



In This Issue

Walmart Selling Peas Grown by Arkansans	1
UAPB Lonoke Farm Agriculture Field Day Set for Aug. 14	2
Estate Planning Education and Assistance Available	2
Housing Workshop a Success	3
Small Acreage Farmers: Deciding What to Grow?	3
Drought Survival Tips for Livestock Producers	4

Dates to Remember

Aug. 14 – UAPB Agriculture Field Day, UAPB Farm, Lonoke

Aug. 16 – Sweet Potato Field Day, Louisiana State University Sweet Potato Research Station, Chase, La.

Sept. 18-20 – National Small Farm Conference, Cook Convention Center, Memphis, Tenn.

Walmart Selling Peas Grown by Arkansans

By Carol Sanders, Writer/Editor, UAPB

Purple hull peas grown by southeast Arkansas producers are now on Walmart produce shelves. The first shipment was picked up by Walmart on July 3. D&S Produce processed the fresh purple hull peas grown by local farmers.

The peas were both mechanically and hand picked. The mechanically picked peas were graded before they were brought to D&S for processing. The shell out percentage (hulls verses peas) was around 50 percent. Insects have not been a major problem; however, peas were sprayed as a preventative measure to control insects.

Both the pea fields and the processor (D&S Produce in this instance) must be Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certified for food safety reasons as a condition of a Walmart purchase. Each producer must develop a personal food safety plan for his/her operation to be certified. Eventually, D&S will not accept peas from fields that have not been certified. UAPB provided food safety training in November and December to participants in Dermott, Marianna and Pine Bluff.

Dr. Henry English, director, UAPB Small Farm Program, says growers should have an irrigation system in place. The extreme hot and dry weather is causing peas to dry very quickly after maturing, leaving little time for the peas to be harvested.

For education assistance with certification, contact your area Extension associate or call Dameion White, research assistant, at (870) 575-7246.



Purple hull peas grown by Arkansas farmers are now on sale at Walmart.

UAPB Lonoke Farm Agriculture Field Day Set for Aug. 14

By Carol Sanders, Writer/Editor, UAPB

An Agriculture Field Day is scheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 14, at the Pearlie S. Reed/Robert L. Cole Small Farm Outreach Wetlands and Water Management Center (SFO-WWMC) on the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB) Farm in Lonoke, Ark.

The field day begins with registration at 7:30 a.m. and welcoming remarks at 8:30 a.m. Tractor and walking tours and demonstrations will follow beginning at 9 a.m. with the last tour departing at 11 a.m. Tractor-pulled trailers will transport participants continuously (hop off, hop on) to three main tour areas—crop production systems, water management activities and agriculture-related activities—where learning stations will feature scientists/or researchers reporting on specific projects.

The Crop Production System stops include native tall grass prairie seed production plots for wildlife and conservation, weed science study plots and UAPB alternative cropping system designed for small and limited resource farmers. This includes organic gardens, Southern pea, peppers and sweet potato varieties and studies.



Participants at the 2010 field day enjoy one of several tractor tours.

Those on the Water Management Activities tour will see the UAPB on-farm reservoir levee stabilization and constructed wetlands wildlife enhancement area, the in-line irrigation monitoring system, hear about the USGS Mississippi River alluvial aquifer groundwater elevations study and the data collection platform that measures the water table within the aquifer of the Lonoke Farm and surrounding area.

On the Ag-Related Activities stops are the UAPB-NRCS Soil Climate Analysis Network (SCAN) site, Arkansas Forestry

Commission progeny testing, and presentations on honeybees and mechanical versus hand harvesting of Southern peas. The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Fish Tank and an antique tractor show round out field day activities.

The UAPB Farm is located on O’Cain Road, off Hwy 31, some 2.8 miles from I-40, Lonoke Exit 175. For more information on Field Day, contact Dr. Leslie Glover at (870) 575-8822 or Charlie Cummings at (501) 674-4470 or email charliecum-mings42@yahoo.com.

