

# PECAN COUNTRY NEWS

Volume 16

Summer 2016

## On the Calendar

### 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

### Sep 8:

Georgia Pecan Growers Field Day; Baconton, GA

### Sep 15:

Alabama Pecan Growers Assn. Conf.; Fairhope, AL

### Oct 17-19:

Western Pecan Prod. Short-course; NM State Univ., Las Cruces, NM

## Pecan marketing order passes easily. Now what?

It may be old news to some, but back on May 6th, the USDA announced the results of the historic referendum vote on the Federal Marketing Order (FMO) for Pecans. A decisive 77 percent of those who voted were in favor of the FMO. So, where do we go from here?

We need to select members of the governing body for the FMO which will consist of 17 members and 17 alternates. These will be growers that are nominated and voted on by growers and shellers that are nominated and voted on by shellers. Here's some of what the American Pecan Board website says about this new body.

The FMO for Pecans will be administered by a yet-to-be-selected 17-member American Pecan Council. Its responsibilities under the Final Order to be published in the Federal Register will be to market and promote pecans to increase demand, gather and publish accurate industry data, coordinate and invest in pecan research, establish quality, grade, and size standards, and create packaging guidelines and standards. Among the initial actions of the Council



### A beautiful fish story (see page 2)

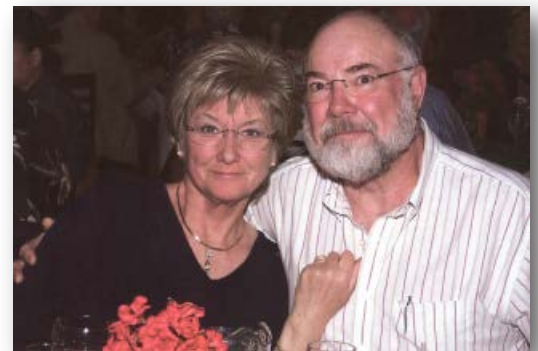
will be to hire full-time professional staff who will carry on the day-to-day business of the American Pecan Council.

Nominating forms for the board will be sent out as soon as the USDA enters the "Final Rule" of the FMO in the Federal Register, and this is expected to happen this month (July). The goal is to have the Council elected and seated by October first, so assessments can be made on the 2016 pecan crop. Exciting times are ahead for pecan folks. Let's get going.

## A giant in the pecan industry retires (sort of)

It was in his blood before he took his first steps, so it's no wonder that Dr. Mike Smith seems to know more about growing food (and especially pecans) than anybody we know. Both of Mike's parents were educators in the public schools; his mother taught elementary school, and his father taught Agricultural Education. Growing up on a 140-acre cattle operation near Stilwell, Oklahoma, also helped him get an early start on his life-long pursuit of knowledge in the agricultural realm. As youngsters, Mike and his brother Dan were very active in the Future Farmers of America (FFA). They both raised pigs and showed them competitively. Mike received the FFA's Star Greenhand award as a high school freshman and the State Farmer Award as a senior. He

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Carole and Mike Smith: a partnership that continues flourishing into the next chapter of life.

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# Pecan Folks

## Mike Smith retirement (continued from page 1)

began working at Greenleaf Nursery at the tender age of 13. Through his teen years, Mike worked on a hay-hauling crew—2 cents a bale, a thousand bales a day (doing the math, that's 20 bucks for a tough day's work).

Mike began his long trek through higher education at Oklahoma State University, receiving his Bachelors in Horticulture in 1973. For his master's program, Mike specialized in the pecan, earning his degree in 1975. From there, he went on to Michigan State University to earn his PhD working with apple, peach, sour cherry and plum. Mike worked his way quickly through the ranks of academia, beginning with his service as a graduate assistant at both Oklahoma State and Michigan State. He would eventually rise to the very pinnacle of his field as the Regents Professor of the Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, Oklahoma State University, a position he has held since 1999. Mike is also a Fellow of the American Society for Horticulture Science, establishing him in the top-achieving one percent of professional horticulturists nation-wide.

Why choose this career path? It seems Mike really enjoys problem solving through science. "I thoroughly enjoy the process of solving a problem or discovery of novel information using sound scientific methodology," he says. He is also a big believer in documenting methods and results for the maximum benefit to others, saying "It is both rewarding and satisfying that information generated by your research or education can benefit others and increase their success and profitability." Another signifi-

cant factor in his choice of career is his love of teaching and mentoring. Over the years, Dr. Mike Smith has guided many a thankful student, both undergrads and graduates, through the difficulties of research and scientific methodology.

