

FARMERS AND CONSUMERS

MARKET BULLETIN

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE • GARY W. BLACK, COMMISSIONER • WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2019 • VOL. 102, NO. 8 • © COPYRIGHT 2019

I spy Georgia Grown by the roadside

GDOT commits to buying native and locally grown plants for highway beautification

By Amy Carter

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The Georgia Department of Transportation is growing its support for the Georgia Grown marketing program by committing to use only native ornamentals and trees in its construction projects statewide.

“From Tennessee to Florida and Alabama to the Carolinas, people traveling through Georgia will see the true natural beauty of plants and trees locally sourced and native to Georgia,” said First Lady Marty Kemp at a press conference in the Governor’s Office March 28.

“By utilizing locally sourced plants and trees for this project, we are not only enhancing the beauty of our roadsides, we are also supporting and sustaining our local and state economies.”

Mrs. Kemp called attention to Southwest Georgia, where growers are still recovering from the effects of Hurricane Michael. The storm hit the area last October at harvest time, causing nearly \$3 billion in damages to cotton, timber, pecan, peanut and vegetable crops and associated businesses.

“Many of our farmers in Southwest Georgia lost years of hard work and investment in the destruction of Hurricane Michael,” she said.



From left: Gov. Brian Kemp; Georgia Green Industry Association Director Chris Butts; First Lady Marty Kemp; GDOT Commissioner Russell McMurry; Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black; State Road and Tollway Authority/Georgia Regional Transportation Authority Director Christopher Tomlinson in the Governor’s Ceremonial Office at the State Capitol March 28.

GDOT Commissioner Russell McMurry said the department’s construction contracts going forward will require the use of Georgia-grown materials, including pollinator plants. The landscaping for rest stops and visitor centers will be in-

those things is represented by a family. Those are jobs and that is family income. And taking the fruit of their labor and using it for state projects is going to be good for all 11 million Georgians,” Black said.

cluded “to put our best foot forward” to travelers, McMurry said.

“This is really an investment in Georgia itself by utilizing local nurseries, many of whom are still generationally owned. In fact, I had a great experience in my youth working with a local nursery and they are still in business today, multi-generationally.”

Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black said GDOT’s commitment to source locally grown plants and trees further strengthens an existing partnership to drive traffic to rural agritourism routes known as Georgia Grown Trails.

GDOT has installed road signs displaying the Georgia Grown logo on Georgia Highway 37 and U.S. Highways 41/341, 1 and 17. The trail system directs travelers to agribusinesses throughout the state and generates a great deal of social media traffic for Georgia Grown and its members, Black said.

“We have to remember whether it’s a morsel of food or it’s something that’s grown in a greenhouse, every one of

Notice

See our new ad category for Pick-Your-Own crops on page 11.

Ads for the May 8 issue — including Farm Services and Handicrafts — are due by noon, April 24.

EEE is detected in South Georgia

Take precautions now to prevent mosquito infestations

By Elmer Gray

A horse in Lowndes County has tested positive for eastern equine encephalitis, one of the most pathogenic among all mosquito-borne, encephalitis-causing viruses.

The clinical disease has a human-case fatality rate of more than 50 percent and a 90 to 95 percent fatality rate in horses. Horses can recover from EEE if it’s caught early enough, said Janemarie Hennebelle, DVM, MPVM, assistant state veterinarian for the Georgia Department of Agriculture.

“The biggest keys are to vaccinate at the appropriate time of the year, which is now before we get into peak vector season,” Hennebelle said, “and do your best to keep down mosquito sources. It’s an uphill battle but do the best you can to keep biting insects at bay.

“If there are ever questions about the health of a horse we strongly recommend contacting a private veterinary practitioner as soon as possible. Horses diagnosed with the disease can recover but it’s important to assess the horse and start supportive care early. You don’t want to wait until they’re very ill for a day or two.”

