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from the dean

Georgia agriculture continues to be a sunny spot in the dismal economic forecast. The leading edges of the positive front are higher commodity prices and strong exports.

The Georgia Ports Authority reported a record-setting fiscal year with 26.5 million tons of goods shipped through the ports. The combination of increased demand for Georgia-grown products like pecans, poultry and peanuts in international markets and our access to world-class transportation to quickly deliver them puts us squarely in the eye of economic opportunity.

We continue to expand the reach of our research, making sure our growers are getting the best yields and preparing students who are ready to meet the challenges of a global marketplace. In 2012, CAES brought in $57.4 million in grant funds to support research and Extension programs.

UGA is a world leader in crop variety development. CAES-developed plants account for 62 percent of UGA’s licensed product revenue, including two turfsgrasses that are among UGA’s Top 10 revenue-grossing licenses. Our peanut varieties are the largest single revenue generator for the UGA Research Foundation.

The forecast for the future agricultural workforce is bright. Last year, CAES researchers assisted 55,000 growers and the industry access the latest research for those areas of agriculture.

The forecast for the future global economy, we will continue to weather the storm and extend our Extension programs and keep our students preparing students with international experience and a global perspective.

Being at the mercy of a murky economy has been difficult, but by building up our research base, extending our Extension programs and keeping our students prepared to graduate school among the 17 UGA colleges and schools. Our students also help on world-class transportation to quickly deliver them puts us squarely in the eye of economic opportunity.

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Managing Editor

Dean and Director

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Buddy Leger

Gale Buchanon

GALE BUCHANAN
Gale Buchanan spent most of his childhood hoeing weeds out of his parents’ peanut fields in Madison County, Fla. Those hours battling weeds no doubt sharpened his resolve to spend his adult years making farmers’ lives easier by rendering their fields more productive.

During his time as a young scientist researching ways to reduce weed pressure on crops, his tenure leading Georgia’s largest agricultural research institution and his term serving as the undergraduate for research, education and economics in the USWA, Buchanan supported the science that supports Georgia’s farmers.

Buddy Leger

Buddy Leger, of Cordele, Ga., used the knowledge he gained through six decades of farming near Tifton, where he is working on several books and serves as an adviser to several agricultural entities.

Buddy Leger

Gale Buchanan

Buddy Leger, a former president of the Georgia Pecan Marketing Board, a former president of the Georgia Pecan Growers Association, and chair of a subcommittee on education as part of former Governor Sonny Perdue’s Agricultural Advisory Committee. He currently sits on the executive council of the National Watermelon Promotion Board, the Georgia Community Rural Development Council, the UGA CAES Advisory Council and the Upper Flint Regional Water Planning Council. Leger has served as executive director for the northeast Georgia Georgia non-profit Children First, Inc.

Night in the Cold helps hungry

By Merritt Melancon

For more than 15 years, UGA’s Alpha Eta chapter of the Georgia Gamma Rho agricultural fraternity has spent one night each November gathering up canned goods for the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia. A one-year-a-time driver might not seem that effective, but the brothers routinely gather more than 5,000 pounds of goods for donation. They ask sororities, and help, and cook dinner for the sorority that provides the most food.

While the drive, called “Night in the Cold,” is a good chance to network and have a bonfire, it also helps keep the food bank’s pantry stockd during a time when many local families need help putting food on their tables. This year, the brothers were overwhelmed by how excited our guys get every year for this event,” said Chase Cowart, a management information systems major and the Alpha Eta chapter’s current president: "As college students, most of us are not in the position to be able to give financially, but we feel that we can be just as effective through donation efforts such as Night in the Cold as well as service efforts in our community.”

CAES: 2020

By Andrea Gonzalez

The University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences embarked on a strategic planning process in October 2011 to create clear goals and an action plan to guide the college into the future. Input and ideas were sought from stakeholders across the college, campus and state. Last fall, the strategic planning committee began working toward the seven goals that the college hopes to achieve by 2020.

For more information about the agribusiness major or the UGA Tifton campus, visit tatifton.uga.edu or call (229) 386-5258.

For more information, visit caes.uga.edu/alumni/.

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Note worthy

By Amanda E. Suwento

Last December, Emily Reece (BSA – Agribusiness, ’12) became the first agribusiness graduate from the UGA Tifton campus. Within the next year, six more students will graduate from the program, which began in Fall 2011.

Using a combination of on-site instruction and distance learning technology, undergraduates on the Tifton campus join the 140-plus agribusiness majors from UGA’s main campuses in Athens for courses covering farm management, agribusiness management, marketing, agriculture policy, finance, economic analysis and selling. Five faculty members in Tifton teach approximately two-thirds of the courses in the major, with the balance taught by Athens and Griffin campus faculty via distance education.

“Whether students are at Tifton or Athens, the degree requirements are the same, and they all graduate with the same degree from UGA,” said Don Shirkey, a professor in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics on the Tifton campus.

Students complete their core coursework at other institutions before transferring to UGA Tifton campus to finish the last two years of the degree.

“A main objective of this program is to allow south Georgia students who are interested in a career in agribusiness to remain in south Georgia if they choose to pursue this major in Tifton,” said professor and department head Octavio Ramirez.

That’s what attracted Reece to the program. “I already had connections in the Tifton area, and I didn’t want to lose those by transferring to Athens,” she said.

Another benefit of the program is that the Tifton faculty, who have primarily Extension or research appointments, bring real-world experience to the classroom. Their connections in the ag community also help students land competitive internships that can count toward course credit.

“You get to know your professors extremely well,” said Shannon Parrish, a senior form Alapaha, Ga. “There’s a lot of one-on-one and they will help you with anything, whether it’s related to their class or another class.”

Ultimately, adding the agribusiness major on the Tifton campus will help to meet the growing demand for graduates with a business — and specifically ag business — degree in south Georgia. One of the program’s long-term goals is to keep highly-skilled graduates in the area to foster local economies and support the state’s agricultural industry.

If the first graduate is any indication, the program is off to a positive start. After graduation, Reece accepted a position as a loan officer for AgGeorgia Farm Credit in Chatsworth, Ga.

To learn more about the college’s strategic plan, the seven goals and this ongoing process, visit caesplan.caes.uga.edu.

During their 2012 Night in the Cold food drive, the brothers of the Alpha Eta chapter of the Gamma Rho agricultural fraternity’s Alpha Eta chapter collected 5,500 pounds of food for the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia.

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By Merritt Melancon

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spotlight

Ag in Afghanistan: The mission continues
By Merritt Melancon

Donna Cheek knows her way around a Chinook helicopter, but she also knows a thing or two about taking care of cows and goats.

Cheek (MS - Animal and Dairy Science, ’12), a Chief Warrant Officer II in the Georgia National Guard, is currently deployed to Afghanistan as part of the Guard’s Agribusiness Development Team III. She’s using what she learned in her animal and dairy science courses to help develop agricultural outreach programs, and plans to apply to vet school at the University of Georgia when she comes home this fall.

“This mission is totally unrelated to my normal military job,” Cheek said. “It’s my civilian education that has put me in the position to assist this team and be an asset to the Afghan people.”

Cheek grew up in Arkansas, spending a lot of time on her grandparents’ farm. She joined the Army in 1996, but always knew she wanted to work with animals. She went back to school after leaving active duty and joined the National Guard in 1999. After getting her undergraduate degree at Armstrong Atlantic State University, she came to UGA.

