



North Carolina Pecan Growers Association

# Nutty News

## Highlights

- **Mark Your Calendars for February 9, 2008 NCPGA Workshop.**
- Do we have your current email address?
- Photos of new variety Nacono

**Happy Holiday Greetings to all of you from the North Carolina Pecan Growers**

## Inside this issue:

2007 Crop	1
Considerations for '08 and Beyond	2
February 2008 Workshop and Field Day	2
Email Addresses	2
Research Projects Timely To Do List	3
Pecan Harvest Festival Holiday Greetings	
Truffles Anyone? Earl and Dianne Denning NCPGA Activities	4
Association Photos	5

## Puttin' Wraps on 2007 Crop

To put a very positive spin on this year's pecan crop, any reason for a light crop next year can not be attributed to the trees being overburdened following the '07 crop. Though spotty, there were orchards which produced more heavily than any of the past three years. Even in those orchards, yields can not be classified as more than "decent", on a 1 to 5 scale, somewhere about 3

The wisdom of several different varieties will never be more apparent than in '07. Orchards in which I am most familiar, the deep freezes leading up to Easter weekend essentially eliminated any crop on Cape Fears, and seriously hampered the Pawnee, both the earlier to break bud. The Desirable variety was completely scorched, but due to the aggressive growing

nature of Desirable, they recovered and actually provided as they normally do. The "old steady" Stuart bailed many of us out. There were a healthy number of nuts after the freezes, but then the hot and dry July, August and September caused the nuts to be 60-70% of the sizes we normally see. The Sumner variety, being the last to break bud and mature in the Fall produced very strong. There are just not a lot of acres in Sumner at this time.

An amazing wrap up is how the nut meat quality can be so great after what we thought were the most impossible growing conditions. With so little rain, the nut meat quality could not have been better. That just goes to show how little we know about nature, just as the ocean tide, it will rule in the end.

Nationally, as you probably know, there has been a record crop throughout the Southeastern U.S. Again, nature rules. These orchards produced heavily for basically two reason, neither of which we mortals had anything to do with:

- 1) after two very lean years, the trees were ready to produce, regardless of the care they had been given, and
- 2) The dry and hot summer kept disease and insect pressure to a minimum. Carry over pecans in cold storage will be heavy and will affect pecan prices for the next couple years

## Considerations for '08 and Beyond

A very positive beginning for the '08 crop has already occurred. From my observations, healthy pecan trees retained their foliage well into December allowing the carbohydrates to recede into the tree's root zone. There will not be a better time to send soil samples to NCDA&CS for analysis.

The beginning of a nutritional program is the soil pH level, for pecan trees a minimum level of 6.0 is strongly encouraged. Application of lime can be done now. Fertilizer applications can wait till January or February. It just seems to make sense to wait about doing very heavy

pruning or any major cutting of the trees. Attempts to reinvigorate older trees is great, but the trees are in heavy stress at this time from the drought. It is suggested to wait until trees have taken up more moisture before putting them under additional stress.

## Educational Workshop February 9, 2008

February 9, 2008 is now set for the NCPGA Annual Workshop. The Wayne County Extension Center is the site. The topics and presenters will be similar to prior year's which have been entertaining and beneficial to growers. If there are relevant topics of particular interest to members, please let Bill Bunn or Laurie Wood know. Consistent with prior years, the daylong program will conclude with a trip through a demonstration orchard. Gary Bevill, long stand-

ing NCPGA member has opened his young orchard of about 100 trees for us to continue the education program with hands-on opportunities.

During the brief business portion, two directors will be elected to serve a three-year term. The Board will develop the slate and present to the general membership for their approval. Also, membership will be asked to approve very minor changes in the Association's by-laws which will improve the effectiveness

of the Board.

A mid-day catered lunch will be provided. The general public is warmly invited. A modest registration fee will be charged to offset some of the program's cost.

Vendors and suppliers will be invited to set up booths to display their products. Should members know of anyone interested in providing a booth, please let us know. An agenda and map will be provided later.

### Twilight Orchard Tour

*The week-long deep freeze last Easter weekend and it's adverse effect on trees was the reason for cancellation of this program in '07. We fully intend to provide this poplar program during '08. The location and specific date will be announced during the 2008 Workshop.*

## Nutty News Extra Email Addresses

As you know, we have had the opportunity to provide Nutty News Extra's this year to share "Happenings" we felt you would like to know

about, the most recent being the great exposure pecans have received on WRAL TV. This was a direct result of your Association's sponsoring a Pecan Recipe cooking

contest for the past several years at the NC State Fair. We intend to continue providing such current events, to the extent we can. You can be very helpful by keeping a current email address on file with the

Association. The Extra's are so much easier and cheaper to provide than the few paper copies we put in US mail. But, we will continue hard copies as long as they are needed and don't mind doing so.

## Research Projects

During our last meeting, the Board discussed how it should continue to satisfy its mandate of supporting pecan-related research. In the past, considering that no active research was being done in NC along these lines, grants were provided to national organizations to assist in very worthy and ongoing research initiatives. The NCPGA Board has wisely voted

to keep our research support "at home". Monies were set aside from 2007 funds to launch worthy research initiatives here at home.

NCPGA officers have met and begun discussions with NCDA&CS and NCSU to begin a collaborative effort to develop a research protocol, the results of which would provide

benefits beyond this Association.

It is very early in this process and much work is to be done before we feel that a workable plan exists.

We wanted to share this development and invite your comments and later on, your sweat and energy.