The type and severity of illness in humans depend upon the age and health of the individual. EEE, the most severe mosquito-borne disease of humans in the U.S., is caused by a virus transmitted by mosquitoes that typically develop in the swamps and woodlands below

the fall line in Georgia. Health districts have reported an increased number of animal cases, indicating that the virus is actively being transmitted.

Thankfully, cases are rare in humans. There was one human case in 2012, and a total of 29 have been reported in the U.S. since 1964. Symptoms range from a mild, flu-like illness to brain swelling, coma and possibly death. Symptomatic cases have a fatality rate of 30 to 50 percent.

EEE can infect people of any age, but young children and infants are particularly vulnerable. Children, the elderly, immunocompromised individuals and, sometimes, apparently healthy adults can develop acute encephalitis

See **PRECAUTIONS**, page 7



Eastern equine encephalitis is transmitted to animals and humans by mosquitoes. Horse owners are urged to vaccinate their animals now and to call a veterinarian at the first sign of sickness.

Take precautions against mosquito-borne disease by following these tips from UGA Extension:

Eliminate all containers and standing water but recognize that there are going to be large numbers of “natural” habitats this spring.

Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing to make you less attractive to mosquitoes.

Wear pants and long sleeves to reduce the amount of exposed skin. Newer, breathable fabrics make this a little more tolerable in Georgia weather.

Use EPA-approved repellents with active ingredients DEET, picaridin, IR3535 and lemon eucalyptus oil, which are proven to be safe and effective. DEET,

picaridin and IR3535 are approved for use on children 2 months and older. Adults should apply the repellent to their hands and rub the exposed skin of children. Complete coverage with repellents is important for everyone. Wash treated skin with warm, soapy water when you are not exposed to mosquitoes.

FORESTRY MATTERS: Managing invasive species

By Stasia Kelly
Georgia Forestry Commission

Springtime in Georgia's forests is a striking sight to behold. Neon green tree canopies, pops of floating white dogwood blooms, and intermittent blasts of purple and pink phlox inspire reverence and trust in the cyclical order of nature.

Keeping Georgia's forests healthy and sustainable are top priorities of the Georgia Forestry Commission, and this time of year is ideal for identifying impediments to those goals. Diseases, insects and invasive plants are threats GFC's Forest Health group monitor continually, and things get busy in spring.

Southern Pine Beetle – one of three native species found in Georgia (Ips and black turpentine are the others.) All of these normally attack stressed and dying pine trees. SPB in particular periodically causes massive losses in many parts of Georgia. So far this year, SPB activity has been detected near Carrolton, and early detection prediction traps have shown higher than normal catches south of Columbus and near Athens close to Lake Oconee. SPB infestations present an orange needle cast and white sap ooze from the tree bark. Later this month the GFC will begin aerial surveys to assess SPB activity. Landowners who suspect the presence of SPB should contact their county GFC forester for identification assistance.

Cogongrass – a non-native invasive weed that chokes natural vegetation – significantly reduces tree and plant regeneration, wildlife habitat, forage and ecological diversity. It is most identifiable in spring when it produces fluffy white seed heads. It has sharp pointed, scaly rhizomes with a very dense root system and grows in a cir-



Cogongrass is a non-native invasive weed that chokes natural vegetation and is extremely flammable, which can create hazardous prescribed burning and wildfire conditions. The Georgia Forestry Commission will eradicate confirmed cogongrass sites at no cost to the landowner.

cular-shaped pattern. Cogongrass is extremely flammable and creates hazardous prescribed burning and wildfire conditions. If a cogongrass site is confirmed, the GFC will eradicate it at no cost to the landowner.

Other non-native invasive species of concern – Callery pear, Japanese climbing fern, Chinese tallowtree, Chinaberry, non-native privet. Landowners with at least 10 acres, three acres of which comprise non-native invasives, will soon be eligible for contract spraying cost-share assistance. Contact your local GFC forester for more information.

The GFC is grateful for your assistance in slowing the spread of invasive species in Georgia. Keep an eye out for the "bad guys," but be sure to get out there and enjoy this most wonderful time in the woods!



