

PECAN COUNTRY NEWS

Volume 34

Winter 2021

On the Calendar

In the COVID era, everything is subject to change including the events shown below.

Feb:

Southeastern Pecan Growers Conference is canceled.

Mar:

Western Pecan Growers Conf. is canceled. But... they do have webinars. See article to the right.

Mar:

GA Pecan Growers Conf. will be rescheduled for May.

Jun 10-12:

OK Pecan Growers Conf. Broken Arrow, OK

Jul 18-21:

TX Pecan Growers Conf.; San Marcos, TX



Spring is just a few weeks away! Hang in there.

In-person pecan conferences? Not quite yet for the Georgia and New Mexico gatherings.

For many of us, the last “real” pecan conference we attended was held in Las Cruces, NM in early March of last year. It seems like a very long time ago. There was little talk or concern, back then, about the pandemic that would soon change our lives. This year, the leaders of the Western Pecan Growers Association have deemed it wise to hold off a bit longer for

an in-person conference. They will instead hold a series of virtual events beginning with a webinar on March 8th. The hour-long event will cover control of the Pecan Nut Casebearer and will qualify participants for one CEU. The WPGA is planning on hosting a gathering later in 2021, and we look forward to that.

The Georgia Pecan Growers Association is planning a live, in-person event for May. The Georgia Pecan Growers Board will meet soon to decide exactly when and where. By late February, you should be able to check in at their website, georgiapecan.org and learn more.



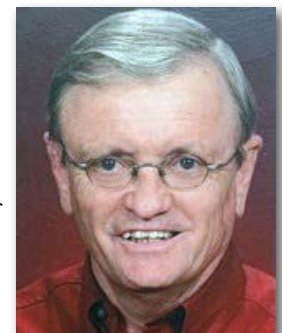
The pecan community loses a long-time friend.

The day after Christmas, our close-knit pecan community lost a long-time member and friend. The Savage Equipment crew has had a warm and friendly relationship with Mr. Jim Lampman of De Leon, Texas for decades, and we are deeply saddened to hear of his passing.

The Lampman family’s adventure in pecan farming began in 1971 after Jim and Teresa moved to Comanche County, Texas. At first, the pecan farm was simply a way to provide some extra income for the young family. But a few years later, Jim began taking

steps to bring their pecan business to a whole new level. Now, two generations down the road, Lampman Pecan Company is a thriving, well-respected presence in the world of pecans. In 2007, Jim added another dimension to the business by starting his own shelling operation. He liked to refer to this endeavor as his “retirement plan.”

The Lampman Pecan Company has stood the test of time and succeeded under Jim’s leadership. The Lamp-



866-572-8243 info@savageequipment.com

Pecan Folks

Jim Lampman (cont. from page 1)

mans were selected as the De Leon Farm Family of the Year in 2005 and the pecan business that Jim and Teresa launched so many years ago, was recognized as the De Leon Business of the Year in 2019.

It is heartwarming to know that Jim Lampman's pecan legacy lives on through his beloved family, especially due to the hard work of his wife, Teresa, his sons, Lance and Kevin and grandsons Eric and Cody. We wish them well and mourn with them for the loss of a cherished member of our extended family of pecan folks.



Teresa and Jim Lampman

Another unique application for Savage Equipment: tung nut harvesting

According to everyone's favorite online knowledge source, Wikipedia, tung oil is a "drying oil obtained by pressing the seed from the nut of the tung tree." The oil hardens when it is exposed to air, and these days it is primarily used as a protective and decorative coating for wood that provides a transparent, wet-looking finish. It has been used to protect wood furnishings for centuries and even appears in the writings of Confucius.

Of course, to obtain the tung oil, one must first grow some tung trees. Then comes the harvesting of the tung nuts, and that is where the tung oil story intersects with Savage Equipment's story. Tung trees, planted by Greg and Marnie Frost, have recently begun to produce a crop of tung nuts. Their Tallahassee, Florida orchards have been planted and nurtured over the past decade, and now it's time to reap a harvest. After a little online research and attending a pecan conference or two, the Frosts had determined that Savage machines might prove effective in harvesting the nuts. They worked with the friendly folks at our Savage location in Baconton, GA and ended up acquir-



Savage machines in the Frost's tung tree orchard

ing an 8548 Harvester and a 7510 Sweeper to help bring in their 2020 tung nut crop. It turns out the Frost's were right about the Savage machines being effective.

