

MARKET BULLETIN

Vol. 98 • Num. 2

January 18, 2024

Est.

1913



SC DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE SEEKS INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT APPLICATIONS

RFSI PROGRAM TARGETS MIDDLE OF THE FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN

BY SCDA

COLUMBIA – The South Carolina Department of Agriculture (SCDA) is partnering with USDA Agricultural Marketing Service to offer more than \$4 million in competitive grants to support middle-of-the-food-supply-chain infrastructure for domestic food and farm businesses and other eligible entities.



Grants under the Resilient Food System Infrastructure program, or RFSI (agriculture.sc.gov/rfsi), will support expanded capacity for the aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, and distribution of locally and regionally produced food products, including specialty crops, dairy, grains and other row crops for human consumption, aquaculture, and other food products, excluding meat and poultry, and wild-caught seafood.

“Strengthening the middle of the food supply chain in South Carolina will provide stronger markets for local farmers, increase stability for consumers, and help ensure a strong future of agriculture in the state,” said South Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers.

SCDA conducted statewide outreach through a listening call, survey, in-person outreach meetings, and a month-long comment period to identify funding priorities for the RFSI program in South Carolina. Based on the collected data and input, funding priorities for South Carolina RFSI subawards will include:

- Projects that increase local producers’ abilities to process, aggregate, and

distribute product through the construction, expansion, or modernization of cold and dry storage facilities.

- Projects that increase local producers’ abilities to process, aggregate, and distribute product through the creation of additional transportation to move product, and that increase distribution channels through the construction, expansion, or modernization of distribution facilities.
- Projects that increase processing capacity, creating new distribution channels and markets for value-added products.
- Projects that purchase and/or modernize middle-of-the-food-supply-chain equipment, packaging, and food safety and labor needs; and increase local producers’ abilities to process, aggregate, and distribute agricultural products.

Two types of awards are being offered with this funding: Infrastructure Grants (\$100,000 to \$3 million) and Simplified Equipment-Only Grants (\$10,000 to \$100,000). SCDA is taking applications through Feb. 9 for the equipment-only application, and through March 1 for the infrastructure program.

Visit agriculture.sc.gov/rfsi for more information and to apply.

If you have questions, reach out to rfsi@scda.sc.gov.



COMMISSIONER’S CORNER



HUGH E. WEATHERS

SOUTH CAROLINA
COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE

SEEKING OPPORTUNITIES IN MOROCCO

I was in Morocco earlier this month. Quite an interesting start to 2024. I visited as part of a trade delegation with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, or NASDA.

Morocco presents some interesting agricultural trade opportunities for American farmers. This country in northern Africa holds the only free trade agreement with the U.S. on the continent. It’s a business-oriented society with some interesting multicultural facets. In one sense, it’s the gateway to Africa for American agriculture.

We had a packed agenda. We visited a milling and bakery school established by U.S. Wheat Associates. We visited a training center built by the Moroccan government for the poultry, beef, and dairy sectors, and talked about demand for US feed grains in the poultry industry. We also met with several key agricultural and trade officials, and some very successful business leaders who want to use our products.

The US exports soybeans, corn, and wheat to Morocco, along with items like tree nuts (they’re big almond consumers) and dairy products.

NASDA and the Foreign Agricultural Service do a lot of research before these trips, and they identified the US products with the best sales potential there as feed grains (corn and DDGS), soybeans and soybean meal, dried fruit and nuts, rice, dairy products, live animals and genetics, pulses, poultry, meat, animal fats, beer, and spirits. For South Carolina farmers specifically, I think there’s a lot of opportunity for peanuts and soybean meal. For the specialty foods producers, there are also some follow-up discussions we should have.

While I was in Morocco, I got to do some sightseeing in Rabat, and visited cities you’ve probably heard of, like Casablanca. I also took some time off to visit Marrakech and the Atlas Mountains near where the earthquake occurred in September.

It’s wonderful to be back in South Carolina. And what a busy time of year it is. Many of our commodity groups and associations hold annual meetings this month, including the South Carolina Watermelon Association, the SC Agritourism Association, the soybean folks, and more.

