

# PECAN COUNTRY NEWS

Volume 14

Winter 2016

## On the Calendar

### Jan 25-29, 2016:

Texas Pecan Short Course, Texas A&M Univ.

### Feb 11, 2016:

4-States Agricultural Expo; Texarkana, AR

### Feb 26-27, 2016:

Southeastern Pecan Growers Conf.; Destin, FL

### Mar 5, 2016:

North Carolina Pecan Growers Meeting; Greenville, NC

### Mar 22-24, 2016:

National Pecan Shellers Meeting; New Orleans

### Mar 29-31, 2016:

Georgia Pecan Growers Conf.; Perry, GA

See you there!



## Turkish trade team visits Savage of Georgia

A team of seven people associated with agricultural trade in Turkey travelled to Georgia last year to tour pecan-related facilities, including our Savage location in Baconton.

Janice Dees, Executive Director of the Georgia Pecan Growers Association, along with Shane Danielson of the Foreign Agricultural Service Office in Washington, led this group participating in a USDA-sponsored training and marketing program (Cochran Fellowship Program) throughout the Pecan Belt of Georgia.

According to the USDA website, "The Cochran Fellowship Program provides short-term training opportunities to agricultural professionals..." Participants come to the U.S. for two-to-three weeks and get hands-on training that will help them gain knowledge and skills in agricultural trade and other agri-business related endeavors.

The goals of the Cochran Fellowship Program are:

- to help eligible countries develop agricultural systems necessary to meet the food and fiber needs of their domes-

tic populations; and

- to strengthen and enhance trade linkages between eligible countries and agricultural interests in the U.S.

Other stops for the Turkish visitors included the USDA's Byron Research Station in Atlanta, a lunch meeting with Will and Billy Easterlin, an orchard visit at Ellis Brothers Pecans, South Georgia Pecans' pecan processing facility, Shiloh Farms' nursery and Nut Tree Pecan Company's cleaning plant and nursery.

The visit to Savage of Georgia was their last stop in Georgia before heading to New England to meet with Ocean Spray Cranberries representatives. It was a great opportunity for us to demonstrate some of our equipment and treat them to some homemade pecan pie.



Turkish visitors at the Savage of Georgia

## Special guests from the land down under

In October, the Savage Equipment team was honored to host a visitor and long-time friend from the other side of the planet. Ross Burling, CEO of Stahmann Farms Enterprises of Australia, accompanied by his plant manager, Collin Oakley, were travelling across the American pecan belt visiting pecan growers and processing facilities. The pair spent a couple of days touring our Madill, Oklahoma operations and exchanging ideas and expertise with all of us.

If you thought the Stahmann name was exclusive to New Mexico pecan growing and processing, here's a bit of pecan history for you. Way back in 1932, Deane Stahmann Senior established Deane Stahmann Farms Inc. in Las Cruces, New Mexico. Along with his sons,

Continued on page 2



Basil Savage inspects crop quality with Ross Burling (left) and Collin Oakley at the Savage family's pecan orchard.

866-572-8243 [info@savageequipment.com](mailto:info@savageequipment.com)

# Pecan Folks

## Appreciating customers at Savage of Georgia

In mid-December, our Savage of Georgia family hosted a Customer Appreciation Day. In other words, we had some of our best friends and customers over to our place for some good barbecue and pecan talk! The afternoon was filled with very lively conversation and a few good laughs as everyone enjoyed lunch, courtesy of Arkansas pecan man and grill-meister, “Crash” Carruthers. There remains a mystery regarding the extremely large and tasty Oklahoma Cornish game hen as Crash described it! Over a hundred guests participated in the event, and we look forward to meeting everyone again before long.



**Crash Carruthers (center) and his barbecue crew**



## Guests from down under (continued from page 1)

Deane Junior and Bill, he planted more than 100,000 Pecan trees on property that is still operated by the Stahmann family.