In addition to Mike's obvious contributions to the academic environment in Oklahoma and elsewhere, his direct impact on real-life pecan growing has been significant. His research into crop thinning has been put to profitable use by pecan growers everywhere. His introduction of leaf analysis to Oklahoma growers has likewise benefited many. Mike also contributed significantly to the release of the 'Kanza' variety by the USDA, Kansas State University, and Texas A&M.

Although Dr. Smith may be "retired" he hasn't left much room in the schedule for sipping tea on the porch swing. Mike will be putting his research and training to good use managing the pecan orchard that he and his wife Carole own. He also plans on getting in some extra travel time and continuing to consult with farmers to help them improve production. He considers his wife, Carole, "a vital part of any success and accomplishments" he has achieved in his career. Mike also points to his cherished relationships with pecan growers in Oklahoma and across the nation as a source of immense satisfaction. And, the feeling is certainly mutual. He wants all the *Pecan Country* folks to know he now has a Facebook page called **Mike Smith Pecans**, where he'll periodically post information relevant to pecan production. Anyone on Facebook can access this page.

## Hauani Creek Ranch hosts wounded warrior fishing event

In mid-June, three generations of the Savage family were honored to host a small, but very special fishing tournament at their Hauani Creek Ranch. The ranch is home to



the Savage pecan farming operation, but for one day in June, it was *Bass Central* and a great location for a once-in-a-lifetime fishing experience for a few of our nation's true heroes.

The story began when reigning Bassmaster Classic Champion (and Oklahoma pecan grower), Edwin Evers, found a way to give back to the U.S. military warriors who have given so much to this country. He teamed up with the Wounded Warriors in Action Foundation last year and participated in his first fishing events with these veterans.

The Wounded Warriors in Action Foundation Inc. (WWIA) serves our nation's combat wounded Purple Heart recipients by providing world-class outdoor sporting activities as a means to recognize and honor their sacrifice, encourage independence and connec-

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# Pecan Pieces

## Fishing event (continued from page 2)

tions with communities, and promote healing and wellness through camaraderie and a shared passion for the outdoors.

The series of fishing events are part of the Healing Heroes in Action Tour, which is sponsored by Optima Batteries. Evers found last year's experience with the veterans so rewarding that he decided to join on for another round. The tournament at Hauani Creek was the first of four that are scheduled for 2016, each of them coinciding with an Elite Series fishing tournament.

For this event, Evers brought in two other Elite Series anglers, Timmy Horton and Chris Zaldain, who teamed up with two other wounded veterans, Grady Rakestraw and Tyson Scott. Also in the competition were two brothers who won the bidding competition for the privilege to fish in the tournament. Their top bid went directly to support the Wounded Warriors in Action Foundation. Each team brought in three fish for the weigh-in, one from the pro and two caught by the veteran. When all the

fish weighing and "trash-talking" were done, Edwin Evers and Purple Heart recipient Levi Crawford of Arkansas, had triumphed. Crawford hauled in the biggest bass of the day at 7 pounds, 11 ounces. Basil Savage and the family were truly delighted to be a part of this worthy



**Basil Savage with winning team**

adventure. They were especially pleased that the lakes of Hauani Creek Ranch were bountiful that cloudy June day. In fact, all three veterans reeled in the biggest fish they had ever caught; and you can't beat that.

## News you can use!

### Promising pecan crop out west

For the Jun 1st article published in *Western Farm Press* (*Promising crop prospects for New Mexico pecan grower*), author Greg Northcutt visited with pecan farmer, Bill Halsell.

Now in his 47th season, the northern Doña Ana County grower has 550 acres of producing pecan trees and another 200 acres expected to produce their first marketable crop in 3-4 years.

While Mr. Halsell acknowledges he won't really know what the trees will bear until August, he's optimistic about what he's seeing on the trees in late May. He spoke about the three things that occupy the minds of most pecan growers: water, bugs and tree nutrition. Water prospects in the Rio Grande Valley are looking adequate this year so far. Halsell says, "It was an ideal winter for the trees, along with moisture and plenty of cold temperatures." Besides rainwater in the summer months, Halsell's trees get water pumped from the ground and surface water from the Rio Grande. He relies on pheromone trap counts to time his sprayings for pecan case-bearer, applying his first spray in mid-May. Yellow aphids are the other insect threat to worry about. Chemical leaf analysis will provide the needed information on what else the trees will need as the

season progresses: zinc, phosphate and trace minerals. Nitrogen will be applied four times during the season in the form of ammonium sulfate.

Lastly, Mr. Halsell speaks optimistically of the coming Pecan Marketing Order.

"I think it will be good for growers in the long run," he says. "We have to expand our markets overseas. Several years ago, I participated in a trade mission to China where we're doing a good job promoting the value of American pecans. We can do much better."

