

# Integrated Pest Management Program

## Monthly Newsletter

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## SPECIALIST SPOTLIGHT

*Get to know the specialists stationed throughout the state of Georgia that make up the IPM Program.*

### Dan Suiter

CAES Tifton Campus  
1109 Experiment Street | Tifton, GA 30223



**D**an Suiter is an Entomology Professor at the UGA Griffin campus. He has a 90% extension appointment. He delivers extension and applied research programs on the management of structural and household pests in support of the pest control industry, homeowners, and UGA Extension. Dr. Suiter has worked with the pest control industry since 1987. He received his Ph.D. (1994) from the University of Florida. From 1995 to 2000 he worked in the Center for Urban & Industrial Pest Management at Purdue University, and has been at UGA since.

He was the recipient of the Recognition award in Urban Entomology for the Southeastern Branch of the Entomological Society of America; Pest Control Technology magazines "Top 40 under 40" award; in 2007 was inducted into Syngenta's Crown Leadership Awards Class; and in 2018 was UGA D.W. Brooks Award winner in Extension. He was a member of the 2017 International IPM Award of Excellence. He is active in leadership roles in several professional

organizations.

Suiter coordinates the training activities of the Georgia Structural Pest Control Training Facility. He developed the Certificate in Urban and Structural Pest Management, a 10-week program provides participants a broad overview of the pest control industry.

Partnering with the Center for Urban Agriculture, Suiter hosts a webinar program that was attended by 4,400 pest management professionals. Webinars provided state-mandated CEU credits in GA, FL, AL, TN, NC, SC, NJ, MD, PA, Nova Scotia, British Columbia, and Labrador/Newfoundland. In 2017, the program was expanded for professionals in the Green industry.

Dr. Suiter has garnered more than \$1 million to support his extension and applied research program, and has spoken to nearly 350 audiences totaling 30,000+ professionals in 20+ states. Over his career he has been a committee member of or major professor to 18 graduate students.

In 2019, Suiter will offer a monthly webinar program for the pest control industry. He has also established a relationship with U.S. Customs and Border Protection at the Port of Savannah (Garden City, GA) involving invasive species research. His recent students' Port research project looked at the ant fauna on Port property and concentrated on exotic and invasive ant species.

Dan is a sixth generation native

Floridian, on his father's side. His great, great, great grandfather, Jean Louis Rousseau, came to the Tallahassee, FL from France in 1812 to fight in the War of 1812. Dan's great grandfather, Robert Henry Rousseau, was born in north Florida in 1870 where he drove free-range cattle and farmed citrus. Following a prolonged citrus freeze, he moved to south Florida in 1899 to a farming community called Boynton, before moving to Palm Beach County, where Dan was born. ■

### UGA IPM INFORMATION

@UGAIPM



The submission deadline for the February newsletter is **January 28, 2019**. Please submit all articles and events prior to the deadline to [ipm@uga.edu](mailto:ipm@uga.edu).

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### IPM PROGRAM LOCATION:

CAES Athens Campus  
463 Biological Sciences Building  
Athens, GA 30602

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan 11 – [GA Extension Gwinnett Category 41 Mosquito Control Pesticide Applicator Training](#) | 8:00AM | Lawrenceville, GA

Jan 15 – [Turner County Extension Peanut Production Meeting](#) | 12:00PM | Ashburn, GA

Jan 15 – [Food 4 Thought](#) | 6:00PM | Thomaston, GA

Jan 17 – [43rd Annual Georgia Peanut Farm Show and Conference](#) | 8:30AM | Tifton, GA

Jan 22 – [GrassMasters Part 1, Monroe County](#) | 6:00PM | Forsyth, GA

Jan 24 – [GrassMasters Part 2, Monroe County](#) | 6:00PM | Forsyth, GA

Jan 29 – [GrassMasters Part 3, Monroe County](#) | 6:00PM | Forsyth, GA

Jan 31 – [GrassMasters Part 4, Monroe County](#) | 6:00PM | Forsyth, GA

## SAVE THE DATE

Feb 8-9 – [2019 Georgia Organics Conference](#) | 7:30AM | Tifton, GA

Feb 21 – [2019 Sustainable Agriculture Update](#) | 9:00AM | College Park, GA

For more events, please visit the [UGA Extension Calendar](#).