“I studied large animal reproduction, primarily nutrition and physiology — all the things you need to have for a strong foundation in large animal medicine,” Cheek said.

Commanders with the National Guard asked her to volunteer for the current ADT mission because of her animal science background.

“I feel like we’re in the military to serve, and when there is a real need for your expertise in an area it’s a privilege to be able to serve in that capacity,” Cheek said. “Knowing what I’ve learned at UGA and going to school at Armstrong has really prepared me for helping this team.

“I know I’ve gained all the fundamental skills, and applied skills, required to do the job that’s needed of me over there. I’ve had such excellent mentorship while going to UGA to prepare me for this mission.”

“This is Cheek’s fourth deployment. While she’s proud of all of her service, she’s eager to serve now by helping the people of Afghanistan feed their families. In a way she feels like she’s been preparing for this mission her entire life — from learning how to can vegetables and make butter with her grandmother in Arkansas to studying animal nutrition and physiology at UGA.

“I think along the way we all have mentors that guide us — whether it’s your family or your teachers,” she said. “To be able to pay that forward to another individual who doesn’t have your background and to experience that fellowship, that connection is worthwhile. I think it’s going to be the experience of a lifetime.”

Georgia National Guard’s Agricultural Development Team III.

University of Georgia Tifton campus before deploying to Afghanistan as part of the Guard’s Agribusiness Development Team III. She’s using expertise in an area it’s a large privilege to be able to serve in that capacity,” Cheek said.

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To market to market

Food PIC helps launch new food products
By Sharon Dowdy

Georgia's 2013 budget includes $3.5 million to construct a long-awaited Food PIC Facility. USA and the Griffin-Spalding County Development Authority will each add $1 million to the construction fund.

The building will house a pilot plant and laboratory spaces as well as quality control labs. For more information, visit caes.uga.edu/center/foodpic. For more information, visit caes.uga.edu/center/foodpic.

Food PIC scientists also have helped international companies develop new products, like a grain-based milk alternative for a Norwegian company now incorporated in Georgia. Versions of this product are being produced on a commercial scale in a California facility and will soon be marketed by Whole Foods stores, Dick Phillips said.

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A stinging collection
By Merritt Melancon

Most people try to avoid stinging insects. Christopher Starr (Ph.D., ’81) made a career out of chasing them down, and now the University of Georgia is benefiting from his persistence.

After traveling the globe investigating the world of social insects, Starr recently returned to campus to donate his collection of wasps, ants and insect nests to the Georgia Museum of Natural History.

A recent graduate of the University of the West Indies in Trinidad and Tobago, Starr collected more than 10,000 wasps, bees and ants in North and Central America, the Caribbean, Southeast Asia and West Africa, many of them while still in graduate school. When he moved to Taiwan in 1990, he left them with the museum for safekeeping.

He recently decided to transfer the bulk of the collection to the museum permanently to help scientists working on the taxonomy of social insects and studying their behavior by examining their nests.

The collection – impeccably organized in about 20 wooden specimen drawers and hand labeled – includes a large number of nests of Asian ants that incorporate larval silk in their construction, so that some hang from twigs or branches like Christmas tree ornaments. There are multi-story wasp nests like apartment buildings, built by creatures ranging in size from gnats to 2-inch monsters.

“This is one of the ways that a collection like ours can grow, through gifts from former students,” said E. Richard Hoebeke, associate curator of the museum’s arthropod collection. “We collect some but there’s only so much we can do.”

The Georgia Museum of Natural History – a consortium of 11 natural history collections supported by six UGA departments – houses the second-largest collection of arthropods in the Southeast and the most comprehensive of its kind in Georgia.

Starr had earlier been wary of permanently giving his collection to the museum, as he worried that other scientists might not know where to find them. However, the museum’s growing public profile and online collection catalogue has made that less likely.

“My one concern is that they contribute to the scientific enterprise by being accessible for study. I am convinced that this is best done by making them a part of this museum,” Starr said.

For more information, visit naturalhistory.uga.edu.

Spotlight: Making science cool

Science project
College program helps inspire grade-schoolers

Learning to teach

Knauf works with school system administrators to make sure the students work in complete collaboration with their host teachers. He stresses the importance of being prepared for each lesson, arriving on time, working with the teachers to develop their lesson plans and following the curriculum.

Students are challenged up with projects that are both educational and fun.

“The most challenging thing was learning how to present a certain concept or topic in several different ways because every child learns differently,” said Hillary Thornton, an avian biology student from Charlton County, who taught a fifth grade science course at Winterville Elementary in fall 2012.

So far, administrators and teachers have been pleased with the results the young “teachers” are having in their classrooms.

“The program has increased enthusiasm for science amongst our student body, which is exciting to see,” said Jerry Stapleton, assistant principal at Winterville Elementary. “The students love the hands-on science activities.”

Keeping science cool

Project FOCUS began in 2002, inspired by Cheryl Jones, a research technician at Emory University whose children attended Barnett Shoals Elementary School in Athens.

“She came to my office and wanted to explore how UGA could partner with her sons’ elementary school to help the teachers as they taught science,” Knauff said. The two of them developed Project FOCUS with Ray Clark, principal of Barnett Shoals Elementary School, and several of the teachers there.

Knauff recruited UGA science majors who had experience working with children. He helped vet them before they went into the classroom and gave them course credit for the hours they spent teaching – making it one of UGA’s first service-learning courses.

Since its inception, Project FOCUS has paired more than 1,000 UGA students with local teachers in Clarke County classrooms.

Paula Valeta Bugg, a biological science major from Decatur, Ga., took the course last year because enrichment programs like Project FOCUS kept her interested in science even after her friends had stopped thinking it was cool.

“She wants to be a physician and can trace her drive to study medicine to one particular memory: dissecting an eyeball at ‘brain camp’ when she was in middle school,” Knauff said.

Teaching kids about taxonomy by helping them categorize a classroom full of shoes or building cell models out of bread, peanut butter and grapes can be a good break from the decidedly un-silly world of science, she said.
Today, Hancock has won scores of medals in shooting sport competitions, including two Olympic gold medals in men’s skeet shooting for the United States — the first in Beijing in 2008 when he was only 19 and the second in London in 2012.

“It’s an amazing feeling, representing my country and to step back on top of the podium and hear the national anthem — there’s no other feeling like it,” Hancock said.

Hancock also won World Cup events in 2005, 2006 and 2008, was named USA Shooting Shotgun Shooter of the Year in 2007 and USA Shooting Shooter of the Year in 2006; won the World Championship in Men’s Skeet in 2005; and in 2003 was the Junior Men’s Skeet national champion.

He refers to shooting as a sport “any kid can do.”

“You don’t have to be extremely talented. You just get out of it what you put in it,” he said.

Hancock participated in a few 4-H state championship shooting competitions before joining the Scholastic Clay Target Program so he could compete on an international level in skeet shooting, trap shooting and sporting clays. At the time, the Georgia 4-H shooting program only covered modified trap, but events in skeet, trap and sporting clays have been added since 2002.

To parents who are concerned about missing youths and guns, Hancock says don’t be.

“This is one of — if not the — safest sports in the world. We are right up there with table tennis as far as safety goes,” he said.

Hancock says the key to a student’s success in the shooting sports lies with the coaches and within the student.

