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February 2021 Update  
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## Seed for Thought

**Roger Boerma, Executive Director**

Looking back over the past couple months, I have experienced a reduction in my usual level of constructive thinking and overall optimism. I am uncertain if this was due to the constant drumbeat of the hideous political discourse, the Covid-19 pandemic keeping me office-bound during the annual commodity conferences and trade show season, or the friend that recently lost his job due to reduced business from Covid-19. Regardless, it is time for me to find ways to put an end to this unproductive attitude.

I would speculate that I am not the only person in our industry that has experienced this sensation. So, what are a few of the approaches we can use to overcome this unproductive mindset? According to Liz Marki, a business coaching, mentoring, and stress management consultant, we need to examine a few of the approaches to our daily behavior. First, she said we need to look on the positive side and be aware of our thoughts. It is easy to focus on the negative when constantly being bombarded with it. Why should we continue to partake of the sources of our negative attitudes, such as the nightly news? Even as businesses close, other businesses have opportunities to pick up new customers.

We need to focus on what has gone well in our businesses and present a positive attitude to others. Negativity has the profound ability to prolifically reproduce itself. Instead, we should work to communicate the positive accomplishments that the business has achieved. Not only will you feel better, but you will allow others to see positive outcomes.

We need to carefully select our associates and acquaintances. As much as possible, we should surround ourselves with positive individuals and avoid the naysayers. We all know people that always see the glass as half empty. Although the Word of the Year may be "inclusivity", this may be a good time to seek out and spend more time with our positive colleagues and collaborators.

Finally, focus on improving the performance of your business while maintaining previously defined goals. It is often during difficult times that we find the best opportunities to move our businesses forward. Although there are many challenges in some segments of the economy, many agricultural businesses have not been as greatly impacted. These dark attitudes can keep us from taking advantage of this occasion.

I hope to have provided you with some things to consider as we progress through these disconcerting times. I wish each of you a positive and productive 2021 growing season.



## A BRIEFING FROM BLAKE

Blake Fleeman, Licensing/Marketing Manager

### Education

Due to Covid-19 none of the UGA classes have scheduled visits to GSD last fall. Dr. Donglin Zhang's Plant Propagation class has scheduled a virtual visit to the GSD facility in late February or early March.

### Licensing

The licensing activity has remained steady over the past few months. As growers start think about spring planting we will be busy working on requests for new peanut licenses. We have also had requests for pecan licenses from two new propagators.

### Marketing/Meetings

We continue to wait and see if and when the "old normal" will return. All of the winter tradeshow and conferences that GSD attends have cancelled in-person meetings and most have gone to virtual formats. The GSD Annual Board Meeting (in Athens, May 19, 2021), Southern Peanut Growers Conference( July 15-17, 2021) and the Alabama/Georgia Seed Association Meeting (July 26-27, 2021) are still scheduled for in-person at this time.

## ENHANCED PLANT BREEDING PROGRAM

With support of plant breeding funds from GSD in 2020, Dr. Zenglu Li and colleagues in UGA's Crop and Soil Science Department have replaced some of old lights in greenhouse. The new lights provide much better coverage and light intensity for the soybean plants grown in the greenhouse (left image).

In addition, the funds from GSD also enabled Dr. Li's program to install an automated irrigation system in the greenhouse (see both images). The irrigation system provides very uniform irrigation to each pot and most importantly, saves time required to manually water the plants during the weekday and weekend. Thank you Dr. Li for sharing this update with us.



## Processing/Production



**Doug Batchelder, Athens, and Justin Tanner, Plains**  
Production Managers

### **SMALL GRAINS PRODUCTION**

Foundation small grain plantings at Plains and Athens GA totaled 230 acres this year. This year we are producing Foundation wheat of nine different licensed varieties. In addition, there are two public varieties (Ga Gore wheat and Wrens Abruzzi rye) of Foundation small grains being produced. We also have five new wheat increases from Dr. Mergoum's UGA program as well as three increases from Dr. Harrison at LSU. So far, it has been a challenging, wet winter in Georgia and getting equipment into fields to spray and fertilize has been difficult especially in North Georgia. Nevertheless, all of the fields have tillered nicely and are looking good. We will continue monitoring for insects and disease pressure including any FHB that may occur.

Foundation TifQuik Bahiagrass from our field in Plains GA was processed in January and will be bagged when the germination results have been returned from the State Lab.

### **SOYBEAN PROCESSING**

We are currently processing seven soybean varieties in Athens totaling a little more than 4,990 bushels that were grown during the 2020 growing season; SH 7418LL, AGS Woodruff, AGS 738RR, and four unlicensed increases for Dr. Li's program at UGA. We have finished processing SH 7418LL and AGS 738RR and have received excellent purity and germination reports from the State Lab. We expect to have completed the conditioning of all seven varieties by the middle of March.

### **FOUNDATION TURFGRASS**

All of the turf plots in Athens GA and at the UGA Iron Horse Farm are dormant and weed-free at this time. They will all be ready for spring harvest. We are currently receiving domestic and international orders.

### **PECAN HARVEST**

We have collected and distributed graftwood cuttings to our new and existing licensees from Foundation trees in South Georgia of Dr. Conner's variety 'Avalon'. We have also been able to fulfill an order of 'Tom' and 'Tanner' for a new licensee from the Foundation trees at the Horticulture Farm in Watkinsville GA.

### **PEANUT PRODUCTION**

We started shelling our 2020 Foundation peanuts on 24 November. We have shelled roughly 4 million pounds of our 8,019,621 total pounds of farmer stock peanuts. The shelling season is going smoothly with only a couple of minor delays. The quality of our Foundation peanut seed is very good due to the favorable growing and harvesting conditions in 2020. We recently purchased a grade-level split screen from the Georgia Federal-State Inspection Service which allows us to perform routine checks of the number of splits at key steps in our shelling facility. Our percent splits is down significantly from last year. We have shelled 9 of our 10 varieties and plan to shell the four small breeder increases at the National Peanut Research Laboratory in Dawson, GA in March. Due to an increase in our farmer stock volume, we have decided to simultaneously shell and treat some of our Foundation GA 06G peanuts. This will allow us to meet our goal for shipping our Foundation peanut seed to licensees. Our total shelled pounds by variety are as follows: Tif NV- 304,071 lbs., GA 18RU- 382,244 lbs., GA 16HO- 217,116 lbs., GA 14N- 93,178 lbs., GA 11J- 39,459 lbs., GA 20VHO- 51,268 lbs., Tif Jumbo- 751 lbs., GA VAL HO- 1,228 lbs., GA 19HP- 4,794 lbs., and GA 06G- TBD.