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AgriBiz & Farm Expo spreads the word on equipment and innovation

MEDIA RELEASE

Jim Melvin, Public Service Activities

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FLORENCE – Though skies were gloomy and the air icy and damp, the mood was cheerful and filled with warmth at last week’s SC AgriBiz & Farm Expo at the Florence Civic Center.

Several thousand attendees were treated to an impressive assortment of educational programs, with more than 130 exhibitors showing the latest advancements in farm equipment and precision technology. In addition, students enjoyed a special Youth Day — led by Clemson University — that was intended to inspire agriculture’s future leaders.



Thousands attended the SC AgriBiz & Farm Expo on Jan. 14-15 in Florence, S.C.

Image Credit: Clemson University / Jim Melvin

“I came to see the equipment to help make some decisions on what I eventually plan to purchase,” North Carolina farmer Kevin Buie said. “What I’ve seen here is going to help me make better decisions.”

Buie brought along his 11-year-old son, John Poe, who took a turn on the AG Combine Simulator, an interactive mobile unit sponsored by the S.C. Farm Bureau that gives users the experience of harvesting “virtual” row crops through an audio-visual device built into the cab of an actual combine. The simulator was just one of dozens of exhibits inside the main arena, while the really big equipment was spread over a large swath of the civic center’s expansive parking lot.

Clemson University, the S.C. Department of Agriculture, S.C. Farm Bureau, S.C. FSA, AgSouth Farm Credit, ArborOne Farm Credit, Bryant Farms and Palmetto Consulting Solutions partnered

with the Expo management team to conduct the two-day event, which combined the industry’s traditional roots with an array of promising new technologies to promote the expansion of agribusiness in South Carolina.

“This year was a great success,” executive director Jody Martin said. “We are excited about the growth and the thousands of attendees who came out to get educated, connected and updated on agricultural innovations. This event is all about total team effort and the team will begin right away to make the 2016 Expo bigger and even better. We are confident that the attendees will leave here and inform other farmers to attend next year (Jan. 13-14, 2016).”



John Poe, 11, takes his turn on the AG Combine Simulator at the SC AgriBiz & Farm Expo.

Image Credit: Clemson University / Jim Melvin

Presenters and attendees included farmers from South Carolina, North Carolina and Georgia, as well as scientists and exhibitors from across the United States.

Clemson University participants included Extension director Tom Dobbins and associate director Brian Callahan, Extension agribusiness specialist Dave Lamie, precision agriculture engineer Kendall Kirk, Public Service and Agriculture program integration director Steve Meadows and Regulatory Services director Steve Cole.

Though the expo attracted growers and other agribusiness leaders, the public was also encouraged to attend. Functions included a Taste of South Carolina, which offered farm-to-table meals by four state chefs, and the Commissioner’s Breakfast with a keynote address by S.C. Agriculture Commissioner Hugh Weathers. The featured chefs represented various parts of the state: Heidi Trull from Grits & Groceries in Belton, Brandon Velie from Juniper in Ridge Spring, Cooper Thomas from Victor’s Bistro in Florence and Brian Waters from Saltus River Grill in Beaufort.



Though the main portion of the expo took place on Wednesday and Thursday, there also were related events before and after the expo. On Tuesday, Clemson Public Service and Agriculture offered Farm Accident Rescue Training and on Friday the S.C. Farm Bureau hosted a symposium that explored the trends, technologies and issues agribusinesses will face in the future.

For a look back at the full schedule of the 2015 expo,

More than 130 exhibitors took part in the SC AgriBiz & Farm Expo, displaying equipment and offering business-related services.

Image Credit: Clemson University / Jim Melvin

go to <http://www.scagribiz.com/expo/events-and-activities/>

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