## FEATURED CREATURE

## Tobacco Flea Beetle

(*Epitrix hirtipennis* (Melsheimer))  
(*Epitrix fasciata* (Blatchley)) – Southern tobacco

Description:

**Immature stages**– The tobacco flea beetle has three larval instars that are whitish with darker heads, and all feed on fine roots near the soil surface or occasionally tunnel into larger roots. The tobacco flea beetle larvae range from 1 mm after hatching to 4.2 mm at maturity, while the pale stripe larvae range from 1 to 11 mm.

**Adult stage**– The tobacco and southern tobacco flea beetle adults are small (1.4–2.2 mm in length) and reddish, yellow brown, with a brown patch across the width of the elytra. The southern tobacco adult is slightly smaller and wider than the tobacco flea beetle.

Biology:

**Life Cycle**– Tobacco flea beetle females can lay up to 200 eggs which hatch in 6– 8 days. The larval development typically lasts from 16–20 days under warm conditions. The last instar larva forms a small cell in the soil where it pupates, and the adult emerges 4–5 days later for a total of 26–33 days. The pale striped flea beetle requires a longer time to develop from egg to adult, 28–54 days total.

**Seasonal Distribution**– There are 3–4 generations of the tobacco flea beetles per year. High numbers have been observed in South Georgia in late June in solanaceous crop transplants, and we think that this is likely a second generation. Only up to two generations of pale striped flea beetle have been reported per year.

Damage to Crop:

Typical flea beetle damage occurs in the foliage of young crop plants, and damage usually manifests itself as numerous small shot holes through the leaves. This occurs early in the growing season and can show up soon after transplanting depending on the date.

Management:

Significant yield loss has been reported for levels of flea beetles at five adults per plant very early in the growing season. We suspect that 5–10% defoliation is sufficient reason for controlling this foliar feeder early in the growing season. Middle to late season control is seldom if ever warranted. Natural enemies of the tobacco flea beetle adults include the bigeyed bug, *Geocoris punctipes*.

David Riley, Professor, University of Georgia, 2018 ■



Tobacco wireworm



Tobacco flea beetle adult



Tobacco Flea beetle damage

## FROM THE FIELD

Articles and news stories pertaining to IPM field work written by inside sources.

### Chris Tyson brings expertise to new role as area onion agent

by Clint Thompson

**C**hris Tyson, a University of Georgia Cooperative Extension agent for more than 10 years, has been named the new area onion agent at the Vidalia Onion and Vegetable Research Center in southeast Georgia.

The Vidalia Onion and Vegetable Research Center, located between Reidsville and Lyons in Toombs County, is home to specialized onion research conducted by researchers in the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES).

Tyson has worked in onion research alongside past area agents Reid Torrance and Cliff Riner while serving as a UGA Extension agriculture and natural resources agent in nearby Tattnall County.

Tyson will continue the onion research being conducted at the Vidalia Onion and Vegetable Research Center, working with industry leaders to evaluate new varieties being released and sharing updates with growers.

"A lot of that foundation in research has already been laid for me. One of my biggest responsibilities will be managing the official Vidalia onion variety trial, which evaluates onion varieties each year for yield and grade and flavor. We're responsible for making a recommendation on which onions should be called Vidalia onions and which ones don't make the cut," Tyson said. "It's very exciting to be able to have this opportunity. I don't take it lightly because it's a critical position in Georgia. I look forward to trying to help the growers and work with the growers and the industry to continue to move forward and make sure we have sweet onions in Georgia."



*Chris Tyson is the new area onion agent at the Vidalia Onion and Vegetable Research Center in southeast Georgia. Tyson previously worked as a UGA Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources agent in Tattnall County.*

Tyson also will collaborate with CAES scientists, including UGA Extension weed scientist Stanley Culpepper on herbicide research and UGA vegetable specialists Tim Coolong and Andre da Silva on fertility issues.

"Andre and I and some of the other county agents hope to do a research trial this year where we look at nitrogen management on some newer onion varieties," he said. "We think we can reduce nitrogen use on some of the newer varieties and still make good onions. If we can reduce it to some degree, that's good for everybody involved."

Georgia onion producers started the planting season in early November, but due to heavy rains this fall, some growers are behind, according to Tyson. The extremely wet conditions have kept farmers out of the field, and planting could be stretched into January this season, he said.

