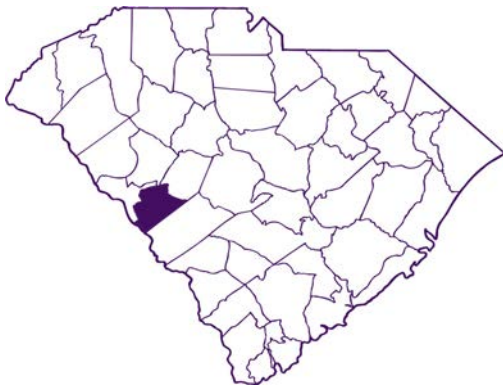


Annual Report to the People

November 2012
Edgefield County



304 Gray Street
Edgefield, SC 29824
Phone: (803) 637-3161
Fax: (803) 637-3162
www.clemson.edu/extension

Mission Statement

The mission of the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service is to provide sound, scientifically based information to South Carolinians and help them use that information to improve the quality of their lives.

General Face of the Ag Economy Along the “Ridge”

Greg Henderson, County Extension Agent

Agriculture along the Ridge of Edgefield County and adjoining counties is focused on peach production. Expansion seems to be leveling off with newer plantings only slightly ahead of those older orchards rotating out of production. Again, until genetic or cultural practices are proven to address the loss of trees early in the production cycle of orchards, economic loss is too much of a risk to replant these sites. An increasing acreage of vegetables and traditional commodity crops offer an attractive option for the near term. Labor and energy costs continue to be the big factors affecting the bottom line for producers. The modern role of Extension remains consistent with its mission. Extension produces education and specialist involvement in advancing the scientific research and demonstration aspects of the Land Grant mission. While we may not be able to address all programs on a local level, the expansion of agent responsibilities across county boundaries insures service to our clientele.



Grain Sorghum Production Increases

No increase in grain prices or opportunity for an alternative cash grain crop comes along unless there is an underlying economic reason. Major production areas of the US suffered an historic drought this past summer. Corn prices, already buoyed by rising prices for wheat due to losses in other production areas of the world, have risen to unprecedented levels. This has given us the opportunity to produce grain sorghum as local mills look for an alternative grain. As an alternative to corn in feed rations for poultry, much of the acreage usually planted to soybeans following wheat has been devoted to

this crop. It also is an important tool in management of herbicide resistant weeds and is not as sensitive to nematodes. Production will be marketed locally either at Amik Farms and Columbia Farms in Monetta, or Prestige Farms in Camden.



Reasearchers Continue to Study Water Use in Orchards



David Lankford, left, with EarthTec Solutions oversees the installation of a splitter valve to regulate irrigation in the test orchard located on JW Yonce and Son farm near Johnston.

Greg Henderson, County Extension Agent

Funded in 2011 through a SC Dept. of Ag Specialty Crops Research Grant, two years of data collection have been completed on the study of water use by peaches during the growing season in SC orchards. Due to the geographic nature of the Ridge, irrigation supplies depend upon surface water to meet the needs of the crop as it develops. Limited supplies, coupled with an expanded acreage, and seasonal droughts, has raised the concern for a more diligent management

of the resource. New legislation regarding the withdrawal of surface and groundwater most certainly demand a more modern approach to irrigation timing and management.

Year two (2012) of study is complete and researches are busy analyzing the data to determine the exact level of water savings. Fruit production numbers from the trial this summer indicate that there is an ever so slight increase in crop production as well as an increase in overall crop quality and uniformity associated with close water management. While the primary focus of the study is to better manage water resources and not to drastically reduce the amount of water used to produce the crop, another grower utilizing the system indicates significant water savings. This, accompanied with the data on fertilizer movement, can offer costs savings in labor, fuel and equipment while lessening the impact on the environment.

With the initial grant funding used, another broader reaching grant is currently is being considered by USDA, to fully automate a system to irrigate peaches based on soil moisture deficits triggered by the system of sensors studied over the past two years.

Invasive Species Monitoring

Several new pests have made their way into the agricultural scene here on the Ridge. The soybean plataspid, better know ans the *Kudzu Bug* was first documented in SC in 2010. As escapee from the Orient, it thrives in soybena fields. Researcher have been collecting yield loss data and have determined a yield loss as great as 60% if not timely controled.

Conversly, a single, well timed application of the appropriate insecticide has offered excellent economic control. Monitoring by Extension personel and grower

education can make this pest more of a nucience rather than a plague.



Homeowners may well be familiar with this insect as it has the same shelter seeking traits as the less troublesome ladybug.

Managing Glyphosate Resistance On-Farm

Jay Crouch, Area Agronomy Agent

Weed management input costs are a significant portion of the total expense in producing a crop. Palmer Amaranth (Pigweed) consistently ranks as one of the top three most troublesome weed species present in nearly all of our summer crops. The emergence and continued spread of glyphosate tolerant pigweed is a continued production challenge across South Carolina. Resistant weed biotypes are promoted through continued use of herbicides with the same mode of action. Significant yield loss and subsequent income loss result from weed infestations that are not controlled. Producer education programs regarding judicious use of glyphosate, appropriate pre-emergent material selection, and use of post-emergent tank mixes are continually being conducted to allow producers to efficiently produce a crop in today's high cost environment.



