



Spring 2025  
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## PABCJournal



**Bryant Sansbury**



**Lori Anne Carr**



**Travis Lee Avant**

## PABC ELECTS OFFICERS FOR 2025

The Palmetto AgriBusiness Council (PABC) recently announced the election of officers for 2025. Bryant Sansbury, CEO with ArborOne, was elected Chairman; Lori Anne Carr, co-owner of Titan Farms, was elected Vice Chair and Travis Avant, Principal of Compass South and Chairman of the Board of Palmetto Rural Telephone Cooperative, was elected Secretary/Treasurer. PABC represents some of the largest agribusiness employers in the state with a mission to promote the economic viability of South Carolina's largest industry.

Sansbury is the Chief Executive Officer for ArborOne Farm Credit, an agricultural credit association and cooperative headquartered in Florence, South Carolina. ArborOne Farm Credit is part of the Farm Credit System and provides agricultural financing and farm related services in the Pee Dee Area of South Carolina. Sansbury holds a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Finance from the University of Georgia. He is also a graduate of the Southeastern Agricultural Lending School (SEALS). He began his career in the Farm Credit System in 2013. Prior to working for ArborOne Farm Credit, Sansbury acquired over 20 years of commercial banking and real estate experience. Additionally, he serves as a Commissioner for the Florence County Soil & Water Conservation District.

*(continued on page 7, see New Officers)*



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## CEO MESSAGE

### FROM RONNIE SUMMERS



**The first quarter of 2025 has been engaging to say the least.** Numerous meetings have been occurring as the quarter concluded. The Spotlight on Ag & Forestry planned and led by the SC Chamber included several PABC member entities as co-sponsors, while the Taste of SC was sponsored by the Farm Credit Associations of SC, and the Certified SC Showcase was led by the SC Department of Ag. Each of these were great events to attend relating to agriculture and forestry.

**For the second year, the SC Ag Tech and Business Forum was held in late March and proved to be excellent.** A planning committee referred to as the “Host Sponsors” included again in 2025 PABC, Mixon Seed, CU-CAT, SC Farm Bureau, SC State University PSA and the SC Department of Agriculture. Also, the SC Soybean Board and the SC Advocates for Agriculture served as Co-Sponsors assisting in the event. Working in late 2024 and early 2025, the Host Sponsors set up an agenda consisting of guest speakers including SCFB Executive Director Gary Spires, Clemson Dean of CAFLS Matt Holt, SC Commissioner of Ag Hugh Weathers, and panels addressing Ag Policy, Natural Resources, Ag Technology, and Value Added/Innovation. The guest speakers and members of many of the panels were associated directly with PABC. Attendance in 2025 exceeded the previous year by about 25 attendees with approximately 125 participants in this year’s Forum. This event is rapidly becoming an annual occurrence as feedback was quite positive from both the 2024 and 2025 participants as to the networking and quality of information shared.

**An Industry Planning Session** was held recently at the Sandhill REC and included farmers, forestry entities, ag/forestry advocacy groups, land grant colleges, agribusinesses which support both ag and forestry, and more. This was the first time such an event had been held in many years and the focus targeted a strategic plan relative to the future of agribusiness in SC. The SC Department of Agriculture and Commissioner Weathers led this effort and challenged the group to address 3 or 4 very prevalent challenges within agribusiness including labor, land loss/increased real estate values, the need for additional added value agribusiness, and ways to improve communications/messaging. As the meeting concluded, a sense of urgency was emphasized as both ag and forestry really need a concerted effort in place to address these challenges. Working groups were formed to concentrate efforts on Communications, Conservation, Innovation and Stabilization.

**After agreeing back in August of last year to work an additional year,** my experience since August has been a fantastic one. With about five months remaining before my retirement on August 30, the PABC Search Committee is engaged and working toward identifying the next PABC CEO. In combination, Sandy is now planning her retirement for the end of September. Many exciting things are planned for late April, May and June as Sandy and I begin to wind down, and we prepare to work along new organizational leadership as we start the transition process. As stated on numerous occasions since January of 2017, it is a privilege to work with the number one industry in our state – SC AGRIBUSINESS. THANK YOU for the opportunity!



In continuing efforts to support organizations that promote agribusiness, PABC recently distributed contributions to the SC 4-H, SC FFA and Clemson CAFLS. Photo at left, PABC CEO Ronnie Summers and PABC member Nancy Smith present a check to 4-H President Maya Chapman and SC 4-H Program Director Ashley Burns. In photo below, Mr. Summers presents a check to FFA students.



