



OKLAHOMA PECAN GROWERS ASSOCIATION

Volume XLVII, No. 1

Michael Smith, Editor

January, February, March 2006

In This Issue

- *President's Corner* - pg. 1
- *Educational Opportunity for Pecan Growers* - pg. 2
- *A Report of Progress and Things Along the Way* - pg. 2
- *Orchard Information* - pg. 3
- *Send in Your 2005 State Pecan Show Entries* - pg. 4
- *Graftwood Sources* - pg. 6
- *New Pecan Book* - pg. 7
- *Circle Pecan Weevil Traps for Sale* - pg. 7
- *911 Addresses* - pg. 7
- *Electronic Newsletter* - pg. 7



President's Corner

Robert Schoenecke, OPGA President

HAPPY NEW YEAR! A new year has begun and another harvest has past (for most producers) and we can now evaluate what we did right and what we did wrong, what went right and what went wrong, what we can change and what we cannot change. Well, what we cannot change appears to have a significant effect on the start of this new year if you live in the state of Oklahoma and need moisture. Drought conditions seem to have reached an all time high and are still climbing and fire conditions and wildfires continue to plague the state. I hope that each of you have been fortunate enough to have escaped the wildfires.

As we evaluate our Association's progress and success during the past year I am both encouraged and disheartened. The failure of the referendum in February disheartened many that worked hard to bring it to a vote and the voter turnout was very disappointing. Dry weather and late spring freeze played a major role in the outcome of the 2005 overall crop; however, we should be very encouraged about several of the accomplishments that took place during the year 2005. To be more specific, we had a very successful conference with near record attendance and membership reached record highs. Crop prices for 2004-2005 reached record highs, Dr. Eric Stafne, the new extension specialist, was brought on board, we had a wonderful turnout at the Oklahoma Farm Bureau convention and many producers in parts of the state had another successful harvest. When we look back at 2005 we can certainly claim it as a success and look forward to building on that success for 2006.

The OPGA booth display at the Oklahoma Farm Bureau convention was well received by the 600 attendees and we had many encouraging comments not only from attendees, but from other exhibitors as well. We gave out samples of roasted pecans, courtesy of Valley View Pecans, pecan nutrition fact sheets and membership application cards to all who had an interest. I would publicly like to thank Randy Bryant for his help and a special thank you to Becky Carroll, Donna Dollins and Becky Cheary for their hard work that they put into updating the display pictures and setup. It was very professional, attractive and informative. If you have ideas for setup places, please contact me or one of the directors and we will evaluate the opportunity.

We sometimes take for granted the role and potential that Oklahoma plays in the pecan industry. Our state is a major player in the pecan industry, our potential continues to grow and the outlook is bright. Our knowledge, technical skills, and access to information from extension, chemical companies, and other sources surrounds us. These all play a role in the success of our operation. We must

evaluate our own operation, choose the methods that work, practice the knowledge that we have and implement the strategies and techniques that have been proven. It will require a lot of hard work but most of all it will require a step of faith.

As you evaluate your own operation, go ahead, make that step of faith and work toward implementing those strategies and techniques that you know. Just make sure that you don't let the things that you cannot change overshadow the things that you can change. Remember, change provides opportunity - what kind of opportunity do you have for the year 2006?

Educational Opportunity for Pecan Growers

The 2006 Fundamentals of Pecan Management Course is currently enrolling students for the 9 month course designed for both experienced and novice pecan growers, or those who are considering becoming a pecan grower.

The course begins in February, meeting one Tuesday afternoon a month through October, except June. Located at the Oklahoma Pecan & Fruit Research Station north of Perkins, participants get the chance to learn in both the classroom and orchard about timely management practices. Total orchard management programs for native and improved pecan cultivars are covered.