In a conversation with Greg about tung trees, nuts and oil, he revealed some of the surprising and fascinating history of tung oil in the southeastern U.S. Much of this history is available on the Frost's gulfcoasttungoil.com website. From the 1920's to the 1960's, farming communities near the Gulf of Mexico from Texas to Florida were home to a thriving tung oil industry. In the early-to-mid 1900's, tung oil was used in a variety of ways, especially in making paints, varnishes and inks. Tens of thousands of acres in the southeastern U.S. were converted from pine forests and cotton fields to tung tree orchards. For several decades, the profitable industry thrived. Tourists even traveled to the area to view the beautiful pink blossoms that appeared each spring. However, competition from other countries, along with alternative synthetics and other agricultural oils made it tough for tung growers and processors to remain competitive. Then, the 1960's brought some devastating early freezes and two terrible hurricanes named Betsy and Camille, essentially terminating the industry.

Why should anyone be optimistic about a restored American tung oil industry? A renewed push toward more sustainable and natural sources for oil and other products sure helps. Scientists in Germany and China are even working on aviation fuel developed from tung oil. Also, despite the many avenues of competition, there is still a strong niche market for domestic tung oil in its more traditional applications, such as furniture finishing. Greg and Marnie Frost are aiming to lead the revival of the American tung oil industry beginning in the Florida panhandle. We, at Savage Equipment, wish them well and are proud to play our part in helping to make a bright future possible.

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.

Pecan Research and Promotion Program is approved.

The USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service has granted approval for The Pecan Research and Promotion Program. This program, established by the Pecan Promotion, Research and Information Order, provides the authority to collect assessments on foreign-grown pecan imports. The stated purpose of the new "rule" is "to strengthen the position of pecans in the marketplace, maintain and expand markets for pecans, and develop new uses for pecans."

Some readers may recall an article on this subject in last season's newsletter entitled "Sharing the Burden for Pecan Research and Promotion".

The program will be financed by an assessment on producers and importers and will be administered by a board of industry members selected by the Secretary. The initial assessment rate will be \$0.02 per pound of in-shell pecans and \$0.04 per pound of shelled pecans produced within or imported to the United States. Entities that produce or import less than 50,000 pounds of in-shell pecans (25,000 pounds of shelled pecans) on average for four fiscal periods (the fiscal period for which the exemption is claimed and the previous three fiscal periods) will be exempt from the payment of assessments.

The program is scheduled to begin in February.

Some Clarity on the Pecan Market

A December 8 article, written by Southeast Farm Press Editor, Brad Haire, on the farmprogress.com website attempts to shed some light on the 2020 pecan market, especially how it relates to the Georgia pecan harvest.

The good news is that Georgia had a truly abundant harvest this past season. The article (written before the harvest was complete) anticipates "the largest in more than a decade" and places Georgia back at the top of pecan-producing states. It was a tremendous recovery from the storms of recent years.

The not-so-great news is that this crop, along with all

the other pecans harvested in the 2020 harvest season, have to be sold into a lackluster market. University of Georgia pecan specialist, Lenny Wells is quoted in the article.

"(Prices) are down now even when compared to the prices we saw prior to China's entrance into the market. In 2009, the average in-shell price was \$1.28 per pound when averaged across all varieties and harvest dates. As China entered the market the following year in 2010, in-shell pecan prices averaged \$2.17 per pound, and we enjoyed similar prices until the trade tariffs went into place," he said

Wells cites several reasons for the low prices. Chinese buyers were in no hurry to buy pecans and increased production from South Africa and Mexico are some major factors. Cold storage "isn't as economically viable in today's complex world market."

South Africa's crop is harvested May through July, "which shortens the window considerably for growers here to get a better price," he said, adding that South American countries like Argentina and Brazil produce more now, too.

The article concludes by advocating for bold initiatives similar to the efforts of several years back that expanded the market for U.S. pecans into Asia and elsewhere. It also suggests that the Pecan Research and Promotion Program (see previous article) is a step in the right direction.

Cover up out there!