“My dad and I have seen a lot of growth in individuals through shooting sports. We have taken kids from very rocky backgrounds and turned them around. They take the dedication from their shooting and turn it back into their lives at school and into their futures,” he said.

Hancock just completed a stint in the Army Marksmanship Unit at Ft. Benning, Ga. He now helps his father run the family shooting sport business — Hancock Shooting Academy in Eatonton, Ga.

“My shooting sport experience helped me focus on my brothers in arms, and it taught me not to be selfish,” Hancock said. “I learned how to be part of a team while I was growing up in shooting sports and I learned what it’s like to be part of something bigger than myself.”

He is glad to be working in shooting sports with his father, but he hasn’t stopped his Olympic training. He plans to compete in the 2016 Olympics in Rio.

For now, he is enjoying spending time with his wife and two daughters and has a new goal of returning to college. He hopes to enroll at the University of Georgia to finish his degree in business marketing or finance, and maybe help organize a shotgun team.

“I couldn’t shoot for the team because it wouldn’t be fair, but I could help lead,” he said.

Vincent Hancock shutter his target during a national competition in Colorado Springs. Hancock says shooting sports are as safe as table tennis.

Shooting star
Former 4-H’er wins gold at London Olympics
By Sharon Dowdy

The first time Olympic gold medalist Vincent Hancock, 23, competed in shooting sports, he was an 11-year-old Georgia 4-H’er. The rest, as they say, is history.

Hancock’s father, Craig, coached the 4-H shooting sports team in Putnam County along with Sammy McPadden. At first, his brother Matthew, 10 years his senior, was involved in 4-H shooting sports and Vincent just tagged along — until he was old enough to participate.

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For now, he is enjoying spending time with his wife and two daughters and has a new goal of returning to college. He hopes to enroll at the University of Georgia to finish his degree in business marketing or finance, and maybe help organize a shotgun team.

“I couldn’t shoot for the team because it wouldn’t be fair, but I could help lead,” he said.
Exploring new fields

Retirees return to the farm for second careers

Story and photos by Merritt Melancon

After spending decades behind a desk or punching a clock, more and more retirees are heading back to the farm to start second careers. Some simply want a new challenge. Some see farming as a way to change the world. And some want to reconnect to their families’ farming heritage. Whatever the reason, the decision to spend their golden years on the back 40 instead of the back nine comes with hard work and lots of surprises.

Grounded

Just up Highway 80, near Millen, Ga., recently retired flight attendant turned farmer Frances Winslow (BSA – Horticulture, ’10) is trying to rework part of her ancestral home into her dream farm.

Winslow, who retired after 31 years with Delta, produced her first crop of organically-grown vegetables in the spring of 2012. She set up shop in a 1-acre field on the front of her family’s farm, the old Jones Plantation in the Birdville Community.

Flanked by 200-year-old oak trees, it is a beautiful, quiet place and a far cry from her home in suburban Atlanta. She finds it good to be surrounded by gorgeous, relaxing scenery when you’re learning how to farm.

“I probably should have kept my day job, but I wanted to get on with it,” Winslow said, bending down to yank up a handful of nutgrass. “The learning curve has been steep, and everything has taken a little longer than I think it’s going to.”

Winslow’s battle with the nutgrass was epic last summer, and she compulsively weeds as she talks, popping down mid-sentence to grab handfuls of the ubiquitous weed.

The first growing season was hard, but that doesn’t change the satisfaction she feels when she’s in her field. Nearly half of the 1,500-acre farm is leased to traditional cotton farmers, and her family members are still taken aback by Winslow’s natural farming techniques and tenacity.

“I tell her I’m going to go out there and spray for her to take care of those weeds, and she’d never know,” jokes her brother-in-law, Jim Andrew.

Winslow plays with a handful of nutgrass as she shakes her head.

A few years ago, Winslow decided to go back to school and finish the bachelor’s degree she started in the 1970s. She finished coursework for her degree in horticulture

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and a Certificate in Organic Agriculture. She sat with CAES Dean Scott Angle at the Georgia Organics Conference in 2006 because she wanted to be closer to that day’s speaker, Georgia author Janisse Ray.

“I asked to sit at a table where there were several empty seats,” she said. “I didn’t realize who I was sitting with until Dr. Angle was introduced as the new dean of the college.”

“I was thrilled by my good fortune in not knowing who he was prior to my sitting down,” she said. “Dr. Angle was telling us how much they needed students to enroll in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. So, I asked if I came back to school and enrolled at CAES if I would be welcomed with open arms, and he said yes. That was definitely a good omen for me and just one more factor that fueled my desire to go back to school.”

Winslow spent sleepless nights sweating over math and science material that she hadn’t tackled in decades and long hours working on farm internships. But school was different this time, and she did well. It was a surprise to her to realize just how enjoyable it was to be back in the classroom, knowing that she was there to learn how to live her dream.

“I had a lot of interests, but they all kind of dovetailed into this,” she said. Winslow graduated in 2010 and started planning her assault on the acre of old pasture that was going to grow into her retirement.

Last year, the converted pasture produced a pretty decent crop of Southern staples like tomatoes, okra, peppers and squash. Winslow sold her produce at a few local markets and hopes to expand this year.

The number of “retirement farmers” increased from about 300,000 to about 450,000 between 1997 and 2007, according to the USDA.

From cash to cows

“I guess I’m a prime example of that saying, ‘You can take the boy off of the farm, but you can’t take the farm out of the boy,’” said Raymond Waters (BSA – Animal Science, ’66), who left a career in banking to take over part of his family farm in Brooklet, Ga., near Statesboro. A lot of others are following Waters’ lead. The number of “retirement farmers” increased from about 300,000 to about 450,000 between 1997 and 2007, according to the USDA.

Waters started farming in the early 1990s. He had always worked with farmers through his banking career, but felt pulled back to his family’s farm in Brooklet after he left banking.

“Everyone says they grew up working on the farm, but I really worked the farm,” he said.

By the time he turned 18, Waters was ready to break away from home, and his mother wanted him to go to college. He attended Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College and then finished his animal science degree at the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences in 1965.

He took a job with USDA Farmers Home Administration that launched his career in farm and rural development credit.

While he was a successful banker, the farm always had a strange pull on him, but so did the stability of a steady salary. Twice he tried to go back home and farm with his father, but neither time stuck and he ended up joining a local bank.

In 1998, it was time to make his move. He leased the farm from his father and decided to give farming one more try.

After his father passed away, Waters continued to work the family farm and started adding to it — buying parcels of what had been his family’s land in the late 19th and very early 20th century.

Waters’ home is decorated with a museum’s worth of family heirlooms — furniture, photographs and newspaper clippings. But the most important legacy is the farm itself.

“Considering the amount of time I spent working on this farm as a child and everything my forefathers did to manage this land, I would hate to think that I was the one who dropped the ball,” Waters said.

Today he’s amassed about 800 acres of land, most of which he uses for cotton, peanuts, corn and soybeans, and as pasture for his two beef cattle herds.

At 68, he still spends a lot of time up on his tractor and riding from field to field in his truck.

He’ll continue to farm as long as he can, even though his buddies who stayed at the bank are spending their retirements at the golf course and on vacations.

“I’ve come to the conclusion that neither the office or farm is perfect,” Waters said. “The office work that everybody wants is not as great as it is supposed to be, but the farm life isn’t as perfect and calm as it looks like from the outside either.”

