



Athens Seed Facility  
2420 S. Milledge Avenue  
Athens, GA 30605  
706-552-4525

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www.gsdc.com  
Editor: Erin Montgomery

Plains Peanut Facility  
1547 US Hwy 280 W  
Plains, GA 31780  
229-824-7881

## Seed for Thought

### Roger Boerma, Executive Director

I recently received a complaint from a soybean licensee regarding some treated wheat seed and some splotches of seed treatment on some soybeans in a bulk bag of their untreated Foundation soybean seed. After thanking the licensee for bringing the problem to my attention, I called a meeting with the GSD production manager and seed conditioning supervisor to determine how our internal quality control procedures had not identified this issue prior to shipment.



This situation reminded me of an article that I had read in a 2011 issue of the business magazine, Inc. The article was authored by the magazine's staff and was entitled "What Does It Mean to Be A Quality-Focused Company?" The article stated five habits of quality-focused companies: i) set clear expectations, ii) collect and analyze data, iii) invest in capacity, iv) promote from within, and v) celebrate victories.

I have spent some time attempting to evaluate how GSD ranks for these five metrics. I believe GSD's core values clearly establishes our expectations: Professionalism through integrity, honesty, openness, and fairness shall guide our actions by: i) respecting our customers and co-workers, ii) devotion to leadership, teamwork, and service, iii) creating value by producing quality products, iv) fostering stewardship, loyalty, and accountability, v) promoting continuous learning, and vi) hiring, training, and promoting the very best.

In my opinion we are not up to speed in the collection and analysis of data from our licensees, although we have recently expanded our on-site visits with them to enhance communications. I believe GSD has a very strong record the past decade in expanding our capacity. We have greatly expanded our peanut receiving, drying, and shelling capacity along with our turfgrass harvesting and seed transport capabilities. This expanded capacity has allowed us to focus attention on exceeding expectations rather than simply meeting the minimum requirements. I believe GSD has strong record of promotion from within the organization. We have filled 11 positions in the past 7 years and over 50% of these were promotions from within GSD. When appropriate for the business, this approach empowers employees that already understand the mission, core values, and products of GSD and helps to reduce the employee turnover rate.

The last practice mentioned in the article was that quality-focused companies celebrate victories. When quality-focused companies are successful, everyone from the newest employee to the Executive Director share in the company's positive accomplishments. In response to increased efficiencies and productivity at GSD the Board of Directors has supported significant improvements to its employee compensation and benefits program. I want to close by again thanking the licensee for bringing this oversight to my attention. This provided me the opportunity to share with the GSD staff and with you how GSD views its expectations and responsibilities. I believe this approach will allow GSD to continue to serve this and our many other licensees for years to come. Is your organization considered quality-focused?

## Licensing



**Blake Fleeman, Licensing/Marketing Manger**

The licensing activity has been running at steady pace for the past two and a half months. We have had request for seven new peanut variety licenses during this period. These agreements have been fully executed. UGARF and GSD are working with several current licensees on modifications to their existing licenses.

## Marketing

**Blake Fleeman, Licensing/Marketing Manger**



The trade show and conference schedule has slowed a bit in the last few months. I was able to attend the Turf Producers International (TPI) meeting this year in Tucson AZ. During the meeting I was able to meet with some of our international licensees that didn't attend the Golf Industry Show earlier in February. Roger and I attended the Southern Seed Certification /Alabama Crop Improvement meeting in Auburn AL. We were able to visit some of our Alabama and Florida licensees during this meeting. In March several of the GSD employees from Athens and Plains attended the GCIA annual meeting in Athens. I was also able to attend the AOSCA Southern Regional Meeting in Richmond VA in April. At this meeting I was able to visit with representatives from other southern Foundation seed organizations and tour the Virginia Foundation Seed Farm in Mount Holly VA. In April, Roger and Doug Batchelder attended the Southeastern Turfgrass Conference in Tifton GA. In the next few months I plan to visit with some of our current licensees and other foundation seed organizations.

## 2018 GEORGIA SEED DEVELOPMENT/GEORGIA CROP IMPROVEMENT INTERNSHIP

We are pleased to introduce the GSD/GCIA interns for the summer of 2018. Pictured below (from left to right) are Amanda Marabesi, Anna Hartley, and Dylan Stewart. Amanda, of Limeira, Sao Paulo, is a UGA Graduate Student with a major in Agricultural and Environmental Education. Anna, of Moultrie GA, is a UGA Graduate Student with a major in Agricultural and Environmental Education. Dylan, of Peachtree City GA, is a UGA Junior majoring in Agribusiness. We are thrilled to have these three excellent individuals with us for the summer.