Hugh Weathers

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wild Weekends

January Weekends

Join us every Saturday and Sunday for live animal meet-and-greets! We'll introduce you to one of our animals and allow you the opportunity to meet that animal up close. Animal presentations are every Saturday at 11:30 am and 3:00 pm and Sundays at 2:00 pm for approximately 10 minutes each. Stop by and say hello to your favorite critter!

Lynch River County Park
5094 County Park Road, Coward
843-389-0550

Coastal Ecosystems Unit Study for Home-schooled Students

January 25 • 10 am

By enrolling in this course, your students will not only learn about the importance of this critical coastal ecosystem but they will also help to actively restore areas of salt marsh which will allow them to have a hands-on way to learn, serve our local communities, and have fun in the process!

Morning Glory Homestead

42 Robert And Clara Trai, St Helena Island
morninggloryhomestead@gmail.com | 843-812-0344
morninggloryhomestead.com

Customer Appreciation Weekend

January 27 • 12 – 6 pm

January 28 • 2 – 6 pm

As we celebrate the start of a New Year, we want to say "Thank You" to our family, friends and visitors who enjoy visiting our vineyard and sharing nature-nurtured wines! Visit with us to enjoy wine, snacks, and good company. Each guest will receive a complimentary Poinsettia Cocktail, made with our 100% Cranberry Wine and Champagne. This sparkling bubbly beverage is as bright as it is refreshing. Plus guests will enjoy light snacks, 10% off all sales, and a chance to win a \$50 Gift Card.

Enoree River Winery LLC

1650 Dusty Road, Newberry
803-276-2855
<http://enoreeriverwinery.com>

Free Children's Program

January 27 • 9 – 11 am

Join us for free 30 minute Saturday activities at the Farm! Parents can sign children up for a half hour session. Group sizes will be limited. Children will learn how to make homemade ink using berries and have the chance to write or draw with a feather quill. Available sessions are 9, 9:30, 10, or 10:30; please specify which session you would like upon registering.

L. W. Paul Living History Farm

Hwy 701 North & Harris Shortcut Road, Conway
Contact: Marian Calder
calder.marian@horrycountysc.gov • 843-915-7861

11th Annual Pig and Oyster Roast

January 27 • 12 – 5 pm

Join us for our Annual Pig and Oyster Roast at City Roots Farm. F2T Productions will be cooking whole pigs from Carolina Heritage Farms and will be mixing up some sides while Kristian Niemi is roasting clusters of SC coastal oysters from Folly River Shellfish over the fire for you to shuck all day. Your \$65 ticket will cover all you can eat, expertly roasted whole hog pulled pork, clusters of SC oysters, F2T Mac n' Cheese, local collards, cornbread, slaw and baked beans. Bring your shuckers, gloves, appetite, and koozies! We will have LIVE music, a cash bar featuring Cathead Vodka Bloody Marys, shucking tables, and fires! This is a limited ticketed event, and you can only get tickets pre-sale. We will not be selling tickets at the door. Bars onsite accept cash and credit cards. No outside food or alcohol allowed in.

City Roots

1005 Airport Blvd, Columbia

vanessa@f2tproductions.com

f2tproductions.com

Tickets f2tproductions.com/event-details/11th-annual-pig-and-oyster-roast

Girls Night Out

January 31 • 6 – 8:30 pm

We are a family-run craft winery and vineyard focused on producing high-quality small batches of local, innovative wines you can't find anywhere else. Open year round for wine tastings, special events, and long walks through our vineyards. Join us for Girls Night Out the last Wednesday of every month. \$25.

City Scape Winery

589 Dunklin Bridge Road, Pelzer

864-329-0615

cityscapewinery.com

facebook.com/cityscapewinery

SALES & AUCTIONS

Yon Family Farms Spring Bull & Female Sale

February 17 • 11 am

Registered Angus, SimAngus & Ultrablack cattle auction, on the farm, featuring breeding-age bulls, 3-n-1 cow/calf pairs, bred cows and bred heifers. Free bull delivery in SC.

