



From your friends at Savage Equipment

On the Calendar

Jul 10-13:

Texas Pecan Growers Conf.; San Marcos;
More info at tpga.org.

Aug 25-26:

Arizona Pecan Growers Conf.; Tucson;
More info at arizonapecan.com.

Sep 8:

Georgia Pecan Growers Fall Field Day;
Univ. of GA, Tifton

Sep 12-13:

National Pecan Shellers Annual Meeting;
Washington D.C.

Sep 14-15:

Alabama Pecan Growers Annual Conf.;
Robertsdale, AL

Ten Years of Pecan Country News

If this is the 40th edition of this newsletter and we send it out once every quarter, then the math tells us we've been at this for about ten years now. It's a significant milestone and an ideal opportunity to reflect on the ways this industry and Savage Equipment have evolved since we started this publication.

It was a decade that encompassed some substantial changes in the pecan industry as well as some major achievements for Savage Equipment. In 2012 the Pecan Marketing Order was still a few years away. Because of the success of that effort, we now have a more cohesive national pecan research and marketing program and we have the American Pecan Council working to increase demand for pecans. The recent advent of the American

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Oklahoma pecan growers gather

In mid-June, members of the Oklahoma Pecan Growers Association met in Ardmore to learn, exchange ideas and enjoy the warm fellowship of the pecan community. A wide variety of equipment **Continued on page 2**



Pecan growers discuss machines with the Savage crew.

New member of the Savage team

In mid-May, Savage Equipment welcomed Robert Corbin of Durant, Oklahoma to the crew. Robert comes on board with a couple decades of experience and broad expertise in the agricultural equipment business.

Robert graduated from Oklahoma State University with a degree in Agricultural Education and began his career almost immediately afterward, working in the parts department at a Pettit Machinery dealership. Before long he was managing the department, and a few years after that, he was managing the whole store. After a merger into United Ag & Turf, Robert would eventually manage multiple stores in the region. He will likely fill several roles

with Savage Equipment that capitalize on his 22 years of valuable experience in the industry.

Robert and his wife, Ashley have two children; a son Chase who is 19 and daughter Camryn, 17. Apart from selling ag equipment, Robert enjoys hunting and fishing; even better if it includes spending time with his family.



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Ten years (continued)

Pecan Promotion Board means we have even more help in the campaign to strengthen pecan demand.

It's a darn good thing the industry is working diligently to boost pecan consumption. Since we started publishing Pecan Country News, pecan production and tree planting have increased dramatically in many places. South Africa had already begun to expand its pecan production back in 2012 and had their first national pecan conference a year later. Pecan planting has continued to proliferate since then, and production in South Africa may soon exceed 100 million pounds. Pecan production in Mexico has also expanded tremendously and has sometimes overtaken U.S. production. Growers in some South American countries have started to plant pecan trees in substantial numbers. It has become a much more competitive international market out there. The good news is that domestic consumption of pecans is increasing, and pecans are being used in a greater variety of ways than ever before.

Closer to home, Savage Equipment has grown in significant ways over the past ten years. We have added to our already extensive machine product line with vibratory

conveyors, a large-scale axial meat sizer, an orchard leaf vacuum, a new industrial cracker and more. We are also delivering equipment to a wider range of customers domestically and abroad. A few years back we opened an operating location in southern New Mexico. Savage also made some major investments in manufacturing equipment, including a large-format laser cutter, a water-jet cutter and a robotic welder. These tools enable us to create more precise, more consistent machines.

The past decade has presented some tough challenges for the pecan industry as a whole and the folks at Savage Equipment; but it has also been a valuable journey of growth that has made us all stronger and more resilient.



Savage Southwest opened in the spring of 2018.

Oklahoma pecan growers (continued)



Growers learn about Savage pecan-cleaning machines.

vendors and other agricultural enterprises were on hand to show off their wares. Savage Red was a prominent color on the convention floor along with several machines from the Silverline shelling equipment series.