### California walnut yields maintain record-setting pace

As reported in our spring issue, the walnut crop for 2015 is turning out to be a whopper at 602,000 tons. A June 16 article in *Western Farm Press* indicates the current crop may break that record yet again. Although estimating the crop this early has some recognized risks, Dennis Balint, executive director of the California Walnut Board says, "the industry could produce 625,000 tons this year which would be another record." It appears to be all about the number of trees planted in recent years.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, California now has about 365,000 acres of walnuts planted across the state. Bearing acreage

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# More Pecan Pieces

California walnuts, continued from page 2

climbed 10,000 from the previous year to 300,000, as non-bearing acres since 2013 increased 20,000 to 65,000 acres.

The increased output and carryover from last year are troubling for farmers trying to make a profit, but the walnut community does what it can.

The increased growth recently led the California Walnut Board to boost its annual advertising budget from \$2 million to \$15 million.

“\$15 million sounds like a lot for advertising, but it’s not,” said Balint. “It’s certainly a big step in the right direction.”

It’s interesting to note that the Federal Marketing order that created the California Walnut Board and allowed for a \$15 million investment in advertising has been around since 1948.

## Pecan butter? Yes, please!

The June 2016 edition of Pecan South magazine is full of enlightening and interesting stories for the pecan community, but one of them might really get your mouth watering. It’s entitled “Purely Pecans pecan butter launches flagship product”. As you might have guessed, someone is launching a new nut-butter made from pecans. Well, it turns out that someone happens to be Jeff Worn, *Pecan Country* neighbor and processor in Valdosta, Georgia. And, the product is the result of a project he’s been working on for about three years: a pecan butter that has nothing in it but pecans. What could be better? If you take a little spin around the new Purely Pecans website, you will learn a bit more. There you’ll find a cool little video where Jeff Worn tells the story of this new product and how fresh and natural it is. Here’s what he says.

Another thing you’ll like about Purely Pecans is that it couldn’t be any fresher. We process pecans from farms that are only hours away from our facility. When we get them, they have just been harvested. After they come in, we clean them, size them, and then they go in the freezer and don’t come out until we get an order. This process allows us to give you the true farm-to-fork freshness that we pride ourselves in.

Besides being fresh and natural, these jars will of course contain all the vitamins and nutrients that make pecans such a healthy snack. Next on the

agenda for Purely Pecans is to expand the product line into flavored pecan butters. You can check out the product and even purchase a jar or two on the website: [www.purelypecans.com](http://www.purelypecans.com). We say, whatever sells more pecans can’t be bad.



## Oklahoma Pecan Growers Conference & Show

Oklahoma Pecan Growers held their annual gathering in Tulsa in early June. It was another great opportunity for us to renew old friendships and forge new ones in the Oklahoma pecan community. The awards banquet provided a great opportunity to honor the long service of retiring pecan sage, Dr. Mike Smith. The banquet was also

a venue for Savage Equipment to present its first-ever “Pecan Excellence Award” which went to Andrea Mount for her many years of tireless service to Oklahoma pecan growers, especially her leadership of the annual pecan food competition we all enjoy.



**Basil Savage III presents award to Andrea Mount**



**Basil Savage and grandsons, Basil III and Dalton, talk machinery with State Rep Chuck Strohm**

# Featured Equipment

## Equipment directly available in Las Cruces

This is your friendly reminder that an assortment of Savage machines are available to examine and purchase right on site in Las Cruces. While we work to establish our own physical location in the area, we are borrowing a little office and yard space from our friends at Inspection

Masters, Inc., 2320 Westgate Court, and you are welcome to drop in. Call Mike Craig at 580-677-1617 if you'd like to discuss your equipment needs or just drop by and visit.



## Time to inspect & test equipment for the coming harvest

We ran a similar article a couple of years back, but thought it might be a good reminder to help prevent costly repairs when down-time will get very expensive in a few months.

### All Redline Machines:

- Consult your operator manual for safe operation and seasonal start-up guidance. (Contact us if you need a manual.) Keep bystanders well clear when starting and checking equipment.
- Check all hydraulic hoses for cracks and ensure fittings attach snugly. DO NOT check for hydraulic leaks with your hand, as high-pressure fluid can penetrate the skin and cause severe injury. Use a piece of paper or cardboard instead. Replace hoses before they become a problem.
- Check belts for slippage and for cracks or fraying, and replace them before they break.
- Clean and grease PTO drive-lines. Ensure they telescope freely and safety shields are in good shape.
- Ensure nuts, bolts, set screws and keys are tight.
- Ensure shields and guards are securely in place.
- Most bearings on Savage machinery are sealed bearings and will rarely, if ever, require grease. If you believe it's needed, apply grease slowly with slight pressure. If the seal has been broken, it will deteriorate more quickly. Replace the bearing or grease it often.
- Make sure safety signs are in place and legible. Safety stickers are available from Savage.

