

MARKET BULLETIN

Vol. 94 • Num. 2

January 16, 2020

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FUNDING, NETWORKING AVAILABLE FOR SC FARMER-VETERANS

BY EVA MOORE

South Carolina is home to thousands of veterans who farm: More than 4,700 Palmetto State farms have a principal producer who's served in the military, according to the latest Census of Agriculture. And those veterans should know about the resources offered by the national nonprofit Farmer Veteran Coalition.

Helping veterans who farm isn't just a way to repay them for their service, according to Sarah Dachos, deputy director of the Farmer Veteran Coalition. It's a way to save farming.

"The average age of a US farmer is 57, and for every two that retire, only one goes into farming," she notes. Meanwhile, while rural Americans make up one-sixth of the US population, they make up a much higher proportion of the military: Some 45 percent of people in military service are from rural America.

"And most go home after they serve," Dachos says. "How can we entice them and support them to solve this crisis in agriculture in America?"

The Farmer Veteran Coalition is one answer to that question. Founded in 2007, the nonprofit offers various assistance, including discounts from agricultural suppliers like Kubota and Growers Supply, and grants of up to \$5,000 to veterans to help them start or manage a farm.

"The grants can be used for anything that's going to help you on the farm. It could be used to build a well, to buy Christmas trees, to buy cattle, buy fences, buy seeds," Dachos says. "Really the sky's the limit as long as it's a tangible, physical thing a farmer can use to help him or her get off the ground, or to continue some momentum."

The coalition also manages the Homegrown By Heroes program, a branding campaign that identifies veteran-owned agricultural products to consumers.

One South Carolina veteran making use of the Homegrown By Heroes program is Jay Boutchyard, a US Army veteran and an employee of the South Carolina Department of Agriculture. He runs a small farm, Freedom Acres, where he grows muscadines, hot peppers, and gourmet mushrooms.



Jay Boutchyard's farm Freedom Acres is part of both the Homegrown By Heroes and Certified South Carolina programs.

"My farm is Homegrown By Heroes certified," Boutchyard says. "From a branding perspective, it's great, because a lot of people try to support veteran-owned businesses. I could have the same product as someone

next to me and they'd pick mine."

South Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers says the Homegrown By Heroes program is a natural fit for South Carolina.

"Veterans have done so much for our country — I'm happy there's something we can all do in return," Weathers says. "I know South Carolinians stand ready to support veterans, and Homegrown by Heroes helps them do just that."

The Farmer Veteran Coalition is hoping to launch a South Carolina chapter, and will hold a networking meeting on Feb. 11 in West Columbia. Representatives of organizations that serve veterans and farmers will attend, including Farm Bureau, USDA, Palmetto Agribusiness Council, Clemson Extension, College of Charleston, Farm Credit and SCDA. Lunch will be prepared by Brandon Velie, chef and owner of the farm-to-table restaurant Juniper in Ridge Spring and a veteran of the US Marine Corps.

COMMISSIONER'S CORNER

HUGH E. WEATHERS

SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE



SC HEMP ENTERS YEAR 3

On February 1, we'll start taking applications for the 2020 hemp growing season.

This will be the third year of hemp farming in South Carolina, and we've learned a lot since the General Assembly gave 20 farmers the opportunity to grow 20 acres each of this crop under the Industrial Hemp Pilot Program back in 2018. By the end of 2019, we had 114 hemp farmers and 43 processors under what's now called the Hemp Farming Program.

I'll admit, sometimes I get tired of talking about hemp. As Blanche hears my phone and other conversations, she says it is the "word of the day" — every day! But I also find it fascinating, because it's not that often you get to see a brand-new crop come on the scene and help nurture a brand-new industry.

This year will bring some big changes for hemp farmers, as USDA recently released its national regulatory framework for hemp production, something called the interim final rule. I share the concerns of some of our growers about the plan, concerns I submitted to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue in a recent letter.

To put it simply, under current state law, farmers can sample their own crop within 30 days of harvest and submit the samples for testing to a lab of their choice. Under the proposed federal rule, SCDA staff would have to do the sampling within 15 days of harvest, and

testing would have to be done by a DEA-registered lab — and currently, there's only one in the state. I worry this will cause bottlenecks and difficulties scheduling the harvest, and I've asked USDA to reconsider.

Some other flexibilities found in our current state law will be eliminated as well, such as how the samples are taken from the hemp plant. It's all designed so that the buying public will have a clear distinction between industrial hemp and its cannabis cousin, marijuana.