Onions account for 13 percent of

Georgia's vegetable crop. In 2017, the farm gate value for onions was \$140.6 million, according to the UGA Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development. The southeast Georgia counties of Tattnall and Toombs have the largest share of Georgia's farm gate value for onions, with \$50.8 million and \$46.8 million, respectively.

To learn more about onion production, see UGA Extension Bulletin 1198, titled "Onion Production Guide," at [extension.uga.edu/publications](http://extension.uga.edu/publications). ■

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## FROM THE FIELD

Articles and news stories pertaining to IPM field work written by inside sources.

### UGA-tifton set to host annual Peanut Farm Show

by Bryce Ethridge

**T**he University of Georgia Tifton campus and Georgia Peanut Commission are set to host the 43rd annual Peanut Farm Show and Conference on Jan. 17, 2019, at the UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center.

The show focuses on peanut production in Georgia and allows the state's producers to hear about the latest trends from industry leaders while learning about the newest research findings from members of the UGA-Tifton Peanut Team.

Scott Monfort, UGA Cooperative Extension peanut agronomist, said that UGA-Tifton's peanut production seminar — which will be held from 9 to 10:30 a.m. — serves as an educational resource for the growers.

"We are here solely to help growers solve issues and have higher production," he said. "We want to ensure that they have everything they need (information-wise) to go back to their farms and produce quality and high peanut yields for the upcoming year."

Weather played a significant role in lower yields growers experienced this season. A wet spring delayed planting of approximately 45 percent of Georgia's peanut crop until after May 25. Because of the late planting dates, more than 200,000 acres of the state's crop were vulnerable to damage from Hurricane Michael, which hit Georgia on Oct. 10. A rainy November added to harvest problems for producers.

Georgia producers are usually done harvesting their crop by early November but were pushed back into December because of the delays.

"Once we got the crop in the ground, we had good weather this year, but



*The 43rd annual Georgia Peanut Farm Show and Conference will be held at the UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center in Tifton, Georgia, on Thursday, January 17, 2019.*

this fall we have just been really wet," Monfort said. "A lot of the growers can't finish and harvest the last few acres. It's been frustrating."

The peanut farm show is expected to attract more than 1,400 farmers, who will see more than 100 exhibits during the show, which runs from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m.

"The peanut commission and UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences strive every year to make sure that we don't miss something and provide as much as we can, educationally and opportunity-wise," said Monfort. "Anything that the growers need related to any part of peanut production, they should be able to find at the farm show."

For more information, visit [www.gapeanuts.com](http://www.gapeanuts.com). ■

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## FROM THE FIELD

Articles and news stories pertaining to IPM field work written by inside sources.

### Kris Braman named Women's Leadership Fellow at UGA

by Sharon Dowdy

**U**niversity of Georgia professor Kris Braman has been named one of nine cohorts in the 2018-2019 Women's Leadership Fellows Program at UGA.

The Women's Leadership Fellows are chosen from nominations submitted by deans and other senior administrators, as well as self-nominations. During the yearlong program, fellows will attend monthly meetings to learn from senior administrators on campus and visiting speakers from academia, business and other fields. The program, which was created in 2015 as part of the university's Women's Leadership Initiative, also features a concluding weekend retreat for more immersive learning.

Braman, who heads UGA's Department of Entomology, joined the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences faculty in 1989, working on the college's campus in Griffin, Georgia. Her early research focused on pests and beneficial insects of turfgrasses and ornamentals in urban settings.

In 2011, Braman was named director of the university's Georgia Center for Urban Agriculture in Griffin, working with the state's green industry and UGA Cooperative Extension agents in urban areas to share research-based recommendations from UGA. Braman also taught undergraduate and graduate general entomology and biological control classes. She served as interim assistant dean of the UGA Griffin Campus from October 2014 through October 2015.

Since being named department head in 2016, Braman continues to conduct research to keep her "grounded and cognizant of issues faculty face on a



*Kris Braman heads UGA's Department of Entomology. She joined the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences faculty in 1989, working on the college's campus in Griffin, Georgia. She was recently selected for the university's Women's Leadership Fellows Program.*

regular basis." Now her research is entirely focused on pollinator health and conservation.

"Leadership just became a natural extension of wanting to help other people and programs grow and succeed," she said.