In 1965 Deane Stahmann Junior headed west, and he didn't stop when he got to the Pacific Ocean. He continued on to Australia with dreams of creating the first commercial pecan operation in the southern hemisphere. And, the dream became reality. In 1982 his Toowoomba pecan processing plant began operations and continued on to great success. A whole new industry was introduced to Australia, and the business expanded. Along the way, Dean Junior mentored young Ross Burling.

Evidently, he did a pretty good job of it. Ross is now at the helm of a diverse, forward-thinking and internationally oriented corporation that supplies pecans, macadamias and nut-based retail products across a wide swath of the



**John Emory Pryor talks equipment with Kenny Arnold and Billy Brown**

Asian Pacific region and Europe. He has been a pioneer in introducing their quality nut products into the Chinese market. While visiting the Savage facilities, Ross took



**Ross Burling of Stahmann Farms, Australia**

time to share some of the innovative ways in which China and Australia are changing the way food is bought and distributed now and in the near future. It was a fascinating presentation, and the whole Savage crew benefited from the insights and interactions with Mr. Burling and Mr. Oakley.

# 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.

### Near-record walnut harvests expected

According to a December 2nd article in *Western Farm Press* (*A walnut production record this year in California?* by Vicky Boyd) this year's walnut harvest is looking like a bonanza. This is despite the challenges of California's ongoing drought and a lack of sufficient "chill hours" for the crop. The USDA is forecasting a crop of 575 thousand tons, which is about one percent higher than last year's harvest. But, the jury is still out.

Although most growers have completed the bulk of their harvest, it may be awhile before the industry knows whether a new record was achieved. Some growers point to the variability among orchards and varieties as reasons why the crop may come up short of a record.

Prices for walnuts seem to be trending down this year. (Probably that pesky old supply-and-demand thing.)

[Modesto grower Jake] Wenger said, "What I've been hearing suggests that walnut prices could be lower – perhaps around \$1.25 per pound for Chandlers which is down significantly from last year."

He added, "It's still early to say but I think everyone can expect a pretty big drop-off from last year. Last year's prices were astronomical."

Another grower (Brent Barton) agreed, stating that walnut prices were in a "correction" at present.

### Pecan Marketing Order:

#### A western perspective

A September 16 article, also on the *Western Farm Press* website (*Pecan marketing order could provide much-needed industry support*, by Dennis Pollock) outlines the case for the pending document. The article cites American Pecan Board President, Mike Adams' confidence that the stakeholder testimony presented this past summer made a strong case to the USDA. California pecan growers added their endorsement of the process.

"The California Almond Board has done a great job with the growth of acreage and prices," said Ben King, who last year became a partner with Brody

and Barrett Blain in the largest grower-sheller pecan operation in California - Pacific Gold Agriculture - with offices in Visalia and Colusa.

The company has 300 acres of pecans in Colusa and 550 acres in McFarland.

King believes the marketing order will help the industry remain sustainable by establishing quality standards and spreading the word on the health benefits of pecans.

### And more Pecan Marketing Order news...

In early November, on the U.S. Pecan Board website, Mike Adams announced the USDA's recent recommendation regarding the marketing order.

On October 28, 2015, the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) released in the Federal Register its Recommended Decision proposing the issuance of a Federal Marketing Order for Pecans. The American Pecan Board (APB), the proponent group for the pecan industry, commends the USDA staff for its careful consideration of the sixty hours of testimony by pecan stakeholders.

The FMO authorizes the marketing and promotion of pecans to increase demand, the gathering and publishing of accurate industry data, the coordination and investment in pecan research, the establishment of quality, grade, and size standards, and the establishment of packaging guidelines and standards. These components were all upheld in the Recommended Decision of the FMO which allows for a thirty-day public comment period. A final order concerning the FMO is expected from USDA in early 2016.

### Not-so-great year for Georgia pecan crop

The December issue of *The Pecan Grower Magazine*, a.k.a *Georgia Pecans*, leads off with an article by Dr. Lenny Wells entitled *Quality Problems Affecting 2015 Pecan Crop*. It was just a couple months ago, when everything looked rosey for the Georgia crop. Now a variety of quality issues are popping up in the harvested product. Dr. Wells states that the most common problem has been "nuts with low percent kernel." Size of the nuts has not been an issue, but quality has been.

