

Chicken Wire




Message from
UPGA President
Lucius Adkins

For the first three months of 2014, the United Poultry Growers Association has been embroiled in our annual legislative battles under Georgia's Gold Dome. Side by side with key agricultural advocacy groups like Georgia Farm Bureau and the Georgia Agribusiness Council, UPGA seeks to ensure that bad legislation affecting our industry never makes it through the process. We also work to advance policies that might help us or provide stability or a regulatory environment that won't hinder our efforts to grow a quality product.

During the 2014 session of the Georgia General Assembly, much of our time was spent providing information on the negative and sometimes downright silly legislative efforts of well-meaning but misguided legislators. A house measure, HR 1106, advocating for the elimination of "food deserts" is just one such example that could have negative impacts on our industry that would "demand for the placement of supermarkets" in underserved areas? Silly indeed. On the other side of the equation, farm advocates worked hard to pass a bill that became symbolic of our struggle to educate an

urbanizing legislature : SB 213. Navigating this bill affecting agricultural water use in a small part of the state, but with implications statewide, became a Herculean effort. We were very fortunate that our ag leaders in the house, Chairman Tom McCall (R-Elberton) and Vice Chairman Buddy Harden (R-Cordele) were up to the task. The two showed tremendous resolve and leadership skills in the face of many disingenuous environmental lobbyists along with a surprising number of misinformed urban (and some rural) legislators. They had to call upon their leaders and even Governor Nathan Deal himself to garner the requisite political will to get it done. In the end, our farm policy leaders won out and convinced their colleagues to block efforts to create new legal challenges for agricultural water use and the undermining of farmers' water rights. We thank them for that.

Looking forward, as the 2014 primary elections come on May 20 this year, it's important that we go to the polls to help those that remain our voice in the policy making positions of our state. There are contested races for the U.S. Senate, Governor, Lt. Governor, constitutional offices, Congressional seats, General Assembly seats and more local elections. Growers must get to know these candidates and support those who will help our industry thrive and prosper.

Sincerely,
Lucius Adkins
President, United Poultry Growers Association

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www.unitedpoultrygrowers.com

P.O. Box 71087
Albany, Georgia 31708



2014 General Assembly Proves Productive for Growers



House Ag Vice Chairman Buddy Harden (R-Cordele) helped pass SB213 through the House

March 20th came and went and it was all over! In a speedy session that went as fast as we can remember the process in recent years, state lawmakers wrapped up another legislative year with 40 productive days of the Georgia General Assembly. Governor Nathan Deal is still deciding which bills he will sign or veto as we go to press, but we have it on good authority that UPGA priorities will remain intact.

At the top of the list, the Governor has already signed SB 213, a bill affecting farm water use. This bill was carried through the Senate last year but ran out of time to make it through the House. This year, we

take our hats off to the House Agriculture Committee and its leadership for pulling the ox out of the ditch and getting the bill passed by literally dousing the opposition's fire with great finesse. In particular, House Ag Vice Chairman Buddy Harden (R-Cordele) had the tough job of carrying the bill through a sometimes hostile urban and environmentally wacko opposition that would not let facts cloud their judgment. With great patience Harden listened and persevered, while meanwhile enlisting his own House leadership and the Governor to beat back the nonsense and advance a bill important to farmers and to Georgia's position in the

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USDA: Poultry production lower/prices higher in 2014



In April, the United States Department of Agriculture issued its latest World Agricultural Supply and Demands report. In the report, the 2014 forecast of total red meat and poultry production is lowered from the previous month, citing higher beef production is more than offset by lower pork, broiler, and turkey production. How low is not fully known, but Broiler production and hatchery data shows slower growth in eggs set and chicks placed. Higher feed prices have also been factored into lower production. Continuing the negative forecast, broiler exports will be reduced and turkey exports lowered on weaker sales. Egg import and export forecasts are lowered as well. On the other hand, the agency also forecasts higher broiler and turkey prices as higher cattle and reduced broiler production support higher prices. ♦

Legislation in FOCUS

SB 213: Flint River Drought Protection Act amendments

HB 943: The GATE amendments

HB 755: Forest land fair market values

HB 863: Animal cruelty amendments

HB 1152: Genetically engineered food

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Governor Nathan Deal and House Agricultural and Consumer Affairs Committee Chairman Tom McCall (R-Elberton) were instrumental in passage of SB213 into law.

ongoing Water War with Alabama and Florida. UPGA commends Harden and the whole agriculture committee for their hard work on this measure.

