



## **Seed for Thought**

### **Roger Boerma, Executive Director**

Recently, one of my childhood friends passed away. He was 76 years old and fortunately had lived a full life with family, friends, and a strong community involvement. His death caused me to reflect on our shared experiences. One of those experiences was backing a friend's camper into our farm pond. By the time I arrived home the next morning my dad was already aware of the event. I remember telling him that he had never told me to stay away from the soft mud on the edge of the pond. It was not a great excuse, but the best I could do at the time. I can still remember his response, "Son, I do not have to tell you everything, some things are simply common sense."

This memory made me think about the May 2019 Seed for Thought where I reflected on what ever happened to common sense. My concerns at the time were the Bayer's Roundup court cases, illegal immigration, and how there appeared to be an inverse relationship between ones' level of education and common sense.

As I reflected on the issue, I wondered if our Society had improved in its level of common sense during the past 4 years. Some of my resulting thoughts included: i) teachers being removed from the classroom for refusing to use the student's preferred pronouns, ii) mayors of our major cities believe the answer to run-away crime, including murder, is to defund the police, iii) biological men that declare themselves as females are allowed to compete in women's sport events and even use women's locker rooms and rest rooms, iv) parents challenging local school board policies are considered domestic terrorists, v) the U.S. Congress cannot agree on necessary laws, but is willing to allow the Executive Branch to run the country via Executive Orders, and vi) the U.S. public debt. I could go on, but I think you can see the trend.

I believe the deterioration of our collective common sense has continued and even accelerated. We have not reached the critical point where an adequate number of U.S. citizens realize the current approach is unsustainable and causing great damage to our country. As I mentioned in 2019 Seed for Thought, until we regain confidence in the value of scientifically tested information and utilize our religious and other value systems to properly interpret the consequence of this information on our Society, common sense will not prevail. Working together science can help us separate fact from opinion (i.e., knowledge) and religion can help us to determine right from wrong (i.e., wisdom).

## A BRIEFING FROM BLAKE

Blake Fleeman, Licensing/Marketing Manager

### Licensing

This has been a busy spring for licensing peanut varieties. UGARF and GSD have completed 11 license agreements for the new TIFNV-HG peanut variety from Dr. Holbrook's breeding program. We also completed 11 license agreements for the Georgia-21GR and Georgia-18RU varieties from Dr. Branch's peanut breeding program.

### Marketing/Meetings

In February Caleb and I attended the Alabama Crop Improvement Association/ Southern Seed Certification Association annual meeting. We were able to meet with several licensees of current UGA released varieties. The Georgia Crop Improvement Association's annual meeting was next on the calendar. We had seven GSD staff members attending the meeting in Athens. The meeting had a good attendance and program. Next, Terry Hollifield, Billy Skaggs, and I attended the Southern AOSCA meeting in Fort Myers FL. Representatives from most of the Southern AOSCA member agencies attended the meeting along with representatives from the Southern Foundation Seed Programs. The meeting included a half day field day for turfgrass training at Bethel Farms near Arcadia FL.

This spring I helped arrange a tour for one of our licensees of Dr. Mergoum's wheat breeding program in Plains, GA. The licensee and I looked at potential wheat releases and toured the different State-wide Variety Trials being conducted in Plains GA. This meeting provided the opportunity to have one-on-one discussions with the licensee and determine the characteristics the licensee was looking for in a new wheat variety for their market area.

### Education

Caleb and I attended the Blueberry Field Day the middle of April organized by the new UGA blueberry breeder, Dr. Ye (Juliet) Chu. During the field day we toured the Alapaha Research Farm and learned about Dr. Chu's vision for the blueberry breeding program (*pictured below*).



## GSDC SAFETY UPDATE

### Caleb Warrington, Senior Director of Operations

Employee safety continues to be a priority at Georgia Seed Development (GSD). Last Fall, GSD selected Safe Workforce Development (Watkinsville, GA) as a provider of safety training for employees in Athens and Plains. They provide training, consulting, and on-site services. In October, the Director of Safe Workforce Development conducted informal safety reviews for the Plains and Athens facilities. These reviews included confirmation of OSHA programs and training under the Occupational Safety and Health Standards per the Federal Government. Both sites were visited, and safety reports were generated. Based on these reports GSD was able to identify a number of hazards and remedies.

On January 12, 2023, eight GSD employees completed a 5-hour CPR training course in Plains. Certification was through the American Heart Association's Heart Saver Total training course, which is OSHA compliant. This course included CPR, use of an AED (automated external defibrillator), choking recognition and response, and general first aid. Since the training, AED devices have been installed in both the Athens and Plains plants.

