



IN A NUTSHELL

Issue No. 17

MARCH 2019

APC MEETS WITH INDUSTRY

American Pecan Council (APC) management has had a busy February and March this 2019. Representatives made presentations highlighting some of the statistical findings from APC's recently completed Strategic Plan. Talking points on the 5 initiatives identified in the plan were covered, including unifying industry, pecan marketing, international marketing, modernizing the industry, and grower sheller transaction models. APC met with industry members at:

- Southeastern Pecan Growers Association Annual Conference in Destin, FL on February 22nd and 23rd;
- Georgia Pecan Growers Association Meeting in Tifton, Georgia on February 26th;
- West Texas Pecan Growers Association in El Paso, TX on February 27th;
- Western Pecan Growers Association Annual Conference in Las Cruces, NM from March 3rd through 5th;
- National Pecan Shellers Association Mid-Winter Meeting in Atlanta, GA on March 13th and 14th



APC staff had the privilege of meeting with industry members and delivering presentations at recent conferences

The APC will be providing a deeper look into the Industry's Strategic Plan with the Council during a working group meeting in April. APC will also provide statistical information to those attending the upcoming Pecan Congress on April 9th.



APC Executive Director Alex Ott educates pecan growers on options for grades & standards at the February meeting in De Leon, TX

DE LEON MEETING

APC staff Alex Ott and Emma Garner met with ~60 Texas growers in De Leon, Texas on February 27, 2019, to provide updates on APC's recent marketing and industry relation activities, an overview of the strategic plan findings, and grades and standards 101. The purpose of the meeting was to educate industry members on each individual grade and standards. Currently, the pecan industry has voluntary in-shell and shelled standards. However, industry can choose to mandate a grade and standard if it is the direction they would like to go. We want to thank each and every one of you who came out to the De Leon meeting. If you have any questions regarding grades and standards, please reach out to the Council office.

APC COMMITTEE MEETING UPDATES

Four committees met via conference call on March 20th and March 21st, 2019, to discuss new opportunities and initiatives that align with APC's Strategic Plan. A big thank you to everyone who contributed time & energy to these important meetings.

You'll find a brief recap of what was discussed on the following page.

Grades & Standards Committee

Congratulations to Randy Hudson for becoming the Chairman of the Grades & Standards committee. The Committee met to discuss grades and standards such as incoming, outgoing, and quality standards under the provisions on Section 8(e). There was great dialogue and feedback from industry members regarding the current issues around MRLs and standards within the industry. The pecan industry has inshell and shelled standards that have been in place for over thirty years. In December 2018, the shelled meats standards were updated to meet internal USDA requirements. Currently, the Council is looking into submitting updated inshell and shelled grades and standards as a package to USDA. These standards will remain nonmandatory, unless industry chooses to move forward with mandating them, through enforcement via third party inspection. APC staff will continue to gather more information regarding the standards and potential research on MRL levels. We will update the industry once more information is available.

Industry Relations Committee

Congratulations to Deborah Walden-Ralls for her appointment as Chairwoman of the Industry Relations Committee. The meeting discourse centered around streamlining the reporting form and data collection process. The Committee recommended an RFP for electronic data reporting which will be reviewed during the next Council meeting. These services include development, launch, and ongoing maintenance of the system. Additionally, APC provided an update of the NASS January survey for the American pecan industry, which has been delayed due to the government shutdown. The new publication date of the NASS survey is March 14, 2019. APC also provided an update on the Land IQ and digital mapping project, a.k.a. the U.S. Pecan Acreage survey. This project utilizes satellite imaging to provide a detailed and accurate summary of acreage in the top eight states. The Industry Relations Committee discussed the first edition of the American Pecan Council annual report showcasing APC activities and progress during the 2017-2018 fiscal year. Once published, this will be available on the American Pecan website. The last item of conversation was the revamping of the APC communications plan to increase presence and engagement with industry members.

International Committee

The International Committee will be making a recommendation to the Council on April 10th to contract with Callanan and Callanan Consulting to submit an Emerging Market Program (EMP) proposal and a Unified Export Strategy (UES) to USDA on behalf of the APC.