In the January edition of one of our favorite pecan publications, you'll find an enlightening article by Joshua Sherman, an Extension Agent with the University of Arizona in Wilcox. The *Pecan South* piece is entitled *Cover Crops—Cover up out there!* In the article, Sherman lays out the pros and cons of employing cover crops in the pecan orchard, lists some options for types of cover crops and offers some suggestions for continued examination of this option. His article concentrates on western pecan orchards but much of it is applicable across the board.

He begins with definitions and the potential benefits of using cover crops in the orchard. Sherman also lets us know that, besides enhancing the health of the orchard itself, cover crops improve the health of the environment by reducing the leaching of nutrients from agricultural land into waterways and eventually, the ocean.

More Pecan Pieces

Cover up (cont. from page 3)

Benefits to the orchard are many.

Most of the benefits of cover crops in an orchard system involve protecting the soil from erosion, providing better access to the pecans on the ground (like in clay soil with large cracking), or maintaining orchard access for harvest because of firmer ground. The suppression of other weed pressure is a great benefit too. But probably the top three most important benefits, especially for western producers, are 1) the cost savings on labor and fuel incurred from tillage and herbicide applications; 2) increase in soil organic matter; and 3) improvement of water infiltration and water holding capacity of our arid desert soils.

In the article, Sherman quotes from The Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education publication which defines cover crops as...

“...a crop used primarily to slow erosion, improve soil health, enhance water availability, smother weeds, help control pests and diseases, increase biodiversity and bring a host of other benefits to your farm. Cover crops help when it doesn’t rain, they help when it rains, and they help when it pours” (Cover Crops for Sustainable Crop Rotations, 2015, Western SARE, online).

Sherman also recognizes the challenges associated with planting and maintaining cover crops. These include getting water to the area between tree rows and the time and effort needed to manage the additional crop.

Some common annual cover crops employed in the western U.S. are rye grass, cereals, clovers, field pea and mustard crops. To learn more about this interesting option, check out the January *Pecan South* magazine.

Pecans are an alternative nut option in California.

A Tree Nut Farm Press article by the above title, written by Lee Allen, establishes the case for pecans as an alternative to more popular nut crops in California such as almonds and walnuts. The Sep, 2020 piece centers primarily on the case of California pecan grower, Garry Vance. The trucker-turned-nut-farmer made his career switch a couple of decades back when he started working a “rundown pecan orchard.” Vance started with just a few

acres and has slowly added more over the years.

He and wife Ginger now own and operate the 185-acre Northern California Pecan Company (doing business as G and G Farms) in Corning, north of Sacramento. Focusing on Wichita and Pawnee varieties, he said: “We pulled 1,500 pounds to the acre on six-year-old trees last year and almost 500 pounds an acre on our four-year-old trees with high-density planting, carefully heading all our trees including the young ones.”

Pecans have been grown in northern California’s San Joaquin Valley for nearly five decades. In the southern parts of that valley the soil is less than ideal for other types of nuts, but seems more than adequate for pecans. Even though Vance considers 2020 to be an off year, he anticipates harvesting about 2500 lbs per acre from his trees.

Vance reminisces about the lack of infrastructure for pecans when he got started and having to haul green nuts long distances to get them processed. His solution to this problem was to create his own dedicated pecan processing facility. Despite the challenges and turmoil of 2020, Vance remains optimistic about the future and the effect the pecan marketing order will have.

Let’s take a trip around the world of tree nuts.

A Western Farm Press article by the same Lee Allen, entitled *Orchards went nuts, smashing records in 2020* appeared on the Western Farm Press website, Dec 16, 2020. The article covers the major tree nuts grown in California—Almonds, Pistachios, Pecans, Walnuts, Hazelnuts—and how they fared last year, in very broad terms.

The story begins with the big one. Allen reports that the **Almond** harvest is BIG with some predictions around 3 billion pounds—yes billion. This would be a substantial 18% higher than the 2019 crop.

“Large is the theme in receipts, shipments, and commitments, all at historic highs,” reported Bill Morecraft, senior vice president of Blue Diamond Almonds. “We’ve had consecutive months of increased shipments at a record pace keeping handlers operating at near capacity.”

Pistachio growers are also looking at record numbers with a market value expected around \$2 billion. With about 300,000 bearing acres, U.S. production is expected

Continued on page 6

Featured Equipment

Savage offers sprayers that can support almost any orchard application.