In February, Corey Booth attended a fall protection training at the Safe Workforce Training Center in Watkinsville GA. The course consisted of both classroom and hands-on exercises designed to familiarize him with hazard recognition and control, setting up different systems, plans for rescue, and how to comply with fall protection standards. As the competent person for fall protection at GSD, Corey will identify hazards and take corrective actions in the Athens and Plains locations.

On May 23, ten GSD employees completed confined space entry and non-entry rescue training with Safe Workforce (*pictured right*). The instruction consisted of classroom and hands-on practical training and was in accordance with OSHA Confined Space Entry training. Topics included atmospheric, chemical, engulfment hazards, and confined space rescue. Safe Workforce Development provided a training tank and GSD employees were able to simulate a confined space rescue using a 4:1 pulley and a winch system. This training allowed us to identify key risk factors for confined spaces in Plains and Athens which include elevator pits and grain bins.



Since the initial safety evaluation by Safe Workforce Development in the fall, both the Athens and Plains sites have posted OSHA 300A Summary report forms, which is a summary of work-related injuries and illnesses. All past OSHA 300 logs for GSD were compiled and have been filed in Athens. This is something that we will keep current; these will be updated any time there are work-related incidents. We will continue with trainings in the coming year including additional fall protection training, hearing, respiratory, and electrical safety.

## **Processing/Production**

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

#### **FOUNDATION PEANUT**

Our Foundation peanut acreage goal for 2023 is 2,134 acres. We will grow 10 varieties of peanuts in addition to 2 one-acre purity increases, 10 breeder line increases for Dr. Branch and 3 breeder line increases for Dr. Holbrook for a total of 25 lines (Tif Jumbo seed will be carried over in the cold room). Our goal for farmer stock is approximately 5,000 tons which is an increase of 700 tons from 2022. We will have 10 varieties planted on acreage ranging from 20 acres to 1,370 acres and 15 varieties planted on acreage ranging from 0.07 acres to 5 acres.

This year we will plan to add a transfer station to our Plains facility which will allow for some growers outside of our immediate growing radius to bring peanuts into our plant from the field on hopper bottom trailers and transfer the peanuts directly on to 21' drying trailers. We will have 640 acres of 06G grown in South Georgia along with 115 acres of 18RU, 15 acres of CB7, and 135 acres of 20VHO. Our Federal/State Inspection Service building is scheduled for completion this summer. GSD, along with Alabama Crop Improvement Association and Florida Foundation Seed Growers, will implement a new farmer stock software program to generate the necessary reports for our 2023 Foundation peanut crops.

#### **FOUNDATION TURFGRASS**

Our Foundation turfgrass fields experienced challenging growing conditions this spring with the cool, wet weather. We also experienced significant winter kill with the paspalums being hit particularly hard from the cold snap in late December. We have still not achieved 100% green-up in Athens, but with another week or two of higher daytime and nighttime temperatures we should get there. Despite the adverse conditions, we have still been able to fill several domestic orders of Tifway, TifTuf, and TifEagle. In fact, we are already sold out of Foundation Tifway and TifEagle in Athens and are awaiting grow back to fill more orders this season. We anticipate several international shipments over the summer as well as domestic orders for Tif3D.

#### **2022 SOYBEAN PROCESSING**

We have plans to produce six soybean varieties this year; AGS 6777C, P70GO21, P70GRO21, P60GO21, as well as increases for two new releases from Dr. Li's program. These include a conventional line with high yield potential as well as resistance to peanut and Japanese root knot nematodes, frogeye leaf spot, and stem canker and a Roundup Ready 2 Xtend soybean with good yield potential and resistance to southern and Japanese root knot nematodes and frogeye leaf spot.

#### **2023 SMALL GRAINS PRODUCTION**

Foundation wheat is progressing nicely this year with most fields harvested. Yields look to be good. We experienced widespread issues from weeds this year. The problems originated from wild hog damage in Plains that caused dormant turnips to sprout. In addition, the usual problems of rye from uncleaned fertilizer trucks and wild radish or vetch caused by too much rain and improperly timed herbicide applications. We have spent considerable time the past few weeks working through these issues and will continue to do so up until harvest. We hope to harvest approximately 3,300 bushels of Foundationwheat in Athens and about 2,000 bushels in Plains.

## SIGHTS AROUND GEORGIA SEED



*Go Wheat 2023 Foundation Field near Plains, GA*



*Johnson Wheat Foundation Field near Orchard Hill, GA.*



*TifTuf Foundation Field in Marshallville, GA*



*Tifway Harvest at UGA Iron Horse Farm*

### UPCOMING EVENTS

UGA Soybean Field Day  
June 30, 2023, Tifton, GA

Alabama-Georgia Seedsmen Conference  
July 24-26, 2023, Saint Simons, GA

Southern Peanut Growers Conference  
July 27-30, 2023, Sandestin, FL

