



**Georgia  
Peanut  
Commission**



**2012 Year in Review**

# 2012 Georgia Peanut Commission Annual Report

Dear Georgia Farmer,

In 1961 Georgia's peanut farmers shared a vision of an investment to improve peanut production and consumption. For more than fifty years the Georgia Peanut Commission has continued to work on the farmers behalf in the program areas of research, education and promotion.

The year 2012 was a record year for farmers. With previous yield records averaging 3,600 pounds per acre and 2012 yields pushing a record state average of over 4,700 pounds per acre, the new varieties from the breeding program, sponsored in large part by the Georgia Peanut Commission, really showed out. Production approached 1.7 million tons on Georgia's 710,000 acres.

Consumption surpassed all previous records in 2010. However the consumption trend did not continue due to the tight supply of the 2011 crop. With record production in 2012 consumption is expected to rebound to record levels.

The farmers' vision of an investment is paying off. Since the inception of the commission in 1961, farmers have invested approximately \$70 million in checkoff funds. If you look at the increase of the average yield in 2012 and value it at the market loan rate of \$355 that is about \$150 million in extra revenue. The \$150 million is twice every dollar ever invested returned to the farmers in one year.

The year 2012 also marked the move of the farmers' headquarters to a new home on I-75 where we can tell the peanut farmers' story and remind consumers their food doesn't come from the grocery store. The commission has also included Saturday hours in order to tell our story to travelers. The construction includes simple finishes and trim, geo-thermal systems and solar photovoltaic systems.

The total cost of construction was \$87 per foot, which is significantly lower than traditional commercial structures. Through the combined wisdom of previous and the current commission boards to plan over the years, the new building is paid for. The new headquarters provides the commission with reduced energy costs and helps in eliminating product spoilage along with additional added benefits.

The programs of the commission are far more broad and diverse than just the peanut breeding program which accounts for our largest investment in grower dollars. Highlights from each of the program areas are highlighted through this 2012 Annual Report of the commission.

It has been my privilege for twenty-six years to serve you, a charge I take seriously and a mission I serve with pride. I want to commit to continued excellence in programs as we move forward.

Thank you,



Don Koehler  
Executive Director

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## 2012 Georgia Peanut Commission Board of Directors

Chairman	Armond Morris	District 2	Ocilla, Ga.
Vice Chairman	Joe Boddiford	District 3	Sylvania, Ga.
Treasurer	Rodney Dawson	District 4	Hawkinsville Ga.
Member	Donald Chase	District 5	Oglethorpe, Ga.
Member	Tim Burch	District 1	Newton, Ga.

### *Advisory Board Members*

Andy Bell - Climax, Ga.	Allen Whitehead - Ashburn, Ga.
Andy Owens - Sylvania, Ga.	David Reed - Pinehurst, Ga.
Neil Lee - Bronwood, Ga.	Wes Shannon - Tifton, Ga.
John Harrell - Whigham, Ga.	Kenny Brownlee - Tifton, Ga.
Zippy Duvall - Georgia Farm Bureau President - Macon, Ga.	



# Research

**F**or 50 years Georgia peanut farmers, through the Georgia Peanut Commission, have successfully improved peanut profitability of peanuts and peanut products by reducing the cost of production through research. Georgia peanut growers have seen yields increase from 1,000 pounds per acre in 1958 when the first peanut checkoff was passed by farmers to over 4,700 pounds per acre today—a 450% increase!

The commission has funded and coordinated research projects in all facets of production including the breeding program, disease, weed and insect management, and water management. The development of the disease risk index and prescription disease control program helped farmers account for the benefit of longer rotations. Research to manage weed resistance has become more critical since the introduction of genetically modified crops in rotation with peanuts. Soil fertility, especially calcium nutrition, has become more important with the introduction of larger seeded varieties.

The majority of the success farmers have received through successful agro-



**Total Investment**  
**\$994,129**

nomical cultural practices, peanut yielding varieties and pest and disease resistance varieties come from research that was initiated ten and fifteen years ago. As farmers look to the future, the best way to improve efficiency in research advancements is from resistance identification, drought tolerance and quality traits isolated and located as genetic-markers on the peanut chromosome genome.

In the research area, the commission focused on educating elected officials in Atlanta regarding the need for a research ento-

mologist to assist farmers with insect problems in peanuts. The position has been vacant for more than six years. This served as a number one priority for the commission and now the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences is in the process of hiring an entomologist in 2013.

Additionally, the commission provides program funds for the Extension peanut agronomist to travel for county peanut production meetings, conduct on-farm research trials, visit farms, and to answer and return phone calls.

The commission also oversees the research program for the National Peanut Board through the Southern Peanut Research Initiative. This initiative was started to avoid duplication of effort and to fully utilize scientists from multiple states where state funding cuts have resulted in fewer scientists and staff conducting research in peanut production.

Georgia's peanut farmers have invested \$994,129 in 2012 for the research program area through the Georgia Peanut Commission funds and the National Peanut Board.

