



On the Calendar

Jan 22-25:

Texas Pecan Short Course; Texas A&M, Somerville, TX

Feb 23-24:

Southeastern Pecan Growers Conf.; Beau Rivage Resort; Biloxi MS; Info sepga.com

Mar 3-5:

Western Pecan Growers Conf.; Las Cruces Convention Center

Mar 19-21:

Georgia Pecan Growers Conf.; Perry, GA; More info at georgiapecan.org

Apr 14:

National Pecan Day!

From your friends at Savage Equipment

Reimbursements/Exemptions on Re-Imported Pecan Product

On December 15, the American Pecan Promotion Board adopted a resolution to establish an interim process enabling importers to request an exemption from past due assessments or reimbursement for assessments collected by U.S. Customs and Border Patrol on pecans that were shipped outside the U.S. and returned as shelled meats.

Along with the text of the resolution, the APPB released checklists to help those affected by it to obtain reimbursement for qualifying import assessments and/or



Oops!

In our fall, 2023 newsletter, we goofed and put out the wrong dates for the winter/spring 2024 pecan events. The dates above are much more reliable.

to obtain exemptions for pecan imports that are covered by the resolution. They also published an application form that people can use to receive their reimbursement. Those with questions about forms, exemptions, or reimbursements can contact the APPB office by email or telephone: forms@eatpecans.com or (817) 985-3034.

The pecan community lost a great friend and mentor.

Every once in a while, we encounter someone who lives life so well that they serve as a shining example for everyone around them to follow. John Lee Turner, Jr. was one of those people. The folks at Savage Equipment and so many others in the pecan community were saddened to learn of his passing this past September.

John Turner was sometimes referred to as "Pecan John" and was revered as the go-to pecan expert for his region. He freely dispensed his knowledge of horticulture, often flavored with generous portions of homespun wisdom and humor. He taught generations of folks, young and old, about growing things, especially the many mysteries of growing quality pecans. After earning his bachelor and Master's degrees, he was a vocational ag teacher for many years and a county ag extension agent

Continued on page 2



As Agricultural Extension Agent, John Turner often shared his techniques on grafting pecan trees.

(photo from the University of Arkansas, Cooperative Extension Service)

866-572-8243 info@savageequipment.com



John Turner (continued)

for even more years. He was also an ardent supporter of 4-H programs and events, and he organized the Red Dirt Master Gardeners group in his area.

The December issue of Pecan South Magazine contains a wonderful tribute to John Turner written by Texas pecan grower, Mike Adams.

National Nutgrower Magazine features Troy Swift.

National Nutgrower Magazine's September/October edition includes an article entitled Valuing the Soil (Doug Ohlemeier, author). This piece tells the story of Troy Swift's evolving, multifaceted pecan operation in central Texas. Swift River Pecans harvests a couple thousand trees, both native and improved varieties, on more than 260 acres alongside the San Marcos River. They also process pecans, produce pecan oil and run a retail operation. They even have a lumber mill that turns out huge slabs of pecan wood along with other wood species.

In recent years, Mr. Swift has increasingly incorporated "regenerative agriculture" techniques into his pecan operations. According to the article, the origin of this shift was his battle against pecan scab and leaf scorch. "Every conventional control method he was taught made the trees worse. Scientists and others who visited his orchard could only tell him there might be something wrong with his soil." He decided they may be right and started studying soil health and regenerative agriculture.

Swift began to eliminate herbicides from his pecan operation and started using "organic biologic foliar fungicides" with the aim of providing a longer lasting and broader spectrum of resistance while doing less harm to the soil microbiome. He still rotates traditional fungicides when the new ones don't prove effective or scab pressure is heavy, but they are used as a last resort. The additional fungicides add new "FRAC codes" to the rotation, which helps combat fungicide resistance.

Swift has also embraced the regenerative soil practice of leaving the orchard floor mostly un-mowed, providing organic matter to the soil and improving water holding capacity. Swift "only mows once before harvest except around sprinkler heads and other critical areas, saving hundreds of hours of labor and fuel, and reducing mower and maintenance costs."