On the educational front, conference attendees had a variety of training and discussion opportunities available throughout the conference. Ag Extension Specialist, Becky Carroll provided classroom instruction on "Tips for Successful Pecan Planting" and then showed us all how

to actually plant a tree during the field day demonstrations. Dr. Charles Rohla made the case for using more environmentally friendly orchard practices and processes to reduce input costs and maintain production in native pecan groves.

The last segment of the event took place at the Savage family's Hauani Creek pecan farm just a short drive southeast of Ardmore. The Savage farm is the largest irrigated pecan orchard in the state. Over a hundred attendees were treated to hands-on lessons by pecan experts and a delicious catered barbecue lunch.



Train of pecan growers convoy to next field day lesson.



News you can use!

Here's a sampling of pecan-related news available on the internet and some of our favorite pecan publications.

In California, it's the "Other Tree Nut".

When it comes to California tree-nuts, "The Big Three"—almonds (the largest by far), walnuts and pistachios—tend to dominate the conversation. Pecans don't get a lot of attention. That's probably because the total output of pecans, even on the national level, is dwarfed by California's production of these three nuts. For example, Utilized Production for California's walnuts was 725,000 tons. Nationwide Utilized Production for pecans was 127,700 tons. And, California almond production is about three times the size of their walnut production.

A short article in the *Western Farm Press* written by Lee Allen (Aug 30, 2022) provides a brief outline of the history and current state of pecan growing in California. Commercial pecan farming began in California in the 1960's. It did not go very well. Early successes in production did not prove to be sustainable. Growers incorrectly assumed they could apply walnut-growing practices to pecan trees, and they "learned the lessons the hard way," as former president of the California Pecan Growers Association, Brian Blain explained it.

Fortunately, the lessons were eventually learned.

Current California Pecan Growers Association President Mark Hendrixson is of the belief that pecans have a bright future with opportunities for increased acreage beyond the current 5,000 or so already planted. Although the Department of Agriculture dropped its reporting of California pecan acreage nearly five years ago, industry estimations are that some 200 new acres are planted each year.

The writer of this article laments the move by the National Agricultural Statistics Service to no longer provide the Pecan Production Report. For many years previous, this annual report contained useful data for establishing a working understanding of acreage, yield, value and other important information.

Will pecans ever rise to the level where they compete with "The Big Three"? We'll leave that in the category of California dreaming.

Finally, we have some official numbers on the 2021 pecan crop.

In early May, The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) published their Noncitrus Fruits and Nuts 2021 Summary, which includes many useful stats on pecans and other nut production in the U.S..

Looking at the big picture on nuts, the U.S. produced less nuts by weight (-4%) but more by value (+3%) than last year. Bearing acreage for tree nuts as a whole was up by five percent from 2020. Pecans were ranked fourth in total production, well behind pistachios and walnuts and way, way behind almonds. Almonds had almost ten times the crop value of pecans.

So, how did pecans perform in relation to recent years? Compared to the average of the past four years, Yield Per Acre was down about nine percent. Utilized production was down about 8 percent but the value of utilized production was up about 8 percent compared to the most recent four years.

Breaking it down by the five leading pecan states, Arizona and New Mexico far exceeded other states in Yield Per Acre with 1860 pounds and 1710 pounds, respectively. Georgia held on to the top spot in utilized production with 88,600,000 pounds. New Mexico had 78,700,000 pounds, and Arizona was third in utilized production with 40,900,000. Utilized production for the entire country was 255,300,000 and the average price per pound (\$2.16) was higher than it has been since 2017.

If you would like to get more detailed information on U.S. pecan statistics for the 2021 season, you can view the report online or download it from www.nass.usda.gov.

Some pecan-growing wisdom from Lenny Wells and the trees themselves

Pages 16 through 26 of the April 2022 issue of *Pecan South* contain a thoughtful, maybe even philosophical, stroll through pecan growing practices authored by University of Georgia Extension Pecan Specialist, Lenny Wells. The article is entitled *Thinking like a tree*. As you might have guessed, it covers pecan growing from a unique perspective—the tree's. In this piece, Wells employs his vast experience with pecan trees and pecan growers to explore the contrast between what the grower

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Pecan-growing wisdom (continued)

wants from the tree and what the tree needs to thrive as it would naturally.

