

# PABC Journal



## COMING SOON... Making Small Farms Big Business Study

As part of the SC Department of Agriculture's strategic plan to increase the profitability of small farms in the state, a study is being completed and will be published at the end of August, 2013. The study will include a comprehensive agricultural economic assessment of opportunities in regional food hubs and value-added processing across South Carolina.

## Palmetto Palate

SC Farm Bureau's annual Palmetto Palate will be held July 25, 6 to 9 pm at 701 Whaley in Columbia. Get ready for another fun event and a chance to enjoy local South Carolina foods from participating chefs as well as an evening of fellowship and a silent auction. Tickets are \$50 per person and can be purchased by calling 803-936-4219.

## COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS RESULT IN FUNDING FOR SC INFRASTRUCTURE

Governor Nikki Haley signed the Highway Funding legislation H.3360 on June 24, 2013, which was passed by the General Assembly.

The bill provides for the \$50 million in recurring general revenues that would allow up to \$500 million in bonding. The legislation also included the transfer of vehicle sales tax recurring revenue of \$41.4 million that will be used for Non-Federal Aid Highway Fund (rural roads which do not qualify for federal aid) to be used exclusively for highway, road and bridge maintenance, as well as up to \$50 million in funding for bridges which is included in the General Appropriations bill. The total funding, approved by the legislature and the Governor

including bonding is approximately \$591 million.

Infrastructure funding was PABC's top priority issue this legislative year. PABC President Jack Shuler attributes getting funding approved to a collaborative effort of agribusiness and business organizations.

"Our success in addressing this issue was due to joint efforts of PABC, the SC Alliance to Fix Our Roads, SC Farm Bureau, SC Forestry Association, SC Chamber of Commerce, Carolinas AGC, SC Manufacturing Alliance and the SC Trucking Association," Shuler said. Shuler also expressed PABC's appreciation to members of the House and Senate who agreed to the

funding proposals and to the Governor for signing the legislation into law.

"We are pleased that the Governor and legislators took this significant step toward improving the state's highways and bridges", Shuler said.

The primary Highway Funding legislation, H.3412 was stalled by efforts to push Ethic's reform and did not get set for special order in the Senate. This legislation will remain on the Senate calendar and is expected to see action early next year.

*(cont. on pg 4, see Recap)*

## BILL STOPS DISCRIMINATION AGAINST SC CERTIFIED WOOD

This session saw several strides for the forestry industry as far as budget requests and passing a bill that stops discrimination against SC certified wood.

Governor Nikki Haley signed Senate Bill 635 into law on June 7, 2013. Senate Bill 635 stops the discrimination against South Carolina grown Sustainable Forestry Initiative and American Tree Farm System certified wood during state funded construction projects by preventing state agencies from seeking the LEED credit point for Forest Stewardship Council certified wood.

Senate Bill 635, sponsored by Senator Katrina Shealy, received second reading in the House on May 30, 2012 by a vote of 103-0. The legislation passed the Senate 41-0 in early May.

The U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system has a bias in forest certification standards. LEED only recognizes Forest Stewardship Council certified wood, failing to recognize the highly respected certification systems of the American Tree Farm System and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. Ninety percent of the Forest Stewardship Council certified timberlands are located outside the United States. The Sustainable Forestry Initiative and the American Tree Farm System are North American certification systems.

*(cont. on page 4, see Forestry)*

## NESA Receives Certification for Pee Dee Site

The North Eastern Strategic Alliance (NESA) has received recognition that gives them the leverage of holding one of the most unique products in the state.

Recently, Cleveland-based Austin Consulting—a leader in site selection consulting for the food and beverage industry—provided NESA with its “Shovel Ready” Site Designation Award for the Food and Beverage Industry for its Pee Dee Electric Food Processing Certified Site, located at the intersection of I-95 and Highway 327 in Florence, giving the region

bragging rights as the location of the state’s only certified food processing site.

