

Annual Meeting
of the
Coastal Research & Extension Center
Commodity Advisory Council
February 24, 2015

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AGRONOMIC CROPS

Mr. Randy Smith– MSU Chair
Mr. Curtis Page – Producer Chair
5 Attendees

Items of discussion circled around the vertical tillage strategies and benefits from the system and how it improved overall soybean production in dry-land situations. The system improves yield in dry-land situations, improves root development of soybeans which allows them to produce a tap root, reduces soil erosion, improves water infiltration, improves nutrient finding, aids in reducing stress during drought situations and reduces trips across the field.

We further discussed how the soybeans and vertical tillage fits in a rye-grass cattle situation. What has been observed is soybeans supply nitrogen to rye-grass reducing this input cost, the vertical tillage allows for reduction of disking for ryegrass and reduces trips across the field, and allows rye-grass to better withstand the winter hardships.

Also discussed the importance of our variety testing program and gave results of this program.

We also discussed the Liberty Link system and results of a split block trial that I conducted last year evaluating the herbicide system and different varieties compared to Roundup Ready.

APICULTURE

Dr. Jeff Harris – MSU Chair
Paul McCaffrey (Absent) – Producer Chair
Glenn Collins – Producer Chair-Elect
16 Attendees

The Chair, Dr. Harris, in the absence of Mr. McCaffrey, opened the meeting, welcomed the group and asked that each person introduce themselves.

Dr. Harris reviewed the recommendations from the 2014 year and talked about possible activities from that a list as well as those that have been put in place. He said that emphasis needed to be put on good plants for honey.

He recommended that Virilomite control be continued.

One of the areas of need is more information on small hive beetles. Dr. Harris said that Audrey Sheridan has done work on small hive beetles and would be a good source of information.

The issue of pesticides was discussed. When goldenrod is killed in the fall, it tends to cause bees to starve, as well as not having a good source of flowering plants to provide food for the bees. When undergrowth is burned or cut out of pine tree stands, the plants being destroyed are often a food source for the bees.

There was discussion about a written piece about bees that could be used in talking with power companies, forestry, pipelines and others who spray under lines, killing plants that produce food for bees. It is difficult to define who sprays what, when, how, and why. And, one cannot “blame” seed treatments and spraying because it is a two edged sword, other crops, like forestry and corn, need spraying. The bees are being killed in the spraying.

Farm Bureau is developing a MS Stewardship program that includes apiculture.

The discussion continued with suggestions of Kenneth Calcote, Bureau of Plant Industry, and Blaire Sampson (601-403-8755) on native bees and honey bees as speakers for programs.

It was noted that youth programs are being pursued through summer camps with entomology. For 4-H and other youth, these camps are well done and attended.

Dr. Harris recognized the value of the USDA attendees from Poplarville in our area and some of the work they are doing in research for bees.

The session concluded with the election of Glenn Collins, 228-424-8206 or glennnc@cableone.net, President of the MS Gulf Coast Beekeepers, as chair for the Commodities Council Apiculture session for 2016.

FORESTRY

Dr. Glenn Hughes – MSU Chair
Mr. Walt Moeller – Producer Chair
Mr. Robert Stelle – Producer Chair-Elect
17 Attendees

Mr. Walt Moeller welcomed the participants. The group introduced themselves. Mr. Moeller turned the meeting over to Dr. Glenn Hughes, MSU Extension Forester.

Dr. Hughes had prepared several handouts for the participants. He began with one that showed the 2014 priorities that had been developed by the producers and the status of those areas that had been identified. New needs had been identified during the 2014 year and those were listed with the status.

Points of Discussion:

There is a good program available on timber bridges by Dr. David Jones. A listing of potential speakers for CFA's was provided. There is a continuing need for certified wood. Mylandandplan.com was a suggested web site to visit.

A question was raised if it would be possible to have the programs on-line hence accessible at times that they could do them on line. The local Extension office can work with the requests to provide those. There are some programs on YOUTUBE.com about wild hogs. Cliff Covington has a wild hog program that is on the Extension website.