Continued on page 4

# More Pecan Pieces

Georgia crop, continued from page 3

Any time you have a heavy crop load of large nuts, the trees will have a difficult time filling them, even with the irrigation under the best conditions, but add any sort of stress to that situation and poor kernel quality will result. The primary stress factors we saw contribute to poor kernel quality this year were cloudy weather conditions in September and heavy, late pressure from aphids (primarily black aphids) and mites.

Rotten kernels have also been an issue. In mid-October Wells cut into 25 nuts from each of several varieties from the research orchard at the University of Georgia. He found an alarming percentage of rotten kernels in many varieties. At the low end, 24% of the Cape Fear and Desir-

able kernels were rotten. Oconee was most concerning, with 60% of kernels rotten. The problem is widespread and its cause remains somewhat of a mystery, as it does not seem to be insect or disease related. The consensus of the experts is that it's a pollination issue.

It is possible that Oconee in particular, but all pecan cultivars to some degree, guard against inbreeding with arresting kernel development. The fact that we see this more commonly in Oconee could be because wet conditions during pollen shed resulted in the release of Oconee pollen onto a lot of receptive females, resulting in a lot of self-pollination that eventually led to fruit abortion when the kernel started to develop.

## Texas Pecan Short Course

Since the 1960s, Texas A&M University has offered an annual condensed course in growing pecans. They call it the Texas Pecan Short Course, and it's proven to be an invaluable learning opportunity at a bargain price. The course has averaged about 80 students in recent years.

The next Pecan Short Course is set to begin Monday, January 25 on the Texas A&M campus, in College Station. It will run through Thursday evening, and it'll be crammed full of useful information for anyone interested in trying their hand at growing pecans. If you already find yourself involved in the pecan business or you're just curious about the whole thing, this is the course you've been looking for (even if you didn't know you were).

What can you learn in four days? Quite a lot, really. Coursework includes pecan tree anatomy and physiology, irrigation considerations, orchard design and spacing, planting and establishing an orchard, business considerations, marketing and production economics, organic and sustainable production, fertilization and mineral spraying, insect management, pecan diseases, pecan varieties, grafting, weed control, pruning, pecan machinery and more. Wow—that's a lot of information. You will

also be introduced to the Texas Pecan Growers Association. The course includes classroom teaching in the early part of the week and substantial time in the Texas A&M pecan orchard later on.

There are students in the course that have a dozen pecan trees and others that have a few hundred acres of pecan trees. Both will come away from the course with a much greater understanding of pecan farming and an appreciation for all the factors involved



**Students get to make their own pecan variety board!**

in growing a quality nut and making money at it. One of the highlights for many students is getting to craft their own "variety board" that illustrates the many types of pecans grown in Texas. Students also enjoy the opportunity to spend time in Texas A&M's pecan orchard and gain first-hand knowledge of how to manage their trees. Certainly, the rare opportunity

to interact with true experts in the field is a privilege worth many times the cost of this course. It's no wonder people from all over the U.S. and other parts of the world attend.

If you'd like to find out more about how to participate, go to web address <https://events.tamu.edu/EMSRegics/TexasPecanShortCourse2016> or, if that's too much to type, just do a web search for "Texas Pecan Short Course 2016".

# Featured Equipment

## A shaker that makes a difference!

As many readers know, Savage Equipment first entered the pecan equipment business with its tractor-mounted tree shakers. A few months back we entered the new world of self-propelled shakers when we teamed up with Orchard Machinery Corporation. We were so impressed with the speed, flexibility and durability of these machines, we decided to start using them in our own pecan orchards here in Oklahoma. It has proven to be a worthwhile investment.

The most popular model for pecan growers has been the versatile Monoboom Series V Shaker. It's powered by a Cummins turbo-diesel that generates 160 horsepower. The optional A-17 clamping head can open to 30 inches. The clamping head can be lifted to just about anywhere you want to clamp, and it has 60 degrees of roll available.

