Tapping into the world of Coke®
Dear Alumni and Friends,

We had an interesting start to 2011. By Jan. 15, Athens had seen 60 times its usual snowfall for the year, according to state climatologist David Stooksbury. For the first time in 30 years, the university was closed for three consecutive days due to snow. But the great thaw has arrived, and we welcome it.

The same can be said for the economy. We have seen a slow-but-steady rise in state revenues since June 2010. That news is as welcome as springtime in Georgia.

U.S. economists continue to remind us the recession was officially over in June 2009, but we have to be patient through what promises to be a slow recovery that could take two to three more years to fully materialize. However, agriculture delivered much good news early in this recovery process.

Many of Georgia’s top commodities are seeing record-high market prices. Most of the price increases are being driven by increased demand around the world. That’s a positive sign the world economy is on the rebound. High prices and record-setting exports for food and agricultural products have set the stage for Georgia agriculture to be an economic star. We expect to see the farm economy remain strong and help stabilize the state as the rest of the economy pulls slowly out of the recession.

Sweeping changes are also afoot in Georgia. We inaugurated a new governor, Nathan Deal, in January. And, CAES alumni Gary Black was elected Commissioner of Agriculture – our first newly-elected ag commissioner in more than 40 years. We look forward to working closely with Governor Deal and Commissioner Black.

Implementation of the new UGA Cooperative Extension delivery model is well under way. Everyone associated with Extension, from administrators to county agents to 4-H and Master Gardener volunteers, is working hard to continue to offer high-quality educational programs that help improve Georgians’ lives. They’ve had to make some hard choices. I am proud of the innovative ideas they put into place that will keep Extension strong in the coming years.

Finally, the college welcomed Rodney Miller as our new development director at the end of 2010. Rodney’s extensive business experience and deep knowledge of agriculture will serve us well as we seek funding and support through these lean budget years. The commitment that our donors and friends have shown has been encouraging. I am confident that under Rodney’s leadership we will see exciting new projects take root.

As spring ushers in a new growing season, we hope to watch the economy prosper, our students flourish and research and extension bring innovation and energy to Georgia agriculture and our college.

Sincerely,

J. Scott Angle
Dean and Director
College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
It's just another day at the office for Gary Peiffer, a Cooperative Extension agent in DeKalb County. The morning starts with a visit to a landscape company to give advice about tree planting and protection, pesticide safety, storm water and urban sprawl issues. Then he's off to a Rotary luncheon to talk about community gardens and farmers markets. After that, it's back to the office to answer phone calls and e-mails from homeowners wondering how to winterize their lawns and get rid of the squirrels in their attics. Throughout the day, homeowners and green industry representatives bring in samples for identification or control methods.

But the workday doesn't always end at 5 p.m. Evenings may be spent preparing for a Master Gardener training or delivering presentations to civic groups about basic gardening skills like diagnostic and pest control issues, soil preparation and plant watering. The next morning, it's back to work in one of the most densely populated Georgia counties to do it all again.

Scenes similar to this one play out every day in many counties across the state, urban and rural. Extension agents stand ready to answer all sorts of questions—from a homeowner trying to figure out why her azaleas won't bloom to a farmer staring down a disease that's threatening to decimate his soybean crop.

"What a lot of people don't understand is that urban ag is not that different from traditional agriculture. To be successful, you have to have good soil, plant the right crops where they're supposed to go, water them correctly and manage pest and disease control."

~ Gary Peiffer, DeKalb County Cooperative Extension agent

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The University of Georgia's Center for Urban Agriculture, located on the UGA campus in Griffin, Ga., is essentially a melting pot of information from disciplines including crop and soil sciences, plant pathology, entomology, horticulture and biological and agricultural engineering. More often than not, urban issues cut across those boundaries. For example, when it comes to addressing a plant disease, pathologists can identify and design a treatment for it, engineers can create a new irrigation system that delivers the proper amount of water at the correct time to lessen disease pressure and horticulturists can help make sure the right plant is installed in the right place.

While traditional agricultural crops like cotton, soybeans and peanuts are considered commodities, urban agriculture is based primarily on products and value-added services, such as landscape architecture and farmers markets.
COMMUNITY GARDENS

Community gardens seem to become popular during times of great social and economic change, from the Great Depression to today. During World War II, American families grew 80 million pounds of food in Victory Gardens, which people planted across the country to help ease the strain on the nation’s food supply. This meant more food for the troops. Victory Gardens represented nearly 44 percent of the country’s entire food supply during the war, according to the New York Restoration Project.

Today, roughly 15 percent of the world’s food is grown in urban areas, including backyard, rooftop and balcony gardens, according to USDA. During the current economic recession, Sheldon Hammond, the agriculture and natural resources program development coordinator for UGA Cooperative Extension’s Northwest District, has noticed an increased interest in local foods and home and community gardening in Georgia.

“People want fresher fruits and vegetables and want to know where their food is coming from,” Hammond said. “Origin seems to be more important than organic right now. People want to know the farmer they’re buying from, and some are even interested in growing their own food. You don’t see the momentum on that slowing down.” Hammond attributes the increased popularity of locally grown foods to the economy and an increased awareness of food safety.

In metro areas, there’s a renewed interest in community gardens and farmers markets on both the county and municipal levels, as well as with non-profit organizations. Several cities have set aside sections of parkland for community gardens. Non-profit organizations are using available plots at churches and shelters. In DeKalb County alone there are somewhere between 50 and 75 community gardens, including those at 26 county parks and 15 senior centers.

James Morgan, an urban horticulture and ag agent in Dougherty County, knows of at least nine community gardens in his area and has also noticed a growing interest in raised bed gardening. “Raised bed gardens have many benefits,” he said. “You can easily grow vegetables in a six-by-twelve plot and plant things like squash that will replenish themselves throughout the summer.” And, raised beds don’t have the same nematode and weed problems as traditional gardens. They’re also easier to maintain for the elderly or people who have a hard time bending and kneeling. Although Morgan spends about 75 percent of his time helping homeowners and the rest assisting local green industry professionals, the demand for information can often be overwhelming. That’s where Master Gardeners come in. A volunteer force trained in a broad range of horticulture topics, they help agents extend their reach in the community.

“Master Gardeners are involved in everything we do, down to answering phones and e-mails, talking to office visitors, being speakers at public and civic groups, writing brochures, talking to the media and teaching,” Peiffer said. While Extension agents in urban counties may not deal with row crops, corn and cows on a daily basis like some of their rural counterparts, their primary mission remains the same: teach people how to grow things, solve problems and make the best-informed decisions possible about the environment we live in.

“A Garden Grows in Brooklyn, N.Y.”