Braman has served as president of both the Georgia Entomological Society and the Southeastern Branch of the Entomological Society of America. Her numerous honors include the society's Distinguished Achievement

Award in Horticultural Entomology, the Georgia Green Industry Association's Environmental Friend of the Industry Award and being named a "Distinguished Alumni" of the University of Kentucky's Department of Entomology. ■

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## FROM THE FIELD

Articles and news stories pertaining to IPM field work written by inside sources.

### Natural Enemies in Georgia Blueberries: who are they and what are they eating?

by Jason Schmidt and Ashfaq Sial, Department of Entomology, University of Georgia

**C** Research at the University of Georgia is focusing on the role of natural enemies such as insect predators and parasitoids in blueberries. This group of insects gets their name because they eat crop pests and provide biological control, an important component of blueberry management. Over the past 2 years Dr. Jason Schmidt's team in collaboration with Dr. Ashfaq Sial's team has collected thousands of natural enemies to determine what species are present, and more importantly to figure out what pests they are eating in major blueberry producing counties in GA including: Appling, Bacon, Brantley, Coffee, Jeff Davis, Pierce and Ware counties. Their first year of data was recently published in the journal Environmental Entomology.



In the first two years of study, 2016–2017, they looked at what type of management practices led to thriving natural enemy populations. They found the highest populations of natural enemies in blueberry systems under very minimal management, such as abandoned orchards. Organic systems also promoted higher populations of natural enemies over the growing season. Blueberries under conventional practices had the lowest numbers of natural enemies. Interestingly, they



also found more natural enemies in field borders surrounding non-cropping areas compared to where blueberries were growing. Although predator numbers were lowest in conventional systems, providing grassy mowed vegetation between rows helped maintain higher populations than fields without between row vegetation. Researchers think these areas provide habitat for natural enemies to feed on pests and non-pest prey and provide refuge from pesticides and temperature fluctuations.

Most of the natural enemies observed were spiders, which are beneficial

in blueberry systems because they consume a wide variety of pest insects. Two common groups were web-building spiders and jumping spiders. Web-building spiders are important for biological control because passive web structure intercepts and traps flying insect pests. Whereas jumping spiders are ambush predators, they actively forage by sitting on blueberry leaves or on the ground and capture insect pests as they pass by. We looked at what these common spider groups eat in blueberries and found they provide biological control services on aphids, spotted wing drosophila (SWD), gall midge, and glassy winged sharp shooter. Spiders were also eating non-pest flies which provide alternative prey options that help to sustain their population.

The other type of natural enemy they found are known as parasitoids. Parasitoids act as biocontrol agents by depositing eggs on or in the body of the pest. These eggs grow to become adults, killing the pest. Only a few parasitoids were observed out of the thousands of natural enemies collected, but those found appear to be very diverse. One parasitoid wasp, referred to as fairyflies (*Gonatocerus* sp.), was common among the parasitoids, and provides biological control of the glassy-winged sharp shooter (*Homalodisca vitripennis*). To see parasitoids, you really have to be looking because many parasitoids are very small. For example, the fairyflies have an average body length of 0.04 inches or 0.85mm.

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## FROM THE FIELD

Articles and news stories pertaining to IPM field work written by inside sources.

### Natural Enemies (continued)...

by Jason Schmidt and Ashfaq Sial, Department of Entomology, University of Georgia

We continue to promote ecologically based management practices that help sustain natural enemy populations and increase biological control services in blueberries. Their initial results suggest that providing vegetation between rows can increase natural enemy populations. And using reduced risk insecticides in organic systems also appears to help sustain natural enemies. This and future research will uncover what natural enemies are present and feeding on other key pests in this system. This information will be used to create decision support tools that improve biological control in Georgia blueberry systems. ■



## AGENT ADVOCATE

*Structural Pest Management Program series to aid Extension Agents*

**N**eed help generating a little extra revenue for your local Georgia County Extension Office? We have discovered it! The Center for Urban Agriculture (The Center) offers four opportunities for Georgia County Extension offices to generate revenue. In the next four issues of the IPM Program Monthly Newsletter, we will reveal the details for all four opportunities.