Many of us spend an excess of money supplying these trees with all sorts of concoctions and filling every acre with an ever-increasing density of trees. But the trees have their own opinion of things, and from what I've seen, they don't always agree with our views. Our goal is to manipulate these trees into giving us what we want. Bending them to our will. But a tree will only bend so far before it breaks or, more likely, your wallet breaks.

One aspect to Wells' admonition to "think like a tree" is orchard spacing. Tight spacing may provide "a commercial harvest a year or two earlier," but it might not make economic sense over the long haul. The costs of hedging earlier in the life of the trees and the high cost of eventually removing trees might outweigh the early benefits of tight spacing. Wells speaks of other problems that sometimes result from trees too tightly packed.



Another example of our "wayward thinking" is how some growers use foliar applications of fertilizer. Wells points out several reasons why some of our foliar applications are misplaced, and in some cases, may even be a wasted effort. "Because they are patient creatures with longer lifespans than people, trees prefer to take up their nutrients via the soil in a relatively slow process." He explains how some foliar applications provide a benefit in specific situations, but "they are only a temporary and mostly localized solution."

Wells is also concerned with pushing young trees to grow larger faster. Better, he says, to let the trees grow at their own pace and build a stronger root structure before they get too large.

The tree's goal early on is to establish itself and settle into its new home. It accomplishes this by putting its energy into root growth. The tree knows this is the most valuable part of its anatomy, and for the first three years, that should be our focus as well. Prune young trees hard the first three years; don't over-fertilize them, and they will develop a better root system. This better root system will make them much more vigorous when it counts—at the time of nut production.

Wells' article is an intriguing and wide-ranging look at how some of our pecan farming practices can seem like viable ways to get the trees to do what we want in the short term but might not be the best thing for the trees and our bottom line over the long run. It seems the slow-growing, long-living pecan trees have a very different perspective from ours. It's worth digging out your May issue of Pecan South to read and ponder the benefits of thinking more like a tree.

Federal dollars to help you go organic.

Californiaagnet.com posted an article on May 16th that outlines two programs now available from the USDA to help with costs associated with organic certification. The two programs are a mouthful: Organic and Transitional Education and Certification Program (OTECP) and Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP).

Here is what the OTECP pays for.

- Certification costs for organic producers and handlers (25% up to \$250 per category).
- Eligible expenses for transitional producers, including fees for pre-certification inspections and development of an organic system plan (75% up to \$750).
- Registration fees for educational events (75% up to \$200).
- Soil testing (75% up to \$100).

The OCCSP covers 50% or up to \$500 per category of certification costs this year.

Both OTECP and OCCSP cover costs incurred from October 1, 2021, to September 30, 2022. Producers have until October 31, 2022 to file applications, and FSA will make payments as applications are received.

To learn more about these programs, check out the article at www.californiaagnet.com.

Featured Equipment

Nut harvesting up north

We would like to introduce our readers to first-generation hazelnut growers, Ross and Alison Mackenzie. Just a few years ago, these friendly Canadian folks launched out into the great adventure of growing tree-nuts on their acreage near the north shore of Lake Erie, about an hour's drive from Niagara Falls and Buffalo, New York. Now their young trees are starting to produce a crop. The Mackenzies did some research online to discover which machines might help with the harvesting task. That research steered them toward contacting our Savage of Georgia office to



An abundant crop of hazelnuts



A cloudy autumn day in the Mackenzie's orchard.
Photos courtesy of Haldimand Hazelnuts

inquire about getting an 8042 Harvester.