In other legislative news, numerous bad bills didn't make the cut and several positive efforts made it through. HB 943, the GATE update bill passed giving legitimate ag producers more protections. HB 755 also passed, which provides a mechanism to adjust forest land fair market values and require the reimbursement by local governments if ad valorem assessments were given based on inflated values.

After some serious tweaking, HB 863 relating to animal cruelty passed, revising definitions and strengthens penalties for animal abusers. Provisions were inserted to exempt agriculture, animal husbandry, hunting, trapping, fishing, and many other ag-related activities.

Finally, HB 1152 was killed, which would have required burdensome labeling of genetically engineered food (GMO's), which could have created negative market impacts. ❖

Contact Information

House Ag and Consumer Affairs Comm.
228-B State Capitol
Atlanta, Ga 30334
Phone: (404) 656-5099
Fax: (404) 656-6897

Ag Tax Exemptions

Less than a year after full implementation of the Georgia Agricultural Tax Exemption (GATE) a number of needed improvement and clarifications were found and introduced as a clean up bill during the 2014 General Assembly. HB 983, sponsored by House Ag Chairman Tom McCall (R-Elberton), was introduced to enhance protections for actual agricultural producers and tighten the qualifications. Poultry growing and processing remain exempt. The bill clarifies the definition of "animal" to include livestock, poultry, fish, and insects. Domestic pets or companion animals are not included in the bill. If you have any questions regarding eligibility of certain items or practices, UPGA recommends you contact the Georgia Department of Agriculture.

 farmtax@agr.georgia.gov

 **1-(855)-FARM TAX, or
1-(855) 327-6829**

NOTE: Call between the hours of 8:00am and 5:00pm, Monday through Friday.

Did You Know?

Georgia Leads 2013 Top Poultry States!

| Top 5 States | No. Produced (1000 Head) | Lbs. Produced (1000 Lbs.) | Value/Production (1000 Dollars) |
|--------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Georgia | 1,334,600 | 7,607,200 | 4,609,963 |
| Alabama | 1,048,600 | 5,872,200 | 3,558,553 |
| Arkansas | 996,400 | 5,978,400 | 3,622,910 |
| N. Carolina | 785,500 | 5,891,300 | 3,570,128 |
| Mississippi | 734,000 | 4,477,400 | 2,713,304 |

*Source - Poultry - Production and Value 2013 Summary (April 2014)
USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service

California Bird Flu Scare Prompts Export Bans

An April report of a positive test in Japanese Quail for a low pathogenic form of H5 avian flu has led to disruptions in poultry exports to certain countries, according to USDA. Imports of chicken from California have been banned by Russia and Taiwan. Japan has issued a similar ban, but it applies only to eggs laid and poultry slaughtered on or after March 24 from Stanislaus County, California. Similarly, Cuba has also restricted imports of fresh or frozen poultry from the county.



While problems there should not affect poultry markets, the scare and recoiling foreign trading partners could prove devastating for individual growers from the area. The USDA APHIS and the California Department of Food and Agriculture are investigating and taking steps to minimize the outbreaks impacts. ❖

Clean Water Act Advisory

We're from the government and we're here to help... In a proposed rule signed by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator, Gina McCarthy, in late March, the agency issued 370 pages of draft rules to take more regulatory control over water use. Currently under comment period in the Federal Register, growers will have to contend with yet another overreach of the federal bureaucracy if adopted as final. Under the proposal the agency now seeks to establish regulatory authority over temporary wetlands and waterways and possibly even seasonal ponds, streams and ditches! And this is not just for public lands but would encompass those waters on private property as well. EPA claims the proposed rule does not expand the scope of the CWA. The agency says it would help permittees through increased permitting efficiency and regulatory certainty. To say that the agriculture industry has a different view of this characterization would be a huge understatement. ❖

Where Are Our Members?

UPGA Membership Distribution

Did you know UPGA's member base has changed over the years? As new processing facilities have sprung up and production continues to evolve across the state, so has our membership. Today, UPGA has members across a wide array of counties in north and south Georgia.