The Getting the Best of Pests (GTBOP) is a live webinar series that reaches out to the Georgia Green Industry offering CEU Category Credits from the privacy and luxury of a home or office environment. This GTBOP Green series saves companies time, travel and expenses and provides extension agents user-friendly, useful information and an opportunity to generate a little revenue right from their county office.

The GTBOP Green Webinars are offered on the 3rd Wednesday of every ODD-numbered month. (January, March, May, July, September and November.) These live webinars are accessed online, utilizing the web-based software, Go-To-Webinar, and are aired from 8:15 am to 10:45 am. For more information on the GTBOP Green Webinar Series or other programs that The Center offers, contact the Bodie Pennisi at [bpennisi@uga.edu](mailto:bpennisi@uga.edu).

For more information on the workshops and other programs from the Structural Pest Management Program, please visit <http://www.gabugs.uga.edu>. ■

### UPCOMING WEBINARS

<p><b>JANUARY 16, 2019</b></p> <p><b>Educate Your Customers about the Science of Properly Pruning Shrubs and Trees</b> Dr. Bob Polomski, Extension Specialist, Department of Plant &amp; Environmental Sciences, Clemson University</p> <p><b>Pesticides Movement in the Environment</b> Dr. Mikey Taylor, Statewide Pesticide Program Coordinator, Department of Entomology, University of Georgia</p> <p><b>MARCH 13, 2019</b></p> <p><b>Insect and Fungal Pests in Urban Trees</b> Dr. David Coyle, Entomologist, Department of Forestry &amp; Environmental Conservation, Clemson University</p> <p><b>Getting to the Root of Urban Tree Health</b> Dr. Barbara Fair, Landscape Extension Specialist, Department of Horticulture, North Carolina State University</p> <p><small>All webinars had been submitted to the Georgia Department of Agriculture for 2 CEU hour allocation and approval.</small></p>	<p><b>MAY 15, 2019</b></p> <p><b>Integrated Pest Management Activities to Minimize Turfgrass Disease</b> Dr. Alfredo Martinez, Extension Plant Pathologist, Department of Plant Pathology, University of Georgia</p> <p><b>Examining Insect Interactions with Plant Pathogenic Fungi Can Help Inform Pest Management Decisions</b> Dr. Bill Klingeman, Landscape and Nursery Entomologist, Department of Plant Sciences, University of Tennessee</p> <p><b>JULY 17, 2019</b></p> <p><b>Dealing with Social Concerns in Urban Environments while Providing Excellent Insect Pest Management: It is possible</b> Dr. Rick Brandenburg, Entomologist, Department of Entomology, North Carolina State University</p> <p><b>What's the Buzz About: Protecting pollinators and beneficial enemies</b> Dr. Jason Schmidt, Entomologist, Department of Entomology, University of Georgia</p>
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## REVENUE GENERATING OPPORTUNITIES

HOW TO USE GTBOP.COM FOR YOUR COUNTY

### PART 3 OF 4 - COMBINE TRAINING AND WEBINAR

County extension offices may elect to hold an additional training session on the same day as a live webinar. Another alternative is to incorporate an archive viewing into an additional county planned training.

#### HOW TO HOST



1. Select live or archived webinar(s) to incorporate into a program.
2. Develop a program and submit it to the GDA for CEU approvals.
3. Select a training location.
4. Advertise.
5. Print GTBOP sign-in sheet before hosting

#### FULL PROFIT

Collect any fees you decide to charge as clients arrive and sign in, typically \$10 (\$5/credit hour), or more to cover refreshments. Your office retains 100% of any revenue collected.



#### CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS



Make 3 copies of the GTBOP sign-in sheet for the webinars and your program. One for the Center sent via [gtbop@uga.edu](mailto:gtbop@uga.edu) or by mail, one for participants, and one for you. The Center will submit the sheet to the GDA for CEUs.

#### AGENT BENEFITS

Another perk is that each agent can count these hours from hosting a live or archived webinar as contact hours with their clients for GA COUNTS required reporting.



For more information on this series, please contact  
Tami Boyle: 770-233-6107, [tadams@uga.edu](mailto:tadams@uga.edu)

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## AGENT ADVOCATE

*Agent participation is requested*

**O**n August 23rd and 24th Georgians across the state will join together to count pollinators as part of the Great Georgia Pollinator Census (<https://GGaPC.org>). The goals of the initiative are to gather data on our pollinator insect population, to create pollinator habitat, and to increase entomological literacy around these insects.