Certifying ag sites is one of PABC’s initiatives as part of an agribusiness economic development strategy. PABC President Jack Shuler said he believes the site will serve as an opportunity creator for NESA and give the region a head-start when it comes to locating businesses in the region.

“PABC is proud that NESA has taken the lead and certified the first ever food processing site in South Carolina,” Shuler said. “This certification raised

the profile and awareness of the Pee Dee by having a ready for construction food processing site. By having this designation, NESA can now market a site that will give companies a six month advantage when choosing a new or expansion location,” Shuler said.

A certified site such as the Pee Dee Electric Food Processing Certified Site provides an expanding or re-locating business with detailed property, geotechnical, utility, environmental, ownership, transportation and permitting research within the convenience of a small binder. Before

awarding the designation, Austin Consulting evaluated over 200 crucial variables which are summarized in the appropriate sections of the report. As part of the process, Austin Consulting performed detailed field investigations of the site and conducted numerous meetings with economic development and utility officials at the city and county level. This confluence of information shows that the site meets the highest standards in the food

*(cont on pg. 3, see Pee Dee Food Processing Site)*

## New SCDA App Lets Users Locate Fresh on the Menu Restaurants



### By: SC Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers

The South Carolina Department of Agriculture’s (SCDA) new Fresh on the Menu (FOTM) app is available now. In the last edition of this newsletter, SCDA introduced the app’s concept to readers. Now readers can download the free app and give it a try!

SCDA released the app June 4 at three press conferences across the state. The day started in Greenville at Rick Erwin’s West End Grille, the second press conference happened in Columbia at the Blue Marlin, and the third at The Culinary Institute of Charleston at Trident Technical College’s Palmer location.

Several media outlets covered the press conferences and have done a number of stories on the app since its release. Two days after the launch, nearly 5,000 people had downloaded the app.

The app features four main sections; those sections include Restaurants, Chefs, Recipes and Roots. Users can search by city, zip code, or restaurant name to locate a Fresh on the Menu restaurant. FOTM restaurants use at least 25 percent Certified SC Grown produce or products on their menus, when in season. There are about 300 participating restaurants, and SCDA is working to see that number grow.

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SCDA’s favorite section is Roots. There, users can learn more about South Carolina farms, produce companies, and breweries supplying to FOTM restaurants. This feature is helping make the farm to restaurant table connection. If you are eager to connect and looking for a great meal made with Certified SC Grown, then visit [www.freshonthemenuapp.com](http://www.freshonthemenuapp.com).

## SC's ECONOMY ONE OF THE FASTEST GROWING

**COLUMBIA, S.C.** – South Carolina has one of the fastest growing economies in the U.S. and has one of the fastest growing manufacturing sectors in the region and nation, according to a recent U.S. Commerce Department report. South Carolina's Real GDP growth rate of 2.7 percent put it above the national average of 2.5 percent and the southeastern regional average of 2.1 percent.

The report, released by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis, ranked South Carolina's economy as the 12th fastest growing in the nation, and tied with North Carolina as the fastest growing state on the East Coast. In addition, South Carolina had the fastest growing manufacturing GDP on the East Coast.

"South Carolina is outpacing the region and nation in GDP growth metrics," said

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley. "This tells me that our strategy is working: grow manufacturing, grow jobs. The race is on."

South Carolina's 2012 Real GDP growth rate compares favorably with the rate from the previous year, which was 2.2 percent. Gross domestic product is the market value of final goods and services produced within a region. Manufacturing played an important role in South Carolina's GDP increase.

"I've said before that South Carolina makes things and makes them well," said S.C. Secretary of Commerce Bobby Hitt. "South Carolina's GDP growth is proving this to the world. South Carolina remains a leader in the manufacturing renaissance. Manufacturing GDP in South Carolina grew 8.5 percent last year compared to the 7.8 percent U.S. rate."

The U.S. has seen growth in its manufacturing sector for three straight years, as has South Carolina. Since January 2011, South Carolina has recruited more than \$9 billion in capital investment and more than 23,000 jobs in the manufacturing sector.