# Education & Information

**T**he Georgia Peanut Commission conducts educational programs for growers, consumers, and governmental officials. Educational events include the Georgia Peanut Farm Show, Southern Peanut Growers Conference, Cotton and Peanut Field Day and the Georgia Peanut Tour. All of these events strive to educate and inform farmers and those affiliated with the industry information about peanut production, research, and new products and services.

Also, the commission continues to partner with the grower organizations in the Southeast to publish the Southeastern Peanut Farmer. The magazine is housed at the commission headquarters. The magazine strives to provide educational information for growers on production, research, and legislative issues.

Education in Washington is a never ending challenge and the commission continues to voice support for appropriations for research funding and programs to fund market development overseas. In 2012 the commission worked diligently to construct

a program which would support farmers in the absence of direct payments which came under fire. Working with the chairman and ranking member of the House Agriculture Committee a program was crafted to provide a safety net to peanut farmers at \$535 per ton. Although the five year 2012 Farm Bill was not included in the fiscal cliff legislation at the end of the year, Congress did extend the 2008 Farm Bill for the 2013 peanut crop. This includes direct payments for the 2013 peanut crop. The commission will work to hold the line on the House Bill and the election of Senator Thad Cochran, R-Miss., as ranking member of the Senate Agriculture Committee positions peanut farmers well in the debate.

The commission continues to communicate to farmers and consumers through media outlets including television, radio and newspaper. Also, the commission has been at the forefront in the peanut industry in terms of social media. The commission spreads the peanut message across the internet through Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr photo galleries.



**Total Investment**  
**\$479,478**

# Promotion

**T**he Georgia Peanut Commission is best known around the state by its little red bags of peanuts. This should come as no surprise since more than 1 million of the ¾ ounce packs of roasted Georgia peanuts are distributed throughout the U.S. and Georgia annually. The commission can be found promoting peanuts through the Georgia School Nutrition Association, Georgia Peanut Bank Week and civic and community clubs. The commission has ongoing promotional efforts with professional bullfighter Matt Baldwin who appears on Direct TV and the tv series Bullproof. Also, the commission continues a partnership with Hickman Racing through the Nationwide Series. The racecar features the Georgia Peanuts logo on the hood, side panels and trunk, and has been featured worldwide on the television show Pass Time.

The commission has teamed up with growers in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi to stretch the growers' dollar further by combining promotional checkoff dollars through the Southern Peanut Growers. This

partnership also allows Southeastern growers to promote runner peanuts across the U.S. In 2012, Southern Peanut Growers worked to promote peanut butter to foodservice through trade media relationships, a chef's recipe contest, foodservice trade shows and menu items at restaurant chains such as Logan's, Pandini's and Noodles & Company. National consumer promotions included a National Peanut Month promotion through social media and bloggers focused on Peanut Butter: Value & Versatility which resulted in nearly 12 million impressions, brought the SPG Facebook page to 1,000 fans (more than 9,000 by year's end!) and a live cooking demonstration on CBS2 in New York. Regional consumer promotions included the Southern Women's Shows in Savannah, Birmingham and Jacksonville and a sponsorship of the high school football playoffs in Georgia, Florida and Mississippi which included television commercials, sponsor IDs and presence on the state high school sports association's web portals.



**Total Investment**  
**\$812,677**



# Building Update

**T**he Georgia Peanut Commission board of directors concluded the commission's 50th anniversary by holding the official ribbon cutting ceremony and open house at the new headquarters in Tifton, Ga., July 31, 2012. The new headquarters is located off of Interstate 75 in Tifton at exit 63B.

The new headquarters was designed by Cadmus Design-Build. The environmental design/build firm provides Architectural Design and Construction Management in the Master Builder tradition towards net-zero energy, environmental sustainability and economic feasibility goals.

The new headquarters was designed and built to meet criteria for LEED Certification at a Platinum Level. The site selection, development, building placement, design, engineering and orientation all contribute to low-impact and high performance results.

Beyond building to LEED Certification standards, the new headquarters has fully integrated alternative/ renewable energy systems that enhance performance capabilities towards the Near and Net-Zero Energy goals. The new building's integrated systems include both passive and active Geo-Thermal Systems, Passive Solar Architectural Design and Engineering, Solar Photovoltaic Systems, Solar Thermal Systems, Natural / Daylight Harvesting Systems, Rain and Condensate Harvesting.

The principles of forward thinking in the design of the new headquarters is a testament to the forward thinking of farmers in the peanut industry here in Georgia. The new headquarters has been made possible through sponsorships and a commemorative brick and bench program. Numerous farmers, organizations and business have all contributed to the building program by sponsoring a commemorative brick or bench.



**Building Investment**  
**\$87 per square foot**

### Platinum Sponsors

Kelley Manufacturing Co.  
Lewis M. Carter Manufacturing

### Gold Sponsors

American Peanut Shellers Assn.  
Birdsong Peanuts  
Toto, USA, Inc.  
The FlintCo Family of Companies

### Silver level

Amadas Industries  
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Lasseter Equipment Group  
SunSouth

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