

The Nutty News

*Provided by the North
Carolina Pecan Growers
Association
Early Fall Edition Sept, 2007*

NATURE'S AWESOME POWER

Here, early in September, it is very easy to say goodbye to August 2007. Much, perhaps too much, has been said about it being the hottest on record, and in southern Nash County with .7 of an inch of rain, it must have been the driest. It is times like these that just about all we can do is stop and reflect on things exactly as they are.

We had absolutely nothing to do with the warm late winter causing early bud-break and vegetative growth. It was not our doing when all vegetative growth in pecan trees was completely scorched during the Easter weekend deep freeze.



5-Year-old Pawnee on April 10, 2008, completely scorched after 5 nights of below freezing temperatures.

Nor, was it our doing when the trees re-foliated shortly thereafter. Aside from the early things we may have done, any crop-set was completely out of our control, yet in many orchards, the crop-set is stronger than in the past year or so. If any of us had control of the weather, August would have been more friendly and with more rain. Yet, the trees have not aborted the entire crop from draught stress and with the dry weather, scab is non-existent and the weevils have not yet emerged.



Same 5 year old Pawnee five months later showing eight nut cluster. Trees were managed aggressively as if freeze had not occurred in order to minimize alternate bearing syndrome in 2008.

We've had nothing to do with being spared major storms/hurricanes to leave an ugly mess, both in the trees and in our minds. We didn't control the lack of rainfall which has prevented heavy limb breakage from the crop overload, nor did we set all this up to minimize the alternate bearing syndrome heading into 2008. In fact, with our hands we've done very little to cause us to be where we are today. And know what, we're still **"JUST FINE."**

May we always be so fortunate as to have a power beyond our own to control the elements. We can only hope for patience and ability to accept all things over which we have no control.

NC CROP ESTIMATE

During the Board meeting on September 4, we talked about '07 crop estimates. Bottom line is whatever your 2007 is, you will have company. Estimates from Board members ranged from "zero" to full 100 % crop. Full crop estimates were by Rossie Ward from Columbus County and Bill Bunn in Nash County.

Industry wide, yield estimates are very strong. That's a good thing for those needing to purchase pecans, but for those in NC with a strong crop, prices may well be at the lowest level in the recent past.

Overall, NC reported about 20% of a normal crop to those asking for our numbers to become a part of the national estimates.

WAYNE COUNTY, HERE WE COME

Tim Haithcock, NCPGA director from Wayne County has reserved the Wayne County Extension Center in Goldsboro for our 14th annual workshop. The date is Saturday February 16, 2008. After the workshop, NCPGA member Gary Bevill has agreed to host the group in his young orchard of approximately 100 trees located just south of Goldsboro.

Various locations in the Goldsboro area were meeting sites as the Steering Committee set about organizing the N C Pecan Growers Association during 1994. The first educational workshop was held in Goldsboro in February 1995.

Wayne and Sampson Counties have consistently claimed the honor of being the home of more NCPGA members and pecan acreage than any others are.

While the program agenda is a ways off, you may rest comfortable that it will be informative, interesting and a day full of enriching opportunities.

TWI-LIGHT ORCHARD TOUR – 2008

Plans for the '07 Orchard Tour were impacted by the April 8 freeze and then unexpected strong recovery from the damages. Our late efforts to make arrangements could not come together in time to provide the quality program we felt we must provide. Therefore there will not be a twilight orchard tour this year.

At the top of your officer's priorities for 2008 is to provide a second educational program during 2008, in a demonstration orchard where conditions can be seen and touched. A final date and location will be established soon and be shared in upcoming newsletters. Late May and early June consistently is the time when lots can be seen and talked about in the orchards, eg. herbicide management, fertility programs, insect and disease observations, and depending on location, irrigation systems and water management.

PECAN HARVEST FESTIVAL – EDUCATION PROGRAM

Dr. Mike Parker, NCPGA Education Advisor, has again led the way in coordinating the 5th annual two-day educational program scheduled for November 1 and 2, 2007 in Whiteville. Again the N C Museum of Forestry in Whiteville will host the event which is expected to draw 1,200 second grade students and teachers from the Columbus and surrounding counties.

To quote Mike, the program is: "to instill in the participants an appreciation for what is involved in growing and harvesting pecans. Science, nature and agricultural topics will be covered using the pecan as a model plant."

Those who have been able to participate in this two-day program, acknowledge that the program's content and the attentive group of youngsters combine to make this a very rewarding program to be involved in. A very loyal group has provided support in the past. Mike, Allan Thornton, Laurie Wood, Rossie Ward, Donnie and Betty Ezzell and staff from the local Cooperative Extension service need additional support during the upcoming program. The two-day program is a high energy, wide-open program and would be stronger if some "relief drivers" were in the wings.

Being that Mike Parker is the program's coordinator, your support of the program and willingness to provide some assistance should be directed to him. Mike's phone number is 919-515-1198, email: mike_parker@ncsu.edu. Come join us, you'll be richly rewarded.