At the same time, the federal rule should ease some problems. For example, going forward, even states without a hemp program have to allow transport of hemp across their borders, so farmers and processors should have an easier time doing business.

Beyond the regulatory changes, the hemp market continues to have uncertainty. The revenue per acre is much less than it was just two years ago and, with continued increases in supply, may still have some downward movement.

Over the next few years, I think we'll start to see the South Carolina hemp industry develop an identity all its own. We'd like our crop to be known for quality and innovation. I admire the farmers who've taken a risk by growing hemp, and we're committed to helping them prosper in the new season.

Hugh Weathers

FARMER-VETERAN COALITION NETWORKING LUNCH

Tuesday, February 11 • 11 am – 2 pm

Phillips Market Center
South Carolina State Farmers Market
117 Ballard Court, West Columbia, SC

RSVP to Sarah Dachos at sarah@farmvetco.org

Membership in the Farmer Veteran Coalition is free.

To join, visit farmvetco.org/membership.

Applications for 2020 grant funding open soon.

For more information, visit farmvetco.org/fvfellowship.

UPCOMING EVENTS

South Carolina Green Industry Association Trade Show

January 21 - 22 • 8 am

Attend our extensive landscape classes, earn pesticide, irrigation, ISA, and Landscape Architect CEU credits, interact with the many vendors, and connect with other landscape professionals. During this event, we also host our Legislative Oyster Roast where we award \$10,000 in scholarships to students in the landscape field.

Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center
1101 Lincoln Street, Columbia

Contact: SC Green Industry Association
803-939-6884 • scgreenindustry@gmail.com
scgreen.org

Columbia Produce Safety Rule Grower Training

January 23 • 8:30 am - 5 pm

Produce growers who must meet the requirements of the FSMA Produce Safety Rule are invited to attend a Produce Safety Rule grower training course.

Phillips Market Center, State Farmers Market
117 Ballard Court, West Columbia

Contact: Brooke Horton
803-351-1244 • bhorton@scda.sc.gov
bit.ly/scpsrColumbia

Beginners Beekeeping Class

February 4 - March 10 • 7 - 9 pm

The Lancaster County Beekeepers Association will be hosting a beginners level beekeeping class starting February 4th, 2020. This class is part of the SC Master Beekeepers Program. We will meet 6 consecutive Tuesdays. Learn the basics for keeping honeybees and become a certified beekeeper. Cost is \$55 per person.

346 Shiloh-Unity Road, Lancaster

Contact: Dale Starnes
803-577-7871 • dixiebeesupply@gmail.com

Anderson County Beekeepers Association Beginner Beekeeping Course

February 11 - March 17 • 6 - 8 pm

Anderson County Beekeepers Association is holding its annual Beginner Beekeeper Course beginning Feb. 11, 2020. Classes are 2 hours in length and will be held each Tuesday for 6 weeks. This course is suitable for the beginner beekeeper or those wanting to learn more about bees and will qualify for the SC Beekeepers Association Master Beekeeper Program. The cost is \$75. Space is limited.

Anderson Federal Credit Union

100 Hanna Crossing, Anderson
Contact: Keith Raines, President
864-380-7787 • acbaofsc@gmail.com
andersonbeekeepers.org

SALES / AUCTIONS

Duke's Auction

January 18 • 9 am

Annual Farm and Construction Auction

1950 Sumter Hwy., Bishopville

Contact: Donald Dukes
803-247-2776 • dukesauctiongroup@att.net
dukesauctiongroup.com

Small Animal Sale

January 25 • 10 am

Poultry, animal related, and farm equipment. 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month.

140 Buffalo Creek Ranch Road, Buffalo

Contact: Judy Cathcart
864-427-9202

Claxton's Auction

January 25 • 11 am - 5 pm

Cows, hogs, equine, goats, sheep, camelots, ratites, poultry, small animals.

18627 Low Country Hwy, Ruffin

Contact: William Claxton
843-909-4285 • wlcjr@yahoo.com

H & S Stockyards

February 8 • 9 am - 3 pm

Misc. farm items and some estate pieces on consignment from the Garris Estate. Small animals and livestock.

12970 Broxton Bridge Rd, Ehrhardt

Contact: Hallman Sease
803-267-7850 • kristish@yahoo.com

Yon Family Farms Spring Cattle Sale

February 15 • 11 am

Offering over 200 bulls at auction, ready for service (Registered Angus, SimAngus, & Ultrablack) and 75 females (pairs, bred cows and bred heifers).