In photo at left, Bryant Sansbury, PABC Chairman, presents a check to Dr. Matt Holt, Dean of Clemson College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences. (More photos page 7. See PABC Contributions.)

## **UPCOMING** **EVENTS**

**May 3**

**Klays for Kids**

**Backwoods Quail Club,  
Georgetown, SC**

**More info:**

[amy@whiteoakforestry.com](mailto:amy@whiteoakforestry.com)

**May 3 -**

**June 29**

**South Carolina**

**Ag+Art Tour**

[agandarttour.com](http://agandarttour.com)

**May 16**

**SC Agricultural**

**Council Spring**

**Tour 2025**

**Tour Departing Farm**

**Bureau Insurance**

**724 Knox Abbott Dr.**

**Cayce, SC**

**More info:**

**803-360-2845**

**May 22-23**

**Forestry**

**Association of SC**

**Young Professionals**

**Summit**

**Clemson Madren Center**

**More info:**

[eoakman@scforestry.org](mailto:eoakman@scforestry.org)





In February, the Forestry Association of SC and SC Forestry Commission participated in Forestry Day at the State House to promote awareness of the important role forestry plays in the state.



Spring began with several engaging agribusiness events. In photo above left, the SC Ag Tech and Business Forum was held at the Phillips Market Center. Dr. Nathan Smith, Clemson University, moderated one of several panels at the event— this one on Agricultural Policy with panelists: Dr. Joe Outlaw, Texas A&M University; Kyle Kunkle, American Soybean Association and Michael Lulich, Lowcountry Labor Association. In photo above right, Commissioner Hugh Weathers gives the welcome at the Taste of SC, which kicked off the Certified SC Showcase. In photo at right, Kathy Coleman, Director of the Sandhills REC, welcomes participants to the Industry Planning Session at their facility.





## SC CHAMBER HOLDS ANNUAL SPOTLIGHT ON AG AND FORESTRY



PABC members enjoying the networking at the Spotlight on Ag & Forestry: photo at left, Bryant Sansbury and Charles Vernon, ArborOne; Coty Ferguson, AgFirst and David Jones, SC Forestry Commission.

Photo below left, Nancy Smith, SC State Fair and Fred West, SC Department of Agriculture.



Photo above right, Chamber VP Will Frierson presented a Resolution to the SC Forestry Commission for wildfire control and prevention. Photo at left, Ley Pickens with Super-Sod, accepted the Chamber's first Agribusiness of the Year award. (Photo credit - SC Chamber)



## WELCOME NEW PABC MEMBERS

### SOUTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS



PABC welcomes the **South Carolina Association of Conservation Districts (SCACD)** as a Board Level member. They will be represented by their current **Chairman Ben Setzler**, a farmer from Newberry county. The Executive Director of SCACD is **Ann-Lamar Tuten**.

SCACD represents the state's 46 soil and water Conservation Districts. Its programs and activities are aimed at advancing the resource conservation cause of the Districts and the cooperating landowners, land users and citizens whom they serve in their communities. Since 1937, Conservation Districts have worked to promote and establish the wise use of soil and water resources on the land.

The quality of land, water and related natural resources has a direct bearing on the activity, growth, development and lifestyle in South Carolina. Conservation Districts develop and maintain programs to ensure a productive and desirable natural resource base. In addition, these programs are conducted in a way that uses to the fullest extent (1) voluntary action; (2) local participation and decision; (3) private enterprise; and (4) partnership between private and public interests at all levels. Through these programs, a clear understanding of the economic, social, political and ecological interdependence between urban and rural areas is demonstrated. For more information, visit <https://scacd.org>

### ADVENT INNOVATIONS

**Advent Innovations**, established in 2016 is committed to revolutionizing agriculture by focusing on sustainable practices, innovative solutions, and a greener future for all. Based in Columbia, SC, the company specializes in using cutting-edge technology, including soil and environmental monitoring sensors, AI/ML and robotics, to transform agricultural systems. The multidisciplinary team at Advent works together to design and implement technologies that empower farmers with actionable insights and increased efficiency.

