



PABC Journal



Funding Available For Organic Certification

South Carolina farmers and food processors who want to pursue organic certification may qualify for reimbursement through a grant administered by the SC Department of Agriculture.

“Organic Certification can open up new market opportunities for South Carolina farmers and companies,” said Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers. “Our cost share programs are a great use of funds because they support agribusinesses that have “skin in the game” by paying back a portion of their investment.”

The Organic Certification Cost Share Program will reimburse producers and handlers of agricultural products up to 50 percent of the operation’s total allowable certification costs, up to a maximum of \$500 per certification scope; crops, livestock, wild crops, and handling (i.e., processing). The deadline to apply for reimbursement for the current fiscal year is December 10, 2021.

SCDA also has three other cost share reimbursement programs available as projects of the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program., including one that offsets the cost of installing an affordable Cool Bot cold storage unit; and two that support businesses through the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Audit process.

To apply for reimbursement programs through SCDA, visit agriculture.sc.gov/grants

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SC Advocates for Agriculture held its annual reception in August to recognize the Advocates of the Year. From left, Ronnie Summers, Advocates President; Brittney Miller– CEO of Manchester Farms, Advocate of the Year (Private Sector); Representative Murrell Smith, Advocate of the Year (Public Sector) and Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers.



Governor Henry McMaster welcomes Premium Peanut to South Carolina as they unveil plans to establish a peanut shelling operation in Orangeburg County. (Full story on page 2)

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Premium Peanut Establishing Operations in Orangeburg County

PABC member Premium Peanut, an innovative, grower-owned peanut shelling company, announced plans in September to establish operations in Orangeburg County. The \$64.3 million investment will create 130 new jobs.

Founded in 2014, Premium Peanut operates one of the newest and largest peanut shelling facilities in the world. The company began shelling peanuts in January 2016, with about 140,000 tons in shelling capacity. Through investments, efficiencies and growth, the company now has a plan capacity of 300,000 tons, which is about 10% of the U.S. peanut crop. Premium Peanut has made additional investments in cutting-edge technologies and enhancements, and added an oil mill, which opened in 2018.

"Premium Peanut is proud of the value we have been able to create for over 400 grower-owners, in addition to providing quality products to customers around the world," CEO Karl Zimmer said. "We are thrilled to expand our operations and establish our footprint in South Carolina"

Locating in Orangeburg County, S.C., Premium Peanut's new facility will provide more capacity and allow South Carolina peanut growers the opportunity to be a part of a cooperative model. This facility will build on the company's existing model, creating maximum value of every peanut for its grower-owners. Premium Peanut's customers consist of the major snack, candy and peanut butter manufacturers domestically, as well as customers in 30 countries around the world.

"In addition to creating jobs, Premium Peanut's new processing facility represents a dynamic value-added opportunity for South Carolina farmers," SC Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers said. "We're thrilled at the chance to expand peanut production in the state and welcome Premium Peanut's investment in our future."

Portions of the facility are expected to be operational by spring 2022. Growers interested in learning more should contact Palmetto Peanut Buying Point. Individuals interested in joining the Premium Peanut team should visit the company's careers webpage.

McCall Farms Makes Major Contribution to CAFLS for Vegetable Research



From left– Commissioner Hugh Weathers, Woody Swink, Marion Swink, Thomas Hunter, Clemson President Jim Clements, Dr. Sandra Branham, Clemson; Henry Swink, McCall Swink, and CAFLS Dean Keith Belli.

PABC Board member **McCall Farms** contributed \$3 million to **Clemson's College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences** for critical vegetable research, establishing the McCall Farms Vegetable Breeding Endowment.

Guest speakers at the announcement held at the Pee Dee REC included Clemson President Jim Clements, CAFLS Dean Keith Belli, SC Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers, McCall Farms leadership team member Thomas Hunter and several others.

Scott Phillips Elected Treasurer of National Association of State Foresters



State Forester Scott Phillips

Congratulations to PABC Board member and SC State Forester Scott Phillips, who was recently elected treasurer of the National Association of State Foresters (NASF). The nation's state and territorial foresters elected a new slate of officers to the NASF's governing executive committee recently with Christopher Martin, state forester of Connecticut, assuming the helm of the organization. Scott will serve a 12-month term before ascending to the NASF vice presidency in 2022. He then will lead NASF as president in 2023.

Just a few days prior to being elected Treasurer of NASF, Scott stepped down as the Outgoing Chair of the Southern Group of State Foresters and shared his farewell message and welcome to the new 2021/22 SGSF Executive Leadership Committee.

