphere of influence. You can learn all about the health-centered Super-fy campaign on the Digital Toolkit for Industry pages of the APC website—[americanpecan.com/toolkit](http://americanpecan.com/toolkit). The not-very-secret password is pecans18. From there, go to the Marketing Campaigns page and you'll find a bunch of ideas and tools to help spread the good news on American pecans.



It's the season of basketball championships—a good time to reflect on the long-time UCLA Coach John Wooden, probably the greatest college basketball coach of all time.

*Us older geezers remember how Coach Wooden's UCLA Bruins dominated the game in the 1960's and 70's—an unprecedented 10 national championships in 12 years, including 7 in a row. Until he died (at 99!) he carried a folded up card in his wallet that his father had given him when he graduated from the eighth grade. It contained seven simple guidelines for leading a good life.*

1. Be True to Yourself.
2. Make each day your masterpiece.
3. Never leave until tomorrow what can be done today.
4. Help others.
5. Drink deeply from good books, especially the Bible.
6. Study friendship and make it a fine art.
7. Pray for guidance and count and give thanks for your blessings every day.

*In his later years, Coach Wooden wrote and spoke about leadership and something he called the "pyramid of success". Look up his TED Talk on The Difference Between Winning and Succeeding. Coach Wooden defined success as, "peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you made the effort to become the best you are capable of becoming."*

*What's more springy than a spring salad? This recipe and photo come from the National Pecan Shellers Association website, [ilovepecans.org](http://ilovepecans.org)*



## **Pecan Spring Salad**

Prep and total time: 15 mins  
Serves: 6

### **Ingredients:**

- 6 cups green salad
- 1-1/2 cups canned mandarin oranges, drained
- 1-1/2 cups pecans, chopped
- 6 green onions, chopped
- 7 ounces Feta cheese
- 8 Tbsp. vinaigrette dressing (can include flavors similar to raspberry)

### **Directions:**

1. Mix together all ingredients except vinaigrette.
2. Add vinaigrette just before serving.



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