Southern Coop's Blanding receives farm leadership award

From Staff Reports

Cornelius Blanding, executive director of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives, was recently named a recipient of the James Beard Foundation's Leadership Award in recognition for his work in assisting African-American farmers.

The Leadership Award is part of the James Beard Foundation's Impact Programs that seek to develop a more sustainable food system through education, advocacy and leadership. Blanding was one of five award recipients for 2019. All five will be honored at the Foundation's 9th annual Leadership Awards ceremony on May 5 in Chicago, according to a press release announcing the awards.

The Beard Foundation recognized Blanding for his advocacy for land loss prevention, economic advancement for rural farmers through cooperative development and policies that support farmers. The Federation operates across 13 Southern states in some of the most economically depressed communities in the region.

"Cooperatives are still being formed out of necessity to combat issues that are relevant to today's economic, social and political landscape," Blanding said in the release. "Access to credit and markets, food security, land preservation and climate change are all issues directly impacting the longevity of southern black farm families."

Under Blanding's leadership, the Federation focuses on cooperative development, land retention and advocacy in the United States and around the world. In Cuba, Blanding led an effort to create an open market for Federation farmers to grow and export black beans to meet the diet demands of Cubans. The Federation under Blanding's leadership also assisted the creation of the first farm



Cornelius Blanding

cooperative in the U.S. Virgin Islands, according to the release.

Blanding has been with the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund for 23 years and was named executive director in 2015. The Federation is headquartered in East Point and is a non-profit, cooperative association involving more than 20,000 low-income rural families organized into more than 75 cooperatives, credit unions and community-based economic development groups across the rural South.

For more information, go to the Federation's Website at www.federationsoutherncoop.com.

COOK GEORGIA GROWN: Candied Bacon

Bacon is always in season. So is candy. Combine the two and what do you get? A happy tummy! Bon appetit, y'all!

Ingredients:

8 slices thick-cut bacon
½ cup light brown sugar
¼ tsp. cayenne pepper

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line baking sheet with parchment paper.

Combine brown sugar and cayenne in a shallow dish. Dip bacon in brown sugar mixture, pressing sugar to stick on bacon. Place coated bacon on parchment-lined baking sheet.

Bake about 20 minutes per side or until crisp, depending on oven and thickness of bacon.



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Georgie's Drive Thru Tuxedo Park

Hello! I'm Georgie, the Georgia Grown mascot. I travel the state of Georgia promoting our No. 1 industry – agriculture! Can you name the official state dog of Georgia? You might be surprised to know it's not an English Bulldog like UGA or even a Beagle/Retriever mix like me. It's the Adoptable Dog, made official by the General Assembly in 2016 to recognize the thousands of dogs in animal shelters statewide awaiting good homes. On March 30, I went to Atlanta to meet a whole bunch of adoptable dogs at the home of Georgia's First Family. The First Lady of Georgia, Mrs. Marty Kemp, loves animals so much that she held a pet adoption event on the front lawn of the Governor's Mansion. I met lots of dogs of all shapes, colors, temperaments and sizes. They came from animal shelters throughout the state, from Dahlonega in the north to Valdosta in the south. There were Pomeranians, Beagles, Weimaraners, German Shepherds, English Bulldogs, two kittens and some of the friendliest pet handlers and dog lovers I've ever met. I ate at least a dozen Beggin' Strips. The event was dedicated to my old friend, Gus. He was Governor Kemp's black Labrador Retriever who died on March 11 at the ripe old age of 91, in dog years. He was a darned good dog!



Georgie at the Governor's Mansion.

PRECAUTIONS

Continued From Page 1

with high fever, drowsiness, lethargy, vomiting, convulsions and coma.

The case-fatality rate is especially high in children. Individuals who survive infection are often left with conditions including mental deficits, behavioral changes, convulsive disorders and/or paralysis.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports a yearly average of seven human cases of EEE in the U.S. Most cases of EEE have been reported from Florida, Massachusetts, New York and North Carolina.

Last year's rains, coupled with rainfall to date this year, will keep the swamps and low-lying areas wet for the foreseeable future. Consequently, most of South Georgia is at risk.