Yon Family Farm, Hwy 392, Ridge Spring

Contact: Lydia Yon
803-622-8597 • lydia@yonfamilyfarms.com
yonfamilyfarms.com

SCDA State Farmers Markets

SOUTH CAROLINA STATE FARMERS MARKET

3483 Charleston Highway
West Columbia, SC 29172
803-737-4664

GREENVILLE STATE FARMERS MARKET

1354 Rutherford Road
Greenville, SC 29609
864-244-4023

PEE DEE STATE FARMERS MARKET

2513 W. Lucas Street
Florence, SC 29501
843-665-5154

VISIT AGRICULTURE.SC.GOV

Click on the State Farmers Markets button for more information about each location

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Fruit & Vegetable Inspection 803-737-4597	Market News Recording 803-737-5900
Fruit & Vegetable Market News 803-737-4497	Metrology Laboratory 803-253-4052

The South Carolina Market Bulletin

(ISSN 0744-3986)

The *Market Bulletin* is published on the first and third Thursday of each month by the SC Department of Agriculture, Wade Hampton Building, Columbia, SC 29201. Periodicals postage paid at Columbia, SC 29201.

Postmaster, send address changes to:
SC Market Bulletin, PO Box 11280, Columbia, SC 29211

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Ads are published free of charge and in good faith. The *Market Bulletin* reserves the right to edit and verify ads but assumes no responsibility for their content.

Ads cannot be accepted from agents, dealers, or commercial businesses, including real estate. Sealed bids, legal notices, or consignment sales are not accepted.

SUBMITTING ADS

No matter the submission method, you must include the advertiser's name, complete address with zip code and county, and phone number with area code with your submission. Do not use all capital letters.

• **Email:** Send ads to marketbulletin@scda.sc.gov. Put the words "Market Bulletin ad" in the subject line.

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• **Fax:** 803-734-0659

The deadline for submitting ads and notices is noon on Tuesday of the week **before** the publication date.

NEXT AD DEADLINE
JANUARY 21 • 12:00 PM

AIMED AT TRAINING EMERGING SC FARMERS, CLEMSON PROGRAM ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

BY CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

COLUMBIA — Farmers getting their feet wet in agribusiness have access to comprehensive entrepreneurial education and business training through a public service program offered by Clemson University.

The South Carolina New and Beginning Farmer Program (SCNBFP) is now accepting applications for the 2020 statewide program.

SCNBFP program is a public education program focused on enabling new and beginning farmers to be successful, productive and innovative members of their local agricultural community by providing them with the tools, knowledge and skills necessary to be successful entrepreneurs, sound business managers, exemplary stewards of the natural environment and successful marketers of the unique products they create.

Most importantly, the SCNBFP seeks to develop individuals who have a sense of pride and enjoy a quality of life as a result of their investment and participation in the industry of South Carolina agriculture. The SCNBFP is managed by Clemson University Cooperative Extension, department of Agribusiness, under the direction of Ben Boyles. The SCNBFP is entering its tenth year and has guided more than 300 emerging farmers through the program with an average graduation rate of 92%.

The cohort program includes a series of 12 core agribusiness workshops to be held centrally at the Lexington County Extension office and are focused on farm business management. Topics include business concept/plan development; financial and risk management; legal and regulatory issues; marketing strategies; personal assessment; and an introduction to federal, state and local agriculture resources.

Core programming will be complemented by regional workshops to be held throughout the state. These workshops will offer important opportunities for local peer and resource networking, as well as provide additional instruction on production and advanced agribusiness topics tailored for each region. All regional workshops are included in the program and are also open to the public. A calendar of regional events will be posted on the SCNBFP website later this spring.

The SCNBFP fills a critical need to train emerging farmers in South Carolina.

“With the average age of SC farmers now up to 59 years, we put our state’s largest industry at risk if we do not invest efforts into encouraging and training the next generation of successful agribusinesses,” program director Boyles said. “At a time when consumer demand for local, high-quality, nutritious farm products is on the rise, there is tremendous opportunity for rural economic development through a thriving local farm and food system.”

The SC New & Beginning Farmer Program is supported by a USDA-Rural Development, Rural Business Development Grant.