Dr. Eric Stafne, Fruit & Pecan Extension Specialist with the assistance of Dr. Phil Mulder and numerous other pecan specialists and growers will present the monthly course. Class members will receive a notebook with reference materials, make a pecan variety board, and grow rootstock trees from seed. A certificate of completion will be awarded to those completing the course. The students will also have the opportunity to use the web based course located at <http://pecan.okstate.edu>. Registration forms are available



online at http://www.okstate.edu/ag/asnr/hortla/ftpcns/ok_pecan_mgmt_course.htm or by contacting Stephanie Larimer at stephanie.larimer@okstate.edu or 405-744-5404. Cost for the course is \$250 per person.

The first class begins on February 21st at 1 pm. The deadline for registration in February 10, 2006.

A Report of Progress and Things Along the Way

Eric T. Stafne, Extension Horticulturist

As many of you know, I recently (Sept. 1) started as the Fruit and Pecan Extension Specialist in Oklahoma. To me this was somewhat of a daunting task, because I had relatively little familiarity with pecans. However, in the



past few months I have made several site visits and enjoyed meeting everyone out there. Many of my visits have been of the "meet and greet" sort of endeavors. In cases where one needed my expertise, the most common issue I have encountered so far is that of orchard overcrowding. Pecans are often planted initially on a 40 ft x 40 ft spacing. This is adequate for several years as the trees go through juvenility and establishment phases of growth. However, one must be cognizant of the need for increased space as the trees get larger. When a child outgrows his or her shoes they can change them; however, a tree cannot change to another spot in the orchard. Therefore, the environment must be changed to accommodate the increasing tree size. Reasons for doing this include increased sunlight for crop development and increased air flow to decrease disease incidence. The first thinning should occur after the orchard has reached 15 to 20 years of age, depending on the tree growth rate. This thinning would reduce the number of trees per acre from 27 to 14, a reduction of 50%. At 25 to 35 years the orchard should again be reduced by 50%, to 7 trees per acre at 80 ft x 80 ft spacing. More detailed information and diagrams can be obtained in the fact sheet F-6247 Establishing a Pecan Orchard. With this meticulous type of management, an orchard can survive and produce for many decades and be around for your children and perhaps even their children. So far, it has been my pleasure to interact with the Oklahoma Pecan Growers' Association and its members. I sincerely look forward to meeting many more of you in the coming months and years.

Orchard Information

Michael Smith, Department of Horticulture & Landscape Architecture

Oklahoma State University has substantial amounts of information available concerning pecan production. Most of this information is accessible through the Oklahoma Pecan Management web page (<http://www.hortla.okstate.edu/pecan/>). We also have a short course available over the web for a nominal fee (<http://pecan.okstate.edu/>), and offer a short course that meets monthly at the Pecan & Fruit Research Station near Perkins beginning in February each year. Information and a schedule for the pecan short course can be obtained from Dr. Eric Stafne, Extension Horticulturist, at 405-744-5409.

Producers considering a new orchard should first consult the soils maps at their local Natural Resource and Conservation Service office. These offices are frequently located in the county courthouse or in the same vicinity. Substantial information concerning soils is also available on the web at <http://soils.usda.gov/technical/classification/taxonomy/>. The presence of healthy native pecan trees is also a good indication that the site will be suitable for an orchard.

Orchard establishment is detailed in OSU Cooperative Extension Fact Sheet F-6247, Establishing a Pecan Orchard (<http://pods.dasnr.okstate.edu/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-1047/F-6247web.pdf>).

This fact sheet outlines certain criteria for soils to be suitable for pecans. Site preparation, planting and initial management are also discussed. Pecan orchard nutrition requirements for new and established orchards are outlined in OSU fact sheet F-6232 (<http://pods.dasnr.okstate.edu/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-1010/F-6232web.pdf>).