There are still aspects of the EEE disease cycle that are unclear. The current understanding is that the virus cycles among birds and bird-feeding mosquitoes (primarily *Culiseta melanura*) in swamp areas below the fall line in Georgia.

Bridge vectors (other mosquitoes that feed on both infected birds and horses or people) move the virus out of the bird/mosquito cycle. According to the American Mosquito Control Association, recent research indicates that snakes and even flatworms could serve as overwintering reservoirs for this virus. Research on EEE disease vectors is currently ongoing in Florida.

While EEE is a bigger threat below Georgia's fall line, cases can occur farther north in the state but are rare. University of Georgia Cooperative Extension experts expect mosquito populations to be high this spring.

-Elmer Gray is a Cooperative Extension entomologist with the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. Market Bulletin staff contributed to this story.



April is Pest Awareness Month in Georgia In February, Gov. Brian Kemp signed a proclamation recognizing April as Pest Awareness Month statewide. Members of the Georgia Structural Pest Control Commission and leadership of the Georgia Pest Control Association are shown receiving the proclamation from Kemp. The Georgia Department of Agriculture's Structural Pest Section licenses and regulates professionals engaged in structural pest control in Georgia. The commission advises the section on enforcement issues and ensures proper licensing and certification of operators and their employees. (Special photo)

Got fire ants?

Take care in choosing safe insecticides for control

By Merritt Melancon

Whether you have a well-manicured lawn or a wild preserve, almost every landscape in Georgia shares one feature: fire ants.

These stinging insects can ruin even the best backyard cookout or game of catch. But homeowners need to take care not to let their rage against fire ants blind them to the dangers of some insecticides.

Dan Suiter, professor of entomology at the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, researches fire ant control methods and wants people to start reading the labels on many of the products sold to control ants.

"Everyone believes that if they're going to sell it at any of the various home-supply stores, that it's safe, that there's no way that it will be able to hurt the environment," Suiter said. "That's not true. You have to read the labels."

When it comes to fire ant control, there are a few common types of chemicals that are used both in over-the-counter and professional pest control products.

First, there are insecticides that contain bifenthrin, a pyrethroid insecticide that is nonselective and capable of killing any insect it comes in contact with. Suiter recommends homeowners avoid these products for outdoor use because of the risk that they could leech into nearby waterways or kill pollinating insects.

Many pyrethroid insecticides are formulated as heavy granulars that fall to the ground and sink into the thatch, where they dissolve, leaving behind the insecticide. Granular formulations protect foraging pollinators because they do not come in contact with flowers. However, they are only safe if gardeners read the label associated with the product and use the product correctly.



Granular formulations should never be allowed to remain on hard surfaces, as they may make their way to streams where the pyrethroids are highly toxic to fish and other aquatic life.

To have the least ancillary impact from fire ant treatment, Suiter recommends using fire ant baits sold under names like Amdro.

The bait is made up of the active ingredient dissolved in an oil that's been applied to an inert carrier. The ants remove the oil from the grit and bring it back to the mound where they share it with the other ants. Baits should never be watered in after application.

Used correctly, ant bait products are the most effective and safest ways to control fire ants, Suiter said.

Gardeners looking to treat for fire ants may want to purchase a hand spreader to sprinkle the bait around their landscape while walking in a grid pattern.

"You may want to purchase a new spreader for spreading ant bait because the lingering odor from any fertilizer or other lawn chemicals could keep the ants from eating the bait," Suiter said.

Ants are very sensitive to the odor of the bait, which turns rancid relatively quickly and becomes repellent to the ants. Gardeners should buy the smallest package of bait they can and use it all within one or two months, preferably all at once.

Also, be sure to apply the bait during warm, dry afternoons to ensure that the ants will be out foraging. Rainfall will keep the bait from being effective, Suiter said.

For more information about fire ant control, see UGA Cooperative Extension Bulletin 1191, "Managing Imported Fire Ants in Urban Areas," at extension.uga.edu/publications.