318 Aiken Road, Ridge Spring

Contact: Yon Family Farms

lydia@yonfamilyfarms.com • 803-622-8597

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

SC Market Bulletin Subscription & Renewal Form

Mail completed form with check or money order payable to the SC Department of Agriculture to: SC Market Bulletin, PO Box 11280, Columbia, SC 29211 To subscribe with a credit card online, visit agriculture.sc.gov, click on Market Bulletin, select Subscribe to the Market Bulletin, then follow the prompts. Do not send cash in the mail. Non-refundable. Allow 6 – 8 weeks for processing. Subscriptions may only be purchased for up to 2 years.

Name _____ Paper: \$15 / 1 year Electronic: \$10 / 1 year
*Active email address required

Address _____ Paper & Electronic: \$20 / 1 year
*Active email address required

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ New Renewal

Phone _____ Check # _____ Renewal ID # _____

Email _____ This is a gift

1/18/24

Market Bulletin Office

Monday – Friday • 8 AM – 4:30 PM

803-734-2536 • marketbulletin@scda.sc.gov

agriculture.sc.gov/market-bulletin

EDITOR Eva Moore

ADS & CIRCULATION COORDINATOR Janet Goins

GRAPHIC DESIGNER Stephanie Finnegan

South Carolina Department of Agriculture Contacts

Commissioner's Office

803-734-2190

Certified SC Program

803-734-2207

Hemp Farming Program

803-734-8339

Consumer Protection

803-737-9700

Livestock & Grain Market News

803-737-4491

Fruit & Vegetable Inspection

803-737-4588

Market News Recording

803-737-5900

Fruit & Vegetable Market News

803-737-4671

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

POLICIES FOR ADVERTISING

For our full policies, please visit:

agriculture.sc.gov/market-bulletin-policies

Only ads pertaining to the production of agricultural products and related items are published. Ads are accepted for South Carolina items, even if the seller lives out of state, provided the item is in state at the time the ad is published and at the time of sale.

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, submissions must include the advertiser's name, complete address with zip code and county, and phone number with area code. While we don't publish the address, we need this information for our records. Do not use all capital letters.

- **Online:** Go to agriculture.sc.gov/market-bulletin. Select "Submit Market Bulletin Ad" and complete the form. If you include your email address, you will receive an automated reminder for a renewal.

- **Mail:** SC Market Bulletin, PO Box 11280, Columbia, SC 29211. You must use 8.5 × 11 inch paper.

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

- **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 23 • 12:00 PM

HEMP FARMING PERMIT APPLICATION PERIOD IS JAN. 1 – FEB. 29, 2024

BY SCDA

COLUMBIA – The South Carolina Department of Agriculture will begin accepting Hemp Farming Permit applications for the 2024 season on Jan. 1, 2024. Anyone who wishes to farm hemp in South Carolina in 2024 must apply online between Jan. 1 and Feb. 29, 2024.

To qualify for a Hemp Farming Permit, you must complete a background check through Identigo and provide a Farm Service Agency (FSA) number. Only South Carolina residents are eligible to apply.

There is no paper or printable application; all applicants must apply online at agriculture.sc.gov/hemp. Permits expire each year, so current permit holders who wish to continue growing must reapply.

Fees: The Hemp Farming Permit application fee is \$100. A \$500 permit fee is due after the application has been approved and Participation Agreement has been signed.

Late Application Grace Period: There will be a one-week grace period in 2024 for Hemp Farming Permit applications to allow for late applicants. The grace period will be from March 1 – March 8. During this grace period, an application can be submitted with the non-refundable \$100 permit application fee along with a non-refundable \$500 late fee due at the time of applying. If approved, the applicant will still be responsible for paying the \$500 Hemp Farming Permit fee prior to a permit being issued. Important: The grace period will end at the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on March 8. No applications will be accepted after the grace period has closed – no exceptions.