In addition to the informative National Nutgrower article, there is a wealth of interesting information on the



Spreading wood chips in the Swift River Pecan orchard.
(photo courtesy of Swift River Pecans)

Swift River Pecans website, www.swiftriverpecans.com/regenerative-practices. For instance, the Swift River team is involved in several very unique partnerships. These include Merlin Tuttle's Bat Conservation and Bat Survey Solutions, LLC. At Swift River, bats are considered "the night shift" of their pest control program. Swift is currently having bat guano lab tested (DNA) and has identified over a hundred species of insects bats consume in and around his orchards. They also partner with Fitzhugh Brewing and Swift Distillery, LLC (a cousin's business not associated with Swift River Pecans, LLC) which contribute spent grains from the brewing and distilling processes. The Swift River team is doing a lot of composting lately using byproducts from their pecan operations and their lumber mill.

As a first-generation pecan farmer, Troy Swift has traveled a long and winding educational road to arrive at his current way of thinking. In the end, he may end up teaching us all a thing or two about growing pecans. If you would like to learn more, check out the National Nutgrower article, the Swift River Pecans website and a long-form interview by Jon Alba (Regenerative Pecan Farm) on various online video platforms.

Pecan Pieces

News you can use!

Here's a sampling of pecan-related news we found on the internet, in our favorite pecan publications and from our own sources and experience.

The Problem With Crop Estimates

The December issue of Pecan South has an interesting article by the above title written by Georgia Extension Pecan Specialist, Lenny Wells. In this piece, Wells laments the historically arbitrary nature of the various pecan crop estimates each year. As "anyone in the pecan industry knows," growers are accused of estimating low and shellers are accused of estimating high. The yearly "carry-over" has similar issues. The basic case Wells makes is that the estimate, no matter its source or the good intentions of the estimator, "they are largely just opinions based on the estimator's own judgment and experience." Also, with all the acreage planted over the past decade or so and the variability of when they produce and at what volume, it is virtually impossible to estimate their contribution to the total crop. The pecan industry's insufficient ability to estimate the crop does a disservice to everyone involved.

What's the remedy? Wells describes objective sampling and measurement systems used by the almond and walnut industries to come up with a more reliable estimate for their crops. These systems are financed by their respective industry boards. Wells believes the pecan industry needs to be able to base market decisions on "data and facts objectively obtained."

Objective and verified assessments of the crop on the trees and in cold storage holdings are equally important to market stability and growers' confidence in the price they receive for their crop.

Some stink bugs are good? Who Knew?

There's a fascinating and useful article in the January, 2024 issue of *Pecan South* that you might want to not only read, but study. It's written by Georgia-based USDA research entomologist, Ted Cottrell and it's entitled *Friend or Foe? Beneficial and Pest Stink Bugs*. As you might have guessed, knowing the difference could be an important part of your pest control program. In his article, Cottrell shows several detailed photographs to help us determine which stink bugs we can consider friendly to our pecan



Euthyrhynchus floridanus:
Considered one of the "good guys" when it comes to stink bugs.

orchards.

One of the best ways to discern a predaceous (friend, because it eats other bugs) from a herbivorous (foe, because it eats plants), is by examining its protruding mouth parts (a proboscis, or that long sucky-looking thing that sticks out from the bug's mouth area).

Herbivorous stink bugs typically have mouthparts of similar thickness as their antennae. In contrast, the mouthparts of predaceous stink bugs are more robust with its thickness about twice that of the antennae.

It seems like a subtle distinction, but if you look closely, the difference is pretty obvious.

California Almond Acreage Drops Again in 2023

An article by the above title appears on the pacificnut-producer.com website (posted 12-04-2023). It states that for the second year in a row, almond acreage in California has decreased, "something that has not happened since at least 1995, according to a new report from Land IQ to the Almond Board of California (ABC)." Almond acreage has decreased from 1.64 million in 2022 to 1.56 million this in 2023. It appears that fewer acres are being planted in the very recent past and more almond trees are being removed (83,000 acres in 2023, as of August).

Land IQ uses a variety of means and methods to determine acreage, "agronomic and remote sensing knowledge, robust on-the-ground verification, customized image analysis, artificial intelligence and more." They state that their acreage estimate is 98.8 percent accurate.

Climate Robotics wins AgSharks Competition.

In a November 14 article on the Western Growers website (www.wga.com) reporter Ann Donahue writes about the winner of the 2023 AgSharks award. *Pecan Country News* told our readers about this annual competi-

Continued on page 4



AgSharks (continued)

tion (loosely based on the “Shark Tank” television show) in our Summer 2023 newsletter. This sixth edition of the AgSharks competition was held in Kauai, Hawaii.