-Merritt Melancon is a news editor with the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

Master Gardener Extension Volunteers

Spring Plant Sale

Coweta County Fairgrounds, AG Building

275 Pine Road, Newnan, GA

- Tomatoes
- Flowers
- Annuals
- Perennials
- Trees

- Peppers
- Herbs
- Shrubs

Saturday, April 13
8:30am–1:00pm

Questions: 770-254-2620

We encourage you to bring wagons and boxes for ease of shopping.

This is(n't) your grandfather's tractor show

By Amy Carter
amy.carter@agr.georgia.gov

To the casual observer, an antique is just a dusty old thing. But to one who is patient enough to stop, look and listen, that old thing tells an unforgettable story. It might speak of ingenuity born of need, or of inspiration that moved humanity a giant leap forward.

To serious collectors like Hamilton Halford, it poses a simple question: Remember me?

Halford learned to drive a tractor before he learned to drive a car. It was the late 1970s, he was 10 years old, and what his Mama didn't know couldn't hurt him or his Daddy, who put him aboard a 1960 John Deere 620 Orchard with a two-cylinder engine pulling a 14-foot mower.

"I didn't even know how to spell John Deere," he said. "I had to stand up so I could push the clutch handle in to get it in gear."

A 31-year career with the Georgia State Patrol dramatically broadened his driving options, but the memory of that first driving lesson was strong enough to fuel his curiosity decades later, when Halford learned that John Deere only made 202 of those tractors. He waited two years for someone to respond to an Internet query seeking one to buy.

"That's when the bug bit me, you might say. I go for the low-production and oddball John Deeres. I've got one they only made three of, one they only made two of, different colors – blue, orange, lime green, a white John Deere."

He's even got a rare self-propelled peanut combine made by John Deere in the 1960s.

He'll be displaying part of his collection at the Georgia National Fairgrounds and Agricul-

ter in Perry Nov. 14-16 at the first Georgia National Antique Agriculture Show.

"Starting out we were just going to have a tractor show, but when you have access to the resources we do like buildings and grounds and RV space, we saw real fast that we could make this event to include an agricultural community maybe we haven't reached before," said Philip Gentry, youth and livestock director at the state-owned fairgrounds.

"We learned that the folks that are involved in antique agriculture or the history of agriculture, they're farmers and teachers and every day people who just have a passion for this kind of niche that's inside agriculture."

Seven months ahead of the event, they've fielded inquiries from hobbyists in Ohio, Mississippi, Texas, Oklahoma and California, according to Marketing and Sponsorship Director Keaton Walker. Potential exhibitions will include cabover trucks once used to haul hay, antique implements, heritage livestock and antique toys.

The show will be a family event, and Walker is working with area schools to coordinate field trips for students. The Georgia Museum of Agriculture, formerly the Agrirama in Tifton, has committed to bring hands-on exhibits and stage demonstrations in candle-making, blacksmithing and the like for children and adults.

"We hope to educate and intrigue the younger demographic as to the possibilities of ag and showcase just what ag has done to influence their day-to-day living," said Stephen Shimp, executive director of the GNFA.

In addition to promoting the Georgia National Fair and the agriculture industry as a whole, the livestock facilities at the fair exist

to promote and encourage youth achievement in agriculture.

Unlike Walker, Gentry and Halford, Shimp doesn't hail from a traditional farming background. He's spent his tenure in Perry learning at events held on the fairgrounds year-round.

"I grew up in southeastern Massachusetts with the largest ag-related industry in that area being commercial fishing," he said. "My real introduction to ag in Georgia was when I came to work here in 2002 as the Public Safety Director. I fell in love with everything about it. I learned right along with the thousands of children who attend our events or show market animals here what it takes to produce the nation's food supply. I am still learning."

In partnership with producers in the area, the show will also include farm tours and demonstrations of old and new harvest techniques for crops such as peanuts, hay and cotton. A trip to a nearby cotton gin is on the bill, as well.