Common spacings for pecans are 35 ft x 35 ft (36 trees/acre) and 40 ft x 40 ft (27 trees/acre). Using either spacing, I prefer the triangle planting plan outlined in F-6247. A spacing of 35 ft x 35 ft is preferred if the trees are to be hedged to control tree size and crowding. A 40 ft x 40 ft spacing would be preferred if crowding will be controlled by tree thinning. The reason for using a 40 ft x 40 ft spacing when the orchard plan is to control crowding by tree removal is that economic studies show more profitability when more trees are retained longer before crowding than to have a higher initial tree density. In either case the trees will eventually need to be thinned since hedging cannot be used to control tree size indefinitely. Both orchard spacings will eventually be thinned twice. Tree density after the

first thinning will be 18 or 14 trees/acre and the final tree density will be 9 or 7 trees/acre depending on initial tree spacing.

Cultivar selection is critical for a successful orchard. Several cultivars are suitable for Oklahoma and are outlined in OSU Fact Sheet F-6201 (<http://pods.dasnr.okstate.edu/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-1027/F-6201web.pdf>). Pollination requirements must be considered when choosing cultivars and developing a planting plan. My preference is to include four cultivars with compatible pollination times in a planting to ensure adequate cross-pollination. The pollinator and cultivar to be pollinated should be within 150 feet of each other. Thus blocks of a single cultivar should not significantly exceed 300 feet wide. There are no perfect cultivars – all have certain strengths and weaknesses. Factors that should be considered when selecting a cultivar are the target market (retail or shelling market), management required for successful production (resistant vs. susceptible to disease; requires mechanical thinning; requires irrigation; etc.), cold hardiness, spring frost avoidance (early vs. late budbreak) and length of growing season required for the fruit to mature.

Managing weed competition is critical to achieve rapid tree growth ([http://osu-ns03.cis.okstate.edu/tools/webtools.nsf/Images/smith/\\$FILE/vegetation.pdf](http://osu-ns03.cis.okstate.edu/tools/webtools.nsf/Images/smith/$FILE/vegetation.pdf), [http://osu-ns03.cis.okstate.edu/tools/webtools.nsf/Images/smith/\\$FILE/fescuesod.pdf](http://osu-ns03.cis.okstate.edu/tools/webtools.nsf/Images/smith/$FILE/fescuesod.pdf) and [http://osu-ns03.cis.okstate.edu/tools/webtools.nsf/Images/smith/\\$FILE/tempweed.pdf](http://osu-ns03.cis.okstate.edu/tools/webtools.nsf/Images/smith/$FILE/tempweed.pdf)). Typically, vegetation surrounding trees is controlled with herbicides (<http://pods.dasnr.okstate.edu/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-1017/CR-6242web.pdf>), although mulches are very effective ([http://osu-ns03.cis.okstate.edu/tools/webtools.nsf/Images/smith/\\$FILE/mulch.pdf](http://osu-ns03.cis.okstate.edu/tools/webtools.nsf/Images/smith/$FILE/mulch.pdf) and [http://osu-ns03.cis.okstate.edu/tools/webtools.nsf/Images/smith/\\$FILE/coldinjury.pdf](http://osu-ns03.cis.okstate.edu/tools/webtools.nsf/Images/smith/$FILE/coldinjury.pdf)), especially during initial tree establishment. Pest management for pecans is outlined in OSU current report CR-6209 (<http://pods.dasnr.okstate.edu/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-1330/CR-6209web.pdf>). Pest management for retail quality cultivars is much more intensive than with native pecans grown for the shelling market.

Irrigation is essential for rapid tree growth and maximum production capacity. Irrigation is an economically sound investment to produce retail quality pecans. A 10-year Oklahoma study showed that yield was increased 33% when 'Western' pecan trees were irrigated. The yield increase was the result of more pecans during the "off year" with little impact on total production during the "on year". Thus consistency in production was improved with irriga-

tion.

Irrigation systems suitable for pecans include solid set impact sprinklers, micro/mini sprinklers, buried and aboveground drip and flood irrigation. Micro/mini sprinklers and drip systems are the most commonly used in Oklahoma.