“Urban agriculture” doesn’t get much more “urban” than New York City. One of the most densely populated, concrete and asphalted cities on Earth is home to more than 600 community gardens — and that’s down from nearly 1,700 during the 1980s. Over the past 35 years, CAES alumn John Ameroso (BSA – Agronomy, ’68) has had a hand in the soil: “oh, a couple hundred” of them. Ameroso started his career as New York City’s first agricultural Extension agent in 1976. He had recently completed a two-year commitment in Vietnam as part of the International Voluntary Service helping farmers with small vegetable and animal production and rice irrigation systems. He found IVS through CAES agronomy professor Jack Perkins, who Ameroso said “got me in my career” by handing him a brochure about the organization one day in class.

Today, after more than three decades working in Extension, he sees urban community gardens as aces of fresh produce in what is otherwise a city of “food deserts” — areas with fast-food chains and corner stores but no supermarket. Surrounded by low-rises and housing projects, the Hattie Carthan Community Garden in Brooklyn’s traditionally low-income Bed-Stuy-Shawsent neighborhood has 43 members who tend individual plots of lettuce, collards, tomatoes and beans: “simple foods,” as the garden’s vice president and market project director, Yonnette Fleming, calls them. They also host a new farmers market on Saturdays, which distributed more than 20,000 pounds of food to the surrounding community during the 2009-2010 season. Produce for the market is grown in 10 garden plots and the greenhouse, which Ameroso provided expert advice for building, as well as in milk crates, boxes, containers, old dressers and even on the roof of the chicken coops.

“We grow lettuce, eggplants, bitter melon, collards, bok choy, heirloom tomatoes, peppers, peanuts, garlic, potatoes, Swiss chard and broccoli,” Fleming said. The market also has a new alternative distribution program similar to Meals on Wheels that makes weekly deliveries to 35 seniors living within a mile of the garden. The basket contains five varieties of fresh–grown produce plus recipes, herbs and an occasional half carton of eggs from the garden’s flock of 20 chickens.

Across Brooklyn, located next to an industrial park and overlooking an IKEA, is the Added Value Red Hook Community Farm. Ameroso helped start the farm in 2003 and serves on the board of directors. Planted in soil spread over an abandoned baseball field and asphalt parking lot, the 1.2 acre garden produces between 60 and 80 varieties of vegetables a year. The produce is sold through farmers markets and CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture), as well as in six local restaurants.

“This isn’t a typical 9-to-5 job — there are long days and nighttime meetings — but every day is different,” he said. “People feel like this farmer stuff is simple, but it’s a science. Even in the city, you have to know about soil pH, nutrition and fertilizers.” Although he’s supposed to be officially retired, Ameroso still spends his days advising local civic organizations, community gardens and the city’s urban farming network about the ins and outs of profitable, sustainable urban agriculture.
Lucy Reid knows her Coca-Cola products. Even before the sharp crack of a tab breaking into a Coke® can or the snap of a Powerade® bottle being opened fills the air, she knows what those beverages are made of — their ingredients, nutritional values, packaging and even their regulatory requirements.

While at-home baristas can mix drinks like tea with vitamin C and honey for their own consumption, companies that manufacture beverages or foods for sale don’t have that luxury. Ingredients have to be approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for use or demonstrated to be safe by experts before mixing them with each other. This practice helps keep food in the United States safe — and Reid hopping.

Reid (BSHE – Experimental Foods, ’82, MS – Food Science, ’84) is the director of scientific and regulatory affairs (SRA) for Coca-Cola Refreshments. Her life revolves around science, regulations, beverages, communications, family and Georgia football.
foods, not juice beverages. D was only approved for limited use in needs vitamin D. At the time, vitamin said. “There was another source of calcium,” she said if they were lactose intolerant, with added calcium. “If people didn’t like which was already selling orange juice the fruit-juice-filled world of Minute Maid, her to Houston, Texas, in 1988 and the Coca-Cola. part of her first great achievement with finds the entry for vitamin D, which was the multivolume book every year. work, and a box arrives with a new set of guides her scientific and regulatory affairs of Federal Regulations onto her desk. It Coca-Cola, she hefts a stack of the Japan. unsweetened blended tea drink from bottles ranging from Coke Zero™, her family photos and a collection of empty American wing. Her office is filled with entrance and the multi-storied North complex, she can see a view of the nutrition claims. federal initiatives like food labeling and to have Coca-Cola’s voice heard on FDA, working through trade associations for the most ingredients we’re using comply with regulations, we realized we would have sure “our products, labels, claims and ingredients we’re using comply with federal regulations, which, for the most part, are FDA regulations,” she said. They monitor what goes on at the FDA, working through trade associations to have Coca-Cola’s voice heard on federal initiatives like food labeling and nutrition claims.

**ADDDING**

**VITAMIN D**

From Reid’s office located within Coca-Cola headquarters’ vast Atlanta complex, she can see a view of the entrance and the multi-storied North American wing. Her office is filled with paper, binders, tacked-up product labels, family photos and a collection of empty bottles ranging from Coke Zero™, her drink of choice, to Sokombichaï, a new unsweetened blended tea drink from Japan.

After talking about her first days with Coca-Cola, she hefts a stack of the Code of Federal Regulations onto her desk. It guides her scientific and regulatory affairs work, and a box arrives with a new set of the multivolume book every year. After a few minutes of flipping, she finds the entry for vitamin D, which was part of her first great achievement with Coca-Cola.

Reid’s Coca-Cola journey first took her to Houston, Texas, in 1988 and the fruit-juice-filled world of Minute Maid, which was already selling orange juice with added calcium. “If people didn’t like milk or if they were lactose intolerant, here was another source of calcium,” she said.

But to help with absorption, calcium needs vitamin D. At the time, vitamin D was only approved for limited use in foods, not juice beverages.

“Once we started looking at the regulations, we realized we would have to file a food additive petition with the FDA,” she said. It usually takes a few years for food additive petitions to go through the system. But after a year of consideration and research, the FDA approved the request.

“We had the first national brand of orange juice with vitamin D,” she said. “That was exciting. That was a regulatory success and a win for consumers.”

**4-H BEGINNINGS**

Reid’s interest in food started way before she attended UGA or helped add vitamin D to orange juice. City life also had its draw for the girl growing up on a Mitchell County peanut farm. So in fifth grade, she made a move toward both through her county 4-H program. “I always knew I wanted to do something with food, but I didn’t know anything about food science,” she said.

“4-H played a critical role in all of this. I went to every leadership camp. And my project (for district project achievement) was dairy foods.”

Her last year in 4-H, as a UGA freshman, her project on foods and nutrition gave her a first place finish at the state level and allowed her to master, the highest achievement for a 4-H’er.

Reid spent three summers as a counselor at Rock Eagle 4-H Center, and just last summer she took her daughter Elizabeth there to watch the Native American pageant.