"This show will focus on anything and everything antique ag, giving our visitors a look into what it took for farmers to produce their crops generations before us," Shimp said. "We hope it will give insight as to just how far technology has advanced the producing power of today's farmer, while assisting them in meeting the demands for food and fiber today."



The first Georgia National Antique Agriculture Show will be held Nov. 14-16 at the Georgia National Fairgrounds and Agricenter in Perry. Show hours are noon to 6 p.m. Nov. 14, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Nov. 15 and 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday. Admission is free. Tickets to a Friday night banquet with a keynote speaker and entertainment will be sold for a nominal fee. Register as an exhibitor and find updates online at <http://www.gnfa.com/p/about/georgia-national-antique-agriculture-show>.

Take a virtual trip back in time

Are you interested in reading the *Market Bulletin's* coverage of agriculture as far back as 1964? Visit the digital archive maintained by the Georgia Documents Depository Service at https://dlg.usg.edu/collection/dlg_ggpd. The archive is part of the Digital Library of Georgia, which maintains an electronic repository of government documents and reports, historical photographs and records, and newspapers. Access is offered to the public free of charge.

Tell us about your favorite tractor, *Market Bulletin* readers

By Lee Lancaster
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Recently, I stopped by a shop near Baxley to talk to the owner about his collection of antique tractors. The visit made me wonder what kind of stories you, our readers, have to share about your favorite farm tractors.

Almost every farmer has a tractor. Looking back, probably

every farmer has a favorite tractor, too. It could be their first tractor from high school or maybe the first tractor the family used when they replaced horses and mules. It could be the tractor they used to produce 10,000 round bales of hay.

It wouldn't have to be restored or even still in one piece, but we would love to hear about tractors that spent their whole life in Georgia growing peanuts, cows or Vidalia Onions. We'll feature these stories in future editions of the

Market Bulletin, the place where a lot of these tractors were bought, sold, found and bought again.

If you would like to share your tractor story, mail it or email it along with a photo, if you have one. Our mailing address is: Georgia Department of Agriculture, Attn: Market Bulletin, 19 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. SW, Atlanta, Ga. 30334.

The email address is: lee.lancaster@agr.georgia.gov



Georgia Grown Area Marketing Coordinator Lee Lancaster at home in Rhine with his children, nephews and the family dog aboard a 1950 John Deere B that was owned by the children's great-grandfather, Levi Dopson. Dopson bought the tractor at Milan Tractor and Implement Co.



Cleveland Carter in Baxley with his JD Unstyled A and Styled A tractors. (Lee Lancaster/GDA)

A correction:

A reader called to question the ingredient list for an archival recipe reprinted in the *Market Bulletin* March 27. The recipe as printed in our May 20, 2009, edition calls for 1½ buttery round crackers, crumbled. While we have not tested the recipe, we agree that 1½ crackers sounds like too few to make a decent pie crust. We suggest using 1½ sleeves or cups of crumbled buttery crackers such as Ritz Crackers® or a similar brand.

Vidalia® Sweetest Onionlicious Pie

Ingredients:

1½ sleeves (or cups) of buttery round crackers, crumbled
6 Tbsps. butter, softened
2 cups thinly sliced sweet Vidalia onions
2 cloves garlic, minced
¾ cup heavy cream
2 eggs
½ tsp. salt
¾ cup shredded Swiss cheese

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
In a mixing bowl, combine crackers and 4 tablespoons of the butter in a bowl until well blended. Press into the bottom and 1 inch up the sides of a 1-inch pie plate to form a shell. Refrigerate until needed.
Melt remaining 2 tablespoons of butter in heavy skillet over medium heat. Sauté onions and garlic slowly until tender, about 12 minutes.

Brown cracker crust slightly and arrange cooked onions in the bottom of the crust. Beat eggs, heavy cream and salt in a bowl until blended. Pour the mixture over the onions.
Sprinkle with cheese.
Bake at 350 degrees for 35 minutes, or until a knife comes out clean.
Serve hot as a side dish to any meal.
-Published May 20, 2009