



College of Agricultural &
Environmental Sciences

Stripling Irrigation Research Park July 2009 Event and Activity Update

4H2O Summer Camp:

On June 2, Stripling Park hosted the first day of a 3 day event dubbed the "4H2O Summer Camp". We partnered with the Mitchell Co. 4-H program and the Flint RiverQuarium, with help from the Jones Ecological Research Center at Ichauway, to hold a camp for 4-H'ers to help educate our young people about agriculture and the environment, in particular the importance of irrigation and water conservation to the rural southwest Georgia ecology and economy. Jennifer Grogan with Mitchell Co. 4-H began the camp in 2008 and was eager to grow and expand it. With financial assistance from the Stripling Family of Mitchell Co., the groups came together to develop the camp for 2009. Jennifer and Debra Cox invited their colleagues in surrounding counties to bring a group from those counties to

participate in this program. We hosted 68 4-H'ers plus a number of adult chaperones from 5 surrounding counties.

Day 2 was spent at the RiverQuarium and Day 3 included a trip to a waterpark near Dothan. Media from WALB and Fox31 television stations along with the Camilla Enterprise and Albany Herald

newspapers covered the 3 day event. The coordinators of the event included Rad and Calvin from SIRP, Melissa Martin from the Flint RiverQuarium, and Jennifer and Debra from Mitchell Co. 4-H. Plans are underway for the 2009 version of the event!



TNC Visit:

On June 23, Shelly Lakly, Courtney Goetzel, and David Reckford from the Georgia chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) paid a visit to Stripling Park to see and hear about the new modular VRI system that Calvin and Rad have been helping FarmScan

develop. TNC has been a great partner in the Flint Basin to promote water conservation on our farms.



2009 Field Day:

We enjoyed hosting over 90 attendees at our annual field day on June 30th. We believe it was a great success and appreciate each of you that joined us on that day. We do recognize and appreciate the support the community, vendors and the State give us, without it we would not be able to progress as we do now. We want each field day event to grow, so please send any suggestions (those that have not already been given to Heather) to sirp@uga.edu.

As mentioned earlier, we had 90 guests at field day. We enjoyed a nice lunch prepared by Rick Heard (FarmScan Co.) and sponsored by the Flint River Soil & Water Conservation District. We were fortunate to have in attendance Dean Scott Angle, Associate Dean Bob Shulstad, Assistant Dean Joe West, and Tony Tyson (Director of Extension County Operations) of the UGA CAES. We want to extend a special “Thank You” to Jay Powell – State House Rep. Dist. 171, Gene Maddox - State House Rep. for Dist. 172, Debbie Cannon – Regional Representative for U.S. Senator Saxby Chambliss, Jody Redding – Regional Director for U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson, Jamey Crozier- Liaison for U.S. Rep. Sanford Bishop, Hobby Stripling- District Director for Congressman Jim Marshall, and Shae Waldon- Liaison for Congressman Jack Kingston.

Our guests were exposed to six tour stops. Each stop included 1 or more crop studies presented by the scientist or/and researcher involved with the studies. Each presenter had about 12 minutes to give a synopsis of their study. Our guests were taken to each stop by a tram being pulled by



a tractor. We are appreciative to the Physical Plant at the Tifton Campus for allowing us to use the trams. We also give thanks to USDA and SIRP Researcher Wilson Faircloth for allowing the park to use his tractor to pull a tram. Thank you, Charles Stripling, for offering your tractor for us to use as well.

Overall, the SIRP staff and volunteers want to thank you for being a part of our 2009 Field Day event. We hope you learned more about us, and we hope to see you next year.

Rainfall at SIRP:

Until arrival of recent rains, things were getting very dry at Stripling Park. During the entire month of June, the Park's official weather station recorded only 1.64 inches of rainfall. Since July 1, we have received 2.36 inches. For the year, the Park has received 32.21 inches of total rainfall. As always, for information from one of UGA's automated weather stations near you, go to www.georgiaweather.net.

Field Activities:

The irrigated winter wheat study was harvested by a custom harvest crew from Doerun and yields averaged approx. 53 bu/ac. Sweet corn, tomatoes, and bell peppers have also been harvested by our researchers. Field activities in watermelons, cotton and peanuts are in full swing.



New Hire:

Chance Tompkins is a senior at Baconton Charter High School in Mitchell Co. Chance was hired on a vegetable grant and he assists with all aspects of the park.

Interesting Article:

"A Truce in the Crop Wars", Newsweek
<http://www.newsweek.com/id/204234>

Upcoming Events/Meetings:

July 23rd – Institute for Georgia Environmental Leadership (IGEL), SIRP.

August 11-13 - 2009 Southeast Bioenergy Conference, Tifton (see www.sebioenergy.org).

August 26-27 - College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences, Advisory Council Meeting, Tifton.

August 26-28 - Georgia Environmental Conference, Savannah (see www.georgiaenet.com).

September 15 - Lower Flint-Ochlockonee Water Planning Council, Leary

September 15-17 - Georgia Peanut Tour

October 20-22 - Sunbelt Expo, Moultrie

USDA Energy Grant Deadline:

USDA Rural Development appears to be still accepting applications until July 31 for grants and loan guarantees for farmers and rural small businesses to install renewable energy systems, make energy efficiency improvements or conduct feasibility studies. An example of an eligible project would be replacing diesel irrigation motors with electric. For complete program details, see www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/farbill or call 404-229-5720.

Trivia:

What nut is the peach related to?

Answer: Almonds