(Previous page photo) Frances Winslow, a retired flight attendant, examines tomatoes growing on her small organic farm near Millen, Ga. (Top) Raymond Waters, who left a job in the banking industry, now raises beef cattle on his farm in Brooklet, Ga. (Above left) Winslow discusses weed pressure and other obstacles she faced during her first year of farming. (Right) Waters tours the parcels of land — about 800 acres — that he’s purchased over the years. He’s slowly trying to rebuild his family’s original land holdings.

From Janisse Ray’s book, *The Year’s Work*
**The Farm Bill**

*Compiled by Amanda E. Swennes*

### What is it?

Congress passed the first Farm Bill in 1933 to help American farmers in the wake of the Great Depression. Its primary goals were to increase farmers’ purchasing power and protect consumers by balancing the production and consumption of specific agricultural commodities, like tobacco and cotton.

Today’s Farm Bill has expanded to cover food and nutrition, conservation, rural development, trade and energy programs in addition to providing assistance to farmers. In fact, more than 75 percent of current Farm Bill funds go to food and nutrition assistance programs.

### What does it cost?

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**At the time of writing, the 2012 Farm Bill had not been passed.**


### What's in a name?

A new Farm Bill is passed every four to seven years. Since 1933, there have been 16 Farm Bills. Their names reflect the shift in their focus from production agriculture to nutrition, conservation, trade and energy.

- 1933: Agricultural Adjustment Act
- 1938: Agricultural Act of 1938
- 1949: Agricultural Act of 1949
- 1965: Food and Agricultural Act
- 1973: Agricultural and Consumer Protection Act
- 1977: Food and Agriculture Act
- 1981: Agriculture and Food Act
- 1985: Food Security Act
- 1981: Agriculture and Food Act
- 1981: Agriculture and Food Act
- 1985: Food Security Act
- 1981: Agriculture and Food Act
- 1985: Food Security Act
- 1990: Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act
- 1996: Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act
- 1990: Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act
- 1996: Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act
- 2002: Farm Security and Rural Investment Act
- 2008: Food, Conservation and Energy Act
- 2008: Food, Conservation and Energy Act

### The Farm Bill affects us all — from farmers deciding what to plant to families trying to feed their kids healthy food during tough economic times. It even affects our college’s faculty, staff and alumni through grants and funding for research and education, as well as Cooperative Extension programs such as specialty crops (fruits and vegetables), bioenergy development, training programs for young farmers and EFNEP, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program.

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**The Farm Bill: How it Works**

*Compiled by Amanda E. Swennes*

### What does it work?

- **Commodity Programs:** provides income support for farmers producing crops such as peanuts, sugar, dairy, cotton, wheat and corn.
- **Conservation:** provides funding for farmers who participate in environmental stewardship activities such as retiring or protecting farmland, or improving farm management practices.
- **Trade:** funds international food assistance and U.S. agriculture export programs.
- **Nutrition:** covers food and nutrition assistance programs, such as WIC, school lunches, farmers markets and urban gardens.

### Why does it work?

- **Spending agriculture-related (Titles 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 & 10) (Titles 8, 9 & 12)**
- **What does it cost?**

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*Total spending over the proposed 2013-2022 period. Source: Congressional Budget Office Cost Estimate, S.3240, May 24, 2012*

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**FOOTNOTES:**

- 1933:  Agricultural Adjustment Act
- 1938:  Agricultural Act of 1938
- 1949:  Agricultural Act of 1949
- 1949:  Agricultural Act of 1949
- 1948:  Agricultural Act of 1948
- 1938:  Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938
- 1953:  Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1953

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**Why does it matter?**

The Farm Bill affects us all — from farmers deciding what to plant to families trying to feed their kids healthy food during tough economic times. It even affects our college’s faculty, staff and alumni through grants and funding for research and education, as well as Cooperative Extension programs such as specialty crops (fruits and vegetables), bioenergy development, training programs for young farmers and EFNEP, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program.
CAES alum receives World Food Prize for soil and irrigation work
By Merritt Melancon
Photos courtesy of Daniel Hillel

Last October, Daniel Hillel (BSA – Agronomy, ’50) was in Des Moines, Iowa accepting the World Food Prize — the preeminent award for solving problems in the world food supply to prevent hunger — in recognition of his work improving food security in some of the most hard-to-cultivate areas of the planet.

Unlike the World Food Prize laureates before him, Danny Hillel saw an opportunity to apply his expertise to solve a pressing problem and determinedly set about creating a new way of doing things that improved the quality of life for large parts of the world,” said Scott Angle, dean and director of the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. “Too often, the great humanitarian contributions of scientists like him go unnoticed.”

Working at the beginning of the Green Revolution, Hillel pioneered ultra-efficient irrigation techniques that allowed Israel to gain a solid agricultural base for the new state and improve food security in hard-to-farm nations in the Middle East, Asia and Africa.

He’s been obsessed with learning the way the land works since he was a child, but as he grew up his interest in agriculture evolved into a desire to bridge cultural divides by sharing knowledge and technology.

“He really is an ambassador for the technologies he worked with,” said Ed Kanemasu, director of the CAES Office of Global Programs, who first met Hillel when they were both studying at the University of Wisconsin.

“He tried to bridge the ethnic divides between the countries in the Middle East,” Kanemasu said. “He was an ambassador to that part of the world that has been in conflict so much. To me that is more special than anything else. It’s not the technology, it’s getting the people to come together and cooperate.”

continued next page
Early years
Hillel was born in 1930 in Los Angeles. There wasn’t much farmland in the city, but circumstances — the death of his father and the Great Depression — prompted his mother to move him and his four siblings to the Middle East. Her parents had moved from Charleston, S.C., to Palestine in 1927, part of a growing movement of Jewish Americans inspired to migrate to the Holy Land and eventually found Israel.

“In desperation, she packed whatever she had and five children, the youngest of them was I, and traveled half way around the world,” Hillel said. “I grew up in this unsettled country, under rather sparse conditions... When I was 8 years old, I was placed on a farm in a collective village called a kibbutz in the Jezreel Valley.”

At that time, farming in arid regions of the Middle East was accomplished by constructing long irrigation channels to individual planting rows. Farmers watched a lot of their water supply evaporate or disappear into the sandy soil before it reached their crops.

“It was in that little village that I found my vocation and avocation — my fascination with the land and the environment,” he said. “I remember myself at the age of 8 being given a spade and asked to direct the frothing waters from a furrow to water the tender saplings that were growing up against this backdrop of barren land. That fascinated me, and it determined the course of my career. I knew I wanted to learn more about land and water and the environment and crops and the climate.”

After World War II, Hillel’s mother sent him back to the U.S. to finish high school and attend college. He spent a year in New Jersey before transferring to UGA to be closer to family members in Augusta and to pursue his bachelor’s degree in agronomy. He graduated in 1950, and went on to receive a master’s degree at Rutgers University before returning to the Middle East and the newly-established state of Israel.

“I was very interested in helping with the development of that new state,” he said.

Into the desert
There was a sense of duty there, helping to establish a safe homeland for the Jewish people in the wake of World War II, but Hillel and his colleagues also had a strong sense of adventure.

“When he arrived in the new country, the government asked him to complete the first soil survey of the new territory. Hillel and a few assistants got in a Jeep and set about it.