### Shakers:

Check your pads for cracks, and ensure they're

still flexible enough to get through the season without breaking. If your shaker isn't equipped with donut pads, you may want to consider the investment this year. Your trees will appreciate it. Open up the access panel and make sure critters haven't built a nest inside your shaker. Ensure the shafts and chain move easily and have no visible signs of damage. The chain should have about ½ inch of lateral movement. Adjust tension, if necessary.

### Harvesters:

It may be time to replace those worn out rubber fingers. How about your sizing chain? After a few years, it may be stretched out so far that it can no longer be tightened enough and will need to be replaced. Remove the side safety panel and check roller chains and sprockets. When the chain is cold, the longest free-hanging section should have about 1-inch to 1½-inch of play with slight pressure up and down. The shorter chain on the hopper side should have about ½ inch of movement with slight pressure. A warmed up chain will have a bit more slack.

### Cleaners:

Remove side safety panels and check chains and sprockets for wear. Chain tension should be similar to the harvester described above. Oily chains are good for preventing rust, but wipe most of the oil off at the beginning of the season so dirt won't accumulate on the chain. Thoroughly clean the engine, make sure the gas is fresh and clean, and replace the air filter if necessary.

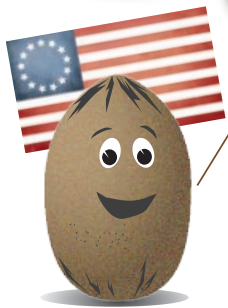
A good inspection and a preseason workout will pay huge dividends when the season is underway and time becomes money. The Savage parts guys are good, but come harvest-time, everyone needs their parts yesterday. We're still working on that one.

# Just Plain Nuts

## FYI: a pecan video to share

A nifty little pecan promotional video, called “7 Top Pecan Tips—Beyond the Pie”, provided by the National Pecan Shellers Association, has been uploaded to their website ([www.ilovepecans.org](http://www.ilovepecans.org)) and their Facebook page. Chefs and industry influencers from Delta Air Lines, Google, High Road Ice Cream, and Bruce Caris from The

Green Valley Pecan Company, share tips on using, buying and enjoying pecans. The National Pecan Shellers have invited us all to share the video with our friends families and customers on our various social media channels.



*In honor of our American Independence Day celebrations, here are a few interesting facts about the amazing document that was signed July 4, 1776. Or, maybe it was a bit later.*

- One of the most widely held misconceptions about the Declaration of Independence is that it was signed on July 4, 1776. In fact, independence was formally declared on July 2, 1776. On July 4, 1776, Congress approved the final text of the Declaration, but it wasn't signed until August 2, 1776.
- Thomas Jefferson is often called the “author” of the Declaration. He did much of the writing, but he was a member of a five-person committee appointed by the Continental Congress to write the Declaration. The committee included Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Robert Livingston, and Roger Sherman.
- When writing the first draft of the Declaration, Jefferson primarily drew upon two sources: his own draft of a preamble to the Virginia Constitution and George Mason's draft of Virginia's Declaration of Rights.
- The average age of the signers of the Declaration of Independence was 45. Benjamin Franklin was the oldest at age 70. Thomas Lynch, Jr. and Edward Rutledge of South Carolina were only 26 when they signed the Declaration.

*This recipe came to us from Willie Kusel, one of our Pecan Country neighbors in South Africa. Rusks are a traditional Afrikaner breakfast meal or snack. They've been around for centuries, providing a way to preserve bread, especially when traveling long distances without refrigeration.*

*Similar to biscotti, they are typically dunked in coffee or tea before being eaten. Ticky is the nickname of Willie's wife (in case you're curious). The recipe was provided using metric measurements, so I've converted them for us antiquated, non-metric folks. This recipe makes a whole bunch.*



## Ticky's Health Rusks

### Ingredients:

1kg (4 cup) self-rising flour	5ml (1 tsp) salt
10ml (2 tsp) baking powder	500ml (2 cup) oat granola
250ml (1 cup) sunflower seeds	100g (4 oz.) pecans
125ml (½ cup) coconut	500ml (2 cup) bran flakes
500ml (2 cup) brown sugar	2 eggs
500g (1 lb.) melted butter	500ml (2 cup) buttermilk

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 180 c (350 f) degrees. Grease 3 loaf pans. Mix all dry ingredients in a large bowl. Beat eggs, add buttermilk and butter then add to dry ingredients. Mix well (If the mixture seems too dry, add a little milk). Divide into the 3 pans and bake for 45-60 minutes. Allow to cool completely. Then slice loaves and dry pieces for 2-3 hours at 100 c (210 f) degrees.



*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 newsletter along to friends and family.*