Estate Planning Education and Assistance Available

By Dr. Henry English, director, UAPB Small Farm Program

Estate planning education and assistance is available through the Small Farm Program at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, made possible by a grant from the Southern Regional Risk Management Center.

Estate planning is a plan for what happens to your property when you die. If you die without a plan, the state has a plan for your property, but the state’s plan may be match your plan. Succession planning is included for those producers who would like to pass their operation on to the next generation.

The Small Farm Program, in partnership with the

National Agricultural Law Center in Fayetteville, has sponsored workshops in Dermott, Hope, West Helena, Eudora and Pine Bluff. Rusty Rumley, staff attorney at the law center, has been the primary presenter. Follow-up calls are being made to workshop attendees to determine if they have acted on the information provided in the workshops and offering additional information or educational materials and assistance.

Even if you didn’t make it to a workshop, you can still receive educational assistance on estate planning by calling Demeion White, research assistant, at 870-575-7226.

Housing Workshop a Success

By Carol Sanders, Writer/Editor, UAPB

More than \$700,000 in housing funding has been requested as a result of a housing workshop in Eudora. According to preliminary data, this amount, the large turnout of 100 attendees and the 50 applications generated at the workshop were unexpected.

The workshop covered purchasing single-family homes, home improvement loans and the use of grants by seniors for feasible home improvements. Mark Pace, area specialist, USDA Rural Development Agency, was the main presenter. Among those in attendance were the mayors of Dermott, Lake Village and Eudora.

If you think that residents in your area would be interested in a similar housing workshop, contact your area Extension associate or call the Small Farm Program at (870) 575-7246.



More than \$700,000 in housing funding was requested as a result of a housing workshop conducted by Mark Pace, USDA Rural Development area specialist. A large turnout of 100 was a pleasant surprise.

Small Acreage Farmers: Deciding What to Grow?

By Dr. Henry English, director, Small Farm Program

The most common question I get from beginning farmers with 20 to 50 acres is how they should go about farming soybeans and wheat. These crops are the normal ones grown in the area and the ones most familiar to the would-be beginning farmers. However, these are not the primary crops that farmers with small acreage farms should consider. Fruits and vegetable crops are more suitable for farms with limited acreage.

Fruit and vegetable crops produce more income per acre than row crops, therefore, requiring fewer acres to be profitable. On the other hand, marketing and finding labor are two major factors to consider when growing fruit and vegetable crops. Before growing any alternative crops such as fruits or vegetables, first identify your

markets. If you can't identify your market, don't grow. Then, identify your labor source. Most fresh fruits and vegetables are hand harvested and dependable labor is necessary for harvesting.

Following is a comparison between soybeans and southern peas to illustrate the profit potential of row crops vs. vegetable crops. The average yield for one acre of soybeans is approximately 35 bushels per acre. At \$12 per bushel, a producer can make \$420 per acre. If you deduct the \$300 per acre production cost, you have a profit of \$120 per acre.

The average yield for southern peas is 100 bushels per acre. At \$25 per bushel, a producer has the potential of making a \$2,500 profit per acre. If you deduct the \$1,066 cost of production (\$800 of that

being the cost of labor), you have a profit of \$1,434 per acre. That's a net income of \$120 per acre for soybeans compared to \$1,434 per acre for southern peas is one reason small acreage farmers should consider alternative crops.

For small farmers that choose row crops, it is probably not feasible to invest in equipment. Getting someone to do the disking, planting, spraying and harvesting is more feasible. Also, renting the land is probably more feasible than operating the land to grow row crops. For specific information on profitability, do a financial analysis before making a decision. If you need assistance doing a financial analysis or for additional information, contact a UAPB Extension associate or call the UAPB Small Farm Program at (870) 575-7246.

Drought Survival Tips for Livestock Producers

By Dr. David Fernandez, UAPB livestock specialist

Arkansas is suffering from a severe drought. Predictions from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration indicate that it is not likely to end and will intensify through September unless tropical storms bring relief. What can you do about it?