Pecan trees use substantial amounts of water. Table 1 shows the water requirement during 2002 – 2004 and the average for a mature pecan orchard in southern Oklahoma. A mature orchard would have 60% of the orchard floor covered with tree canopy, regardless if it required 50 trees or 5 trees to provide 60% canopy cover. Orchards that exceed 60% canopy cover are crowding and should be thinned or hedged. Water requirements for a newly planted pecan tree are about 6 gallons per day at peak water use (July and August). Water use increases with tree growth in a fairly linear manner until the orchard reaches 60% canopy cover. Non-bearing trees should be irrigated from May through August. Bearing trees should be irrigated from May through September. The reason for the difference is that withholding water tends to increase cold hardiness and reduces susceptibility of non-bearing trees to cold injury. Nuts on bearing trees develop rapidly in September and a drought stress will reduce kernel yield and quality. Therefore, it is imperative that bearing trees be well irrigated during September. Cold injury is less likely on bearing than non-bearing trees, although it can be a problem on either.

Budget information for pecans and numerous other crops are available from the O.S.U. Agricultural Economics Department at <http://agecon.okstate.edu/budgets/>.

Table 1. Water requirement of a mature (60% canopy cover) pecan orchard.

Month ^z	Water requirement (acre-inches) ^y			
	2002	2003	2004	Avg.
May	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.2
June	6.2	5.5	4.5	5.4
July	7.5	9.8	7.6	8.3
Aug	7.3	7.5	5.8	6.9
Sept	3.0	2.6	2.9	2.8
Season total	27.0	28.5	24.2	26.6

^zsource: pan evaporation from Oklahoma Mesonet data for Madill.

^y $ET_{crop} = E_{pan} \times Pecan E_{pan} \text{ coefficient}$, where E_{pan} = calculated pan evaporation from Mesonet data.

Pecan Epan Coefficients^x

May	June	July	Aug	Sept
0.5	0.8	1	0.9	0.5

^xSource: 1997 Texas Pecan Handbook

Send in Your 2005 State Pecan Show Entries

It's not too late to enter your pecans in the state pecan show. The deadline is rapidly approaching, but you still have time to get your entries in the mail. To date, only 30 entries have been received for the state pecan show. The more exhibits entered, the better the state show. After judging, this year's pecan show will be displayed at the OPGA annual meeting in June held in Shawnee.

There will not be any qualifying regional or district pecan shows this year. However, some county/area shows will be held at the discretion of the County Extension Educator. Growers are encouraged to participate in county shows if available. Winning entries from county shows will be sent to the state show. If no county/area show is available, growers may enter pecans directly by sending samples to Becky Carroll, 360 Ag Hall, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078. Samples should arrive by February 10, 2006. If you have questions about sending an entry, contact Becky at becky.carroll@okstate.edu or 405-744-6466.

Samples should be entered in a sealed plastic or paper bag. Label the bag on the outside and place a label inside the bag. Information should include exhibitor's name and address, county and type of pecan entered. Be sure to follow the guidelines that are listed below before sending entries.

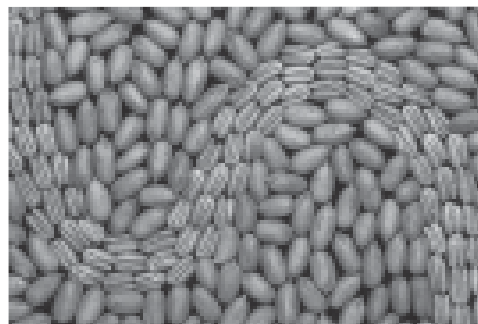
A few helpful hints: Take the time to select pecans that are all the same cultivar, or same size and shape natives – don't send mixed pecans. Select uniform, clean, uncracked pecans. Presentation can make the difference between two very similar samples. Make sure to send 2 pounds of pecans in a labeled and sealed bag.

General Rules and Guidelines:

- All entries must be grown in Oklahoma during the current season.
- Each entry shall consist of two pounds of nuts.
- Entries deemed unworthy by the judges will not compete for awards.