“4-H is what prepared me for my job here at Coke. Without my 4-H communication skills, I wouldn’t be where I am today. And that’s what has been really exciting about coming back to Georgia and reconnecting with 4-H and UGA.”

~Lucy Reid

For about 20 years, she spent her football seasons in the land of the Longhorns. While she and her husband Bob, who left his alma mater’s territory “kicking and screaming,” miss Houston and the many memories their family made in Texas, Reid is glad to be back in her home state.

“This past year, my children got their picture made with Rass (UGA’s brother and temporary UGA mascot). Now I get to introduce them to (where I grew up),” she said.

She hopes both Elizabeth, 10, and her son Charlie, 8, will be involved in 4-H as they get older. Right now, their days revolve around schoolwork and sports. They also have something many kids only dream about: A refrigerator full of Coca-Cola products in their basement. Lucy doesn’t let them crack a can of Coke® whenever they want to, but they still think it’s pretty cool that their mom works at Coca-Cola.

“I like it when my mom brings home new products for us to try,” Charlie said.

Elizabeth likes the “huge polar bear in the Coca-Cola store,” she said.

**FINDING FOOD SCIENCE**

While Herschel Walker was leading UGA football through its glory days, Reid was walking the halls as an undergraduate in experimental foods in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences. Through that program, she studied food and nutrition. But that career path wasn’t exactly what she wanted to do with her life.

And then she discovered food science.

“Dr. John Powers came and lectured in one of my experimental foods classes,” she said. “That’s when I knew this is what I had been looking for.” Powers was key in both founding and recruiting students in the Coca-Cola store,” she said.
to UGA's Department of Food Science and Technology, and with that lecture, he hooked a new student and changed Reid's future.

After finishing her experimental foods degree, she jumped into life as a food science graduate student in the then-named UGA College of Agriculture. Her coursework in Athens was followed by peanut research in Griffin. Even now, food science and technology students follow the same path, with some remaining in Athens to do their research.

Retired food science and technology professor Manjeet Chinnan helped Reid with her peanut processing research and, when a position as a research coordinator opened up at UGA, worked with her as she studied black-eyed peas. “Knowing her, I thought she would do a good job, and she did,” Chinnan said. She strengthened her knowledge of statistics through her research project, “and I think that’s one of the reasons she’s with Coca-Cola.”

LABELS AND CALORIES

In 1994, the FDA started requiring nutrition labels on food and beverage products. Minute Maid itself had about 600 different types of packaging that needed labels. “We might have orange juice in a 64-ounce carton, a 16-ounce carton and a 10-ounce bottle,” Reid said. “In my group, I was the scientist developing all the nutritional information based on nutrient data we had gathered from government databases and internal laboratory analyses. “In my team today [at Coca-Cola], we still develop these numbers for our products.”

Starting in 2000, Reid flew to Brazil twice a year for meetings of Codex Alimentarius Commission’s Intergovernmental Task Force on Fruit and Vegetable juices as part of the U.S. delegation led by the FDA and USDA. “All the major juice companies had a representative there,” she said. “We had a five-year timeframe to develop juice standards.”

With countries like Australia, Thailand, Costa Rica, France and others in attendance, she said it was like a UN summit — complete with headphones and translators.

Now she’s involved in Clear on Calories, an initiative the American Beverage Association started in support of First Lady Michelle Obama’s “Let’s Move!” campaign addressing childhood obesity. Coca-Cola made the commitment to the White House along with several other companies. They’re now working with the FDA to comply with federal regulations.

“Part of the commitment was to place calorie information on the front of all packaging by February 2012,” she said. They already had some products with calories declared on the front packaging, as Coca-Cola had previously made a global commitment in 2009. “You can look now, and it’s on the front of the Coke Zero package. And we will continue to do this for all the different products we sell.” For 20-ounce drinks and smaller, they’re putting the calories contained in the entire bottle.

But it’s not just big projects that require Reid’s label-scrutinizing eye. “Every time we do a promotion on our packages, such as a new Disney movie, we review the label again to make sure essential information hasn’t been altered,” she said.

A ROCK STAR TEAM

Three years ago, Reid “was responsible providing scientific and regulatory support for the juice business, not only for North America but also globally,” she said. “Then Rhona brought me to Atlanta, and now I’m responsible for scientific and regulatory affairs work for all of the U.S. business.”

Reid works with a team that includes chemists, nutritionists, food scientists and scientific and regulatory affairs directors from several different countries. At the head of that team is Coca-Cola’s chief scientific and regulatory officer, Rhona Applebaum.

“We make sure that the products we put out are first and foremost safe,” Applebaum said, “and that whatever we say about them anywhere in the world is in compliance with local regulations and the claims made are substantiated by the facts and science.”

Reid calls Applebaum the “rock star of scientific and regulatory affairs.”

But Applebaum said that if she’s the rock star, she has “a rock band organization, because I have people like Lucy who are helping put out the music.”

“In addition to being theoretically smart, Lucy is practically smart, not just knowing what needs to be done, but how it needs to be done,” she said. “She’s also extremely ethical. She’s always going to do what’s right. And she’s funny. She’s got a good sense of humor. She’s an excellent team player. It’s always about the product or project, not about Lucy.

With everything that she has going on, the work/life balance, she never shirks responsibility. She’s always asking what she can do to help.”

ONE BIG FOOD SCIENCE FAMILY

Today Reid is giving back to another generation of food scientists. She met up with UGA food science graduate coordinator Mark Harrison when she was in Athens for UGA’s Woodruff Lecture. Harrison was on her graduate committee when he first started at UGA; now Reid guest lectures in his food law class.

“I have trouble convincing my students that food law is actually an exciting, dynamic area,” he said. “Lucy comes in and emphasizes that. "I tell my students when I meet with them for the first time that this is the most important class that they’ll take. If you don’t do something legally and get caught, you’ll be in trouble. Then all the other stuff doesn’t matter.”"
invaders

Kudzu-eating pest munches its way across the South

By Sharon Dowdy

A tiny, smelly immigrant the size of a pea has University of Georgia scientists on edge. On one hand, it’s a godsend since the bug eats kudzu, Georgia’s most prolific weed. On the other hand, it’s bad news since its menu also includes soybeans and other legumes — plants Georgia farmers rely on for their livelihoods.

First spotted in northeast Georgia in the fall of 2009, the bean plataspid (Megacopta cribraria) is a native of southeast Asia. The insect is also called the lablab bug and 

3rd floor condominium,” said Wayne Gardner, the UGA entomologist tasked with tracking the pest’s march across the state.

On the UGA campus in Griffin, Ga., Gardner and his staff are raising kudzu bugs in small plastic arenas filled with kudzu leaves. “In our labs, we’re trying to determine if they die from anything naturally,” he said.

UGA entomologists John All in Athens and Phillip Roberts in Tifton are studying the bugs’ effect on soybeans.