Any legal resident of South Carolina, at least 18 years of age, who is just beginning to farm or who has actively farmed for less than 10 consecutive years is eligible to apply for the SCNBFP. As many as 50 applicants will be accepted for the 2020 program. Additional information, including program details, FAQs, workshop schedule, fee structure, and an online application can be found at scnewfarmer.org. Programming is scheduled to run from April through October 2020. The deadline to apply is Feb. 16, 2020.



HEMP AND CBD STILL BANNED FROM COMMERCIAL ANIMAL FEED IN SC

BY SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

COLUMBIA — The South Carolina Department of Agriculture is taking steps to notify consumers and animal feed manufacturers that hemp and cannabidiol (CBD) are not permitted ingredients in animal feed products in South Carolina.

All commercial animal feed products sold in South Carolina must be registered and renewed annually with SCDA, a process that allows the agency to review feed products to make sure they are properly labeled and contain only ingredients that are approved for use in animal feed.

Ingredients used in animal feed in the United States undergo a scientific review by the FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine prior to being allowed for sale or distribution in the US. Currently, hemp and CBD have not undergone that review. The FDA affirmed its position in a statement released November 25, 2019: “Based on the lack of scientific information supporting the safety of CBD in food, the FDA ... cannot conclude that CBD is generally recognized as safe (GRAS) among qualified experts for its use in human or animal food.”

Over the past year, SCDA has been educating store owners that commercial feed products containing hemp and CBD are illegal and should not be sold.

Beginning Jan. 3, 2020, SCDA will send manufacturers a formal letter notifying them when illegal products are found in distribution. A company will have the option to reformulate the product to remove the hemp and/or CBD ingredient and submit a formal registration application. Failure to do so within the required time frame may result in further regulatory action.



SC SEEKS NOMINEES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD

The state of South Carolina is seeking nominations for an award to recognize individuals who are doing extraordinary work for the natural environment. Nominations will be accepted through January 31, 2020.

The S.C. General Assembly established the S.C. Environmental Awareness Award during the 1992 legislative session to recognize outstanding contributions made toward the protection, conservation and improvement of South Carolina’s natural resources.

Each year the public is invited to submit nominations that are then reviewed by an awards committee, which includes representatives from the state’s natural resource agencies. In judging nominees, the committee considers excellence in innovation, leadership, and accomplishments that influence positive changes affecting the natural environment. Members of the awards committee represent the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, S.C. Forestry Commission and the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium.

The S.C. Environmental Awareness Award is presented annually in late winter/early spring.

Patrick McMillan, the Glenn and Heather Hilliard Professor of Environmental Sustainability in the Department of Forestry and Environmental Conservation at Clemson University, won the most recent SC Environmental Awareness Award. McMillan is most widely known as the Emmy Award-winning host, co-creator and writer of the popular SCETV nature program *Expeditions with Patrick McMillan*. He has exposed hundreds of thousands of people to the importance of conservation, preservation and the management of our natural resources.

A list of previous award winners, nomination guidelines and a nomination form are available at trees.sc.gov/enviroaward.htm or by calling Holly Welch at (803) 667-0815.

BUMPER CORN CROP PREDICTED FOR 2020

FARMERS LEARN GROWING STRATEGIES DURING CLEMSON EXTENSION'S CORN AND SOYBEAN GROWERS MEETING

BY DENISE ATTAWAY, CLEMSON UNIVERSITY
IMAGES COURTESY CLEMSON UNIVERSITY PUBLIC SERVICE AND AGRICULTURE

SANTEE – Given increased acres and a return to trend yields, agricultural economists say the corn outlook for 2020 is for a potential bumper crop that could drive down market prices while creating huge stockpiles that could take years to reduce.

This could create headaches for many. But about 200 farmers who attended Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service's 2019 State Corn and Soybean Growers Meeting learned budgets can help relieve some of this stress.

Guest speaker Mark Welch, a professor and Extension economist from Texas A&M University, said United States farmers produce about 40% of the world's corn. If the weather remains normal, farmers are

expected to expand their corn plantings by about 5% for a total of 94.5 million acres. Corn yields are expected to reach 15.55 billion bushels, topping the 2016 record of 15.15 billion bushels. If this happens, stockpiles will soar.

"Corn demand has been soft in the U.S.," Welch said. "Global corn stocks are tight and are getting tighter."

Welch said farmers should create and follow budgets.

"You will need to get your production costs down and lock in profitable prices when you see them," he said.