There was discussion about the demographic changes of the membership of CFA's. And about the need for younger people to be involved in the program as they would stand to be involved through inheritance.

Dr. Hughes talked about the Neighbors helping neighbors program. This has been successful in Oklahoma.

Invasive species are still a major problem. Landowners need to particularly aware of Cogan grass. Discussion with Boards of Supervisors about road side cutting and spraying is needed. The chemical Chopper Generation II, works under long leaf pines. Chopper has to go in understory.

There is a court case in Oregon about forest roads.

Dr. Hughes also talked about Lake Thoreau, through USM. Mike Davis, a biology professor is working with the program and using piney woods cattle.

Among new needs discussed, were the need for assistance with wild hogs, beavers, and invasive species like Chinese Privet, Cogongrass, and Chinese Tallow Trees.

There is a publication on beaver control. Adam Rhonke has a book and there is a program available for CFA's on Beaver control. There is a list of certified beaver control individuals. NRCS has had a Cogan grass program, but budget cuts have slowed that down, what is available now through NRCS?

The group also discussed forestry land taxes. There is also a need for assistance for County Foresters for secretarial help so they can get out into the field more to help clients.

There was discussion on rail corridors to get products to the Coast for shipping. There was an environmental study being done that was very intensive.

Use the MS forestry Commission web site for burn bans. The group would like to have the web site for that.

Robert Steele was elected chair for 2016.

The list for needs was:

- Animal control, beavers and wild hogs
- Invasive species, Cogan and privet
- Organize better and approach Boards of Supervisors about tax value of land to help keep forest lands in the family.
- Newspaper articles that could apply to the issues
- There was some discussion about rail use for wood pellets.
- There needs to be information from MSU on the importance of Forestry in the counties.
- There is a connection with bees in terms of burning and spraying at times the bees are harvesting honey. Loss of undergrowth "starves" bees.
- Have Apps for forestry, short courses on U-tube, and Google Forest land in MS for information.

FRUITS

Dr. Eric Stafne – MSU Chair
Mr. Tom Giles (Absent) – Producer Chair
Mrs. Bonnie Lippincott – Producer Chair-Elect
Allan Hillman - Recorder
21 Attendees

The Fruits session of the MSU Coastal Research and Extension Center Producer Advisory Council meeting began with the introduction of Dr. Rebecca Melanson, the new Extension Plant Pathologist for fruit and vegetable crops. She is housed at the Central MS Research and Extension Center in Raymond, MS.

There was some discussion of combining the fruit and vegetable sections for next year since nearly all attendees are in both sections. Most of the attendees thought this was a good idea.

Discussion on different ways to market and sell fruit crops ensued, with mention of drop stations, co-ops, Community-supported agriculture (CSA), and Farm to School programs. Some have had greater success with some more so than others.

The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) was a topic brought up in relation to Good Agricultural Practices and Good Handling Practices (GAPs and GHPs, respectively). If the producer is in compliance with GAP/GHP, they will also be in compliance with FSMA. However, the cost associated with becoming certified can be substantial based on the size of the farming operation. It will be challenging for many producers to comply with the rigorous demands and expense of the program.

Organic farming is done by the Choctaw tribe near Philadelphia, MS. Dick Hoy stated that it was a lot of paperwork. They sell through CSA to local participants as well as to those in Jackson, MS. They have sold 120 shares and each share ranges from \$346 to \$396. That includes 12 weeks of produce. Mr. Hoy also stated that he has seen the positive impact of the program on the surrounding community and their eating habits.

The USDA-ARS in Poplarville gave an update of their programs. They do research primarily on blueberries, but also other small fruit crops. They have projects that deal with fruit insects and diseases too. A new project is dealing with bee populations and pollination issues. Native bees are good enough for many crops but some require assistance of hives. The USDA-ARS often partners with MSU Extension to put on fruit-related programs throughout the year.

MSU Extension programs for fruit include workshops, field days, and short courses. Right now topics include blueberries, grapes, and Muscadines, but other topics could be covered if there is a demand. Programs on fruit crops like pecans, citrus and blackberries have been delivered in the past.