With their new knowledge of the nation’s soils, Hillel and a dozen other pioneering farmers selected the site for their first farm — the Negev Desert. With fewer than 4 inches of rainfall a year, it was the perfect test case.

“That’s a desert but nonetheless there are possibilities there — there is land and there are meager but significant water resources,” he said. “And we tried to discover and harness these water resources, to develop the land and begin farming.

“It was a very difficult task. During the first year of our settlement there, we lost three of our original 12 members who were killed by marauders. The land was still very insecure and the borders had not yet solidified.

The news that a group of young men had set up a farm on the edge of the new country in the middle of the desert raised eyebrows and captured the attention of the young government.

“One day, there was a convoy of vehicles that passed along the little dirt road next to the little settlement, and that convoy turned into our encampment,” he said. “The doors of the limousine were flung open and out stepped a man with white frizzy hair.”

It was the founding prime minister of Israel, David Ben-Gurion.

“He wanted to know what we were doing there,” Hillel remembers. “He challenged us. He said, ‘What are you doing in this desert?’ and we told him that we were trying to find a way of bringing life to the desert. He was so captivated by the task that he turned the convoy around, returned to Jerusalem, resigned from the government and came to join our little village as a member.

“It was a very extraordinary move on his part. He was tired of politics and he wanted to go back to basics — to the pioneering tasks of developing the land. But we didn’t know what to do with him. What do you do with an older man who was a politician and all that?”

Sharing agricultural know-how
The years on the farm with Ben-Gurion inspired Hillel and helped open his worldview. It broadened his vision for what agronomists can do to foster peace.

The Israeli government sent him to Burma to help set up an experiment and develop farming techniques for the far more moist Burmese soils. Later, it was to Japan, Egypt, Jordan, countries in Africa and the Palestinian territories. Over the course of his career, Hillel has worked in more than 40 countries.

“At 82 years old, Hillel still has that willingness. At the CAES D.W. Brooks Lecture in November 2012, he challenged a packed room of students and faculty to work to solve the world’s current environmental and food security challenges — managing the world’s water resources, curbing global warming and preserving the natural world.

“I take great satisfaction in this outreach and being able to constructively convey the need to manage the environment — the importance of the stewardship of land,” he said. “I can think of no greater task, and it’s a joy.”

Young Danny Hillel on the kibbutz.

“Sharing agricultural know-how meant more than just passing books to farmers or conducting experiments. It meant sharing a worldview with them that brought together people to come together and cooperate.”

—Ed Kanemasu
Director of the CAES Office of Global Programs

Hillel in Burma, ca. late 1950s.

While the time with Ben-Gurion helped propel Hillel into the world of global development, the research he conducted in the Negev Desert helped him earn his Ph.D. from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

While teaching at the Hebrew University, he penned a soil physics textbook that has helped thousands of young soil scientists around the world understand the underpinnings of their new profession.

“When I was in school, we had a textbook for a soil physics class that none of us could understand,” said David Radcliffe, who researches and teaches soil physics in the CAES Department of Crop and Soil Sciences.

“I started reading Hillel’s soil physics textbook, and soon everyone in the class was reading the same book and ignoring the original textbook. Hillel’s soil physics textbooks, in all their editions, have been the standard for many years,” he said.

Agriculture students all over the world read these textbooks, which explain complex soil physics concepts with simple, clear language and provide illustrations to help students fully understand them.

Soil and Water: Physical Principles and Processes was the first of 24 academic and popular titles produced by Hillel, and it cemented his reputation as a teacher worldwide. It was ground-breaking how well it was written, Radcliffe said.

“If you met him at a meeting, he was really interested in the students there,” Radcliffe said. “He was always willing to talk with students about their research, about what they were doing.”

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Approximately 87,500 people strolled through 100 acres of exhibits at the 35th annual Sunbelt Ag Expo in Moultrie, Ga., last fall. The premier farm show of the Southeast, held from Oct. 16 to 18, 2012, hosted 1,200 exhibitors demonstrating the newest farming technology, research and practices. As in past years, the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences had a large presence at the show, both in the UGA building and throughout the grounds. CAES alum Chip Blalock (BSA – Animal Science, ’87) serves as director of the Sunbelt Ag Expo.

Check out these snapshots of what went on at Expo, and then make plans to stop by the UGA building from Oct. 15 to 17, 2013 for even more educational fun.

For more information, visit sunbeltexpo.com.
The chicken and the egg

100 Years of Poultry Science at UGA

By Merritt Melancon

Historical photos courtesy of UGA Extension and the Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library

It all started with an egg. Well, OK ... maybe a few trays of eggs. In the back room of a building at the Georgia College of Agricultural and Mechanical Arts, three turn-of-the-century incubators were busy hatching what is now one of the oldest, most storied poultry science departments in the nation.

"To begin, the old question of which was first in the order of creation — live hen or egg — has been practically settled," wrote an Athens Banner reporter in a 1912 newspaper notice. "Eggs come first."

"The state college's new department began its work with three incubators full of the best eggs to be procured for the purpose of the study and demonstration and research and experimentation."

The local paper — then the Athens Banner — poked a little fun at the fact that the college, which was not yet a part of the University of Georgia proper — was starting a poultry husbandry program without any live hens. Over the next 100 years, the research and education programs that began at that chicken-less poultry department have revolutionized the economy of northeast Georgia and helped to shape the way an entire nation eats dinner.

In only 10 decades, families went from eating chicken less than once a month to eating it several times a week. It's the nation’s most popular meat; annual per capita consumption of poultry currently exceeds 97 pounds.

"Chicken meat was largely a byproduct of egg production, and now the meat products have become a much larger part of the business," said Abit Massey, president emeritus of the Georgia Poultry Federation. "It’s one of the greatest success stories in Georgia, and a lot of that success has to do with UGA working with farmers and industry."

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Fathers of UGA’s poultry science department

The responsibility of hatching that first set of eggs fell to the university’s first poultry scientist, Leroy Jones. The college’s pioneering dean, Andrew Soule, hired Jones as a poultry husbandry professor in 1912 in an effort...
to broaden the college’s course of study. Soule and Jones saw America’s farmyard poultry flocks as an untapped source of economic opportunity for small farmers.

Right before Soule hired Jones to teach Farm Poultry Management and Poultry Breeding — the college’s first poultry science class — the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture released a study placing the value of all the eggs and chickens on American farms at three-quarters of a billion dollars.

At that time chickens were part of almost every well-appointed farmstead but existed only to produce eggs for the household and an occasional chicken dinner.

With so many isolated hens and eggs on every small farm, Jones pointed that the actual value was probably closer to a full $1 billion. To him this was evidence there was promise in poultry.

“This great poultry output, which exceeds the cotton crop in annual value, is peculiar in that it comes from many small, rather than from a few large producers,” Jones wrote in a November 1912 Athens Banner article.

Jones went on to explain the financial possibilities of large-scale poultry production and the barriers against it. What was once the domain of housewives and children — tending chickens and collecting eggs — was on the cusp of becoming big business.

The pullet years
Soule recruited both Jones and Roy F. Irvin, a Michigan College of Agriculture graduate, to head the new Department of Poultry Science, which was formally created in 1914.

Shortly after the launch of the department, the college’s trustees funded the construction of the school’s first poultry science buildings.