Additional Lease Agreement Verification Requirements: Lease Agreements shall be recorded in the same manner as a deed of real estate at the county Register of Deeds Office. All Lease Agreement signatures must be notarized. A notarized and properly recorded Lease Agreement must be included in your application support documents.

Missing or Incorrect Information in Application: Submitted applications with missing or incorrect information that has not been corrected or submitted by the Feb. 29 deadline will be considered incomplete, and the applicant will be required to pay the non-refundable late fee to continue with their application for a 2024 Hemp Farming Permit. If the missing or incorrect information is not submitted along with the associated fee before the grace period deadline at 5:00 p.m. on March 8, 2024, the application will not be accepted.

For further information, visit agriculture.sc.gov/hemp or email hempstaff@scda.sc.gov.



DHEC INVESTIGATING CASES OF LEAD EXPOSURE FROM CINNAMON APPLESAUCE POUCH PRODUCTS

BY SCDHEC

COLUMBIA – As part of an ongoing investigation related to a nationwide recall of cinnamon applesauce pouches mostly eaten by children, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) has had products that contained high levels of lead removed from store shelves throughout the state.

DHEC also identified lead in a sample of applesauce associated with a child who had a high level of lead.

"The quick response by staff and our cooperation with the FDA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have helped protect South Carolinians from this particular lead source," said Sandra Craig, Food and Lead Risk Assessments Division Director. "If you are concerned about a potential lead exposure, please discuss the matter with your health care provider to see if a blood lead test is right for you or your family member. Young children, pregnant women and nursing mothers may be most at risk."

The agency began its investigation in November 2023 when the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a recall for several brands of cinnamon applesauce pouch products intended for children's use, including:

- WanaBana brand apple cinnamon fruit purée pouches (sold nationally)
- Schnucks brand cinnamon applesauce pouches (sold in Midwest states)
- Weis brand cinnamon applesauce pouches (sold in Mid-Atlantic states)

In November, DHEC's Rapid Response Team notified more than 20,000 food retailers in South Carolina, alerting them to the recall and requesting that they remove these products from store shelves.

The WanaBana brand of cinnamon applesauce pouches were primarily distributed by the Dollar Tree store chain within South Carolina. DHEC Rapid Response Team members visited more than 130 Dollar Tree stores and located recalled pouches in at least 10 of these stores.

These pouches were removed promptly, and DHEC staff notified our partners at the South Carolina Department of Agriculture (SCDA) who regulate the wholesale distribution of food in South Carolina. SCDA staff visited the Dollar Tree distribution center and learned that 157 cases had been sent to stores after the recall, with each store receiving one to two cases of the WanaBana product. This distribution immediately was halted.

Since early November, several South Carolina children have had blood lead tests because their parents and health care providers were concerned about the WanaBana recall. DHEC has been working closely with health care providers and the families of three children who had consumed these products and had blood lead levels test above the reference value identified by the CDC. The reference value is used to identify children with blood lead levels higher than most children's levels.

In one of the three cases, product testing completed Jan. 4 showed lead levels more than 1,100 times the Food and Drug Administration standard for food intended for children of 0.01 part per million. No product was available for testing in relation to the other two children.

Children with lead exposure often have no symptoms. Lead exposure only can be confirmed with a blood test.

Parents and caregivers of children who may have consumed recalled products should contact the child's health care provider about getting a blood test for lead. Based on your child's blood lead test results, health care providers can recommend follow-up actions and care.

Families and health care providers with questions may contact DHEC's toll-free lead line at 866-466-5323 (866-4NO-LEAD).

Health care providers wanting information on management of lead cases may reach out to the Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units at pehsu.net.

More information on lead can be found on the DHEC website at scdhec.gov/environment/your-home/lead. You can also learn more about the applesauce recalls at the FDA or CDC websites.

CLEMSON ANNOUNCES DATES/ TOPICS FOR 2024 'GOING ORGANIC' WEBINAR SERIES

BY DENISE ATTAWAY, CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

The Clemson University Organic Plant Breeding Institute continues its "Going Organic" webinar series to teach growers how to produce nutritional legumes and save money.