Citizens will be asked to count pollinators on a favorite pollinator plant for 15 minutes on one of the count days. We are looking for bumble bees, carpenter bees, small bees, honey bees, wasps, flies, butterflies, and other insects. Detailed training will be offered throughout the state and through the website in mid-2019. Counts will be easily uploaded to a website. This project is perfect for schools doing STEM work!

Public gardens, universities and Extension offices will hold events centered around the census during all of 2019. These include workshops on pollinator habitat creation, pollinator identification, and the benefits of insects in the garden. Several locations will be holding events on count days to assist in counting. All the details can be found on the website at <https://GGaPC.org>. Won't you join us in being part of Georgia pollinator history? ■

# Great Georgia Pollinator Census

*All citizens of Georgia are asked to participate on*

## AUGUST 23-24, 2019

*by counting pollinators on their favorite pollinator plant for fifteen minutes.  
Training is available. All counts will be submitted through the website.*

GGaPC.org

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## FROM THE FIELD

Articles and news stories pertaining to IPM field work written by inside sources.

### UGA faculty, staff to present findings at Georgia Organics Conference

by Clint Thompson

**W**ith demand rising for organic produce and the industry growing to meet the need, the Georgia Organics Conference is a pivotal event for educating organic growers in Georgia and throughout the South.

Organic agriculture has increased in the U.S. by about 10 percent per year over the last 15 years, according to Juan Carlos Diaz-Perez, a University of Georgia scientist in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. It is likely that the increase in consumer demand for certified-organic produce has led some of Georgia's larger growers to dedicate part of their land to growing certified-organic crops, said Julia Gaskin, UGA sustainable agriculture coordinator.

The Georgia Organics Conference, set for Feb. 8-9, 2019 at the UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center, is an important event for farmers and others interested in organic agriculture, according to Diaz-Perez.

"It has a regional impact beyond the Georgia borders," he said.

Along with UGA research entomologist Jason Schmidt, Diaz-Perez, who specializes in vegetables and plasticulture, will present at the conference and share some of his research from the two certified-organic acres on the UGA Tifton campus.

"I will be showing my organic research plot at the (UGA-Tifton) Hort Hill farm. I'll also talk about research on high-tunnel production for vegetables like tomato, lettuce and spinach, as well as organic fertilization and utilization of cover crops," he said.

Event sessions, workshops and field trips to farms in south Georgia will be



UGA organic horticulture expert Julia Gaskin is shown teaching participants about soil composition at the 2011 Georgia Organics Conference. Gaskin will help lead a presentation during the 2019 Georgia Organics Conference in Tifton, Georgia on Feb. 8-9.

offered for conference attendees during the two-day event. Gaskin, along with UGA postdoctoral research associate Kate Cassity-Duffey and organic farmer Daniel Parson, will discuss nitrogen fertility management in organic production systems.

"Nitrogen is the nutrient needed most by crops and it can be complicated to provide enough for good yields without overapplication, which can cause environmental problems and crops to be more susceptible to pest attacks," Gaskin said. "We will also talk about how to integrate organic fertilizers, cover crops and other soil-building techniques into your nitrogen management plan."

Vanessa Shonkwiler, a public service assistant in UGA's Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development, will share marketing tips on how farmers can expand their brands and stories.

For a full list of speakers or to register

for the Georgia Organics Conference, visit [conference.georgiaorganics.org](http://conference.georgiaorganics.org).

Full scholarships are available for Georgia Organics members. To become a member, see [georgiaorganics.org/become-a-member-today/membership](http://georgiaorganics.org/become-a-member-today/membership), and to apply for a scholarship, see [conference.georgiaorganics.org/scholarships](http://conference.georgiaorganics.org/scholarships).

Students interested in volunteering for one day at the conference can receive a free pass to the conference for the second day. Those interested can email [kayt@georgiaorganics.org](mailto:kayt@georgiaorganics.org) for more information. Class credits may also be available. ■

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## MEDIA MENTIONS

Articles and news stories pertaining to IPM field work written by outside sources.

### Multistate research projects vital to solving broad agricultural issues

by Clint Thompson

**I**n agricultural research, scientists across disciplines often find themselves working to address the same issues as colleagues at other institutions. To help advance and streamline this important work, funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) allows land-grant university scientists to work collectively to answer questions with a broad scope.