SCSU 1890 Collaborates with Governor's School for Agriculture on Teaching Project

Two South Carolina agencies are joining together to train and prepare the next generation of leaders in agriculture. SC State University 1890 Research & Extension and the SC Governor's School for Agriculture at John de la Howe held a joint Memorandum of Agreement Signing Ceremony on September 22 to commemorate the partnership. at the School located in McCormick.

PABC member SC State 1890 serves as the primary outreach arm of the university and delivers research-based programs and solutions in agriculture, natural resources and conservation, youth development, food safety and security, family health and nutrition, community and economic development and education, innovation, and support.

The SC Governor's School for Agriculture, a residential high school, is the first statewide program of its kind in the nation for which students, grades 10th-12th, receive hands-on training in the fields of agriculture, agribusiness, forestry, land management, food science, and more.

As part of the collaboration, SC State will procure and install on the campus a high wind tunnel for teaching year-round production, and vertical farming towers. A summer immersion ag camp with an emphasis on STEM will also be held on the campus. The camp will be made available to limited resources youth to participate. Extension agents from the Upstate, Piedmont and Low Country SC State 1890 Extension regions will provide instruction.

"SC State 1890 Research & Extension is excited to partner with the SC Governor's School for Agriculture and to help expose students to the possibilities that exist within agriculture. The hoop house and vertical farming towers will introduce the future of farming to students. By integrating science, engineering, mathematics, and technology in our programming, we hope to further inspire students to create new ways of providing leadership in the food and fiber industries," said Dr. Louis Whitesides, vice president and executive director for SC State 1890.

As the premier ag education program in the state, Tim Keown, president for the SC Governor's School for Agriculture said the partnership will enhance student learning and make a positive impact among students.



Dr. Louis Whitesides, VP and Executive Director for SC State 1890, talks about the partnership with the Governor's School for Agriculture at John de la Howe.



1901 Main St.
Suite 1225
Columbia, SC 29201

Phone: 803-256-9099
Fax: 803-926-3463

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We're on the web
Scagribusiness.org

CEO MESSAGE FROM RONNIE SUMMERS

SC AgriBusiness is quite busy with the 2021 fall season now fully evident. Harvest of several crops continues where weather allows, and daily log trucks are observed delivering wood to mills for processing. Our farm and forestry communities are doing what they do best providing the essentials for life and supporting our way of life here in South Carolina.

The Palmetto AgriBusiness Council is busy like our agribusinesses we support. Recently, we polled our members and received surveys as to what are perceived to be 2022 legislative and regulatory priorities. The PABC Legislative & Regulatory Task Force (LART) has now met, considered this information, and has prepared a slate of priorities for consideration at our Executive Committee and Board Meetings on November 9. Once we make decisions in this regard, we should be prepared to enter the new year from a policy standpoint.

Additionally, during October, a Strategic Planning Session was held with the PABC Board level members focusing on fine tuning our organization to provide the best support possible to our membership. This was the first such meeting since I assumed my present role here at PABC, and this effort proved quite informative for both the Board and your staff. A huge "THANK YOU" to those who participated as many great ideas surfaced! Through this planning, PABC should become even stronger over the coming years and for the long term.

Despite the truly unique times we are experiencing, the collective AgriBusiness industry within SC continues to exhibit strength and the ability to grow. Needless to say, Sandy and I are honored to be part of this organization that represents agriculture, forestry and rural South Carolina. Thank you for allowing us this opportunity to be engaged in an industry we all value immensely!

PABC WELCOMES NEW MEMBER CROSBY LAND COMPANY, INC. _____



Todd Crosby

New PABC member Todd Crosby is the owner of Crosby Land Company, Inc. After honorably serving in the United States Air Force, Todd began his forest industry career with a small privately owned family business in 1993.

Working in procurement and private land management for 9 years, he gained valuable hands-on forestry experience. This eventually led to a full-time career in land brokerage in 2002. Todd began his brokerage career with Shaw, McLeod, Belser and Hurlbutt which later became American Forest Management, one of the largest forestry management and brokerage firms in the United States. After a successful 16 year career with American Forest Management, Todd had a strong desire to expand his presence in all aspects of rural land brokerage. This led Todd to open his own brokerage firm Crosby Land Company, Inc. in 2018. Licensed in South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and North Carolina, Crosby Land Company

Inc. specializes in high-end sporting properties, agricultural land, historical properties, conservation, and investment grade timberland.

Todd and his wife, Melissa, have four children and reside on their property, Holly Bluff, in the "Ace Basin" on coastal South Carolina.