All conducted a sort of kudzu-bug’s favorite foods test using kudzu, soybeans, field peas and peanuts. “It seems to like soybeans as much as kudzu,” he said. “It will get on the other legumes, but doesn’t seem to like them nearly as much.”

Although not a major crop in Georgia, All calls soybeans the “third most important crop” in the world. “As far as farm crops go, soybean is one of the major crops of the world, ranking up there with rice, corn and wheat,” he said. It’s mostly grown in the Midwest, but large amounts are also grown in the mid-South and Carolinas.

While researchers expected the bugs to show up in their fields last summer, they were still surprised to find it. “I had been watching for it, and one day I couldn’t find it, and the next day they were all over the place,” All said. “I couldn’t find it, and the next day they were all over the place,” All said. “I couldn’t find it, and the next day they were all over the place.”

All and Roberts’ team also conducted a headcount test. They found up to 100 kudzu bugs feeding on individual soybean plants. An acre of soybeans consists of about 80,000 plants. “If you do the math, that’s a whole lot of insects,” All said.

UGA scientists are working to determine how to control the pest around homes and whether or not to control it on agricultural crops.

All and Roberts established field trials to determine whether it’s more economical to apply pesticides for the pest or leave the fields untreated. Trials conducted during 2010 revealed several viable treatment options for controlling the pest in soybeans, All said.

“In terms of economic damage, we set up simple field experiments where we treat portions of fields and leave portions untreated. Then we carry the crop to yield and record yield differences,” he said.

Data from six of the team’s trials revealed a 19 percent reduction in yield in untreated plots compared with plots protected with insecticide. “This is an obvious concern for the potential damage these insects may cause on soybean,” he said.

All and Roberts continue to search for other ways to reduce the insect’s impact on soybean and other Georgia-grown legume crops. “It’s a true bug, but with needle-like mouthparts,” Roberts said. “It feeds on stems, primarily sucking plant sap. The one observation we have made is it does not appear to feed on the developing pods, thank goodness.”

As its numbers grow, the bug is becoming a homeowner pest, too.

Following in the footsteps of the Asian lady beetle, it shows up in droves and overwinters around homes. “The difference is, the bean plataspid doesn’t seem to want to come indoors,” Gardner said. It likes to congregate on the sides of light-colored homes and vehicles. The insect is most active in the afternoon and when temperatures are warm.

A team of USDA Forest Service scientists in Athens led by Jim Hanula is studying the bugs’ long-term effects on kudzu and have recorded a 33 percent decrease in kudzu yield or dry weight after only one year of bug feeding. Hanula hopes the bugs’ effect on kudzu will be cumulative so there will be a lot less kudzu infesting forests in the future. “It eats kudzu, which is good, but it also stinks and gets on homes, which is bad,” Roberts said. “And the ominous threat is that it eats soybeans and other legume crops.”

~ Phillip Roberts, UGA entomologist

Top Left: CAES entomologist John All uses a sweep net to collect samples of kudzu bugs in a soybean field. All sat in wait for the bugs to show up in fields last summer and was amazed to see them literally appear in droves overnight.

Left: Bean plataspid, pea-sized insect immigrants from Asia, are attracted to light-colored homes and vehicles.

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~ Phillip Roberts, UGA entomologist
Killing the “Cruise Ship Virus”

Hand sanitizer could reduce stomach bug cases

By Sharon Dowdy

A ll you-can-eat pizza, sunsets over an ocean horizon, relaxing on the lido deck — these are typical cruise ship vacation memories. One memory vacationers don’t want to make is being quarantined in their cabin because a stomach virus has spread across the ship.

A hand sanitizer created by University of Georgia scientists could reduce the number of stomach bugs on land and at sea by killing the norovirus, which is the leading cause of acute gastroenteritis, or stomach flu, in the United States.

Commonly called the “cruise ship virus” or stomach flu, in the United States. The virus-killing hand sanitizer developed by CAES food scientists has its roots in research done by UGA Center for Food Safety director Michael Doyle and assistant research scientist Jing Zhao. Doyle and Zhao created a similar formulation for use as a fresh produce wash through an agreement between the UGA Research Foundation Inc. and HealthPro Brands Inc., FIT’s parent company.

UGA has submitted a patent application for the norovirus-killing hand sanitizer, which could be available to consumers by the summer of 2011. 1

Get a Whiff of This

Trained wasps respond to specific scents

Story and photos by Brad Haire

O ver the years, Glen Rains and his wasps have received both national and international media attention. But when National Geographic called, he was excited to get back under the lights.

“As a scientist, I felt like National Geographic’s interest would focus more on the science of things rather than just the novelty of this project, which is something I’m much more interested in,” said Rains, a biological and agricultural engineer on UGA’s Tifton campus.

In May 2009, a film crew traveled to Tifton to interview Rains and film his research, which conditions wasps to detect various scents, like those released by a stressed plant or even a corpse.

Using sugar water to train the wasps to associate scents with food, six years ago Rains developed a machine called the Wasp Hound. This portable “nose” monitors the behavior of wasps trained to respond to a particular scent.

The Wasp Hound is made from a 3-inch pipe that’s 10 inches long. A fan and a Web camera fit over one end. Inside, a tray places four or five wasps in a pinhole in the removable white cap that covers the other end.

If the scent they’ve been trained to recognize wafts through, the wasps crowd around the pinhole. If the scent’s not there, they just hang out.

The camera sends an image to software that analyzes the amount of dark space the wasps create around the pinhole, giving a more objective view and answer to their behavior.

As a kid, Rains did his 4-H project on the science of things rather than the novelty of this project, which is something I’m much more interested in,” said Rains, a biological and agricultural engineer on UGA’s Tifton campus.

The Wasp Hound connects to software that turns data from “nosey” to scientific.

“I lost some of that interest when I went to college, but have found that I am still just as interested in why insects behave the way they do and how they sense odors as I was when I was a kid,” he said.

In the future, the Wasp Hound could be used to help find traces of dead bodies, sniff out dangerous chemicals and even detect bombs or biological weapons.

Rains and co-investigator Joe Lewis, a retired USDA Agricultural Research Service entomologist, are working with the Georgia Centers of Innovation to attract investors and market the Wasp Hound as an alternative scent-detection device.

Continued on next page

World Class Grass

UGA TriSport won out as the turfs of choice at the 2010 World Cup Soccer Tournament

Story and photo by Brad Haire

T he World Cup is the premier stage for the world’s most popular sport: soccer. The most recent tournament was held last summer in South Africa. The players who stepped onto the pitch at the Moses Mabhida Stadium in Durban dug their cleats into TriSport, a bermuda grass released in 1997 by Wayne Hanna while he was a crop and soil science professor with the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and a research geneticist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service.