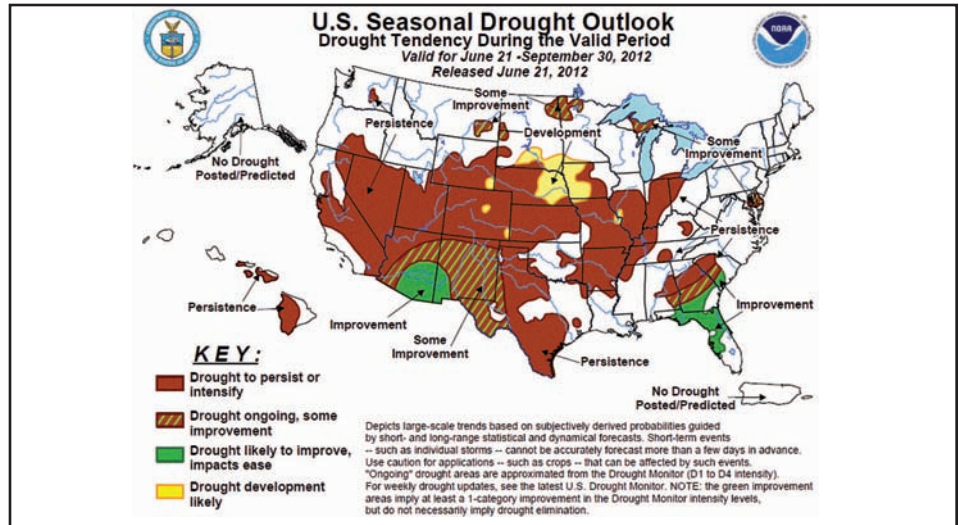
First, evaluate the condition of your pastures. How much forage do you have? If you get little to no additional growth until September, how many animals will it support?

Evaluate the body condition of your livestock. Most are still in pretty good condition. Early weaning and selling of calves, lambs or kids will help to maintain the cows, ewes or does in good condition and lower their nutritional needs. Also, cull unproductive or non-pregnant females.

Estimate your feed needs based on the number of animals you keep, and secure your supply early. Store your hay carefully so it is not bleached by the sun or rot on the ground side in case of rain. Test your hay for an idea of how much grain or protein supplements to provide. Move hay feeders around to spread out the fertility of wasted hay and livestock waste.

Producers with extra forage should consider renting out their pasture or purchasing light weight stocker animals. With hay prices expected to remain high or continue upward, consider selling hay.

Begin rotationally grazing your pastures if you haven't already. It forces livestock to consume more and waste less of forage in pastures and also gives pastures time to recover if



much-needed rain occurs. Rotational grazing can be started by simply closing gates on your farm.

Make sure animals have access to plenty of water and shade. Water in tanks and troughs can get very hot during the day. Erecting a shade over the water can significantly reduce water temperature and encourage animals to drink more often.

Keep your animals out of ponds by fencing the pond off and providing access lanes so the animals can drink but cannot loaf in the water. Pond water can become heavily contaminated with bacteria from animal waste. Mastitis and infectious diseases can be spread by contaminated water.

Plan for fall and winter grazing seasons. Arkansas often receives rain in September. If you have winter annuals already seeded in the pastures before the rain comes, you should see early growth because warm season grasses will not be competing with the new growth. That way, even if you feed hay during the summer, you can

reduce hay needs during the winter and early spring of the next year.

Create a drought recovery plan. Drought damaged pastures will have bare spots where weeds may become established. Soil fertility can suffer after a drought, so test your soil. Think about including several drought resistant grasses in your pasture mix. Design a good rotational grazing plan to allow pastures to recover and distribute water to all of your pastures.

Lastly, do not be in a big hurry to restock next year. Allow your pastures time to recover. Once pastures have returned to good health and you have a good rotational grazing program in place, you may be able to increase your stocking rate to higher levels than before the drought.

All this depends upon good management. For help with pasture or herd management, contact your Cooperative Extension office or Dr. David Fernandez at (870) 575-7214 or fernandezd@uapb.edu.

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