In those early days, research focused mostly on brooding and maximizing egg production. Commercial poultry production was just starting to take off as farmers struggled to find anything to grow to replace their failing cotton crops, said Greg Mathis (MS — Poultry Science, ’80, Ph.D. — Poultry Science, ’83), owner of Southern Poultry Research Inc. and lay poultry historian.

Ellis Murphy is credited for starting the first commercial flock in Georgia in 1914 just a few miles north of Athens in Talmo, Ga.

“In 1912, the first class in poultry science was taught; in 1924 — 12 years later — the first commercial poultry production operation was started,” Mathis said. “These people were already understanding the way that poultry and the poultry industry was going to come about, and were already ahead because of the work being done at the University of Georgia.”

World’s best poultry men
In the 1920s, ’30s and years following World War II, enrollment in the poultry science program grew steadily as farmers started to see promise in commercial poultry and veterans headed back to school. Poultry science students even had their own dorm, with a sign above the door that read, “Through this portal passes the world’s best poultry men.”

Today, the UGA Department of Poultry Science still produces some of the best poultry men and women in the world.

“Our undergraduates are spread all over the state and all over the world,” said Walter Britton, a retired professor of poultry science. Mike Lacy, current poultry science department head, likes to remind students who are considering taking classes in the department that, “there is one word that describes poultry science major: employed.”

Researchers would develop new breeding, feeding and processing technologies, which the industry would quickly adopt. In return, the industry would hire newly-minted poultry science graduates and support the department by procuring funding for research, teaching efforts and new facilities.

In 1955, the Georgia Poultry Federation supported the acquisition of funding to construct a poultry research station on Whitehall Road, which was expanded in both the 1970s and 1990s. In the 1970s, the Georgia Poultry Federation was also instrumental in securing funds to renovate the dilapidated dairy barn — now known as Four Towers — into offices and research facilities for Extension poultry science faculty and staff.

The research done in these new facilities and laboratories, and the development of vertically integrated poultry operations, helped make Georgia the poultry capital of the world. People from around the globe came to see how Georgia farmers and poultry magnates were producing chicken so efficiently.

“In this period, between 1953 until about the middle 1960s, there were about 100 people a month from foreign countries that were visiting this institution,” said Richard Noles, a retired poultry science professor.

Poultry capital of the world
Changes in feed science, breeding and poultry farm infrastructure technologies were happening at lightning speed.

“The industry was developing so rapidly here,” said Leo Jenson, who retired from UGA in 1990 as a poultry science professor. “Our undergraduates are spread all over the state and all over the world,” said Walter Britton, a retired professor of poultry science. Mike Lacy, current poultry science department head, likes to remind students who are considering taking classes in the department that, “there is one word that describes poultry science major: employed.”

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“The industry was developing so rapidly here,” said Leo Jenson, who retired from UGA in 1990 as a Distinguished D.W. Brooks Professor of Poultry Nutrition. “The university was trying to upgrade and recruit research faculty. We had top people in all fields — genetics, parasitology, nutrition and food science.”

Each time a researcher developed a better bird, better feed or better processing technique, it would become part of the industry’s standard practices.

“If you had an idea, the poultry industry was very quick to adopt it,” said Walter Britton, who retired from the department in 2001. “If you did some research, as soon as they heard about it, they would go home and try to make it work.”

Innovation spurred more innovation. A geneticist would breed a new bird, which would necessitate better feed, which would necessitate different processing protocols, which would change the business and marketing of poultry, and so on and so on.

“In the late 1950s, if you had a broiler chick,” Britton said, “it would be a slow-feathering bird, meaning that if you sold

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1912: POULTRY SCIENCE AT UGA BEGINS

The University of Georgia traces its poultry science roots back to 1912 when Leroy L. Jones was hired to initiate poultry instruction at the university. He organized and taught the first poultry courses at UGA — Farm Poultry Management and Poultry Breeding.

The first B.S. in Poultry Science majors graduated.


Support from the Georgia Poultry Federation led to further expansion of the Whitehall Farm facilities. The poultry research and teaching facilities at UGA are currently among the best in the world.

1962: POULTRY SCIENCE TURNS 50


The Department of Poultry Science at UGA was officially established when Roy F. Irvin was named the first head of the department.

The first B.S. in Poultry Science majors graduated.

The faculty increased to five members: L. Bell, K. Whitek, L. Edlin, C. Barber and L. Hoffman.

The department began its Ph.D. program.


The University of Georgia traces its poultry science roots back to 1912 when Leroy L. Jones was hired to initiate poultry instruction at the university. He organized and taught the first poultry courses at UGA — Farm Poultry Management and Poultry Breeding.

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Support from the Georgia Poultry Federation led to expansion of the Whitehall Farm facility.

1996

1970

1980

1996

1960

1950

1940

1930

1920

1912

2012: POULTRY SCIENCE TURNS 100

UGA has a diverse program in poultry science that includes research, instruction and Extension programs in nutrition, physiology, reproduction, endocrinology, genetics, parasitology, processing, products, management, environmental issues, molecular biology and more.

More than 600 students have earned undergraduate or graduate degrees in poultry science at the University of Georgia.

Continued industry assistance resulted in further expansion of the Whitehall Farm facilities. The poultry research and teaching facilities at UGA are currently among the best in the world.

“Since the late 1950s, if you had a broiler chick,” Britton said, “it would be a slow-feathering bird, meaning that if you sold
Continued from previous page

it young it would have pin feathers, which meant you would have problems if you were using a plucking machine."

When geneticists developed a fast-feathering bird, which eliminated the need for people to hand pull pin feathers, the industry completely changed. "In the 1950s, half of the workforce would be sitting there picking pin feathers;" Britton said. "Five years later they weren't. That’s how fast some of the technology was moving on."

A better way to raise chickens

Through the 1970s, ‘80s and ‘90s, UGA poultry scientists continued to make breakthroughs in chicken breeding, nutrition and flock health, but more and more scientists started to focus on the search for better, environmentally sound ways to raise chickens.

One thing that allowed the poultry industry to thrive in Georgia was the development of a set of best practices for using chicken litter and processing plant wastes in the 1980s, Massey said.

For example, UGA researchers proactively developed ways for poultry processors and farmers to comply with the Clean Water Act before it became necessary for state and federal agencies to impose new regulations.

"This voluntary program was a huge success and was considered a model program by state and federal agencies," Massey said.

International reach

These discoveries don’t just affect Georgia. Faculty and students are continuously sharing their knowledge around the globe.

“We’re still leading the world of poultry,” Massey said. “People from other parts of the country and other parts of the world come to Athens to learn about what we’re doing.”

UGA’s poultry science faculty are in high demand to share their research at international conferences. In February 2013, more than 100 poultry professionals from all over the world visited the department to hear presentations from the faculty on modern poultry production.

“We are inspired by the accomplishments of the people who built the department’s outstanding reputation,” Lacy said. "The present faculty, staff and students continue that tradition of excellence."

The development and adoption of those best practices helped keep poultry production in the state.

Georgia continues to be the top poultry-producing state in the U.S. The poultry industry represents nearly 50 percent of the state’s economic impact of raising poultry and ensures efficiency, reduces the environmental impact of raising poultry and ensures poultry is safe for consumers.

In the fall of 2007, CAES Alumni Association President Ben Martin told a story about how he became involved with the Association after his long-time friend and mentor, Dr. M.K. "Curly" Cook (former head of UGA’s Extension animal science department) called and asked him to volunteer. I also got the "Curly Cook call," and, just like Ben, here I am serving as president of the CAES Alumni Association.