Savage 5528



Savage 5537



Savage 5740



Nelson Super 80



Nelson Super 92

Savage Equipment manufactures a wide array of sprayers that can support a variety of orchard sizes, tree heights and tractor horsepower categories. Savage and Nelson Manufacturing have been helping to grow healthier trees for several decades, and we'd be happy to help you get this year's pecan crop off to great start with a new sprayer. Check out the complete line of sprayers and other great orchard machines at savageequipment.com, and give us a call.



Savage Sprayer Comparison				
Model Number	Tank Capacity	Fan/Volute Size	Length/Width/Height	PTO/HP Required
5525	500	25"/36"	150"/72"/66"	540/45HP
5528	500	28"/36" or 48"	150"/72"/66"	540/60HP
5534	500	34"/48"	150"/72"/66"	540/70HP
5537	500	37"/48"	150"/72"/66"	1000/90HP
5540	500	40"/56" or 72"	150"/72"/66"	1000/110HP
5740	1000	40"/63" or 72"	207"/91"/69"	1000/120HP



Nelson-Hardie Sprayer Comparison			
Model Number	Tank Capacity	Blower Fan	PTO/HP
6800P	500 or 1000	Dual 34", 9-Blade	540/80-100 HP (req.)
Super-80	500 or 1000	Dual 40", 10 or 16-Blade	173 or 225 HP
Super-92	1000	Dual 46", 13-Blade	325 HP

Just Plain Nuts

Tree nuts (cont. from page 4)

to be a little over 1 billion pounds.

The article reports that **pecan** production should be up by 6.7% from last year and anticipated shipments of “362 million pounds to buyers around the globe.”

Walnut producers are also expecting gains of about 19% over the previous year as a result of “new acreage, more-densely-planted orchards and heavier-yielding

varieties.” The walnut folks are looking at production at around 750,000 tons—1.5 billion pounds!

Last and usually least, are the **Hazelnuts**. These farmers are anticipating production of 71,000 tons or 142 million pounds. They have been planting “some 5000 new acres of trees per year over nearly the last decade.”



Interesting Space Geek Stuff (especially for us space geeks that have been around awhile)

It's a sad and strange fact that the three great tragedies of the American space program all occurred within a few days of each other on the calendar. The Apollo 1 launch-rehearsal fire that killed three astronauts, happened on January 27, 1967. The Space Shuttle, Challenger exploded just after launch on January 28, 1986, and the Space Shuttle, Columbia disintegrated upon reentry to Earth's atmosphere on February 1, 2003. This month, we honor these seventeen brave men and women who lost their lives while helping to blaze our trail into space.

On a happier note, when this newsletter hits the streets in early February, it will be almost exactly 50 years since astronaut, Alan Shepard became the first person to play golf on the moon (February, 1971). Well, he didn't actually play golf, but he did whack a couple golf balls with a six-iron. There's no record as to how far they traveled, but Shepard reported they went “miles and miles.” Prior to his Apollo 14 lunar escapades, Shepard was among the initial cadre of seven U.S. astronauts and became the first American in space on May 5, 1961, alone aboard the Freedom 7 capsule launched by the Mercury-Redstone rocket.

Pecan and Sautéed Onion Soup

What's better than some hot, spicy soup on a cold winter day. We have the National Pecan Shellers' website, ilovepecans.org and Chef Leif Benson to thank for this yummy recipe.

Ingredients:

- 3 Tbsp. pecan oil
- 1 Cup sweet onion, diced
- 3 Cloves fresh garlic, crushed
- 6 oz. tomato paste
- 1½ quarts chicken stock
- 2 Cups half & half
- 2 Chipotle in adobo sauce, to taste (Find it in the ethnic foods section of your grocery store.)
- 2-3 Cups pecan, pieces
- 3 Tbsp. lime juice
- Salt and pepper, for taste

Instructions:

Sauté onion and garlic in Pecan Oil until translucent. Add tomato paste and Chipotle, stir. Add the chicken stock and half & half. Bring to a boil then turn down to a simmer. Add pecan pieces and simmer for 30 min. Puree half the soup until smooth then add back to combine. Finish with fresh lime juice for taste. Garnish with chopped pecans and nut oil.

* You may use lighter milk and yogurt if desired.

Have you ever tried soup with a grilled-cheese sandwich? Mmmm



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.