

Fresh from the Farm
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Second Year of Good Crops in the Area a Welcomed Relief

All the harvest is not in the basket yet, but our row crop farmers at least should have a good argument for the lender when it comes to asking for a loan next season. If we look back at our recent history in the multi-county area, things did not look good from 1998 thru 2002. Matter of fact 2002 was down right awful in terms of yield and price, one of our worst cotton years in history in the multi-county area. There were numerous cotton fields left abandoned that season due to the expense of harvesting and a farmer knowing he would not get anywhere near a return on the charge for running the equipment thru the field. Last year presented a relief to many of our farmers with good yields and fair to good prices.

This year is offering an outstanding crop of cotton, peanuts, soybeans and corn, if our folks can only get them out of the field while the quality is still good. It seems our history in this state is we do well at the expense of others, sort of like trading on the futures market. We benefited from at least three of the four tropical storms and hurricanes while others took a hit. I have only heard of a case here and there where too much water has either hurt yields in fields or affected the quality of the crop and most of this concern came from the corn crop. There are still parts of many fields of corn in the area waiting on the combine due to wet conditions; however, the corn that was harvested timely has boosted the average yield in the multi-county area over recent years.

A current problem for cotton farmers is not enough harvest hours during the day. Cotton has to be dry and fluffy for the picker to do a good job getting it from the open boll to the basket. Cotton is not drying out until 2:00 or 3:00 PM in the evenings due to

overcast skies. Even though some do harvest into the night time hours, the onset of dew stops harvest. The net result is we need more days of sunshine with warm weather to give us more picking time. We attempted to harvest cotton plots this past Tuesday on a farm in Lee County but had to wait until 3:30 to get started, and there was still damp cotton while we harvested due to the overcast skies. Still things look good on the farm for two years in a row from the production standpoint.

Another State Tobacco Meeting Reminder

Tobacco growers should find the state meeting important to their livelihoods on Thursday, November 11th at Lynches River County Park. This used to be the state park. The location of the park is approximately two miles west of Hwy 52 near Effingham in Florence County. From Hobbs Crossroads in Sumter County east of I-95 take Hwy. 403 approximately 4 or 5 miles southeast to Byrds Crossroads and turn left on Hwy. 541. Go a short distance then keep straight on Hwy. SSR 147 towards Effingham for another 4-5 miles. You should see a sign about the park. Turn left. Registration begins at 9:30 AM and the meeting at 10:00 AM. The buyout will be the highlight of the topics I'm sure.

Young Leader Program Looking for Couples or Individuals

If you are young ,meaning 26 to 66 years old (I guess I'm now young again), the American Soybean Association and Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc. are looking for farm couples or individuals who are innovative, enthusiastic, and interested in playing an active role in the soybean industry. They encourage you to participate in the Young Leader Program. The purpose is to promote agriculture and help guide the soybean industry. To become eligible you must be willing to commit to two phases of the training, February 22-26, 2005 in Austin, Texas and December 2005 in Des Moines, Iowa. If you

need an application, contact your local Clemson Extension office. Deadline for applications to be received in St. Louis is November 19, 2004.

Certified Crop Advisor Program Offered at Santee

If you are a certified crop advisor (CCA), you have an opportunity to attend an upcoming training at the Ramada Inn in Santee November 16-18. Russell Duncan and others coordinate this workshop that thoroughly covers all competency areas needing credit towards this certification. The fee for the entire workshop is \$120. Those needing to attend only specific days will be charged \$50 per day. After November 5th the late fee of \$25 will be added. Reservations for the motel may be made at 803-854-2191. Questions or concerns may be directed to Russell Duncan at 803-435-8429. A total of 20 CCA credits will be offered for attending the entire workshop. CCA 's need 40 credits every two years. This is a good opportunity, particularly for courses in soil and water and nutrient management.

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