PECAN HARVEST FESTIVAL

Suzanne King met with the Board on Tuesday evening to talk about the upcoming Pecan Harvest Festival on Saturday November 3, 2007. As in the past four years, she and the Whiteville Downtown Development Commission have developed an outstanding day long festival. They have made every effort to highlight NCPGA and to arrange our tent display in the most prominent space. Again, any NCPGA member wanting to take advantage, there will be a "Pecan Court" in which pecan related displays can be arranged.

As in the past, this is a plea for volunteers to join us in Whiteville early on November 3 to help set up tents, tables, chairs and whatever it takes to prepare a highly respectable display for the Association. And then, assist in staffing the area. At a minimum, we need eight persons and at this time, we don't have the eight. In addition to the warm bodies, we also need two tents (10X20) at least four 6 or 8 foot tables and half dozen or so chairs.

We will begin taking down the display around 3:00 p.m.

Please let Laurie or Bill Bunn know of your interest to come aboard and serve the Association in this very worthwhile manner.

NEW DIRECTORS

The Association is pleased to introduce two recently elected directors. Gary Baggett whose address is 1095 Feed Mill Road, Roseboro is located in Sampson County, has many years in various stages of farming activities. He recently established his pecan orchard of approximately 150 trees. Gary acknowledges that his pecan farming experience may not be strong at this time, but his farming background should help to understand some issues that will undoubtedly arise.

Jack Crabtree and his wife Noonie live at 278 Queen Anne Drive, Bath, N C and are located in Beaufort County. They have been very active in the Association, rarely missing a learning opportunity. Both Jack and

Nonnie are retired and travel extensively; they stay in tuned with their orchard which includes pecan trees.

Welcome to you two. The Association will be stronger as a result of your serving as a director.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

As you know, almost half NCPGA membership dues goes for providing annual subscriptions to the Pecan South from Texas Pecan Growers Association and the Pecan Grower provided by the Georgia Pecan Growers Association. Respective lists were sent to those organizations shortly after our workshop in March. If you are not receiving these publications, please let us know.

PECAN TREE SUPPLY, 08

Based on telephone conversations this year, there will be large planting of pecan trees in North Carolina this year. That is of course, providing pecan trees are available. From all reports, they will be in very short supply for this coming planting season. Simply stated, they too are a victim of this year's very harsh growing condition throughout the Southeast. Even with enough water, constant watering for root development and attempting to keep the new and very tender new growth alive, inevitably leads to heavy scab pressure causing trees to harden off, stop growing and completely defoliate.

Recent editions of the NuttyNews strongly encourage planters to be very diligent in their search and decision making toward their source of trees. In those publications, grower's attention was called to the Big Box stores where quality, price and other specifics were called into serious question.

Also, planters were encouraged to go beyond web surfing to locate nurseries with pecan trees to sell.

Several times during the last workshop, there was great emphasis on studying, investigating, and learning all there is to know before making a long-term decision about pecan farming. There are few circumstances where that is more important than variety selection and source of pecan trees.

FALL SEASON IS AN ACTIVE ONE

With education and promotion as the major part of its mission statement, NCPGA will be quite busy and highly visible this Fall. In addition the Pecan Harvest Festival, the Association will again participate in the Mountain State Fair, the Raleigh State Fair, with educational material and providing monies for the pecan recipe cooking contest. We will be at some State Farmers Markets with product and informational handouts during Pecan Day. Other programs of local interest will include your officers and directors representing the Association and promoting pecans.

As a member of NCPGA, to become active in a positive way in your local area would be great. The Association will provide plenty handout material to help you. Please contact Laurie Wood or Bill Bunn

TO DO LIST

- Manage weevil, stink bugs
- Manage herbicide strip for harvesting
- Keep young trees watered
- Maintain weed free area around young trees
- Remove broken/hanging limbs
- Prepare harvest equipment
- Renew contact with past customers

THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT

Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every new day find you a better man.

**PECAN FARMING EQUIPMENT,
WANTED AND AVAILABLE**

Pecan Tree Shaker Needed

Mr. Frank Waldron, orchard in Columbus County is in need of a tree shaker. He is running a 45 h.p. tractor and would need a shaker to work on that size tractor. Frank's telephone number is 336-465-1120
email: fwwaldron@triad.com

PECAN CRACKER

Pearce Bros. Pecan cracker: These crackers are portable, handbuilt, commercial crackers and can crack 100 plus lbs. per hour with 80% yield of halves. (stats provided by seller). The complete machine sells for \$ 3,300. Call Gordon Pearce at 252-230-0224 or email: blueangel@bbnp.com



Air Blast Sprayer



Bill Bunn air-blast sprayer: 300 gallon PTO driven, needs minimum 50 HP tractor. Excellent coverage to 50 feet. It's a converted peach tree sprayer with fixed 13-nozzel volute. Set to deliver 100 gallons material per acre. Excellent condition, kept sheltered. Trees have out grown sprayer. Priced at \$2,500.