One of the valuable options available on OMC shakers is the patented Fully Automated Shaking Technology or F.A.S.T. system. This system takes the guess-work out of your tree shaker settings. You'll have the ability to tailor the shaking procedure to your specifications. Trees will be shaken with more consistency, allowing you to work more efficiently, prevent excessive shaking, reduce barking, and minimize time and resources.

Other great options include 24-inch air-cooled pads, automatic sling lubrication, pressurized air-conditioned cab, long boom (12 Foot), dual automatic brakes, and automatic rotary sweepers.

Long-time Oklahoma pecan grower and owner of The Flying G Ranch, Mike Spradling, was one of the first growers to purchase an OMC Monoboom Shaker from Savage



Equipment. Here's what he had to say:

Why reinvent the wheel when you can be part of the industry's best tire shop? That's exactly what Savage Equipment did by taking on the line of shakers from OMC. I have always been impressed, never surprised, with Savage Equipment, when it comes to manufacturing equipment and providing the best possible machines to make our job easier and more efficient in producing and processing pecans. Adding the OMC Monoboom Shaker from Savage Equipment to our line of harvest equipment was a win, win, win. A win for Savage Equipment, a win for OMC, and definitely a win for us here at Flying G

Pecans. It's making a real difference in our ability to get our pecans harvested efficiently.

We, at Savage Equipment, couldn't be more proud to offer these great machines to our pecan-growing customers.

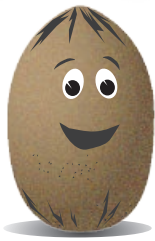


Flying G operations manager, Jon Vantrease along with Basil Savage and Flying G owner, Mike Spradling

# Just Plain Nuts

## Pecan Power

According to the natural health website, *Food Facts*, "pecans are in the top 15 foods known for their antioxidant activity, according to the USDA." The article, entitled "What are Pecans Good For?" tells us that the Vitamin E in pecans, along with ellagic acid, betacarotenes, lutein, and zeaxanthin, help rid our bodies of harmful free radicals, helping to protect them from disease, cancer, and infection. Pecans also provide healthy doses of several minerals that are critical to our well-being, including Manganese, Copper and Magnesium, along with several others. So eat up those pecans, and don't feel the least bit guilty about it.



As we enter another contentious presidential election year in the U.S., maybe it's time for a bit of presidential humor. Here are a few amusing and witty things said by a few presidents.



**"I hope you're all Republicans."**

*Ronald Reagan, speaking to surgeons as he entered the operating room following a 1981 assassination attempt*

**"I have left orders to be awakened at any time in case of national emergency--even if I'm in a Cabinet meeting."**

*President Ronald Reagan*

**"I think this is the most extraordinary collection of talent, of human knowledge, that has ever been gathered together at the White House, with the possible exception of when Thomas Jefferson dined alone."**

*President John Kennedy, at a dinner honoring Nobel Prize winners of the Western Hemisphere, 1962*

**"He can compress the most words into the smallest ideas better than any man I ever met."**

*Abraham Lincoln, referring to a lawyer*

**"Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and remove all doubt."**

*Abraham Lincoln*

## Fried Pecan Pies

Ingredients:

1 cup dark Karo syrup

½ cup sugar

1 stick butter

3 eggs

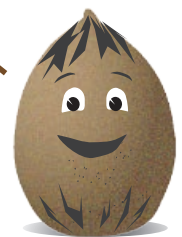
1 cup pecan pieces

1 pkg refrigerated pie crusts

*Okay--maybe you shouldn't eat too many, but you gotta try these things. Oh yeah!*

Directions:

Bring syrup, sugar and butter to boil and then pour slowly over 3 beaten eggs. Return to saucepan and add pecan pieces. Cook on medium/low heat, stirring constantly until mixture thickens (about 8-10 minutes). Set aside to cool while preparing the crust. Cut circles in crust based on desired fried pie (approx. 4-6" diameter). Spoon filling into center of circles. Moisten edges, fold over and score edges with fork tines. Fry to a golden brown on each side.



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.