GEORGIA SEED DEVELOPMENT

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Seed for Thought

Roger Boerma ,Executive Director

Do you ever think about the rewards of commitment and dedication? I believe that both of these traits are major catalysts in the pathway to success. Recently, this was reinforced for me one beautiful April evening when Cindy and I attended a party to celebrate Steve Finnerty's 40 years of service to the University of Georgia.

Although Steve was born and raised in Athens his family has strong ties to their family farm in Missouri. This was likely the reason Steve chose a career in agricultural research. Since the late 1970's he was responsible for the soybean nematode resistance research project. Dr. Richard Hussey and I hired Steve to help in the development of resistant soybean varieties that would the overcome the yield losses that were occurring from soybean cyst and root-knot nematodes.

I need to mention that Steve is a man of few words. I would characterize him as a person that leads through his actions rather than words. It is easy to undervalue the contributions and leadership qualities of these individuals. During the evening Steve's son, daughter, and friends provided their views on Steve's approach to life, contributions, and friendship. They all emphasized his dedication and commitment to his family, job, friends, and Christian beliefs. Their comments got me thinking of Steve's success at UGA and his contributions to agriculture.

When Steve started his position there were no root-knot nematode resistant soybean varieties. His initial efforts contributed to the identification of resistance to three species of root-knot nematode and the development of an efficient greenhouse screening protocol. The screening protocol is now employed by public and industry soybean breeders around the world and also used by breeders of other crops. This protocol allowed him to annually screen between 17,000 and 20,000 soybean lines. If you do the math, he has screened over 750,000 breeding lines in his career. His continued efforts resulted in the release of over 30 root-knot and soybean cyst nematode resistant soybean varieties for the Southeast. The root-knot nematode resistance in the current Monsanto, Pioneer, and Syngenta soybean varieties traces their resistance to Steve's research.

Steve has also trained numerous undergraduate and graduate students, post-doctoral associates, and visiting breeders on how to efficiently screen for nematode resistance. Many of these individuals are now running their own public- or private-sector breeding programs. Not bad for a person of few words!

Steve's significant contributions in the various aspects of his life were all driven by his steadfast dedication and commitment. We all want to be a success in our respective businesses or professions. I believe Steve Finnerty's example provides us with a straightforward blueprint to reach that goal.

Licensing

SIGN HERE

Blake Fleeman, Licensing/Marketing Manger

Licensing activity has been steady over the last couple of months. We have executed 8 new licenses for the new Georgia-16HO peanut variety and 3 for the new TifNV- High O/L peanut variety. We also executed 7 other agreements for some of the older GA peanut varieties. Brent Marable and I are currently working on agreements for the three new soybean lines along with finishing up two new wheat agreements. Several other agreements for turfgrass, blueberries, and horticultural varieties have been completed in the past few months.

Marketing

Blake Fleeman, Licensing/Marketing Manger

The Golf Industry Show was in Orlando FL this year and we had the debut of a new display booth at the show. The new display was for the Georgia Integrated Cultivar Release System (GICRS). The new display represents the two turfgrass breeding programs at UGA and the current licensed varieties developed from the programs. GICRS also had a display at the National Peanut Buying Point meeting in Tampa FL. GICRS was represented by Billy Skaggs at this meeting. At the end of March I attended the Southern AOSCA meeting in Starkville MS with Terry Hollifield and Billy Skaggs. The meeting was very well attended and I was able to talk with representatives of other Southern Foundation Seed Programs. I will be taking the new GICRS turfgrass display to the S.E. Turfgrass Conference in Tifton on May 16th.

Education

Blake Fleeman, Licensing/Marketing Manger

We hosted Dr. Donglin Zhang's Plant Propagation class on February 23rd in Athens. Dr. Zhang's class (*pictured right*) had 18 students in it this year. The class first met in the conference room for a slide presentation and then moved into the processing plant for a tour of the machinery, warehouse, and cold storage facility. This year since the class was earlier than in past years we were able to show them the seed cleaning machinery in operation along with the new color sorter. The students really enjoyed getting to see these machines in operation. We will have several members of the Athens staff attending the Southeastern Turfgrass Conference in Tifton on May 16th.

