

News Announcement  
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### A Peachy Opportunity

Our neighbors across the river in Chilton County are well known for being the peach capital of Alabama. This is a challenging farming operation. Peach growers must battle insects, disease, drought, late frosts, wind damage, and low chill hours to produce a good crop. But it can be done; otherwise we wouldn't have any peach growers left. If you would like to learn more about commercial peach production, this is your opportunity. There will be a Chilton Area Peach Production Meeting on Thursday, January 24, 2008 at the Alabama Power Co. Building in Clanton, AL which is located at 2030 7<sup>th</sup> Street South (about ½ mile north of I-65 Exit 205 on US Hwy 31).

The meeting will begin at 5:00 p.m. and will include a sponsored supper, so reservations are required by Jan. 21<sup>st</sup>. Topics to be covered will include: Integrated Pest Management, Chill Hours Update, Thinning Peaches, Research Updates, and more. To make a reservation call the Chilton County Extension Office at (205) 280-6268 or locally call the Coosa Extension Office at 377-4713.

On a side note, have you noticed what a warm winter we have had so far? In fact it has been the warmest on record in the last 51 years! Fruit growers track something called chill hours, which are the number of hours below 45 degrees. Different varieties of fruit trees require a certain number of hours of chill in order to set good fruit buds. Right now they have logged 418 hours, that's 40% less than average. Unless things change, I'm sure I will be getting some calls in the springtime about why the fruit trees are not bearing. Commercial growers use a product called Dormex to help with this problem. This topic will be covered at the meeting as well.