## Processing/Production

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

### 2018 SMALL GRAINS PRODUCTION

**Plains:** Wheat in the Plains area is really drying down fast, but with the current forecast it looks like that is about to change. Our most mature varieties are in the soft dough stage, so maybe they can stand a week of rain without a significant loss in seed quality. At this point I am seeing very little Fusarium Head Blight development. We have the following varieties in production: ‘Baldwin’, ‘SH 5550’, GA 13LE31, GA 13LE43, ‘AGS 3000’, GA 15LE3, GA 15LE29, LA 9225-C, LA 150-241, LA150-62 5, LA 8080-C, and GA 15E47.

**Athens:** This year we have nine different Foundation wheat increases in North Georgia: 14E19, 14E45, 14E53, L11544, ‘AGS2035’, ‘AGS2038’, ‘AGS2024’, ‘Savoy’, and 2010E2914. All of our fields were treated at flowering with a fungicide and insecticide. We have experienced excellent wheat growing conditions so far and appear to have escaped any serious Fusarium Head Blight development. We are hoping the prediction for the next 7 or 8 straight days of rainfall does not cause serious quality deterioration.

### 2018 SOYBEAN PRODUCTION

We have plans to produce two soybean varieties this year: ‘AGS Woodruff’ and G13LL-44.

### 2018 PEANUT PRODUCTION

As of 15 May we have shipped out about 95 % of the 4.6 million lbs. of the 2017 crop of Foundation peanut seed. The 2018 planting of our Foundation peanut seed got off to a slow start. Late April was cool and wet, then in May it turned hot and dry. Our first Foundation peanut fields were planted on 2 May and by 12 May 75% of our Foundation peanut fields were planted, which will likely make the fall harvest season really exciting. Planting has slowed due to dry soils and now having to irrigate to obtain a stand. The forecasted rain that our wheat crop really doesn’t need is welcomed on our peanut fields.



Our 2018 crop production plan is as follows: 1,100 acres ‘GA 06G’, 100 acres ‘GA 16HO’, 100 acres of ‘TIF NV’, 70 acres GA 122540, 50 acres of ‘GA 14N’, 25 acres of ‘GA 11J’, and 6 acres of GA 122706. Alabama Crop Improvement Association in Headland, AL will be maintaining the Foundation seed production for ‘Tifguard’, ‘GA 09B’, ‘GA 12Y’, ‘GA Greener’, and ‘GA 07W’.

### 2018 TURFGRASS PRODUCTION

Foundation turf distribution kept us busy last summer and it appears that this summer will be very similar. All of our Foundation turf fields around the state have recovered from the wild temperature fluctuations and cold weather that we experienced this spring with the exception of some of the fields that were harvested late in the fall. We have already distributed most of our inventory of Foundation ‘TifTuf’ to licensees as well as most of our supply of Foundation ‘Tifway’. Currently, we have additional orders for Foundation ‘TifEagle’, ‘TifTuf’, and ‘Tifway’.



**Processing/Production cont.**

**2018 PECAN PRODUCTION**

We harvested Foundation pecan graft wood (*Buddy Parker pictured below left*) in January and February at the UGA Horticulture Farm and from trees from South Georgia plantations for distribution to licensees.



**2018 BLUEBERRY PRODUCTION**

We harvested two blueberry varieties, ‘Georgia Dawn’ and ‘Suziblue’ (*pictured above right*), in April for a licensee in South Georgia. Both are very desirable early bearing southern highbush cultivars that produce an abundance of excellent quality fruit.

**Education**

**Blake Fleeman, Licensing/Marketing Manager**

On 26 and 27 February GSD and GCIA held a Board of Directors and Advisory Committee Member Retreat in Macon GA for both organizations. After the dinner on Monday evening, Attorney Daniel C. Haygood from Watkinsville, GA gave a presentation on the Fiduciary Obligations of Association Directors. The retreat continued the next morning with various presentation showing how UGA, UGARF, GCIA and GSD work together to promote and bring new UGA-developed cultivars to the marketplace.

**Upcoming Events**

\*2018 Annual AOSCA Meeting  
Atlanta, GA June 24-27

\*Georgia/Alabama Seed Association Annual Convention  
Saint Simons, GA July 9-10, 2018

\*Southern Peanut Growers Conference  
Sandestin, FL July 19-21, 2018

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