These free webinars, featuring presentations by world-renowned researchers who are experts in their fields, will be held monthly through May 2024. This series is part of a United States Department of Agriculture National Institute for Food and Agriculture-funded grant project.

Registration is requested. For information, contact Dil Thavarajah at dthavar@clemson.edu.

GOING ORGANIC WEBINAR SERIES 2024

Speakers and topics for the 2024 Clemson Going Organic Webinar Series are listed below.

Visit news.clemson.edu/clemson-announces-dates-topics-for-2024-going-organic-webinar-series for links to register online.

Jan. 31 – Michael Mazourek, vegetable breeder, Cornell University. 10 a.m. (EST)
Selecting positive vegetable traits for organic systems

Feb. 14 – Lane Selman, agronomist, Oregon State University. 1 p.m. (EST)
Culinary Breeding Network

March 13 – Mehmet Tulbek, president, Food Centre. 10 a.m. (EST)
Research and commercialization solutions for alternative protein and upcycled food ingredients

April 17 – Sara Eckhouse, executive director, Food Shot Global. 10 a.m. (EST)
Sustainable organic food production

May 15 – Erin Clayton, scientific research advisor, Good Food Institute. 10 a.m. (EST)
Market trends and research opportunities in the global plant protein industry

Organic farming is becoming more popular. The latest figures from the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service for organic farming in the United States for 2021 show a 13%, or \$1.28 billion, increase in total sales and a 5% increase in the number of farms from 2019.



COTTON GROWERS AND PEANUT GROWERS 2024 MEETINGS

The 2024 South Carolina Cotton Growers Meeting will be held January 23 at the Santee Conference Center, 1737 Bass Drive, Santee SC. Registration begins at 8:15 am. The meeting will include updates from Commissioner Hugh Weathers and Chairman of the National Cotton Council Shawn Holladay, as well as sessions about nematode control in cotton, deer pressure on South Carolina cotton, the 2023 cotton crop, and an update on new varieties.

The South Carolina Peanut Growers meeting follows on January 25, also at the Santee Conference Center. Registration begins at 8:30 am. Sessions include an economic outlook, precision agriculture in peanut research, the Sustainable U.S. Peanut Initiative, phenotyping for genetic improvements in peanut, peanut variety and management, and an update from the National Peanut Board as well as Commissioner Hugh Weathers.

For more information, contact Katherine Helms, SCDA Marketing Specialist, khelms@scda.sc.gov, 803-734-5229.

LEARN TO IMPROVE QUAIL HABITAT AT SCDNR SEMINAR MARCH 7-8

BY SCDNR

The S.C. Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) will host its annual Wild Quail Management Seminar March 7-8 at the James W. Webb Wildlife Center and Management Area in Hampton County.

The registration fee is \$95 per person and includes meals, overnight accommodations and seminar materials. The deadline to register is Friday, Feb. 2. Registration is limited to 30 participants. For more information, contact the SCDNR Small Game Program in Columbia at 803-734-3609, e-mail Patty Castine at CastineP@dnr.sc.gov or visit dnr.sc.gov/education/quail.html.

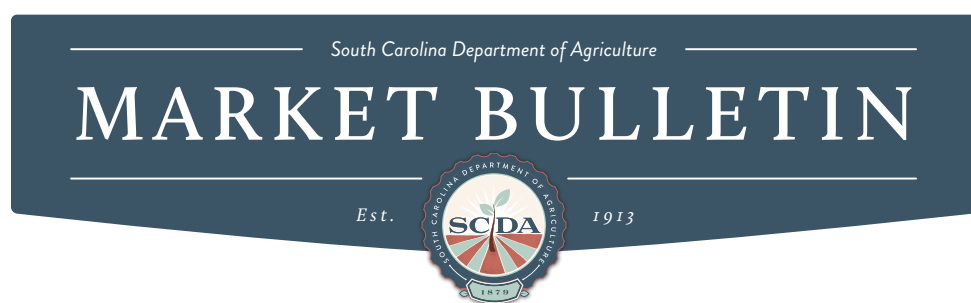
Field demonstrations and classroom instruction will focus on habitat practices including firebreak establishment, prescribed burning, forest management, brush control, discing for native foods and supplemental food patch plantings. Presentations will be given on wild quail natural history, biology, predation and other factors that may be contributing to the population decline. An update on current research will also be presented. Speakers will include wildlife and forestry professionals from state and federal agencies.