Climate Robotics is a developer of mobile biochar production systems for commercial agriculture. Biochar is a carbon-negative soil amendment made from waste biomass that helps reverse global climate change. When biochar is applied to agricultural soils, it boosts crop yield, water retention and nutrient retention. Globally, biochar production has the potential to durably sequester up to two billion tons of atmospheric CO₂ in agricultural soils every year, while generating valuable carbon removal credits. Climate Robotics’ trailer-mounted systems allows for low-cost, distributed production of high value biochar directly on the farm.



The judges provided Climate Robotics with a \$250,000 equity investment offer. Along with the money, the AgSharks winner receives international recognition, mentoring from industry experts and access to more Western Grower resources. Previous winners have been able to leverage the investment dollars (often in the millions) to bring new products and ideas from development to market.

Oklahoma’s pecan harvest looks promising.

An encouraging article on the *Farm Progress* website (www.farmprogress.com, Nov 9, 2023) tells the tale of a promising crop of Oklahoma pecans after a couple of fairly dismal years for the state. Author, Trisha Gedon begins by describing the weather-related trials for pecan growers in 2021 and 2022. Thankfully, this year is looking much better.

Becky Carroll, Oklahoma State University Extension senior specialist, fruit and pecans, said the National Pecan Shellers Association predicts this year’s crop estimate at 22 million pounds, which is above the average of 17 million pounds in Oklahoma.

Carroll is quoted further in the article stating that Oklahoma has 1,878 pecan farms spread over 96,000 acres and “about 75% of the pecans grown here are native pecans”.

In this piece, we also hear from third-generation pecan grower Susan Haydon Raybourn, and her excitement to be bringing in a decent crop for the first time in a few years.

Raybourn’s 600-acre pecan grove is part of a 1,600-acre operation her grandfather, Grover Haydon, started in 1915. Her parents, Paul and Maxine Haydon, made substantial improvements to the farm for 70 years, and she now manages it with her sister. There also are 60 acres dedicated to Stuart pecans that were grafted by her grandfather.

Josh Grundmann is also looking forward to this year’s Oklahoma pecan crop. He runs a shelling operation seasonally and a retail store, near Shawnee, Oklahoma that sells nuts and candy all year long. He says, “I’m looking forward to seeing our customers again and catching up because that means they’re thriving.”

There is also an article in the December *Pecan South* magazine, written by Becky Carroll, outlining a recent “pecan field day” at Leon Bailey’s pecan farm in east-central Oklahoma. This informative event was attended by around 170 current and prospective native pecan farmers.

California pecans also looking good this year.

Our readers might want to check out a video interview (posted Dec. 27, 2023) with pecan grower Karlene Hanf, President of the California Pecan Growers Association—written, on the *Pacific Nut Producer* website. Karlene is well known by many in the pecan industry through her representation of Linwood Nursery at pecan conferences over the past many years.

In this interview, conducted by Mathew Malcomb of *Pacific Nut Producer* Magazine and California AgNet, Ms Hanf describes the California pecan harvest as being of “very good quality” and of a relatively high volume. She has much more to say about the California pecan industry and if you’re interested, check out her interview on the Pacific Nut producer website, (pacificnutproducer.com).

Featured Equipment

**Get the growing season off to a strong start
with a new orchard sprayer.**



With more sprayer options than anyone, Savage Equipment is able to provide just the right sprayer to protect your orchard through this year's growing season. Savage makes rugged, powerful sprayers that are engineered for the unique environment of the pecan orchard, but ideal for many other tree-spraying applications as well. The toughest pecan orchards are all in a day's work for a Savage Sprayer. Very tall trees? Mixed sizes? Random spacing? Savage sprayers have you covered. The chart to the right shows the range of PTO-driven sprayers which are suitable for virtually any size of tractor and orchard. Below that, you will find a chart depicting some of the powerful engine-driven sprayers Savage offers that are built by our friends at Nelson Manufacturing.

