



GEORGIA SEED DEVELOPMENT

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June 2021 Update
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Seed for Thought

Roger Boerma, Executive Director

GSD has recently completed its annual employee performance evaluations. It is my responsibility to conduct the evaluations for the three GSD managers. This year I decided to request for each of them to perform a self-evaluation of their performance prior to our scheduled face-to-face meetings. Each of these managers found this task difficult and challenging. It was interesting how closely my assessment of their strengths and weaknesses agreed with theirs. On average, the managers rated themselves about one grade below how I had rated them.

This effort got me thinking about some of the common characteristics that I commonly see expressed by exceptional employees. I am certain that with adequate thought this list could become very long, but I wanted to report to you some of their qualities. I want to begin by stating that exceptional employees are organized. They understand their tasks and responsibilities and assemble the needed resources to complete a job prior to leaving the plant. It is difficult to perform at a high level if you arrive at a job site and have forgotten some of the needed tools or equipment.

Another quality of exceptional employees is a positive attitude. As a manager, supervisor, or technician it is critical to possess confidence in the work plan you are about to implement. If the leader doesn't maintain the confidence that the chosen approach is going to be successful, it is unlikely the rest of the crew is going to successfully carry out the plan.

The possession of problem-solving skill is a trait that encourages team members to look at an exceptional employee for solutions when things appear to be going off track. When the team's progress appears to be grinding to a halt, it is common for some individuals to experience a total shut-down of their intellect. It is at this stage that an exceptional employee shines through the haze and carries the team on their shoulders over the end line.

A final comment is that exceptional employees understand the short- and long-term mission and goals of the organization. This becomes especially critical when dealing with challenging customers, contract growers, or other employees. As an example, a difficult contract grower that consistently produces high quality seed is preferred to a contract grower that is pleasant, but only occasionally meets GSD standards. An exceptional employee keeps their eye on the end game.

We are blessed at GSD in that we have assembled a dedicated and talented group of team members that understands GSD's mission and goals and believes that GSD makes a difference. Covid-19 taught us that we can rely on each other to get the job accomplished.

A BRIEFING FROM BLAKE

Blake Fleeman, Licensing/Marketing Manager

Education

GSD hosted Dr. Wayne Parrott's Plant Breeding Practicum class on 19 May in the GSD conference room. The class had a limited number of students this year due to Covid-19 restrictions. The speakers included: Shelley Fincher with the University of Georgia Research Foundations Innovation Gateway, Roger Boerma with Georgia Seed Development, and Terry Hollifield with Georgia Crop Improvement Association. Each addressed how their organizations helped a UGA cultivar make it into the marketplace. The class then toured the GSD processing plant. The tour of the seed conditioning equipment was led by Corey Booth. Next, Doug Batchelder demonstrated the Almaco R1 Purity combine that GSD uses for initial Foundation increases of small grains, Bahiagrass, and soybean.



Licensing

The licensing activity has continued at a steady pace during the COVID -19 pandemic. We've had 16 applications for new peanut licenses with the majority of the requests for Georgia 20VHO peanut. UGARF and GSD are currently working with a company on a license agreement for three of Dr. Li's new high oleic, low linolenic soybean varieties. Immediately after wheat harvest is completed and Dr. Mergoum has selected the new varieties for release, UGARF and GSD will be working on getting that information out to potential licensees.

Marketing/Meetings

I'm excited to report that I attended my first in-person meeting last week in over a year. The GSD board meeting was held last week with about 22 in attendance (including Board members, Advisory Committee members, guests, and staff). I think everyone enjoyed being able to see and visit with colleagues. I'm beginning to get information on tradeshow that are starting back up in the near future. The **Southern Peanut Growers Conference is on schedule for July 15-17 in Panama City Beach, Fl. and the Georgia/Alabama Seed Association meeting is scheduled for July 26-27 at St. Simmons Island, GA.** I have received booth space application from some other shows that will be held in January and February of 2022.

Processing/Production

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

SMALL GRAINS PRODUCTION

All of our Foundation wheat fields were sprayed with a fungicide for FHB control during flowering and those applications appear to have been successful. Some of the North Georgia wheat is showing a little bit of cold damage from late April freezes, but I don't anticipate the yields will be reduced by very much. We have already harvested all of our Foundation wheat fields in the Plains area and the one at the Iron Horse Farm in the Athens area. The remaining North Georgia Foundation wheat fields will be harvested the first or second week of June. We anticipate harvesting approximately 6,500 bushels of Foundation wheat in Athens and 5,500 bushels in Plains from a total of 18 varieties. Foundation TifQuik Bahiagrass from the GSD Foundation field in Plains was processed earlier this year and has been distributed to licensees.

SOYBEAN PRODUCTION

We have plans to produce seven soybean varieties this year: AGS Woodruff, AGS 738RR, AGS 6777C, and SH 7418LL, as well as increases of three new high oleic, low linolenic releases from Dr. Zenglu Li's program.

FOUNDATION TURFGRASS

Our Foundation turfgrass fields in Northeast Georgia have experienced challenging growing conditions this spring with all of the cool, wet weather. We have still not experienced 100 percent green-up. Despite the adverse conditions, we have still been able to fulfill a few domestic orders of Tifway, TifTuf, and TifEagle. GSD has outstanding domestic and international orders for TifTuf, TifEagle, and Tifway for later this summer. The Athens group spent some time earlier this month with Dr. Schwartz and his crew testing their new turf sprig washer and helping to get it set up. The washer worked well and exceeded all of our expectations.

PEANUT PRODUCTION

Peanut planting for GSD is off to a late start this year due the cool spring. We should be able to finish planting by 27 May. We have 19 varieties and experimental lines planted on a total of 1,961 acres with 4,412 farmer stock tons contracted. Our 2021 Foundation peanut production plan includes of the following varieties: 1,556 acres of GA 06G, 167 acres of Tif NV, 111 acres of GA 18RU, 36 acres of GA 14N, 56 acres of GA 20VHO, 22 acres of GA 11J, 5 acres of Tif Jumbo, 5 acres of GA 19HP, and 1 acre each of GA163120, GA142513, GA085249-R2, and GA085249-R3.

To help handle our increased production in 2021, GSD has purchased an additional 15 drying trailers and is adding a surge bin and high-capacity elevator above the peanut sheller. This year GSD expanded our growing area beyond the Plains, Georgia area into the Colquitt, Georgia area. Fudge Peanut Company was contracted to produce 500 tons of Foundation farmer stock peanuts for GSD in 2021. The Fudge Company Foundation peanuts will be dried and graded at their facility in Colquitt and then transported to our Plains facility where they will be directly loaded into our warehouse. The Foundation peanut production at the Fudge Company will be under the guidance of GSD personnel.