It is indeed a very special honor to serve as your president, and I pledge my best effort as we carry out the mission of the CAES Alumni Association. It’s even more special when you consider the long line of accomplished men and women who have served in this role over the past 57 years.

In April 2012, the University of Georgia Chapel was the site of a celebration and enlightening panel discussion on the past, present and future of the 150-year-old Morrill Act, which established land-grant colleges across the U.S. Land-grant colleges have contributed significantly to our abundant way of life, and CAES continues to carry out the mission of teaching, research and Extension in an exceptional way. Our administration has battled several years of challenging budget shortfalls, yet Dean Angle proudly reminds us that CAES remains one of the top agricultural colleges in the nation.

An important CAES mission is to support Georgia agriculture. A major mission of the CAES Alumni Association is to support our college. The Alumni Association operates with a 13-member volunteer board of directors and five committees with approximately 10 volunteers per committee. We welcome your willingness to serve. If you would like to volunteer, contact Juli Fields in the Office of College Advancement at (706) 542-3390 or jfields@uga.edu.

Sincerely,

Joe R. Wells
BSA – Animal Science ’66, MS – Animal Science, ’69

I hope you’ve enjoyed Southscapes as much as I have over the years. I find it very interesting, informative and entertaining and look forward to each new issue. From Dean Angle’s message to the exciting teaching, research and Extension stories, to the spotlights on student and alumni activities and accomplishments, I read each issue cover to cover.

California Grown varieties.

For more information or ways to support UGA’s Department of Poultry Science, visit poultry.uga.edu.
1970s

Timothy D. Schowalter (Ph.D. – Entomology, ’79) has been named a fellow by the Ecological Society of America. ESA fellows are recognized for their outstanding contributions that advance or apply ecological knowledge in academics, government, non-profit organizations and the private sector. Timothy is a professor and head of the Insect Ecology and Forest Entomology Department at Louisiana State University.

1980s

John Wilkinson (BSA – Ag Education, ’77, MED, ’82) of Toccoa, Ga., was named chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee and vice chairman of the Committee of Education and Youth for the 2013 Georgia State Legislature. He is also a member of the Government Oversight Committee. He is the State Senator for District 50, which includes Habersham, Franklin, Hart and White counties. He is a member of the Georgia Agricultural Education Hall of Fame, and received the UGA CAES Award of Excellence in 2009. He was named the 2012 “Policy Maker of the Year” by the Georgia Association for Career and Technical Education.

1990s

Rachel Walters (BSA – Ag Communication, ’99) is the district sales manager for the Heartland District for Bayer Cropscience in Indiana. She is responsible for all of the sales that are generated in Indiana and eastern Illinois. Rachel manages eight sales reps and three technical sales consultants.

Tamlin Hall (BSA – Ag Economics, ’02), of Los Angeles, was named one of 35 finalists for the 38th annual HUMANITAS Prize, which honors television and film writers for telling stories that explore “the human experience in a way that both entertains and enlightens.” He also received the David and Lynell Angell Fellowship Award in Comedy Writing for his script for a comedy called “Young.” Tamlin is currently doing graduate work in film and television at the University of California, Los Angeles.

2000s

Jim Faircloth (BSA – Agribusiness, ’08) is a regional business representative for Syngenta, covering Georgia, Alabama, north Florida and central Tennessee. His responsibilities range from managing seed allocation, seed orders and seed forecasting to presenting at customer update meetings, helping the sales reps with business planning and computer skills, and managing several key customers in the district. He currently volunteers on the CAES Alumni Association Development and Finance Committee.

Tyler Harper (BSA – Ag Engineering, ’19) was sworn in as State Senator of District 7 and named vice chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee for the 2013 Georgia State Legislature. Tyler is the president of the Ochilla Rotary Club and the treasurer of the Georgia Young Farmers Association. He serves as a member of the CAES Strategic Planning Committee and volunteer for the CAES Alumni Association. Tyler is a brother in the Alpha Gamma Rho (AGR) Fraternity and serves as a member of the alumni board. He is also a member of the Ben Hill-Irwin Joint Development Authority and is actively involved in his community.

Nathan Wilson (BSA – Horticulture, ’11) is working with Georgia Commissioner of Agriculture Gary Black as a marketing specialist. Nathan’s work focuses on the commodity commissions and the Georgia Grown program. Before joining the commissioner’s office, Nathan served as an intern in the UGA Cooperative Extension office in Hall County.

2010s

Angela Boothe (BSES – Environmental Economics and Management, ’11) works as the confidential secretary to the deputy commissioner of the Georgia Department of Community Health. She currently manages an agency-wide administrative simplification initiative to create a more efficient and responsive department. She is an active volunteer with the CAES Alumni Association and lives in Atlanta.
2012 CAES Alumni Association Award of Excellence

By Merritt Melanson

The CAES Alumni Association Award of Excellence recognizes College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences alumni who have achieved excellence in their chosen field and/or in their community.

Chigozie Asiabaka
BSA – Ag Education, ’81
MED – Ag Education, ’82

Over the past two decades, Chigozie Asiabaka has pioneered improvements to agricultural practices and food security throughout Africa as well as to the Extension program in Nigeria to keep it responsive and relevant to the changing needs of Nigerians.

He currently serves as the vice chancellor of the Federal University of Technology in Owerri, Nigeria, overseeing a student body of more than 18,000 undergraduate students, 3,500 graduate students and 3,000 faculty and staff.

“New food insecurity issues keep him engaged in the world of continuing education, Extension and agriculture. “At the end of the boom years, people thought the only way to make a living was to be a contractor and go work on the oil fields instead of going to work on a farm. So the challenge is getting people back to farming,” he said.

One way to lure them back is to show them that they can make a decent livelihood in farming. Asiabaka said.

Over the last few years, he has helped pioneer a new landscape of Georgia agriculture.

“(Tankersley’s) agricultural programming efforts have been based on the issues and needs of his agricultural clientele,” said Ken Lewis, the Extension program development coordinator for the Southwest District. “He has become one of the most highly regarded agricultural development agents in the state.”

Tankersley pioneered research in cotton and cantaloupe intercropping and worked diligently to help farmers improve the yields of their cotton, vegetable and peanut fields.

He also worked to help improve the market for their crops — helping found value-added processing cooperatives like the farmer-owned Tift Quality Peanutsshellng and storage cooperative and the Georgia Alternative Energy Cooperative.

Tankersley led the charge to develop bioenergy crops in south Georgia and works with individual farmers to build the knowledge and infrastructure support they need to start investigating new crops and new markets for bioenergy.

He has also worked to increase private investment in the Tift County Extension office, maintained a strong 4-H and youth development program in the county and increased cooperation with the Tift County government and Tift County Development Authority.

Tankersley received the 2006 Walter B. Hill Award, which is the highest honor given by the University of Georgia in recognition of public service work and outreach accomplishments.

Libby Carter (BSA – Ag Economics, ’11) is a marketing graduate assistant with the Georgia 4-H Foundation’s Annual Fund, where she is helping develop strategies to cultivate the Georgia 4-H Annual Fund, design marketing publications, learn about donor management and stewardship, and coordinate alumni and fundraising events. She is a member of the Golden Retriever Rescue of Atlanta and also serves as a volunteer for the CAES Alumni Association Awards Committee. She is currently a graduate student in the CAES Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication.