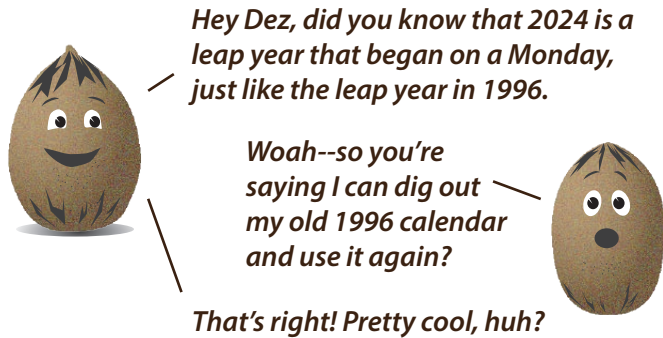
Drop by or contact us to learn more about our Savage and Nelson orchard sprayers. You can visit our website to see the complete line of orchard machines built by Savage. You can also find us at youtube.com/savageequipmentinc. If you're interested in putting the latest innovations in orchard management and harvesting to work for you, please give us a call at 866-572-8243 or send an email to info@savageequipment.com.

Savage Sprayer Comparison

Model Number	Tank Gallons	Fan Diam.	Volute Width	Lngh/Wdth/Ht	PTO RPM	HP Req'd
5525	500	25"	36"	150"/72"/66"	540	45HP
5528	500	28"	36" or 48"	150"/72"/66"	540	60HP
5534	500	34"	48"	150"/72"/66"	540	70HP
5537	500	37"	48"	150"/72"/66"	1000	90HP
5540	500	40"	56" or 72"	150"/72"/66"	1000	110HP
5734	1000	34"	48" or 60"	207"/91"/69"	540	80HP
5737	1000	37"	48" or 60"	207"/91"/69"	1000	100HP
5740	1000	40"	63" or 72"	207"/91"/69"	1000	120HP

Nelson-Hardie Sprayer Comparison

Model Number	Tank Capacity	Blower Fan	PTO/HP
6800P	500 or 1000	Dual 34", 9-Blade	540/80-100 HP (req.)
Super-80	500 or 1000	Dual 40", 10 or 16-Blade	173 or 225 HP
Super-92	1200	Dual 46", 13-Blade	325 HP



For us older folks, it's hard to believe 1996 was 28 years ago. We can still remember that year when...

...*Home Improvement*, *Friends* and *Seinfeld* were some of the most popular shows on television.

...the *Independence Day* movie was a big blockbuster that year. A young Leonardo DiCaprio was in *Romeo + Juliet*. Tom Cruise starred in two big movies--*Mission: Impossible* (the first one) and *Jerry Maguire*.

...Boyz II Men, Whitney Houston and Celine Dion were lighting up the pop music charts. It was Shania Twain, George Strait and Alan Jackson on the country side of music.

...we were thrilled to watch our gymnasts and other athletes dominate the Atlanta Olympics (and the shock of the bombing). This will be the year of the Paris Olympics.

...Bill Clinton was re-elected president, beating out Bob Dole and independent candidate, Ross Perot. This year's winner is anybody's guess.

In case you're interested, back in 1996, a dozen eggs cost \$1.11, a pound of bacon was \$2.47, your average house was \$166,400 and the median household income was \$35,500.

If you can't find any old 1996 calendars, it probably means you're not a hoarder. But, you could save this year's calendar and use it again in 2052.

Honey Roasted Pecan and Pecan Snack Mix

Why not try out this delicious snack recipe we found on the pages of ilovepecans.org. It was created by Eva Kosmas Flores, creator of many wonderful things, including this recipe and her website, adventuresincooking.com. The woman can not only make incredible food, she takes amazing photographs of it (along with beautiful photos of lots of other stuff).

Ingredients

- 2 cups pecan halves
- 2 Tbsp. honey
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1/2 tsp. red pepper flakes
- 3/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup dried apple chips, roughly chopped
- 1/2 cup dried pear pieces, roughly chopped
- 1/3 cup dried cranberries
- 1/4 cup roughly chopped dark chocolate



Process

1. In a small bowl, stir together the honey, oil, red pepper flakes, and 1/4 tsp. of the salt. Place the pecans in a medium bowl and drizzle with the honey mixture, then toss to coat.
2. Spread the pecans out in an even layer on a baking sheet and roast for 10 minutes, then stir them on the pan and redistribute in an even layer again and bake until fragrant and deeper in color, about 4 to 7 minutes more, keeping a close eye so they don't burn.
3. Toss the pecans with the remaining ingredients (including the remaining 1/2 tsp. salt) to combine. Enjoy!

If you've got a pecan story, a good, clean joke or a pecan recipe you'd like to share, send it along to pecancountry@savageequipment.com. We love to hear from our Pecan Country neighbors.