

News Article
July 28, 2008
Roger Vines
County Extension Coordinator

Pecan Conference Coming to Fairhope

The Alabama Pecan Growers Annual Summer Tour is coming to Fairhope, Alabama on Tuesday, August 5, 2008. This tour is a great chance to learn how to grow and market pecans and is open to anyone. Alabama pecan growers on the Gulf Coast were hit hard by Hurricanes Ivan in 2004 and Katrina in 2005, but are making a nice comeback. This tour will feature a visit to Auburn University's Gulf Coast Research and Extension Center in Fairhope, a charter bus trip of four innovative pecan orchards in Baldwin and Mobile Counties, and lunch at the Blue Gill restaurant on the Mobile Bay causeway overlooking the "Five Rivers Delta".

The APGA tour is open to anyone interested in pecan production and marketing, and no reservation is required. The tour will begin at the Gulf Coast Research and Extension Center auditorium at 8:00 am with a \$5/person registration fee. The center is located at 8300 ALA State Hwy 104, Fairhope, Ala., 36532.

The tour coordinator is Monte Nesbitt, and questions about the tour can be directed to him at 251-990-8417.

Pecan research at the GCREC focuses on cultivar testing for Low Input (reduced spray) and High Input (traditional) management. Over 60 cultivars are under evaluation, including several very promising selections that are highly scab resistant and early ripening. A major grafting effort was made in April to further expand evaluations. Dr. Bill Goff and Monte Nesbitt, Department of Horticulture, Auburn University, will show and discuss new cultivars, grafting methods and tree training.

The tour will also visit B & B Pecan Co. is a family-owned retail/mail order pecan business started by Clarence and Sandra Bishop in 1956. B & B has grown from a mail-order only business that bought pecans to a full service retail, internet and mail order business that buys and grows pecans. The tour will go behind the scenes' and look at the Bishops retail store and how it has grown to meet the demands of a diversified direct marketing business while maintaining a personal connection to their customers. We will see their orchards and discuss which varieties have survived the hurricanes and have been important in their retail business. Other farms to be visited include Underwood Farms, Ken Buck Farm, the Bertolla Farm. They each have some unique management practices to show that would be helpful to anyone interested in pecans.

A seafood lunch buffet has been reserved at the Blue Gill Restaurant. The Blue Gill is right on the water, with a view of the Five Rivers Delta as it merges with Mobile Bay. (Alligator and Pelican sightings likely). **Lunch price is \$12.95 per person (dutch treat).** Call the Coosa County Extension Office for directions and/or local hotel lodging information.

Accommodations

Key West Inn
231 Greeno Rd. S.
Fairhope, AL 36532
(251-990-7373)

Group rate \$69.99 + tax.

Reservations should be made by July 28th and
ask for *Alabama Pecan Growers* group rate.

Schedule of events
Tuesday, August 5:

8:00 am Registration at Gulf Coast Research and Extension Center
8:30 Tour Research Orchard
9:15 Depart on charter bus
9:35 B&B Pecan Co., Fairhope, AL
10:20 Bus departs
10:45 Underwood Pecan Farm & Nursery, Summerdale, AL
11:30 Bus departs
12:15 pm Lunch on the Causeway
1:30 Bus departs
2:00 Ken Buck Farm, Bayou la Batre, AL
3:00 Bus departs
4:00 Bertolla Farm, Belforest Community, State Hwy 181
4:45 Bus departs and returns to the Gulf Coast Research and Extension Center

Direction to the Gulf Coast Research & Extension Center

From Mobile, AL

Take I-10 E toward Pensacola, FL – go 7.4 miles

Take Exit #35/Daphne/Fairhope onto US-98 E – go 8.1 miles

Turn Left on AL-104 – go 0.5 miles

GCREC is on the Left.

From Georgia

Take I-10 W to Alabama

Take Exit #35/Daphne/Fairhope onto US-98 E – go 8.1 miles

Turn Left on AL-104 – go 0.5 miles

GCREC is on the Left.