Dallas Duncan (BSA – Animal Science and Ag Communication, ’11) recently completed her first year as director of communications and youth activities at the Georgia Cattlemen’s Association, based in Macon, Ga., where she is responsible for the monthly Georgia Cattlemen magazine, the GCA and junior association websites, social media, advertising and the events put on by the Georgia Junior Cattlemen’s Association. Dallas also recently debuted as an independent beauty consultant for Mary Kay and owns her own knitting business, Knit Lobalicious: Knit Knacks by Dallas.

Kimberly Jackson (BSA – Environmental Resource Science, ’97, MA – Plant Pathology) ’98 is the new UGA Cooperative Extension agriculture and natural resources agent in Fayette County. Kimberly was one of the first CAES graduates to earn an undergraduate degree on the UGA Griffin campus.

Georgianna Mann (BSA – Animal Science, ’11) is currently at Virginia Tech completing a master’s degree and moving into the Ph.D. program in human nutrition. She is very involved in her church, Northstar, and volunteers within both the church and the community. She spends her spare time working at Paris Mountain Stables, where she boards her mare.

Rachel McLocklin (BSA – Ag Economics, ’10) has worked with Senator Saxby Chambliss since 2010. She is currently a legislative assistant covering agriculture, nutrition, forestry, rural development and the environment. She is a member of the Junior League of Washington, D.C.
2012 Young Alumni Achievement Awards
By Merritt Melanson

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

Bret Caudell
BSA – Agribusiness, ‘06

Caudell found new sources of revenue as an entrepreneur in south Georgia’s onion growing and packing operations. Just days after graduation he found himself helping with the spring Vidalia onion harvest at Sikes Farm in Collins, Ga. The first few days on the job ran from 7 a.m. to midnight. Those were hard days, but they got Caudell hooked on the onion business.

Over the next six years, Caudell transformed his experience on the Sikes’ farm into a winter-season sweet onion importing, packing and wholesale distribution business called Onions Etc. He leases the Sikes processing facility during the fall and winter to pack his onions and still manages the domestic onion operation for Sikes Farm during the spring and summer.

“I personally have met and worked with over 30 grower-packer-shippers from the Americas, and I can attest that Bret has propelled himself and his colleagues into the forefront of their profession,” said Mark Schuman, Caudell’s produce broker.

Abby Needham
BSA – Animal Science, ‘04
MA – Ag Leadership, ‘05

Needham uses her love of agriculture to inspire students in Walton County.

She started her career in a marketing position with the Georgia Cattlemen’s Association, but found her calling as a teacher during a year-long internship with the Georgia FFA, where she worked as a camp counselor teaching horsemanship. Needham was teaching a child a new skill and seeing his face light up with excitement was one of the most rewarding feelings I have ever experienced,” Needham said.

She started teaching agricultural science and horticulture in the fall of 2005. In 2010, her colleagues voted her Loganville High School Teacher of the Year.

“Her students thrive under her instruction and enthusiasm,” said Loganville High School Principal Nathan Franklin. “They respect her and know that she is able to teach them life lessons while in the classroom and in the lab.”

Becca Turner
BSA – Ag Communication, ‘00
MMC – Mass Communication, ‘02

Turner is using her experience as a public relations and marketing professional to help mold the next generation of communications specialists.

She started her career as director of the Colquitt County Arts Center before taking a position teaching communications and public relations at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in 2006.

“What a wonderful opportunity to have the ability to shape young minds,” Turner said. “If my students leave my class with no skill other than the ability to challenge themselves to think deeply and to explore the ideas that interest them, then I have succeeded.”

Bobbie Robinson, dean of the School of Liberal Arts at ABAC, believes that it is Turner’s real-world experience with the arts center and the roles she holds with community service organizations that make her such an effective teacher.

“She has a perspective and practical experience that other faculty steeped in only the academic world simply don’t have to the same high degree,” Robinson said.

Susannah Lanier
BSA – Agribusiness, ‘07
MAL – Ag Leadership, ‘12

Lanier found success and fulfillment when she left a career in business and finance for the classroom.

After graduation, she started her career at AgGeorgia Farm Credit in Royston, Ga., and then Waynesboro, Ga., before finding her calling as a teacher. She began teaching agriculture and serving as an FFA adviser at Southeast Bulloch High School in Brooklet, Ga., in 2009.

“I never imagined that I would be a high school agricultural education teacher, but I have never regretted my decision to make a career change,” Lanier said. “My chosen profession allows me to influence today’s youth and equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in their chosen careers.”

Lanier trained the winning team in the statewide Horse Evaluation Career Development Event. Lanier is also active with the Statesboro-Bulloch Chamber of Commerce Agribusiness Committee, the CAES Alumni Association and Metter United Methodist Church.

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Matthew Pitts
BSA – Agribusiness, ‘11

Matthew Pitts, BSA – Agribusiness, ’11) was recently promoted with ConAgra Foods, Inc. to a sales analyst on the Joint Business Planning team.

His job includes gathering and maintaining data to support customer business reviews, trends and pricing, as well as supporting key account and national account managers in the field. He currently lives in Tampa, Fla.

Caroline Portwood
(BSES – Environmental Economics and Management, ’11) is an environmental consultant at GaTech, Incorporated in Atlanta. She works in the commercial real estate department and travels the country performing Phase I environmental site assessments and compliance audits. She is currently serving as chair of GaTech’s philanthropy committee. Outside of work, she serves as a volunteer on the CAES Alumni Association’s Connections Committee, helping establish and maintain the relationship between alumni and CAES. She serves as the vice president of membership and administration for the Alpha Omicron Pi Atlanta Alumnae Chapter as well as an advisor to the UGA AOII Chapter.

Michael Pisciotto
BSA – Ag Education and Agriscience, ’10
MAL – Ag Leadership, ’13

Michael Pisciotto, BSA – Ag Education and Agriscience, ’10, MAL – Ag Leadership, ’13) is the new public affairs coordinator for the Georgia Agribusiness Council.
In November 2012, 25 CAES alumni and friends traveled to Cuba to learn about that country’s culture, people, and agricultural and environmental history, and experience a place most Americans have never visited. Highlights of the trip included a lecture by former Minister of Agriculture Pepe Morales on the history of Cuban agriculture and the island nation’s rise as one of the world’s primary sugar producers. They also toured UBPC Vivero Organoponico Alamar, one of the most successful urban organic farms in Cuba, which raises ornamentals, medicinal herbs and seedlings. With more than 400 members, the Alamar cooperative provides a variety of healthy organic vegetables to nearby communities.

The trip also included a walk through Old Havana that provided background information on the rich depth and breadth of Cuban history, zip-lining at Las Terrazas, a community and nature preserve in the Sierra del Rosario mountain range, a cigar rolling demonstration inside one of Havana’s most famous cigar stores and a ride along Havana’s scenic coast in restored classic cars.

If you’re interested in visiting Cuba with UGA CAES alumni and friends in 2013, contact Juli Fields at (706) 542-3390 or jfields@uga.edu.
Know it all...

Compiled by Andrea Gonzalez

It’s no secret that the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences stays busy. We offer programs and information across the state for people of all ages. If you want to see what’s happening near you or keep up-to-date with what we’re doing in teaching, research and Extension, check out these online resources.

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