



## Seed for Thought

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

Have you heard of the terms diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)? What is your or your business' DEI quotient? These terms are dominating a great deal of discussion in Federal government, large corporations, universities, and professional organizations. Over 2 years ago I decided not to renew my membership in a national professional society of which I had been a member since 1968. My decision was based on their decree that DEI was their major goal for the year. How does a dues-paying membership organization encourage its participants to embrace its DEI goals? Simply said it cannot, but it looks good to members and non-members alike.

Recently, a university plant breeder came to me and questioned what GSD, as a stakeholder, could do to assist in addressing the oversized influence DEI is having on the hiring of university administrators and faculty members. Like other society's aspirational goals, the challenge for DEI is nailing down its definition. It means different things to different individuals, groups, and organizations. It reminds me of the word sustainability. An esteemed UGA professor once told me that you cannot measure something you cannot define. The problem with these types of societal and cultural ideals is if you cannot define and measure them you can never determine when, or even if, you have achieved enough of them.

It alarms me to observe how inconsistent organizations are when it comes to applying DEI approaches. In DEI centric organizations there appears an obvious conflict between the concepts of merit and DEI. For example, universities are among the most DEI conscious organizations when hiring administrators and faculty but not concerned when hiring football coaches and awarding athletic scholarships.

It seems to me the organizations that are most concerned with DEI issues are organizations that operate with other people's money. This is clearly the case with the Federal government, universities, professional organizations, and large publicly traded corporations. They want to repair perceived societal wrongs with other people's money, regardless of the outcome.



## A BRIEFING FROM BLAKE

Blake Fleeman, Licensing/Marketing Manager

### Licensing

The licensing activity has begun to pick up with people starting to think about spring and which peanut varieties they want to plant this year. We have had several requests for license agreements for the two newest peanuts (Georgia-21GR and TIFNV-HG) and some of the older ones also. UGARF and GSD also just finalized the agreement with the licensee for 12-TG-101 (TIF3D) bermudagrass.

### Marketing/Meetings

The first industry meeting this year was the Soybean /Small grains expo in Perry, Georgia during December. Attendance was good for this early meeting and the lineup of speakers was excellent. January brought the start of another busy time for GSD for trade shows and industry meetings. Roger and I attended the Southeast Regional Fruit & Vegetable Conference in Savannah, GA. As in the past the show was very well attended. I attended the Southern Seed Association meeting this year in Florida. I was elected to serve on the board of the Southern Seed Association as the Georgia representative. While at the show I was able to spend some time with some of our licensees from all over the Southern region. The Georgia Peanut Farm Show was the next stop on the circuit. Roger, Caleb, JT, and I were present for the show. While at there we engaged with producers with questions about the new varieties like Georgia-21GR and TIFNV-HG and the old standard Georgia-06G.

Once the month of January ended, the trade show and meeting schedule began to slow down. The Golf Course Superintendent Association of America Show (GCSAA) in Orlando, FL was the first show in February in which we used the GICRS booth. I was joined in the booth by Mrs. Shelley Fincher, Dr. Paul Raymer, and Dr. Brian Schwartz. The attendance for the show this year was up 70% from the 2022 event. The increase in attendance allowed us to see many of the current domestic and International turfgrass licensees at the show. We had several people inquiring about licensing UGA grasses internationally. A week after the GCSAA was the Turfgrass Producers International show (TPI) in Nashville, TN. The attendance at the TPI show had a good turnout with almost 600 people in attendance. Here I was able to meet with a producer from Australia and a potential new producer from Turkey.

*(pictured right: GICRS booth at the GCSAA trade show with Ken Morrow, Paul Raymer, Mel Williams, and Blake Fleeman)*



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### Education

On February 25, GSD hosted Dr. Donglin Zhang's HORT3620: Plant Propagation class. Dr. Zhang had a large group this year; with 26 students in the class. Roger started thing off with a presentation about GSD in the conference room. The class was then split up into two groups for presentations in the plant. Corey showed the group the seed cleaner and all the other specialized equipment on it. Caleb showed the group the Almaco combine (*pictured page 5*) and the Koro for grass harvesting. Caleb also showed them examples of a lot of the different seeds we currently are conditioning and licensing.