Field demonstrations and classroom instruction will focus on habitat practices including firebreak establishment, prescribed burning, forest management, brush control, discing for native foods and supplemental food patch plantings. Presentations will be given on wild quail natural history, biology, predation and other factors that may be contributing to the population decline. An update on current research will also be presented. Speakers will include wildlife and forestry professionals from state and federal agencies.

Bobwhite quail populations in the Southeast, including South Carolina, have been declining steadily over the past 60 years due to major land use change and reduction in suitable habitat. The annual Wild Quail Management Seminar is designed to instruct landowners and land managers in the proper techniques of creating habitat that will support native populations of bobwhite quail.

"The annual quail management seminar is a great place to meet and learn from many experts in the natural resources field," said Michael Hook, SCDNR wildlife biologist and Small Game Project supervisor. "So if you have any interest in creating better habitat for bobwhite quail and the other assorted species that use these early successional habitats, this seminar is for you."

More than 1,500 people have attended the seminar since its inception in 1987. These sportsmen and sportswomen have positively affected thousands of acres across South Carolina by applying basic techniques to improve habitat on their lands.



2024 DEADLINE SCHEDULE

| AD DEADLINE - 12 PM (NOON) | ISSUE PUBLISHED |
|---|-----------------|
| December 19, 2023 | January 4 |
| January 9 | January 18 |
| January 23 | February 1 |
| February 6 | February 15 |
| February 20 | March 7 |
| March 12 | March 21 |
| March 26 | April 4 |
| April 9 | April 18 |
| April 23 | May 2 |
| May 7 | May 16 |
| May 21 | June 6 |
| June 11 | June 20 |
| June 25 | July 4 |
| July 9 | July 18 |
| July 23 | August 1 |
| August 6 | August 15 |
| August 20 | September 5 |
| September 10 | September 19 |
| September 24 | October 3 |
| October 8 | October 17 |
| October 22 | November 7 |
| November 12 | November 21 |
| November 19 *Changed due to Thanksgiving closures | December 5 |
| December 17 | January 2, 2025 |

SC WOOD DUCK DIE-OFFS LINKED TO HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA

BY SCDNR

In December, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) and the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) received numerous calls concerning an apparent die-off of wood ducks in waterfowl impoundments and river swamps in Clarendon, Colleton and Williamsburg counties.

Preliminary testing indicates two of these die-off events can be attributed to highly pathogenic Eurasian H5 avian influenza (HPAI). Results are currently pending from additional die-off locations.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza was first detected in the United States in January 2022 in two wild ducks harvested by a hunter in Colleton County, South Carolina, and one wild duck in Hyde County, North Carolina. Prior to these findings, HPAI had not been detected in a wild bird in the United States since 2016. Following the detection of HPAI in early 2022, portions of the United States experienced large die-off events of snow geese and eiders.

"Since 2022, the greatest impact on wild birds in South Carolina has been seen in black vultures and bald eagles," said Molly Kneece, SCDNR state waterfowl biologist. "Up to this point, we had not experienced any noticeable die-offs of waterfowl species in South Carolina. These recently reported wood duck die-offs seem to be localized but do have potential to spread into other counties and to other waterfowl species given the social and migratory behaviors of wood ducks."

Hunters should be aware that HPAI is present in the environment, and it is also showing up in an APHIS sampling effort of hunter harvested birds. However, it is still safe to pursue and consume wild fowl this season. This type of HPAI virus is considered a low risk to people but it can be a danger to the poultry industry, which is an important part of South Carolina's agricultural economy.