"I think this shows that South Carolina is outrunning our peers in manufacturing and that we're successfully growing the manufacturing economy

in our state," Hitt added. During the last few years, South Carolina has also seen increases in worker productivity.

"Being able to show businesses outside of South Carolina the increases in worker productivity helps to recruit new business investment to the state," added Hitt.

### SC Moves Up In Business Rankings

South Carolina ranked 23rd in a CNBC 2013 ranking of "Top States for Business" In 2012, the state was ranked 32.

States were ranked in 10 categories and given an overall ranking. SC scored No. 9 in workforce, No. 8 in the cost of doing business and No. 15 in infrastructure and transportation. Georgia received an overall ranking of 8, and North Carolina was No.12.

## Pee Dee Food Processing Site (cont. from pg 3)

processing field and allows companies to expedite the process of doing business in the NESAs region by mitigating much of the time, expense and risk incurred during a typical site selection process.

South Carolina Senator and Chairman of the NESAs Executive Committee Yancey McGill said the

Certification of the Pee Dee Electric Food Processing Certified Site will be an incredible buoy for business in the area, by both increasing interest in the region and providing it with the state's only certified food processing site.

"This creation of this certified site marks a great day for the NESAs region,"

Sen. McGill said. "A product like this will give our region a marked advantage against other sites across the country by the merit of it being certified 'shovel ready' and short-cutting any location process for an incoming company."

The 39-acre site's certification will make it one of the top destinations for food

processing or distribution centers in the coming years.

SC Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers said, "The first in SC certified food processing site will no doubt make the Pee Dee region even more attractive to agribusinesses looking to expand or establish operations in SC."

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602 Meeting St. Suite B  
West Columbia SC 29169

Phone: (803) 926-3462  
Fax: (803) 926-3463  
jack@novingerqtr.com  
cathy@novingerqtr.com  
www.scagribusiness.org

For information about how to join PABC, contact: Cathy Novinger, 803-926-3462.

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Jack W. Shuler, President  
Cathy B. Novinger, Executive Director



PABC worked with the SC State Fair to schedule the first annual Harvest Concert on opening night (October 9, 2013) of the Fair. This event is sponsored by the SC Farm Bureau and SCANA Corporation and will be an opportunity to showcase South Carolina's agribusiness industry and its supporters. The award-winning Country music group, The Band Perry will perform. If you are interested in learning more about this concert and sponsorships, please contact Jack Shuler, 803-926-3462 or jack@novingerqtr.com.

### Thanks to the Harvest Concert Sponsors



## RECAP: PABC LEGISLATIVE ISSUES (cont. from pg. 1)

In addition to infrastructure funding, PABC was supportive of the following agency budget requests which saw several vetoes by the Governor. Five of the seven agribusiness-related vetoes were overridden by the General Assembly.

### SC Department of Agriculture Budget

- **Overridden** -\$145,000 for consumer services technician.
- **Sustained** -\$500,000 for the SC Grown marketing and branding program.

- **Sustained**—\$75,000 for refrigeration capacity at the Pee Dee Farmers Market.

### Clemson PSA Budget

The following vetoes by the Governor were overridden:

- \$3 million for the Advanced Plant Technology Lab.
- \$150,000 for an Ag Engineer at the Pee Dee Research Facility.
- \$150,000 for a Plant Breeder at the Pee Dee Research Facility.

- \$100,000 for a Research Assistant at the Pee Dee Research Facility.

### SC Forestry Commission Budget

The General Assembly funded the Forestry Commission as follows:

- \$2 million for fire-fighting equipment (one-time funds)
- \$756,000 for 19 new firefighting positions
- \$180,000 for operational support.

## Forestry (cont. from pg. 1)

In South Carolina, 2.4 million acres are certified by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and the American Tree Farm System.

There are about 81,000 acres of Forest Stewardship Council certified timberland in South Carolina with the vast majority of the timber grown for paper products.

To give a preference to the Forest Stewardship Council certified wood encourages the importation of certified wood from overseas resulting in discrimination against wood products from South Carolina certified to the North American standards.