The Mackenzie's are the owners of Haldimand Hazelnuts, established in 2016. They had a few acres to work with and thought they would try their hand at growing nuts. They enjoy the challenge and the diversity of tasks involved in operating a nut-tree farm. With help from friends, family and a part-time helper, the Mackenzie's have planted 2200 trees on dense spacing that will be thinned once the trees mature and start to overlap each other. As with pecan trees, hazelnuts produce best when there are multiple varieties growing that will allow complementary pollen production and flowering schedules to enhance pollination. Also like pecan trees, hazelnuts rely on the wind to scatter pollen as the process tends to happen in the late winter before insects are available to help out. Harvest time comes in August and September, so you can be expecting an update in the fall edition of this publication. In the meantime, our readers might enjoy checking out all the great photos on the Haldimand Hazelnuts Facebook page.



Savage's 8042 Harvester has been the little workhorse in the Savage lineup for a couple decades. It carries its own power source in a 14 HP Kohler engine, and it can be pulled by an ATV or lawn tractor. The 8042 has been used for harvesting pecans, chestnuts and hazelnuts.

Savage sweepers and blowers can help speed up harvest.

Savage blowers efficiently clear pecans from the tree row while the side sweeper moves nuts into a windrow. The Savage V-Sweeper is often mounted on the front of the tractor in tandem with a Row-Vac or Row Harvester mounted to the rear. Either of these configurations can help you get you through those harvest tasks quicker.

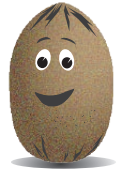




Hello out there in Pecan Country!

We've been cranking out this little newsletter for ten years, but we're always looking for ways we can do it better. This is where you, our Pecan Country neighbors, can lend a hand. We'd like to hear from you about any suggestions you might have for improvement. Also, we'd love for you to pass along a story—maybe some old family

lore or a great tale about something that happened in the pecan orchard. Maybe you have a suggestion for a future article or even a yummy old family recipe (using pecans of course) that you'd like to share. The point is, we just like to hear from our readers once in a while. It's easy—just send an email to pecancountry@savageequipment.com.



I'd wave "howdy" but I have no hands.

It's July! Time to celebrate independence and all that comes with it—life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.



LIFE

"To succeed, jump as quickly at opportunities as you do at conclusions."—Benjamin Franklin

"Whenever you do something, act as if all the world were watching."—Thomas Jefferson

LIBERTY

"Those that can give up essential liberty to gain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."—Benjamin Franklin

"You will never know how much it has cost my generation to preserve YOUR freedom. I hope you will make a good use of it."—John Adams

The PURSUIT of HAPPINESS

The concept of "happiness" in the time and culture of the Declaration of Independence was very different from today's self-focused, emotion-driven "feeling".

Be in general virtuous, and you will be happy.
—Benjamin Franklin

Our greatest happiness does not depend on the condition of life in which chance has placed us, but is always the result of a good conscience, good health, occupation, and freedom in all just pursuits.

—Thomas Jefferson

And a CAUTION:

"When the people find that they can vote themselves money, that will herald the end of the republic."
—Benjamin Franklin

Love pecans? Love Bacon? Love quick but impressive snacks to try out at your next summer gathering. Perfect!

This recipe is found on the ilovepecans.org website and was submitted by Holly Chute, Georgia Grown / Department of Agriculture.



Photo from ilovepecans.org website

Pecan Stuffed Bacon Wrapped Dates

Ingredients

- 24 Pitted dates
- 24 Pecan halves
- 12 Slices of raw local bacon
- 24 Toothpicks
- 1-2 Tablespoons BBQ seasoning

Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 400° F.
2. Lightly spray a foil lined sheet tray with cooking spray.
3. Insert a pecan half into each date. Cut each bacon strip in half. Wrap the bacon around a stuffed date and then secure with a toothpick.
4. Arrange the dates, seam side down on the sheet tray and then dust with BBQ seasoning.
5. Bake the stuffed dates for 15 to 17 minutes until the bacon is brown and crispy.
6. When done, transfer the dates to a paper towel lined plate to cool for a minute or two.

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 little newsletter along to friends and family.