Processing/Production

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

2017 SMALL GRAINS PRODUCTION

Foundation wheat plantings in Athens for 2017 totaled a little over 170 acres consisting of seven different varieties. Also planted was 45 acres of Foundation rye. Our Plains location has planted four wheat varieties resulting in a total of 110 acres. In addition, Plains has 10 acres each of two different oat varieties. In 2017 we have experienced a warm, wet winter in Georgia and we will once again try to stay ahead of FHB (scab). Athens has completed conditioning the Foundation Tifton 9 bahiagrass seed and the purity is excellent. We are still waiting on the germination results for Tifton 9. The Foundation TifQuik bahiagrass seed has already been conditioned and purity and germination are both good.

2016 SOYBEAN PRODUCTION

We have plans to produce two soybean varieties this year, G12PR-63R2 and G13LL-44.

2017 PEANUT UPDATE

We have shipped over 95% of our 2016 Crop Foundation Peanut Seed (05/10/2017). Our 2017 Foundation acreage is about 50% planted. The first peanuts were planted on 4/15 and for a change we have quite a few acres planted in April. Peanut planting is back under away after a break the first week of May that saw rain, below normal temps, and cooling soils. Our 2017 production plan consist of the following: GA 06G- 1,115 acres/ 5,500,000 lbs. , GA 14 N-100 acres /500,000 lbs., GA 13M-25 acres/100,000 lbs., GA 16 HO - 100 acres, Tif NV HI-O/L -50, GA 11J - 25 acres , GA 122540- 5 acres (new normal oleic medium maturating runner), GA 082549 - 2 acres (new high oleic, nematode resistant spanish).

PECAN PRODUCTION

We harvested pecan graftwood in January and February at the UGA Horticulture Farm and from trees in South Georgia for distribution to licensees.

FOUNDATION TURFGRASS

Turf sales kept us busy last summer and it appears that this summer will be very similar. We are in the process of increasing production of TifEagle and Tifway at the Iron Horse Farm. The spring freeze that we had set all of our fields here in Athens (*pictured right*) back but they are finally almost completely recovered and greened back up. We have already distributed some TifTuf to licensees here in the USA and one to Japan. Currently, there are five orders for Tifway and three orders for TifEagle.

New Faces at Georgia Seed Development

Georgia Seed Development would like to introduce our new Foundation Seed Technician Mr. Buddy Parker. Buddy hails from Pendergrass Georgia. He has a background in agriculture, one that started in FFA while attending school and grew into working on a farm gaining valuable knowledge and skill sets. Buddy began work with GSD in February and we are pleased to have him as part of our organization.

Mr. Buddy Parker

The 2017 Georgia Seed Development/Georgia Crop Improvement Internships have been given to Mr. Alex Gilreath and Mr. Matthew Hart. Alex is a rising Junior at ABAC studying Diversified Agriculture while Matthew is a Junior at the UGA studying Agriscience and Environmental Systems. The internship provides an opportunity to learn about varietal development and commercialization, seed and turfgrass production, ornamental plant propagation, certification, and foundation seed and plant programs. Students will work alongside GSD and GCIA staff to participate in the process of taking a new variety to the marketplace.

Mr. Alex Gilreath

Mr. Matthew Hart

Important Dates

***Georgia Seed Development Semiannual Board Meeting**, Americus, GA, May 24, 2017
***AOSCA**, Cleveland, OH, June 11-14, 2017
***Alabama-Georgia Seed Association**, Sandestin, FL, July 9-10, 2017
***Peanut Growers Conference**, Sandestin, FL, July 20-22, 2017
***American Peanut Shellers Assoc. & National Peanut Buying Points Assoc. Pre Harvest Joint Convention**, Lake Blackshear, GA, August 1-2, 2017

Georgia Seed Development is a proud member of Georgia Grown, a program of the Georgia Department of Agriculture. http://georgiagrown.com