“We’re pleased that a turfgrass variety developed in Georgia, in Tifton, was used,” Hanna said. “We work hard to do such broad testing over many areas in our breeding program, and our releases do well in many parts of the world.” TriSport was bred to be rugged, Hanna said. The dark green grass is dense and disease-resistant, tolerates cold and does well in many environments and soil types. And, it holds up well and recovers quickly from a lot of foot traffic, an important characteristic for a soccer field. It is widely used to create American football fields across the Southeast and golf courses around the world.

“Wayne Hanna’s reputation as a world-class turfgrass breeder is really unmatched,” said J. Scott Angle, CAES dean and director. “And TriSport being used at this type of prestigious event is another example of how the innovations and technologies we’re developing in Georgia are being appreciated and used around the world.”

To create TriSport, Hanna took the germplasm of a cold-tolerant bermuda grass and irradiated it — a practice used in plant breeding to alter plant characteristics — to get a finer grass texture. This yielded 57 fine-textured bermuda grasses that were grown and tested. A dozen years later, TriSport was born.

Since 1983, Hanna has released four turfgrass varieties: the popular TifEagle, TriSport, TifBlair and, recently, TifGrand. He’s been also working with Brian Schwartz, a crop and soil science assistant professor on the UGA Tifton campus, since 2009 to develop new and better turfgrasses that are more stress- and drought-tolerant.

TriSport is licensed by the University of Georgia Research Foundation Inc. (2)

Wayne Hanna’s TriSport bermuda grass, developed on the UGA Tifton campus in 1997, covered the pitch at Moses Mabhida Stadium in Durban, South Africa, during the 2010 World Cup soccer tournament.

Rains and co-investigator Joe Lewis, a retired USDA Agricultural Research Service entomologist, are working with the Georgia Centers of Innovation to attract investors and market the Wasp Hound as an alternative scent-detection device.

Continued on next page

1 Approximately 60 percent of American cases of foodborne illness are caused by the norovirus, which is linked to uncooked foods like salads, deli meats, fresh produce and raw oysters.

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4 The virus-killing hand sanitizer developed by CAES food scientists has its roots in research done by UGA Center for Food Safety director Michael Doyle and assistant research scientist Jing Zhao. Doyle and Zhao created a similar formulation for use as a fresh produce wash.

5 “As a scientist, I felt like National Geographic’s interest would focus more on the science of things rather than just the novelty of this project, which is something I’m much more interested in,” said Rains, a biological and agricultural engineer on UGA’s Tifton campus.

6 Using sugar water to train the wasps to associate scents with food, six years ago Rains developed a machine called the Wasp Hound. This portable “nose” monitors the behavior of wasps trained to respond to a particular scent.

7 The camera sends an image to software that analyzes the amount of dark space the wasps create around the pinhole, giving a more objective view and answer to their behavior.

8 In the future, the Wasp Hound could be used to help find traces of dead bodies, sniff out dangerous chemicals and even detect bombs or biological weapons.

9 Rains and co-investigator Joe Lewis, a retired USDA Agricultural Research Service entomologist, are working with the Georgia Centers of Innovation to attract investors and market the Wasp Hound as an alternative scent-detection device.
Practical, but priceless
Internships give students experience, employment opportunities

By Sarah Lewis

In the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, the dean promises students one thing: enrichment opportunities. The Deans’ Promise encourages students to take advantage of experiences they may only have while they’re in college, including internships, study abroad and service-learning and research opportunities.

Austin Suggs, a senior majoring in agricultural communication, interned at Dow AgroSciences in summer 2010. Suggs worked as a southeastern territory sales representative, visiting farmers and dealers throughout Georgia, Alabama and the Florida panhandle to discuss and promote PhytoGen cotton.

“I was told what I was expected to accomplish and they cut me loose on my own,” Suggs said. “I was really treated like a full-time sales employee and not an intern, and I thought that was great.”

Maintenance and Management

Andrew Stevenson, a senior majoring in agricultural business, interned at an Archer Daniels Midland plant in Louisiana where raw commodities are shipped all over the world to be used in food, beverage, industrial and animal feed markets. Stevenson worked in maintenance for grain terminal operations management.

“I learned both the management and maintenance sides of the plant,” Stevenson said. “I worked in a plant that operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year and that has exported 300 million bushels every year for the past three years. I was able to learn the logistics of how a plant that size operates.”

A Vineyard Education

Phillip Stice (BSA – Biological science.) spent a summer interning at Tiger Mountain Vineyards in Tiger, Ga. Stice lived at the vineyard for three months, working in the fields, crush pad and tasting room with the customers.

“Making wine is easy. Making great wine is very hard,” Stice said. “Actually getting hands-on and working in the vineyard really gave me a good base for a career in wine.”

From Intern to Employee

Having an agricultural background and education helped prepare Suggs, Stevenson and Stice for their internships.

“I felt that my overall classroom knowledge and the fact that I have a very solid agronomic background gave me an upper hand over the other interns,” Suggs said. “Also, being able to get up and speak [in front of a group] is something that I’ve learned as an agricultural communication major and in my years as a 4-H member.”

Stevenson agrees that classroom knowledge helped him in the grain business.

“Even though the internship was in maintenance, it was still economics. If something is not running, you are losing money. For the plant to run efficiently and keep costs down, you’ve got to understand economics,” Stevenson said.

Stice’s horticulture background allowed him to understand the vineyard’s plants and how to care for them.

“My horticulture classes prepared me with knowledge about the soils, root systems and nutrients affecting grape vines and the scientific aspect of the career,” Stice said. “A lot of chemistry goes into winemaking and that can be intimidating to people who don’t know science.”

Stice found his internship by researching the college’s website and discovering the Winegrowers Association of Georgia. Even before his internship, he was able to explore his interest in learning about wine in another way – by studying abroad. Stice took a course in enology and viticulture in Cortona, Italy and was able to visit different vineyards overseas.

“I’ve had employers tell me that if they see a resume without internship experience, that’s one of the first ones they throw out,” Suggs said. “I recommend [doing] one summer or one semester in an internship. Anything like that is invaluable.”

CAES dean and director J. Scott Angle agrees that the experiences and knowledge students gain from working in real-world settings can open the door to new opportunities.

Where are they now?

ANDREW STEVENSON – Archer Daniels Midland offered Stevenson a full-time job at a plant in Arkansas, a year prior to his graduation.

AUSTIN SUGGS – Dow AgroSciences offered Suggs another internship for the summer of 2011.

PHILLIP STICE – Stice is working in California and Argentina at vineyards during their harvest.

“Internships give companies and businesses a chance to test ride candidates. With the economy and recession, companies are being more selective, and internships make a difference. Most students with internship experiences are getting the jobs they want. I encourage every student to do an internship.”