HORTICULTURE: **COMMERCIAL ORNAMENTAL**

Dr. Gene Blythe – MSU Chair
Mr. Heath Steede – Producer Chair
10 Attendees

Mike Levy from Dogwood Ridge Farms noted that the nursery had a good fall season and the greenhouses and outdoor growing areas are full of spring crops. He suggested that plant-based insect repellents would be helpful for ornamental production to reduce the need for conventional insecticides.

James Mills from K & M Roses noted that rose rosette disease, spread by wind-borne mites, has become of major concern in U.S. landscapes. The disease has always been present with *Rosa multiflora*, but has become much more prevalent due to mass plantings of modern landscape roses. the disease has been found in Houston. He also noted that Master Gardeners have a great responsibility to spread the word about the value of plants and gardening.

Jeff Howell from Rocky Creek Nursery noted that laurel wilt on Redbay has caused loss of trees in natural areas in George County. Chili Thrips are also becoming an issue in the Southeast, having spread from Florida, and affects various crops, including *Ternstroemia* (Cleyera) and *Ligustrum*. Jeff noted reported that current demand for nursery stock is fair, growers are upbeat about 2015 sales, trade show activity was active at MANTS (Mid-Atlantic Nursery Trade Show) in Baltimore, and plant supply in the nursery industry is down due to reduced production levels or companies having gone out of business. He also noted a need to educate young people about the value of plants and gardening.

Tim Ray and Heath Steede reported that gardeners in their counties are gearing up for spring are being encouraged to submit soil samples for testing to prepare for the growing season.

Dan Batson from GreenForest Nursery reported that business was good last year and again this year, but echoed Jeff Howell's comment that plant supply is down in the industry. Nurseries need to be cautious about shipping undersized plants. Dan recently attended a seminar about plants and Millennials and reported that Millennials want great neighborhood more than great home landscapes; they want nice places to go walking. The nursery industry needs to reach Millennials via electronic means. Dan also noted that a critical, upcoming issue is the impact that possible removal of neonicotinoids could have on the nursery industry. What replacements for neonicotinoids would be available?

Linda Harrison reported that the Master Gardeners in Jackson County have been actively participating in garden shows and plantings at public schools. She noted that the elementary schools need to better job of maintaining the gardens. Student maintenance of gardens will be emphasized at high schools where the Master Gardeners will be planting in the coming months. Heath Steede noted that George County has a very active Junior Master Gardener program.

Wes Burger from MAFES discussed the MSU program of releasing both public and licensed/patented plants. He noted that 20% to 25% of royalties go back into the breeding program.

HORTICULTURE: **HOME**

Dr. Gary Bachman – MSU Chair
Vacant – Producer Chair
Ms. Terri Thompson - Recorder
9 Attendees

The Home Horticulture group met with Dr. Gary Bachman opening the floor to suggestions and questions. Some questions discussed were:

Q. What type of educational information is given out to home owners? Is it just via Master Gardener? Are there any other avenues?

A. Other ways to get information include

- Agricultural Newsletters
- MSU Lunch and Learns
- Internet - We need to be careful getting resources from google and other internet search engines because the information may not always be researched based.
- MSU does use Social Media \
- Many Master Gardener associations and Extension offices have Facebook
- MSUCares.com (researched based) MSU is aware that MSUCares need to be more user friendly.

Q. How much do Master Gardeners actually teach?

A. About half of Master Gardeners are trained to teach

Q. Should Master Gardeners do research

A. Typically Master Gardeners will not do research. MSU State staff and Extension Agents usually conduct the research and then disseminate to Master Gardeners and the general public.

HORSE & SMALL RUMINANTS

Mr. Roy Higdon – MSU Chair
Mr. DeWayne Smith – Producer Chair
22 Attendees

Points of Interest:

- Mississippi State University has a new horse specialist, Clay Cavendar, who will work with both 4-H Horse Program and Adults.
- Small ruminant specialist may be looked into as this group grows in Mississippi.
- Goats are the largest growing 4-H Livestock project this past year.

