



GEORGIA SEED DEVELOPMENT

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Seed for Thought

Roger Boerma, Executive Director

I have spent the past several weeks visiting with various seed, turfgrass, and nursery businesses around Georgia (contract growers, equipment vendors, licensees, etc.). On a recent return trip to Athens I started thinking about some of the things that impacted my overall impressions of the businesses that I had visited. My goal was to identify the things that had left a positive impression with me and use these ideas to improve GSD.



Besides the obvious importance of the value of the product or service provided to GSD from a given business, what additional factors impacted my opinion of these businesses? I arrived at six issues. The first thing I would always notice when I arrived at a new business was the company signage. Could I find the location to enter the business? Is the company sign well maintained and can it be read from the road? It leaves a negative image if I had to drive past the business several times before I knew where to enter the main office. Equally important, is the business providing a welcoming and well maintained entrance? When taken together with the signage this becomes the first direct interface one would have with these businesses.

Once I arrived at the business' main office the next important image relates to how the office employees related to me. Was I welcomed to the business or was I treated as though I was a distraction from more important responsibilities? Did the employee show a true interest in my visit? It is generally at this stage of the visit that I obtained my first opportunity to gain a deeper insight into the business operations. Often times I would encounter a short wait time while an office employee would search for the actual person I came to visit. It is during this period that I would pick up conversations among the various office employees that provided me with insight into employee morale and how office employees viewed their employer. It is obvious to me that a business will not succeed without highly engaged employees with positive morale.

During most of my visits I would be provided a short tour of the physical facilities. Of course, this varied from business to business depending on the type of organization. These tours would provide me with an impression of the maintenance and overall organization of the buildings, grounds, and equipment. A fresh coat of paint improves the overall appearance of a business and helps to extend the useful life of its buildings. Picking up trash and removing obsolete equipment improves a business' appearance and safety. Newer equipment usually indicates a desire of the business to improve its efficiency, employee safety, and productivity.

These are just a few of the ideas that I gleaned from my visits and hope to employ at GSD to continue our goals of becoming more effective and efficient. I will leave you with the response I received from one individual when I asked him the question, "How can you justify all the employee time and expense your business spends in keeping things clean and organized?" His response was, "I believe it brings more customers to my business". Enough said!

GSDC on the Road

Blake Fleeman, Licensing/Marketing Manager

We have been very busy this winter attending trade shows and commodity meetings. Roger and I started off the year by attending the Southeast Regional Fruit & Vegetable Conference in Savannah, Georgia (*GSD booth pictured right*). This meeting was very well attended with over 3,300 participants. The Small Grain/Soybean Expo was held in Perry, Georgia this year and we had the GICRS display set up at this meeting. There were over 100 attendees at the Expo.



From there Roger, Ralph, and I attended the Peanut Farm Show in Tifton, Georgia (*GICRS booth pictured left*). We received a number of questions regarding the availability of Foundation peanut seed for the coming spring and we also received grower feedback on current varieties being produced. There were several inquiries regarding the availability of the new Georgia-18RU peanut variety developed by Dr. Branch. We were able to provide them with informative information with our newly created brochure of Georgia-18RU. I then attended the Southern Seed Association Conference in Phoenix, Arizona. Attendance at this show was also very good and provided a chance for me to meet with several of our out-of-state licensees. I was able to hear a number of highly informative presentations including talks on the production of hemp and on the security of the southern U.S. border. Terry

Hollifield and I traveled to the Golf Industry Show in San Diego, California where we both manned our turfgrass displays at the trade show. We were also able to meet with UGA turfgrass licensees from around the world.

Licensing

Blake Fleeman, Licensing/Marketing Manager

**SIGN
HERE**

The licensing activity has begun to accelerate with people starting to think about spring planting and which specific varieties they want to market in the coming years. We expect to have several requests for license agreements for Dr. Branch's new peanut variety Georgia-18RU. We continue to receive requests for UGA-developed blueberry and pecan varieties. We have recently completed a wheat and a blueberry license agreements along with several amendments for currently licensed cultivars.