The company products and services include but are not limited to:



- Sustainable solutions for agriculture and beyond
- Resources and insights for transitioning to eco-friendly practices
- Cutting-edge technology for a smarter, greener future

The Advent team has more than 35 years of collective experience with modeling, analysis, design, and product development and is actively involved in projects from several government agencies, including USDA, NASA, DOT, DOD, DOE as well as state agencies like the SCDA (South Carolina Department of Agriculture) and SCRA (South Carolina Research Authority). By leveraging the power of artificial intelligence and machine learning through their FieldRich smart suite of agriculture products, the company helps farmers optimize crop management, monitor soil health, count fruit blooms, provide recommendations for bloom/fruit thinning and predict crop yields. The company's robotics expertise also enables the development of automated solutions that streamline tasks such as spraying and planting.

**Advent Innovations** has launched their new website which will provide more information on this unique business that focuses on robotics, sensors, and digital engineering associated with agriculture: [www.adventinnous.com](http://www.adventinnous.com)

**Advent** will be represented at PABC by its founder **Dr. Ritubarna Banerjee**, who is also the company President and CEO. WELCOME to PABC **Advent Innovations!**



## NEW OFFICERS (cont. from page 1)

*"I'd like to congratulate Sarah Windham on a highly successful two year term as chair of the Palmetto AgriBusiness Council," Sansbury said. "She is a talented leader and did an outstanding job. Looking ahead, I am thrilled to have the opportunity to chair PABC, an organization that I have long admired and appreciated for its great work in promoting agriculture and forestry in South Carolina."*

Carr and her husband, Chalmers are co-owners of Titan Farms, located in Edgefield County, South Carolina. Titan Farms is the largest peach grower on the east coast, with over 6,000 acres of peaches, bell pepper, eggplant and broccoli. Titan Farms produces more peaches than the state of Georgia, growing 60 different varieties of the fruit, one of which is named for Carr – Lori Anne Peaches. Carr grew up on a farm between Florence and Sumter, South Carolina. She is a graduate of Clemson University.

Avant leads Compass South's appraisal division and is a Certified General Appraiser in multiple states. He has ample experience appraising income-producing properties, including office buildings, mixed-use properties, industrial properties, retail properties, ag production, farmland and timberland. He is an Accredited Senior Appraiser with the American Appraisal Society (ASA), a designated Review Appraiser with ASA and serves on the ASA Board of Ethics Committee. He is also a designated Senior Appraiser with the International Right-A-Way Association. Avant serves on several boards: a local bank board, Palmetto Telecommunications (PRTC) and the SC Broadband. Prior to forming Compass South, Avant retired from the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division after serving two terms as Sheriff of Colleton County, South Carolina. A graduate of the F.B.I. National Academy, he received his Bachelor's degree from the University of South Carolina.

*"The Palmetto AgriBusiness Council is very fortunate to be led by such a well-respected slate of officers," CEO Ronnie Summers said. "Their knowledge and experience will be an asset in continuing PABC's commitment to sustain and grow South Carolina's agriculture and forestry sectors."*



**New PABC Chairman Bryant Sansbury presents a plaque to outgoing Chair Sarah Windham thanking her for her service and leadership.**

## PABC Contributions (continued from page 3)



Left photo, Ronnie Summers, PABC CEO, presents a check to Jill Jeffords, Director of the SC Ag in the Classroom. Right photo, PABC member Dr. Louis Whitesides and PABC Executive Assistant Sandy Boozer, present a check to Tim Keown, President of the SC Governor's School for Agriculture.



Palmetto AgriBusiness Council

OFFICERS:

Bryant Sansbury, Chairman  
Sarah Windham, Past Chair  
Lori Anne Carr, Vice Chair  
Travis Avant, Secretary/Treasurer

STAFF:

Ronnie Summers, CEO  
Sandy Boozer, Executive Assistant

**MEMBERS IN THE NEWS**

**Dominion Energy Honored for Energy Efficiency Program**

Dominion Energy South Carolina was honored by the Smart Energy Consumer Collaborative (SECC) for its outstanding support of small and midsize businesses by creating a comprehensive energy efficiency program that provides financial assistance, educates business owners and ensures high-quality implementation.

The company's Small Business Energy Solutions program received the SMB Engagement Award at SECC's 2025 Consumer Symposium, an annual forum spotlighting customer-focused innovations in the energy industry. Dominion Energy's award-winning program helps qualifying small businesses in South Carolina manage their energy costs by providing financial incentives for energy-saving upgrades to lighting as well as heating and cooling systems.

The SMB Engagement Award celebrates innovation and leadership among electricity providers across the U.S. This year, Dominion Energy South Carolina joined a limited group of multiple-time recipients of the Best Practices Award.

Palmetto AgriBusiness Council

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