Discussion included:

- Organic farming – supporting the niche but educating the public on the production of organic based products.
- Supporting and protecting livestock agriculture from bad publicity and education from animal rights and USHS. *Making connections at home with producers and representatives.*
- Support Farm Bureau in their support of Mississippi Livestock Production.

What can Mississippi State University do for this group?

- Field days for small ruminant education
- Small ruminant nutrition
- Small ruminant forages – different grazing techniques
- Implement a buck test for South MS
- Marketing for small ruminants
- Promote agriculture education
- Small Ruminants Producers Association
- Promote the 4-H Horse Program
- Support the small producers in the county

LIVESTOCK

Mr. Brad Jones – MSU Chair
Mr. Tom Wise – Producer Chair
24 Attendees

2015 Event Calendar

- March 4 & 5 – BCIA Bull Sale
- March 17 – Long-range Meeting with Stockers
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- April 17 – White Sands Beef Cattle Boot Camp (Basics of Cattle Production)
- March 28 – Field Day at White Sands
- June 9-12 – BIF Meeting (Beef Improvement National Meeting)
- August 6 & 7- Deep South Stocker Conference, Montgomery AL
- April 1st begins (Cody Rutherford – Beef Cattle Specialist @ MSU)

White Sands – De-wormer study – long range products and Dectomax product.

Upcoming Research

- Weaned Calf Project – weaned calf to pre-conditioned calf, cost for gain. Measuring inputs to methods used. Looking at different alternatives to effect the bottom line.
- Producer driven study
- Pasture samples and feed samples will be used.

Rocky Lemus – report and updates on research (Farm Research and demonstrations - Concentrate on more Farm Research)

- Hay samples will be done at MSU by July and August
- NRS Soil and Forage testing will be the system used
- The results can be electronically sent
- Announced different field days in the handout

New Forages

- Sun Hemp – illegal in MS – is legal in other states as a forage
- Update on blast in ryegrass – still working on testing with different varieties, collecting different species with different states – will probably have some data in the next 5 years

Cattle/Livestock

- Is it economical to double-worm cattle? Need research on effects with using dart guns and the drugs that are used with them.
- Research on Agrotain – slow release coating on area. Cost effective on forages. Rocky has some research on Agrotain.
- There may be restrictions placed on livestock antibiotics and the way the producer can administer drugs to their herds or be able to purchase drugs. This will be something that will come in the future that will effect producers.

SEAFOOD & AQUACULTURE

Mr. Dave Burrage– MSU Chair
Mr. Damion Flynn – Producer Chair
7 Attendees

Started with a brief discussion about the new Governor’s Oyster Council. MSU is represented by Dr. Benedict Posadas.

Early in the process but two large questions loom:

1. Where will the money come from to build hatcheries?
2. Where will these oyster be placed? Mississippi is losing suitable growing areas as a consequence of increased coastal development and concomitant degradation of water quality.

Points of Discussion:

There followed a brief discussion about the existing aquaculture operations in the coastal region and how they have been able to survive by finding niche markets. A lot of operations have come and gone due mainly to production economics and foreign competition.

Dr. Mahmoud provided an update about seafood safety training. MSU continues to hold the high ground in this arena. Eleven HACCP and Sanitary Operation classes were held in 2014, with a similar amount to be held this year beginning in March. There will be a constant need for this area of programming due to the high turnover rate in the seafood industry workforce.

The session ended with a discussion of how producers could be made aware of potential funding opportunities. MSU faculty will devise a procedure to share the numerous funding advisories we receive either through a list serve or through our social media accounts.