## Timely to Do's

- Take soil samples
- Apply lime as needed
- Think on new plantings
- Establish new plantings
- Prune, January & February
- Gather graft wood in January
- Attend educational programs
- Rejoice and be thankful

## Pecan Harvest Festival

All indications and reports from the 2007 N C Pecan Harvest Festival in Whiteville were that it continued to be blessed with great weather and huge crowds.

NCPGA Educational Advisor, Mike Parker again coordinated the two-day educational program attracting nearly 1,200 students, teachers and supporters to N C Forestry Museum on Thursday

and Friday. The numerous well positioned and staffed stations provided a two hour concentrated focus on the Pecan. Mike was capably assisted by NCPGA members, Columbus County Extension Service, NCDA&CS and NCSU representatives. A super "hats off" to NCPGA Director and Columbus County resident Rossie Ward and NCPGA liaison, Milton Parker for

representing the Association during the Festival on Saturday. It is believed that the very solid performance by Rossie, Milton and other Columbus Co. volunteers could well set the stage for future NC Pecan Harvest Festivals.

**As we approach the beginning of a New Year, let us reflect on relationships both personal and professional. It is our loved ones who make our lives complete, but it is our business partnerships that allow us to remain unique and independent. With appreciation for your relationship with the NC Pecan Growers Association and warmest wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year. Seasons Greeting and Best Wishes from your North Carolina Pecan Growers Association**



## Are There Truffles in your Orchard?

It has been known for sometime that truffles grow on pecan tree roots. Truffles, as you may know, is that “High Dollar” item, \$100.00 a pound found in upscale restaurants. The problem is there is not an abundance and they are difficult to find. A phone call from a

laboratory at Duke University to Bill Bunn resulted in a walk-through his orchard on a truffle hunt. They are there, but not many, not nearly enough to justify time and energies to pinpoint their location. The reason for sharing this is to let you know

there is significant interest in Georgia and now in North Carolina to learn more about truffles and its attraction to pecan tree roots.

Once more is known, it is hoped that they might be cultivated in pecan orchards.

The team from Duke is very interested in this research and if other orchards close by can turn up a significant volume, they would be most pleased to pay a visit, and truffle with you through the orchard.

## NCPGA Members Earl and Diane Denning of Coats, NC

Because the Association membership covers many miles, it is impossible to know when every member meets a bump in the road. That is saddening and indeed regrettable. We have learned that one of NCPGA’s longest term and most loyal members, Mr. Earl Denning of Coats has begun treatment for leukemia. Anyone who

has participated in workshops, field days or wherever surely remembers Earl and his well-timed and challenging questions. There were few who didn’t benefit from Earl’s questions to presenters and hearing them struggle for a suitable response. It is most fitting to note that we learned of Earl’s situation as final plans were being made

for NCPGA’s two-day educational program in Whiteville. Ever enthusiastic and involved Earl asked how he and Diane could be of help. They both were there and contributed greatly for the full program, a testament to their commitment and dedication to this Association.

**Earl, we look forward to seeing you in Goldsboro in February. And, if “mama” needs a hand getting you there, many of us will be ready and willing to give a hand. The Denning’s mailing address is P O Box 124, Coats, NC 27521.**

### NCPGA Very Active

As would seem appropriate, the Association is more visible during the Fall season, a time when fresh pecans are around. Laurie continues to single-handed represent us and our interest in the pecan recipe-cooking contest held in conjunction with the two State Fairs. No dollar spent

by the Association yields higher visibility and exposure of NCPGA and the pecan industry. Again with NCDA&CS and Laurie’s efforts, pecans were the order of the day at the Raleigh Farmers Market and The Southeastern Marketing Center Farmers Market in Lumberton. The Association provided current year pecans to both in the on-

going effort to promote pecans. Many pieces of literature were passed out at both markets. The Association was well represented, literally in the Historic Oakview County Park’s orchard of 200 pecan trees ranging from new plantings to really old trees. Their Heritage day program and the special day set aside to celebrate the pecan was attended by over 5,000 people, many from the “city” who listened intently as pecans were

featured. NCPGA director, Gaylon Ambrose, again single-handed, manned an educational booth at the Farm Heritage day in Martin County. As many know, if all pecan trees were counted, Martin County could well claim the highest number of pecan trees in this state. For pecan grower educational presence, we were where we should have been. A mighty thanks, Gaylon.



NCPGA director, Rossie Ward captures attention of second graders during the Pecan Harvest Festival



NCPGA and NCDA&CS Marketing Specialist Laurie Wood talking pecans at Pecan Day in Raleigh Farmers Market. Sue Bunn, wife of NCPGA President, Bill Bunn is also busy.



NCPGA President, Bill Bunn talking and showing pecans at Wake County Farm Heritage day and Pecan Day. Over 5,000 (mostly "city folks") attended both events.

### *The very impressive Nacono variety*

The Nacono is a recent USDA release. Propagated trees have reached bearing age and are showing very positive characteristics. Initial plantings might include the Nacono as a temporary tree. At thinning time, the decision could be made to keep the Nacono as the permanent tree. The Nacono is a mid-season pollinator and receptivity. The Oconee, a USDA release in 1991, appears to be the more preferred as a pollinator. "



Very strong tree structure



Mid-season maturing



Easily shelled, great quality

NC Pecan Growers Association  
Bill Bunn, President  
PO Box 435  
Bailey, NC 27807  
919 8155764  
carya@intrex.net

Laurie Wood, Secretary  
PO Box 25  
Ivanhoe, NC 28447  
910 532-4208  
laurie.wood@ncmail.net



**Visit us at**  
**[www.ncpecans.org](http://www.ncpecans.org)**

Left blank for  
For Mailing Label