Forages and Livestock

Kevin Campbell, Area Agent

- Grass Masters Program – four part series on basic forage management
- Private Pesticide Applicators Training – 2 held
- Cool Season Forages Field Day
- Tropical Legumes (warm season legumes)/Pasture Management Field Day
- Beef Cattle/Bull Test Field Day
- Alfalfa Demonstration Plots
- Rotational Grazing Demonstration/ Field Day
- 4 sets of Cool Season Forages Demonstration plots planted
- Edisto Forage Bull Test (sold 28 bulls; average \$2900)
- Beef Cattle Marketing training for producers
- Small Ruminant Forages, Goat Field Day
- Submitted 38 forage samples to the Southeastern Hay Contest (13 Southeastern States) results: first, second, third in Legume Baleage, second in Warm Season Perennial Hay.
- Sprayer Calibration Clinic



Prospective buyers review bull selections at the Edisto Research and Education Center in Blackville, SC

Agricultural Service Lab Annual Report

A much underutilized service by many is the Ag Service Lab. Soil, Feed and Forage, Nematode, Plant Tissue, Animal Waste, and Agricultural Water are a sample of what can be tested for a nominal fee. The following is a breakdown by the State as well as Edgefield County.

Test	State Total	Edgefield
Soil	57609	238
Plant Tissue	3058	21
Feed/Forage	1112	0
Animal Waste	1961	4
Irrig. Water	386	1

Soil testing continues to be the first step in addressing plant production problems. While our numbers seem low in comparison to the totals, private labs offering similar services at roughly the same cost are utilized by area producers though consultants or agricultural dealers. The source of the information is irrelevant as long as producers are aware of some of the yield triggering estimates on inputs for fertilizer. *(Photo courtesy of Texas A&M)*



Forestry & Natural Resources Provides Expertise

2012 Edgefield Forestry Association News

Clemson Extension works closely with the Edgefield Forestry Association. The Forestry Association held 4 meetings for 2012. Programs consisted of 'The History of Edgefield Pottery', 'Cost Share Opportunities from the NRCS for Landowners', 'Forest for Wildlife' and 'Pond Construction and Basic Management.'

Average meeting sizes range from 50 to 60 people, with a mailing list of just over 160 people (with some being from out-of-state). The Edgefield Forestry Association was fortunate to give a scholarship due to fund raising efforts by those on the Scholarship Committee. This year a \$1000 Scholarship was awarded to Andrew Wilhelm who is now attending Piedmont Technical College before transferring to Clemson University to major in Forest Resource Management.

Edgefield 4H Shooting Sports

Stephen Pohlman, County Extension Agent

The Edgefield 4-H Shotgun Club meets every third Sunday of the month from January till May. The primary goal of this Club is for 4-H'ers to learn firearm safety and how to properly shoot shotguns at clay targets. Most of the youth that participated in this club have a hunting background, though it is not required. Meetings were held at the National Wild Turkey Federation's Five Stand Shotgun Range in the afternoon.

A special thanks to Steve Moore for donating his time to teach these youth the sport of shotgun shooting. Many parents work behind the scenes, as well, and are very much appreciated. Plans are already being made for the 2013 4-H Shotgun Club.

Cogongrass Survey – Invasive Species Watch

Extension personnel have acted as a coordinator, locator, and identifier of Cogongrass in Edgefield County. This survey is an effort to stop the spread of this extremely invasive and non-native species of grass from taking hold in our state. Due to the lack of funding, the method for this year has been a constant eye and education to landowners that are actively logging and leasing land to GA and FL out-of-state hunters. There were no reports of this grass in Edgefield County for 2012. If you suspect an established site of this invasive species, please contact your Extension office for positive ID. Numerous pictures may be found on the web by simply searching the keyword, cogongrass.

Pesticide Licensing and Recertification Training

One of the most important aspects of Extension education is the continuing education of Private and Commercial users of pesticides. Holders of these licenses must obtain their required number of continuing education credit hours to maintain their certifications. Formal trainings are offered in Edgefield each year and recertification opportunities are available through programs and educational meetings held throughout the year as approved by the Department of Pesticide Regulation. There are currently 68 Private Applicators, 19 Commercial, and 8 Non-Commercial or government employee license holders in Edgefield. More information and schedules of training opportunities may be found at <http://www.clemson.edu/public>

www.clemson.edu/edgefield

The Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to people of all ages, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status and is an equal opportunity employer.

Staff

William G Henderson

County Extension
ghndrsn@clemson.edu
803-637-3161, Ext.113
864-941-6123 Cell

Stephen Pohlman

County Extension Agent
spohlma@clemson.edu
803-637-3161, Ext. 117

Kevin Campbell

Area Livestock Agent
camp5@clemson.edu
803-637-3161, Ext.112

Maria Black

Administrative Assistant
mwhite@clemson.edu
803-649-6297, Ext.113

Teaching Edgefield County the benefits of 'FireWise'

Most people believe their home will never burn and that the lives of their loved ones will be safe. Fire is something that always happens to someone else. There is a need to educate the public on how to better prevent a woodland fire (aka Wildfire) from threatening their safety. The Extension agent saw a need to become creative in delivering the fire safety message.

Many homeowners believe that they are safe and never see the warning signs. The agent encourages the landowner/homeowner to start with the obvious (such as leaves in the gutters or pine straw mulching up against the house). Landowners are also educated about tree health, wildlife, nuisance wildlife, to insects, etc. Often times the problem they have might be indirectly related to exposure to wildfire and they never know it.

Principles found in FireWise, a formal educational curriculum, were also taught. During the course of teaching about pine thinning, topics related to controlled burning for forest health and lessening the chance for wildfire are discussed. Thinning methods around the home site are also discussed to better FireWise the structure and to aid in fighting fire should an unfortunate event happens.