To help South Carolina farmers build budgets, the Clemson Extension Agribusiness Team at the Sandhill Research and Education Center (REC) has created enterprise budgets to use as guides for planning on individual farms. These budgets are tools for projecting costs and returns for crops and livestock, said Nathan Smith, a Clemson Extension economist and agribusiness production professor. Information can be found at bit.ly/ClemsonEnterpriseBudgets.

"These budgets are just general guidelines," Smith said. "Each farm should develop budgets based on its specific situation."

The budgets continually are revised. Check with your local county agent for updated versions.

IRRIGATION AND AGRONOMIC STRATEGIES

Attendees also learned about irrigation and agronomic strategies to improve yields, net returns and water-use efficiency.

"Ag water problems begin when the well is turned on," said Jason Krutz, an irrigation specialist with the Mississippi State University Cooperative Extension Service. "Irrigation is important for higher yields, stable yields and higher profits. But

aquifers only have so much water in them. We need to determine how to make higher yields with less water."

Michael Plumblee, a Clemson Extension precision agriculture specialist and assistant professor at the Edisto REC in Blackville, said about 13% of South Carolina row crop acres are irrigated. Cost is one impediment. A typical center pivot system can exceed \$50,000. Add pumping infrastructure and recurring annual costs associated with pumping water, and many farmers can't justify the added expense in times of tight profit margins.

"Irrigation is a tool that growers can use to improve yield and quality especially in dry years,"



Plumblee said. "It can benefit growers by helping them achieve certain yield goals each year which ultimately helps with budgeting and year-to-year consistency."

Crop yields do not always improve when irrigated but if water is a limiting factor, irrigation "definitely" will help, he said. In addition to helping increase yields, irrigation also can help improve water-use efficiency by applying water to the crop at the correct time.

EARLY-MATURING SOYBEANS

In addition to corn, attendees also learned about managing early-maturing soybeans in the Carolinas. Rachel Vann, Extension soybean specialist from North Carolina State University, talked about North Carolina growers who are successfully producing early-maturing soybeans.

"Growers are becoming increasingly interested in producing earlier-maturing soybeans," Vann said. "These soybean maturity groups typically have an indeterminate growth habit, which allows simultaneous vegetative and reproductive growth over several weeks. We have growers who can find a nice premium for September delivery."

Early-maturing soybeans can be planted in mid-April and harvested in mid-September in North Carolina. Soybeans typically are planted in South Carolina from May 10 to July 11 and harvested from Oct. 20 to Dec. 30. Proponents claim planting earlier-maturing soybean varieties can reduce the potential for harvest delays. Clemson Extension soybean breeder Ben Fallen from the Pee Dee REC said the biggest issue he's found with growing early-maturing soybeans in

South Carolina is harvest timing.

"Early maturing soybeans will not wait around to be harvested," Fallen said. "Seed quality will go down in a hurry, especially if the weather doesn't cooperate with harvest. Also, sometimes with early beans, they are setting pods during the heat of the summer and you can run into problems if you don't water them at the right time."

Still, some farmers have been successful growing early-maturing soybeans.

"I think them being able to grow early-maturing varieties has a lot to do with management," Fallen said. "That's why this research is important."

Vann and Fallen are researching row-spacing in Dillon County. Narrower rows are producing higher yields, Vann said.

SOIL NUTRITION

Regardless of the corn or soybean variety grown, proper soil nutrition

is important. Jim Camberato, a Purdue University agronomist and former Clemson agronomist stationed at the Pee Dee REC, said proper pH, or acidity level, is fundamental.

"Liming soil is important," Camberato said. "Most South Carolina cropland soils require lime to correct soil acidity and, then, maintain the pH level for the crop or crops being grown. This is why it is important to get soil tested before planting."

To help growers make better soil nutrient management decisions, Bhupinder Farmaha, a nutrient management specialist housed at the Edisto REC, is working to update soil additive recommendations for South Carolina.

This was the third year for the State Corn and Soybean Meeting. Meeting coordinator David Gunter, an Extension feed grain specialist housed at the Edisto REC, said this meeting differs from other state meetings in that Clemson partners with specialists from other states to provide South Carolina farmers with valuable information

"I believe it's a good idea to bring in specialists from other states so that our farmers can hear from someone with different experiences," he said. "Corn and soybeans are major row crops in South Carolina and we need to provide as much information as we can to help our farmers grow profitable crops."

Corn and soybeans are major contributors to the South Carolina economy. Figures from the United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service for South Carolina in 2018 show 310,000 acres of corn earned more than \$173 million, while soybeans earned nearly \$100 million.

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