**REMINDERS: [GSDC/GCIA SUMMER INTERNSHIP APPLICATIONS](#) ARE DUE MARCH 17, 2023.**

**2023 GEORGIA SEED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM TO ENHANCE PLANT BREEDING PROPOSALS ARE DUE APRIL 14, 2023**

### GSDC SAFETY UPDATE

Caleb Warrington, Senior Director of Operations

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 by Tracey Crawford 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.

On January 12, 2023, 8 GSD employees (Doug Batchelder, Corey Booth, Caleb Warrington, Colby Rustin, Justin Jones, Payton Johnston, Buddy Parker, and Alex Gilreath) 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 Athens and Plains.

Corey Booth attended a fall protection competent person training at the Safe Workforce Training Center in Watkinsville on February 22nd . The course consisted of both classroom and hands-on exercises designed to familiarize 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 Athens and Plains.

GSD plans to provide Athens and Plains-based employees with confined space entry (CSE) and grain elevator shaft rescue training in the first part of May in Plains. Safe Workforce Development will provide a training tank for this exercise.

## Processing/Production

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

#### **FOUNDATION PEANUT**

Shelling began December 5, 2022. We have shelled 56% of our farmer stock inventory (8,631,634 lbs.) and have 33% of our inventory treated (5,125,807 lbs.). We continue to maintain a split log for each lot and check the splits going into our final product multiple times per day. Our preliminary germination reports indicated that we could shell and treat our GA 06G simultaneously. We began to shell and treat GA 06G on January 24, 2023. Seed quality is great despite the drought we experienced during early weeks of summer of 2022.

#### **FOUNDATION TURFGRASS**

All of the turf plots in Athens and at the Iron Horse Farm are doing well and lie dormant and weed free at this time. We will apply a round of spring pre-emergence weed control along with an application of lime on several of the varieties. They will be ready for spring Foundation sprig distribution and we are taking domestic and international orders already.

#### **2022 SOYBEAN PROCESSING**

We are processing five soybean varieties in Athens totaling a little more than 3,000 bushels that were grown in 2022; SH 7418LL, AGS Woodruff conventional, G17PR-1053HOLLR1, G17PR-1207HOLL conventional, and G15PR-340 conventional. So far, we have completed processing SH 7418LL, G17PR-1053HOLLR1, AGS Woodruff, and G17PR-1207HOLL, and are awaiting lab results. We have 1100 bushels total left of the remaining three varieties to process and anticipate being finished conditioning soybeans mid-March.

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

Foundation small grain plantings for this year total 310 acres in Lavonia and Plains. Total acreage is a little less than last year. We are producing Foundation wheat of 7 different licensed varieties. In addition, there are also two public varieties (Ga Gore wheat and Wrens Abruzzi rye) of Foundation small grains being produced. We are increasing four new wheat lines from Dr. Mergoum's UGA program as well as one from Dr. Harrison at LSU. Fields across the state have more than adequate moisture at this time and we are scouting for insect, disease, fertility as well as any weed problems.

#### **2023 PECAN HARVEST**

We have collected and distributed graftwood cuttings for Dr. Conner's variety 'Avalon' to a licensee.  
*(pictured on page 5)*

SIGHTS AROUND GEORGIA SEED



*Avalon graftwood cutting in Adel, GA*



*LA754 Foundation Field in Plains, GA*



*Riverland wheat field in Lavonia, GA*



*Caleb with Dr. Zhang's HORT3620 class*

UPCOMING EVENTS

Georgia Crop Improvement Annual Meeting  
March 1, 2023, Athens, GA

Southern AOSCA Meeting  
March 28-29, 2023, Fort Meyers, FL

Georgia Seed Development Semi-Annual Meeting  
May 24, 2023 Americus, GA