VEGETABLES

Dr. Christine Coker – MSU Chair
Mr. Paul Cavanaugh – Producer Chair
Mr. Allan Hillman - Recorder
20 Attendees

Upcoming Events

March 5, 2015 - George County High Tunnel Field Day
June 4, 2015 - Beaumont Vegetable Field Day

Suggestion for Next Year

Combine Fruit/Vegetable Session

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

Market Maker

Free program – register with produce information, buyers and sellers

Pomegranates

Bloom falls off (disease/pollution problem)
From 75 trees to 40 over last year

Update from Dr. Regina Bracy, LSU, Hammond

Lost many farmers – post Katrina
CSA's have started
Several large farms are operative
Pick your own is not popular now
Farm to school in LA on increase

Farm to School Program

Grant Opportunities:

- Build up for small farmers to contribute to Farm to School
- Possible meeting with cafeteria directors and local schools to discuss what they need from local farms

GAP (Good Agriculture Pictures):

- Becoming certified is expensive
- Record-keeping is important

Pesticide Certification

Audit Possibilities

Chris Shivers, Farm Bureau

Your voice to the legislature



The Mississippi State University Extension Service provides research-based information, educational programs, and technology transfer focused on issues and needs of the people of Mississippi, enabling them to make informed decisions about their economic, social, and cultural well-being.

The **Coastal Extension Region Office** serves these 21 southeastern most counties of Mississippi.
1815 Popp's Ferry Rd * Biloxi, MS 39532 * Phone 228-388-4710 * Fax 228-388-1375

County	County Coordinator	Physical Street/Mailing Address	Phone	Fax
Clarke	Christy King	101 Westwood Ave., PO Box 109 Quitman, MS 39355	601-776-3951	601-776-1023
Covington	Carolyn Conger	68 Industrial Park Drive Collins, MS 39428	601-765-8252	601-765-5009
Forrest	Tawnya Crockett	952 Sullivan Dr Hattiesburg, MS 39401	601-545-6083	601-545-6173
George	Heath Steede	7128 Highway 198 East, PO Box 738 Lucedale, MS 39452	601-947-4223	601-947-4224
Greene	Mitchell Newman	#2 Oak Street, PO Box 730 Leakesville, MS 39451	601-394-2702	601-394-2741
Hancock	Christian Stephenson	856 Highway 90 Ste B Bay St. Louis, MS 39520	228-467-5456	228-466-6225
Harrison	Sheran Watkins	2315 17th St, PO Drawer Z Gulfport, MS 39502	228-865-4227	228-868-1470
Jackson	Terri Thompson	4111 Amonett St, Ste E, PO Box 1248 Pascagoula, MS 39568	228-769-3047	228-769-3347
Jasper	Bert Gilmore	37B West 8th Ave., PO Box 506 Bay Springs, MS 39422	601-764-2314	601-764-2035
Jeff Davis	Thomas Brewer	2304 Pearl Avenue, PO Box 580 Prentiss, MS 39474	601-792-5121	601-792-5123
Jones	Kimberly Tolbert	515 North 5th Ave., PO Box 448 Laurel, MS 39441	601-428-5201	601-428-3158
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Lauderdale	Patty Swearingen	410 Constitution Ave 5th Floor Meridian, MS 39301	601-482-9764	601-482-9777
Marion	Amanda Woods	1060 Hwy 13 South Columbia, MS 39429	601-736-8251	601-731-3791
Neshoba	Karen Benson	12000 Hwy 15 N, Ste 2 Philadelphia, MS 39350	601-656-4011	601-656-5505
Newton	Katrina McCalphia	65 Seventh Street, PO Box 188 Decatur, MS 39327	601-635-7011	601-635-2146
Pearl River	Eddie Smith	417 Hwy 11 North Poplarville, MS 39470	601-403-2280	601-795-0651
Perry	Brittany Odum	103-B 2nd Street West, PO Box 405 New Augusta, MS 39462	601-964-3668	601-964-8480
Stone	Judy Breland	214 N Critz St, Suite A Wiggins, MS 39577	601-928-5286	601-928-4677
Wayne	Lanette Crocker	810-A Chickasawhay St Waynesboro, MS 39367	601-735-2243	601-735-6264



The Coastal Research and Extension Center is Mississippi State University's "southern exposure," linking residents of the coastal region to the university. The center's mission is to conduct research and education programs aimed at developing a better understanding and use of renewable and nonrenewable resources in south Mississippi. Its applied research and educational programs with biological, physical and social systems focus on enhancing the quality of life of residents of Mississippi and other Gulf states.

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