– J. Scott Angle
Dean and Director
College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
Having a Field Day

UGA Tifton campus educates local grade-schoolers about farm life

The hungry calf almost stole the milk bottle from Hanna Grace as she and her daddy, Stacey Abell, fed it through the fence, but Hanna Grace held on tight. The Abells, and the calf, were at the University of Georgia Tifton Campus Animal and Dairy Science First Grade Field Day. But this wasn’t Stacey’s first visit to the campus. “A long time ago,” when he was a Tift County grade-schooler, he came to field days on the campus, too. Returning with his daughter to learn about and see many of the same things was “kind of neat,” he said.

The field day, held every spring, began on the campus 23 years ago. Since then, more than 15,000 first-graders – or virtually every Tift County first-grader in the past two decades – have attended the event, said Joe West, who spearheaded the event in 1987 when he first came to Tifton as a UGA animal scientist.

“At that time, we were getting call after call from schools that wanted to come out to see the baby calves at the dairy. But instead of it just pretty much being a petting zoo, we decided to organize it better and add a real education session,” said West, now the UGA Tifton campus assistant dean.

In addition to feeding dairy calves, the kids now learn how a real dairy works and get to see and learn about fish, cattle, goats, horses and freshly-hatched baby chicks. Prior to the field day, teachers use lesson plans developed by the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences to go along with the day’s activities. At the end of the field day, teachers get additional materials, including coloring books and short stories about agriculture.

ANOTHER FIELD, A DIFFERENT DAY

In the late 1990s, sitting around various “breakfast tables” in Tift County, Benjie Baldree and several local young farmers discussed how sad it was that so many kids really didn’t know where their food comes from. Their solution? Start a small program to get local school kids on farms and show them working agriculture. They tried to start the “something” on privately owned land, but couldn’t get it off the ground, said Baldree, a UGA Tifton campus research coordinator.

Then, in spring 2001, with a group of 50 Omega, Ga., third-graders as their guinea pigs, Baldree and a few other farm experts set up a half dozen learning stations at the UGA Tifton Rural Development Center. Agricultural and Environmental Awareness Day was born, another program targeted to local school kids.

Now, twice a year (once in the spring and once in the fall) dozens of school buses filled with more than 1,000 students swarm the campus’s arboretum, where they see as many as 50 learning stations covering subjects from peanuts to poultry, solar panels to snakes and pretty much everything else between the dirt and the sky, all with a focus on agricultural production and environmental stewardship.

“It has gone well beyond my wildest imagination,” Baldree said. The whole event is designed to help students meet standards for third- and fourth-grade proficiencies in science and is a valuable learning tool for teachers, said Stephanie Estes, a fourth-grade teacher at Omega Elementary, at the recent fall Agricultural and Environmental Awareness Day. “This is our one field trip a year; and as long as they keep having it, this is where we will choose to come,” she said.

Though the UGA Tifton campus is geared toward higher education and research, programs like these that reach much younger students fit perfectly into the campus mission, West said. “We are simply in the business of education. These two programs and the people who dedicate their time are a window for these kids to see how their food and fiber are made. You never know what positive things can happen by just reaching out and sharing this.”

Story and photos by Brad Haire
What’s one thing about your field that you wish everyone knew?

Compiled by April Sorrow and Amanda E. Swennes

Food shortages and starvation are always closer than the general public realizes. A single point mutation in either a major food source or a pathogen can result in a plant disease epidemic, and the result can spell disaster. Only through constant vigilance and research are we able to feed our nation and the world. We are blessed in the United States with many sources of nutritious plants for food, but this is not universally true. If I make a strong decision in my job as an agronomist, farmers will lose money, in many countries, the inability of a plant pathologist to solve a problem rapidly will result in the deaths of many people.

Melany Wilson
Animal stress specialist
Biology and agricultural engineering

Food, nutrition, and agriculture are always closely related. Agriculture does not involve talking to cows and corn. It’s a niche area of communication that helps share the story of agriculture with those who are the most important consumers and politicians. It’s something that everyone in the agriculture field can participate in. We must be advocates for agriculture.

Andrea Gonzalez
Senior agricultural communication
Woodstock, Ga.

People occasionally ask me, “So your major is about studying the economics of cows and chickens?” It always makes me laugh because I wish people understood how interlinked into society the field of agricultural economics truly is. For example, increases in demand for alternative fuel sources like ethanol also create an overall increase in food prices. While the cows and chickens are important, ag economics is much more complex and socially integrated than people realize.

Elizabeth “Libby” Carter
Senior, agricultural economics
Jersey, Ga.

O&A

Animal manures are a resource, not a waste. Land application of animal manures to grow crops, when done correctly, is great for soil quality, soil fertility and water quality. University of Georgia Extension works closely with livestock producers to teach them how to properly land apply their manure to achieve desired agronomic yield while at the same time protecting the environment.

Melany Wilson
Animal stress specialist
Biology and agricultural engineering

Extension agent from Pickens County.

Food and Agriculture, ‘68, of Spokane, Washington retired in 2010 from USDA.

Gary Fagan, BSA – Agriculture, ’68, of Spokane, Washington retired in 2010 from USDA.

Rick Jasperse, BSA – Horticulture, ’75, received the Legacy Alumni Award from Oregon State University (MS, Ph.D. ’81) in recognition of his work in international agricultural development and in poetry. Larew’s award cites his leadership at USDA and USAID to promote food security, improve food aid nutrition, jump-start youth development programs and build higher education capacity both overseas and here at home. He currently directs the Center for International Programs within USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and has guided programs in Iraq, Armenia, Afghanistan, South Africa, the Congo, Nicaragua, Haiti and elsewhere. Many of these efforts are carried out by Extension experts, teaching professors and researchers at American land-grant universities, and Larew’s office works closely with colleagues like Dr. Ed Kanaracus, director of the UGA CAES Office of Global Programs, to make sure that U.S. agriculture benefits from these overseas activities and partnerships.

Larew has also received numerous awards for his poetry, including the Louisiana Literature poetry prize.

Jody L. Strickland, BSA – Ag Engineering, ’86, took a new position with Weyerhaeuser as the U.S. Timberlands Acquisitions and Development Manager in 2010. She has 19 years of experience with Weyerhaeuser. She also serves on the Georgia Farm Bureau Board of Directors, as a chairman of the Georgia Farm Bureau, a member of the Georgia Farm Bureau Agri-Law Board, and a member of the Georgia Farm Bureau Board of Directors.

Gary Black, BSA – Agricultural Education, ’80, is Georgia’s newly elected Commissioner of Agriculture. Black began his career in 1980 with Georgia Farm Bureau, where he supervised the young farmer leadership development program. In 1989, he was selected as the president of the Georgia Agribusiness Council. He served in that role for 21 years.