USDA Veterinary and Wildlife Services recommends hunters and others to take precautions to protect themselves and the domestic birds they may encounter from the virus:

- Do not harvest or handle wild birds that are obviously sick or found dead without latex gloves.
- Dress your game birds in the field whenever possible. If you must dress birds at home, clean

them in an area in which your poultry and pet birds have no access.

- Keep a separate pair of shoes to wear only in your game cleaning area. If this is not possible, wear rubber footwear and clean/disinfect your shoes before entering or leaving the area.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke while cleaning game.
- Always wear rubber gloves while cleaning game



or cleaning bird feeders.

- Wash hands with soap and water immediately after handling game or cleaning bird feeders. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol wipes.
- Use dedicated tools for cleaning game, whether in the field or at home. Do not use those tools around your poultry or pet birds.
- Wash all tools and work surfaces with soap and water and then disinfect them.
- Avoid cross-contamination. Keep uncooked game in a separate container, away from cooked or ready-to-eat foods.
- Cook game meat thoroughly; poultry should reach an internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit to kill disease organisms and parasites.
- Double bag the offal and feathers. Tie the inner bag; be sure to take off your rubber gloves and leave them in the outer bag before tying it closed.
- Place the bag in a trash can that poultry and pet birds cannot access. This trash can should also be secure against access by children, pets or other animals.

Julie Helm, a veterinarian and poultry specialist with Clemson Livestock Poultry Health, advises South Carolinians to protect small poultry flocks with two simple statements: "Keep it AWAY and Keep it CLEAN."

Keep it AWAY: Keep your poultry and pets away from wild ducks and geese and their environment

— ponds, lakes and swampy areas. Take care not to track the wild waterfowl virus back to your flock if you are hunting or hiking in the wild waterfowl environment. Buy new birds from a reputable source. Keep new birds or returning show birds separated from your established home flocks for 30 days. Keep pests (rodents, raccoons, opossums, rabbits) out of bird pens. Keep visitors out of your bird areas; what may they be carrying on their feet, clothing or vehicles.

Keep it CLEAN: Clean cages and coops. Clean any equipment first before it comes onto your property. Wear designated farm shoes and clothing to care for your birds. Wash your hands before and after working with your birds. Change birds' food and water daily. Wash your vehicles and trailers after visiting other poultry facilities and before you come home — go through a car wash.

DHEC strongly urges anyone who handles birds — including hunters and poultry farmers — to follow the recommended precautions for

protecting themselves from possible exposure and to talk with a doctor if they have any health concerns regarding a possible exposure.

South Carolina hunters and landowners can help SCNDR and APHIS monitor this potential HPAI event by reporting sightings of dead wood ducks or other waterfowl to SCDNR (800-922-5431 or webmaster@dnr.sc.gov, Subject Line: HPAI). Of notable interest will be the location of the die-off, number of individuals affected, species, and habitat type. HPAI testing will be done on a case-by-case basis, but it will be very helpful to know where any waterfowl die-offs are occurring and to what extent.

After reporting any waterfowl die-off events to SCDNR, landowners and habitat managers can gather any dead waterfowl they find and bury those carcasses on site. This important step can help reduce the spread of HPAI to scavenging mammals and birds of prey. All equipment, tools, clothing, and boots should be disinfected with a solution of 1/3 cup bleach to 1 gallon of water.

For more information on HPAI or to monitor confirmed detections in wild birds and commercial or backyard flocks follow: aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/avian-influenza/2022-hpai

Contact: SCDNR, Greg Lucas, LucasG@dnr.sc.gov, 864-380-5201

FARMER BOOTCAMP

BY SCDA

Farmer Bootcamp 2.0 took place on January 8–11. The 4-day workshop put on by Project Victory Gardens offers an opportunity for transitioning service people interested in agriculture to get hands-on farming experience and meet agriculture experts and other veteran farmers. Participants attended workshops from industry experts and visited farms across the upstate. Project Victory Gardens hosts Farmer Bootcamp twice a year at farms all over the state. More info can be found at palmettovetsinag.org.