“It allows us to bring together a critical mass of people to investigate a problem with broad impact or implications,” said Joe West, assistant dean on the UGA Tifton campus. “Rarely does one institution have the resources or scientists to address a broad issue from multiple different angles. The projects generally have multiple objectives and scientists from participating institutions contribute to the issues they can address, so each project has a varying degree of participation from member institutions. Thus, you are able to muster the resources from all over the country.”

Approximately 2.7 percent of all research money generated by UGA CAES in 2018 was dedicated to multi-state projects. Last year it was 3.2 percent and in 2016, it was 2.5 percent.

West serves as administrative adviser for a project titled “Genetic Improvement of Adaptation and Reproduction to Enhance Sustainability of Cow-Calf Production in the Southern United States,” which has brought together scientists from Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Kansas, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas and the U.S. Virgin Islands to research genetic aspects of beef production.

The project investigates beef



*Assistant Dean Joe West serves as administrative adviser for a multi-state research project called “Genetic Improvement of Adaptation and Reproduction to Enhance Sustainability of Cow-Calf Production in the Southern United States.”*

production issues such as hair coat, thickness of the hair coat, how the animal sheds in the spring and how that contributes to heat stress.

“A variety of breeds of cattle are used because of effects of coloration. White-faced breeds are especially susceptible to pink eye because they reflect more intense sunlight into the eye. These qualities are related to the animal’s adaptation to the environment,” West said. “Diseases interact with the environment, and scientists are working to identify genes that turn on and turn off an animal’s response to the environment. Since environments vary greatly across the country, we include scientists from multiple states.”

The project was recognized for regional excellence (Southern Region) at a recent Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU) meeting.

West is one of three UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences faculty members who are involved in multistate projects that received APLU regional recognition.

Gary Hawkins, a CAES scientist who specializes in water resource management, is part of a project titled “Drainage Design and Management Practices to Improve Water Quality,” which focuses on improving drainage management on agricultural lands and was recognized for National Excellence in the North Central Region.

Hawkins is one of 22 land-grant researchers who are developing new technologies and strategies to improve agricultural drainage systems. In Georgia, he is monitoring drainage water and trying to determine, if nutrient levels in the drainage water are high,

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## MEDIA MENTIONS

Articles and news stories pertaining to IPM field work written by outside sources.

### multistate projects (continued)

whether scientists can implement the same bioreactors in southern fields as they do on northern farms or should they modify them to better utilize regional materials to remove nutrients. He is also looking at how scientists use practices such as conservation tillage, different fertilizer technologies or modified fertilizer applications to help plants uptake nutrients better to prevent excess nutrients in drainage water.

"Involving multiple states allows the researchers to communicate what we are doing in a more formal manner, present ideas to each other and learn from each other ... ways the same issue may be addressed in different regions of the country," Hawkins said.

UGA Cooperative Extension vegetable disease specialist Bhabesh Dutta is part of a team of scientists working on a project titled "Biology and Management of Iris Yellow Spot Virus, Other Diseases and Thrips in Onions" that was recognized by APLU for National Excellence in the North Central Region. The research focuses on disease and pest management of onions, production issues in different parts of the country, and marketing issues.

Dutta contributes expertise in disease management of bacterial and fungal diseases of onion, specifically center rot, which is prevalent in different onion-growing regions of the country. The bacterial species that causes center rot in Georgia, however, is different from that found in western or northern areas of the country.

"For example, the bacteria that affects Georgia onions is *Pantoea ananatis*, whereas the bacteria in Washington or in Michigan is *Pantoea agglomerans*. The symptoms are similar, but they



*Gary Hawkins, a CAES scientist who specializes in water resource management, is part of a project called "Drainage Design and Management Practices to Improve Water Quality." Pictured is water coming from drain tiles and sampling equipment next to it.*

are caused by different organisms and they survive in different ecosystems," Dutta said. "Being able to collaborate with other scientists allows us to work together to find a holistic solution."

USDA support for multistate projects is authorized for five-year terms. Upon completion of a five-year project, researchers submit progress reports. If they seek to continue the project, they submit a rewrite of the project to establish new objectives and procedures to ensure that projects evolve to address new and ongoing issues. ■

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