Hiram Larew, BSA – Horticulture, ’75, received the Legacy Alumni Award from Oregon State University (MS, Ph.D. ’81) in recognition of his work in international agricultural development and in poetry. Larew’s award cites his leadership at USDA and USAID to promote food security, improve food aid nutrition, jump-start youth development programs and build higher education capacity both overseas and here at home. He currently directs the Center for International Programs within USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and has guided programs in Iraq, Armenia, Afghanistan, South Africa, the Congo, Nicaragua, Haiti and elsewhere. Many of these efforts are carried out by Extension experts, teaching professors and researchers at American land-grant universities, and Larew’s office works closely with colleagues like Dr. Ed Kanaracus, director of the UGA CAES Office of Global Programs, to make sure that U.S. agriculture benefits from these overseas activities and partnerships.

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extension agent in Gwinnett

Brian Kemp: BSA – Agricultural mechanization, '67, is Georgia’s newly elected Secretary of State. He owns Kemp Properties, a small business specializing in real estate investments and property management, and serves on the board of St. Mary’s Hospital in Athens, GA.
DuVall, Ragan named to Georgia Ag Hall of Fame

By Sharon Dowdy

T

al DuVall and Gene Ragan, two pioneers in Georgia agriculture, were inducted into the Georgia Agricultural Hall of Fame during a ceremony in Athens Sept. 17, 2010. The Hall of Fame is a program of the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

FROM DAIRY FARM TO DEAN

DuVall (BSA – Agronomy, ’54, MAEX – Ag Extension, ’70, DPA – Public Administration, ’75) grew up on a dairy farm in Greene County, Ga. After serving in the U.S. Army in Panama in 1956, he began his Extension career as an assistant county agent in Carroll County. Over the years, he was promoted to county agent, district agent and assistant director. He capped his career as director of the Georgia Extension Service and dean of the UGA College of Agriculture, positions he held until his retirement in 1988.

DuVall used his position to support Georgia agriculture and Georgia 4-H across the state. He led the efforts to establish the Jekyll Island 4-H Center and helped pave the way for the renovation of the Rock Eagle 4-H Center in the ’90s.

DuVall felt county agents should be storehouses of vital information to help his clients maximize the benefits of every input, minimize their chemical and fertilizer use and enhance soil and water quality.

AG ON AIR

First as a county Extension agent, then as a farm broadcaster, Ragan (BSA – Agronomy, ’45) has devoted his life to informing others about agriculture and helping Southern farmers.

As a young man in Early County, Ga., Ragan exhibited champion cattle and earned Master 4-H Club status after becoming the Georgia 4-H Meat Animal Champion.

After two years of college at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, he transferred to UGA, where he served as president of the Collegiate 4-H Club, vice-president of the Intercollegiate 4-H Club and was inducted into the Alpha Zeta agricultural fraternity.

After earning a bachelor’s degree in agriculture from UGA in 1945, Ragan worked for the UGA Extension Service in south Georgia and north Florida. Ragan exhibited champion cattle in the U.S. The broadcast ran on Dothan, Al.’s WTVY. “The Noon Farm Report” and “The Gene Ragan Farm Show.”

In 1953, he garnered sponsors and created two radio programs: “The Ragan Report” and “The Gene Ragan Farm Show.” Five years later, he transitioned to television with “The Noon Farm Report,” which ran on Dothan, Al.’s WTVY. “The Noon Farm Report” is believed to be the longest running TV farm program on a single station in the U.S. The broadcast reached farmers in south Alabama, south Georgia and north Florida. Ragan broadcast an estimated 30,000 shows before retiring in 1988.

CAES Alumni Association Young Alumni Achievement Award

Compiled by Juli Fields

The CAES Alumni Association Young Alumni Achievement Award recognizes College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences alumni who are 35 years old or less and who have achieved excellence in their chosen field and/or in their community.

Sam Watson (BSA – Agricultural Education, ’02) worked in sales at Southern Valley Fruit and Vegetables since 2003. He is a founding partner in Chill C Farms, LLC, a vegetable grower/packer operation, and works at Rho Farms, a small 70-head cow/calf operation. Watson is chairman of the Colquitt County Farm Bureau Young Farmers Committee, a member of the CAES Alumni Association Finance and Development Committee and a 2009 graduate of Georgia Ag-Leaders.

Christopher Stripling (BSA – Agricultural Education, ’05, MAL – Agricultural Leadership, ’06) is working toward his Ph.D. in agricultural education at the University of Florida, where he has assisted with graduate teaching and is a research assistant. He worked as an agricultural education teacher at Ola High School from 2006 to 2009 and received the school’s 2008-2009 Teacher of the Year award.
A BARK GOES OUT TO …

By Stephanie Schupska

Seven alumni from the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences were honored as Bulldog 100: Fastest Growing Bulldog Businesses on Jan. 22 at the Marriott Marquis in Atlanta. The Bulldog 100 ranks the businesses based on their average three-year growth rate, regardless of company size. Branch Carter of Grovetown, who graduated from UGA with a degree in agricultural communications, credits both his education and the friends he made in college with some of his business’s success.

“It all goes back to people,” said the owner of Branch Carter Photography. “Knowing the UGA College of Agriculture, even though it’s large, it still has a smaller feel to it. It’s a place where you feel like you know the people and feel like you know them as friends.”

“It’s thrilling to see our CAES alumni recognized in this way,” said Juli Fields, CAES director of alumni relations. “We know the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences successfully prepares its graduates for lucrative careers, and the Bulldog 100 program allows us to showcase those alumni who have hit a homerun in the business world. These alumni-owned businesses have a tremendous impact on the economy of this state.”

2010 winners who graduated from CAES (and their rankings) were:

• Hardy Edwards (BSA – Agricultural Economics, ’83, MS – Food Science, ’94), owner of Vitamin Derivatives Inc. in Winterville, at #2.
• Branch Carter (BSA – Agricultural Communication, ’94), owner of Branch Carter Photography in Grovetown, at #34.
• Thomas Zeke Harvey (BSA – Landscape Grounds Management, ’01), owner of Chappell Mill Trees in Milledgeville, at #42.
• Harold Still (BSA – Agricultural Engineering, ’66), owner of Southern AGCOM Inc. in Blakely, at #45.
• Mark Tribby (BSA – Biological Science, ’84, DMA, ’88), of Saint Francis Animal Hospital in Augusta, at #60.
• Jim Moore (BSA – Agricultural Economics, ’78, JD ’81) of Moore, Clarke, Duvall & Rodgers PC in Athens, at #92.
• Charles Hall (BSA – Horticulture, ’72, MS – Horticulture, ’74), owner of Association Services Group in LaGrange, at #80.

“We hope other CAES alumni will take the time to nominate their businesses for the 2012 class,” Fields said. “Being a part of that group of successful businesses can only be a positive.”