- Label each entry as to exhibitor's name, address and cultivar of nuts. If more than one native (seedling) pecan exhibit is made, identify the nuts from separate trees by numbers. Only one exhibit of each cultivar or native tree may be entered by one individual.
- Each entry will compete in one of the following 28 classes:
 1. Apache
 2. Barton
 3. Burkett
 4. Cheyenne
 5. Choctaw
 6. Comanche
 7. Graking
 8. Gratex
 9. Kanza
 10. Kiowa
 11. Mahan
 12. Maramec
 13. Mohawk
 14. Pawnee
 15. Peruque
 16. SanSaba Improved
 17. Schley (eastern)
 18. Shawnee
 19. Shoshoni
 20. Sioux
 21. Squirrels Delight
 22. Stuart
 23. Success
 24. Western
 25. Wichita
 26. Other Cultivars
 27. Large-Native (seedling)
 28. Small-Native (seedling)
- Each grower is allowed to participate at one county show of his or her choice.
- Each grower is allowed to enter one entry in each show class with the exception of Class 26 (Other Cultivars), Class 27 (Large-seedling) and Class 28 (Small- seedling)
- Each grower may enter one entry from each native (seedling) tree.
- Entries should be shipped or mailed to arrive at the show at least one day prior to the deadline.
- County pecan shows will not be affected by these rules and procedures.
- Only first and second place winners in each class of each county/area show will be eligible to compete in the State Pecan Show. Following each county show, eligible entries will be placed in cold storage, and judged before the Oklahoma Pecan Growers Annual Meeting. At that time, the winning entries will be displayed with awards and recognitions. All entries will become the property of the OPGA.
- First, second and third place winners in each class at the State Pecan Show will receive ribbons.
- State Pecan Show Special Awards – Trophies will be awarded for the largest pecan entry, the entry having the highest kernel percentage, the champion seedling and the best entry of the show.
- If a qualifying show is not available, growers may submit entries in accordance with these guidelines directly to the State Show. Entries in the state show must be received by February 10, 2006 at the following address:

Oklahoma State University
 Department of Horticulture & Landscape Architecture
 Attn: Becky Carroll
 360 Ag Hall
 Stillwater, OK 74078-6027



TAKING ORDERS FOR CIRCLE PECAN WEEVIL TRAPS.

\$16.50/each. Contact Suzen Ihle at 918-367-6168.

NEW PECAN BOOK — by Wes Rice., Pecans - Volume II, A Grower's Perspective.

Color pictures and descriptions of over 80 cultivars, including Oklahoma releases. Updates on all facets of pecan culture. Over 350 color pictures. Perfect bound — \$ 32.95 + 2.50 S&H and 8% sales tax or AG exemption. Hard cover — \$46.95 + 3.00 S&H + 8% sales tax

or AG exemption. Wes Rice, 580-765-7049, 9704 Braden School Rd., Ponca City, OK 74604

911 ADDRESS

Oklahoma is in the process of replacing route and box numbers with street addresses to improve response time in case of emergency. Soon after the new address is issued the Post Office begins returning mail that bears the old address to the sender. As soon as you get a new address, please send the address revision to Janice Landgraf, RR 1 Box 148, Madill, OK 73446 or email her at okpecan@trinex.net.

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

If you would like to receive your OPGA newsletter via email, please send your name and email address to: rhiannon.battles@okstate.edu with "OPGA Electronic Newsletter" in the subject line. The electronic version of the newsletter will be in Adobe PDF format.

Membership Application

We invite you to become a member of the Oklahoma Pecan Growers' Association. Membership includes the *OPGA Newsletter*, *Pecan South* and *Pecan Grower*. Make your checks payable to OPGA and mail to:

Oklahoma Pecan Growers' Association
Janice Landgraf, Treasurer
RR 1 Box 148
Madill, OK 73446
okpecan@trinex.net (580) 795-7644

Name _____

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

Renew New Member

Grower Member \$50.00
 Industry Member \$125.00
 Extension/Research/Student \$40.00

Oklahoma Pecan Growers' Association
c/o Horticulture & Landscape Architecture
Oklahoma State University
360 Agricultural Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078-6027

Return Service Requested