Processing/Production

Doug Batchelder, Athens, and Ralph Johnson, Plains; Production Managers

2019 SMALL GRAINS PRODUCTION

Our Foundation wheat plantings this year totaled 150 acres divided among seven different licensed varieties, a public variety, and four experimental increases. We have adequate Foundation Wrens Abruzzi rye and GA Gore wheat in cold storage for our 2019 needs. It has definitely been a challenging fall and winter due to excessive rainfall. Our contract growers were unable to plant two wheat varieties in the Athens, Georgia area due to wet field conditions. The ability to fertilize and spray the fields remains a challenge.

TifQuik Bahiagrass harvested from our Foundation field in Plains, Georgia will be conditioned and bagged later this month.

2019 SOYBEAN PROCESSING

We are currently conditioning two soybean varieties totaling a little over 1,250 bu. that were grown in 2018; SH 7218LL and AGS Woodruff. SH 7218LL was grown at the GSD Farm near Plains, Georgia under our new center pivot irrigation system. We expect to have both of the Foundation soybean varieties conditioned by the first week of March and expect excellent purity and germination.

2019 TURFGRASS PRODUCTION

All of the turf plots at the Athens, Georgia site and at the UGA Iron Horse Farm are doing well and are weed free at this time. We already have orders for Foundation TifEagle for Greens for later in the spring/summer.

2019 PECAN HARVEST

We have collected and distributed Foundation graftwood cuttings for our licensees of Dr. Spark's variety Tom at the UGA Horticulture Farm in Watkinsville, Georgia as well as from Foundation trees in south Georgia of Dr. Conner's variety Avalon.

2019 PEANUT PROCESSING

Foundation peanut shelling is on schedule and we should be finished during the week of 18-22 February. Due to the late peanut harvest we actually started shelling before harvest was completed which is unusual for us. The last in-shell peanuts were delivered to us on 27 November and we had completed shelling several of the smaller quantity varieties by that date. We do not have germination results back from the Seed Lab on all our Foundation peanuts, but the quality is excellent on those results that we have received. Surprisingly, even the late November harvested peanuts germinated very well. We will have the following Foundation shelled seed in inventory: 3,600,000 lbs. of 06G, 325,000 lbs. of 16HO, 285,000 lbs. of Tif NV, 260,000 lbs. of 18RU, 117,000 lbs. of GA 14N, and 70,000 lbs. of GA 11J.

The Peanut Treater Improvement project is close to completion. The electrical wiring is still incomplete, but it should be completed by 8 February. The bid for the Peanut Sheller Surge Bin project has been awarded to WGC INC. from Graves, GA. This work is scheduled to begin early in June as soon as peanut seed shipping is complete.



Education

Blake Fleeman, Licensing/Marketing Manager

GSD has scheduled a program and tour for Dr. Donglin Zhang's Plant Propagation class for 14 February. Several GSD personnel were able to attend the educational sessions at the Small Grain/Soybean Expo held in Perry, Georgia in January. The 2019 GCIA Annual Meeting will be held on 28 March in Athens, Georgia. This meeting provides GSD personnel the opportunity to stay abreast of new rules and guidelines required in the production and conditioning of Foundation material of UGA-developed varieties.

Georgia Seed Snapshots



*Foundation
Wrens Abruzzi
field in Gibson,
Georgia*



Corey Booth and Buddy Parker harvesting Avalon Pecan Graftwood at Shiloh Farms in Ray City, Georgia

Upcoming Events

- * National Peanut Buying Points Conference
Nashville, GA February 15 – 18, 2019
- * Georgia Crop Improvement Annual Meeting
Athens, GA March 28-29, 2019
- * 73rd Southeastern Turfgrass Conference
Tifton, GA April 24, 2019
- * Annual GSD Board of Commissioners Meeting
Americus, GA May 22, 2019

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