The Bulldog 100 is in its second year. Winning businesses must be in operation for at least five years, owned or operated by a UGA alumna and have had a yearly revenue of more than $100,000 for 2007.

Bob Pinckney (’82) and Justin Nieder (’82) of protective sportswear manufacturer EvoShield in Bogart came in first place. Pinckney is a former Georgia 4-H'er. EvoShield had a growth rate of 130.48 percent from 2007-2009.

... For more information visit www.uga.edu/alumni/bulldog100.

NEW FELLOWSHIP FUNDS CRITICAL COTTON STUDIES

By Faith Poppers

For 24 years, Gary Herzog worked as a research scientist for the University of Georgia in Tifton, Ga., studying insects that affect cotton. During his lifetime, he made enormous impact on the sustainability of the state’s cotton industry. A new endowment fund in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences will ensure his work continues.

The Gary A. Herzog Fellowship Fund for Applied Research in Cotton Agroecosystems will provide fellowship support to UGA graduate students conducting thesis or dissertation research in cotton production systems. Graduate research will focus on critical issues in applied research facing the industry.

“Knowing the UGA College of Agriculture, even though it’s large, it still has a smaller feel to it. It’s a place where you feel like you know the people and feel like you know them as friends.”

The Gary A. Herzog Fellowship Fund for Applied Research in Cotton Agroecosystems will provide fellowship support to UGA graduate students conducting thesis or dissertation research in cotton production systems. Graduate research will focus on critical issues in applied research facing the industry.

Students will investigate integrated pest management of insects, diseases and weeds, and irrigation technology.

“The Herzog Fellowship program will help us address the critical shortage of applied scientists in production agriculture, especially in cotton,” said J. Scott Angle, CAES dean and director.

Bob Pinckney (’82) and Justin Nieder (’82) of protective sportswear manufacturer EvoShield in Bogart came in first place. Pinckney is a former Georgia 4-H'er. EvoShield had a growth rate of 130.48 percent from 2007-2009.

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Nominations for the 2012 class of Bulldog 100 businesses opened Jan. 24. For more information visit www.uga.edu/alumni/bulldog100.

If your company is interested in contributing to Georgia’s agricultural success, we’d like to hear from you. Contact Rodney Miller, director of development, at (706) 542-3390 or rcmiller@uga.edu.
CAES NOTES

CAES WELCOMES NEW DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

By April Sorrow

Rodney Miller was named Assistant to the Dean and Director of the Office of Advancement for the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences in December 2010. In his new position, Miller will lead the college’s fundraising efforts and oversee alumni relations.

Miller replaces Rob Cooper, who left the college in July 2010 to become executive director of the National FFA Foundation.

“Rodney has a long history in agriculture,” said J. Scott Angle, CAES dean and director. “He is on many boards and foundations and has also served as a member of the CAES advisory council. We look forward to his leadership in this crucial time for the college.”

Miller was born into agriculture in Benton, Ill., where he still operates a 1,400-acre row crop farm. He also operates a small farming operation in Buford, Ga., which includes a corn maze, and a small farm in Athens.

He serves on the Georgia FFA sponsor board, the Georgia Agribusiness Council and the Illinois Rural Heritage Museum board of directors. He has also served as a member of the board of directors for the Association of Equipment Manufacturers.

His professional career includes positions at several tractor companies. Most recently, Miller was CEO of McCormick International USA in Duluth, Ga. He also was CEO for Montana Tractors and worked in management for Valtra, Long and Mahindra tractor companies.

Miller is considered an expert on trends in the agriculture industry. He is currently developing a national TV show, “Inside the Barn,” which will feature agriculture in the Southeast, antique tractors, women in agriculture and a farm-to-table food segment. The show will air later this year on RFD-TV.

From Four Towers

Alumni and Friends,

American writer and physician Orison Swett Marden said, “Don’t wait for extraordinary opportunities. Seize common occasions and make them great.” Every day at the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, great men and women seize common occasions to teach, to research, to serve, to advocate and to make all of our lives better.

And every day, great men and women around this state and nation volunteer their time and resources to assist CAES in its mission of teaching, research and extension.

I am proud that several CAES alumni have seized the opportunity to serve the great state of Georgia in key leadership positions. Two CAES alumni hold constitutional offices: Brian Kemp, Secretary of State (BSA – Ag Mech, ’87) and Gary Black, Commissioner of Agriculture (BSA – Ag Economics, ’80). Three CAES alumni serve in the Legislature: Tom McCall (BSA – Agronomy, ’80) was re-elected State Representative, District 30; Rick Jasperse (BSA – Food Science, ’79, MAL – Ag Leadership, ’03) was elected State Representative, District 12; and Ellis Black (BSA – Animal Science, ’65) was re-elected State Representative, District 174.

As we all know, our state continues to have significant budgetary problems. While we have a new governor at our state’s helm, our university and college will continue to be challenged by budget reductions and cutbacks. I hope your 2011 New Year’s resolutions included becoming more active in the CAES Alumni Association and offering support to our college through your time, talents and financial contributions. As president of the CAES Alumni Association, I pledge to continue to seize common occasions and make them great for CAES. Collectively, we can make 2011 a year of growth and prosperity for our college.

Sincerely,

Charles Hall

BSA – Horticulture ’72

MS – Horticulture ’74

CAES ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

And the winners are…

Flavor of Georgia

food product contest spotlights the best foods from across the state.

Barbecue and hot sauces, confections, dairy products, meat products, snack foods, and jams, jellies and sauces take center stage at the state capitol for an annual food contest. See this year’s winners at www.flavorofgeorgia.caes.uga.edu.

Your food product deserves the limelight, and the annual Flavor of Georgia food product contest can help! Enter by March 31; see the contest rules at www.caes.uga.edu/flavor. The show will air later this year on RFD-TV.

Source: UGA Career Center Graduate Survey, 2010

STUDY ABROAD

100 CAES undergraduate students studied abroad in more than 39 different programs in 2010.

Top Destinations

1. Costa Rica (13)
2. Australia and New Zealand (16)
3. Italy (12)
4. Spain (7)
5. Cape Town (5)
6. Thailand (5)
7. Nicaragua (5)

CAES ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

RODNEY MILLER

CHARLES HALL

RODNEY MILLER

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Ag Tag Benefits Georgia 4-H and Georgia FFA

Did you know? The “Support Agriculture in Georgia” specialty license plate tag benefits two of Georgia’s leading youth organizations: Georgia 4-H and the Georgia FFA Association. The two groups each receive $5 for every tag purchased. Since the program started in 2007, it has raised more than $100,000 for Georgia 4-H and Georgia FFA. Funds, which are distributed by the Georgia Department of Revenue, help promote agriculture, agricultural awareness, environmental education and youth. Tags are available from your local county tag office.

~ Compiled by Amanda E. Swennes