The committee also discussed relations with the Mexican pecan industry and how the APC might be able to work with Mexico to contribute to APC efforts through voluntary contributions on Health and Research studies, as an example. Another alternative that the committee asked APC staff to look into was the establishment of a USDA Research and Promotion Board that would mandate

assessments on nuts imported into the United States. Part of such a program would also mandate foreign representation on the Board.

Marketing Committee

The Marketing Committee will be making a recommendation to the Council during its April meeting to approve the social media based “Superweeks” proposal presented by Weber Shandwick. This is a six-month campaign that would finish off the fiscal year.

In addition, the Committee will be recommending that the APC subscribe to the AspireIQ influencer platform. The platform will enable APC staff to work directly with social media influencers. Being able to conduct certain marketing activities in house allows the APC to stretch industry’s dollars. The platform will save a substantial amount on social media efforts and then enable the APC to apply those savings to other line items within the marketing budget.

Another recommendation for the Council to consider will be the funding of studies on health-related issues and pecans. Dr. Guy Johnson has identified areas of interest for pecans. If the Council approves, the APC will be posting requests for proposals on the different areas, with studies to begin later this year.

In a preview of what’s to possibly come with the next fiscal year; the National Pecan Shellers Association proposed two Chefs Summit events. Also, the committee is looking at utilizing Comcast Cable to run a 6-month television campaign in strategically aligned markets.

FEBRUARY MARKETING HIGHLIGHTS

The latest Marketing Highlights Report, sharing activity and results from February marketing efforts, is available to view and download. Visit the [Your Dollars at Work](#) page in the Digital Toolkit for Industry (password: pecans18) or click the button below to check it out.

The image shows the cover and a preview of the February 2019 Marketing Highlights report. The cover features a banner with the text "American PECANS THE ORIGINAL SUPERNET" and "FEBRUARY 2019 MARKETING HIGHLIGHTS". Below the banner, there are several sections of content, including a large image of a pecan-topped pizza, a section titled "PECANS & PIGSKIN" with a sub-headline "From pecan-topped pizza on the Food Channel to pecan appetizers in the Chicago Daily Herald, game day pecan recipes were shared like never before - a 31% increase over last year's Big Game recipe coverage.", a section titled "Energy food" with a sub-headline "Boost heart smart recipes with pecans", and a section titled "Simple Ways to be Heart Smart" with a sub-headline "Discover recipe checklist of heart-healthy pecans". At the bottom, there is a section titled "AMERICAN HEART MONTH" with a sub-headline "American Pecans released an article, 'Simple Ways to Be Heart-Smart,' to remind consumers of pecans' heart benefits. The article ran in 970 news outlets nationwide, reaching consumers in more than 40 states. One of the featured recipes, Cherry Pecan Energy Bites, received 2x as many views on AmericanPecan.com as it did in January."

[Download the February Marketing Report](#)

PECAN CONGRESS TO BE HELD

The American Pecan Council is coordinating a Pecan Congress of all pecan associations. The meeting will take place on Tuesday, April 9, 2019, at the Hyatt Regency DFW International Airport. The first of its kind, this meeting will provide a space for up to two representatives from each association to gather and give updates on their current activities and research. This will enable industry to further unify our efforts and eliminate duplication, so we can maximize our impact with limited resources.

On April 10, 2019, the American Pecan Council will have a general Council meeting open to public. The meeting will take place from 9:00 am CST – 12:00 pm CST in the Maverick Conference Room at the Hyatt Regency DFW International Airport.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Council office. We hope you'll join us for the general Council meeting!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Georgia Pecan Growers Association Annual Conference

March 26-27, 2019
Tifton, GA

Pecan Association Congress Meeting

April 9, 2019
Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport

American Pecan Council General Council Meeting

April 10, 2019
Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport

Oklahoma Pecan Growers Association Annual Convention

June 15-19, 2019
Ardmore, OK

For a complete list of upcoming industry events & educational courses, visit the [Industry Events page](#) on [AmericanPecan.com](#)



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