



Dear Members,

January 2024

Happy New Year! We hope your year is off to a good start. It seems like every year we say that the crop or market wasn't what producers wanted, yet we feel fortunate so many continue and are proud to grow the state tree and health nut.

The Texas Pecan Growers Association (TPGA) is always cognizant of the struggles pecan producers face, whether it be with the market, labor, weather, or any other adversarial conditions. These conditions are diverse since Texas is a large state and a convergent point of U.S. pecan production. Therefore, TPGA wanted to get a better handle on the ways we could help. We needed to hear directly from you on what are the most pressing needs and those that need to be addressed in the future. To study the industry, we helped lead a specialty crop block grant with Texas A&M AgriLife from the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA). This grant's listening sessions, surveys, and visits gave TPGA and those in the Texas pecan industry the necessary details to lead our charge to serve you. I'm happy to say within the past year, we have already seen successes that address these needs.

Throughout the year, the Texas Pecan Growers Association (TPGA) staff and Board of Directors worked to achieve these wins and to meet the organization's mission "to assist Texas pecan growers in growing pecans profitably through education, research, promotion, and advocacy." With these continued successes, the value of your membership services continues to grow through grants and outside sources; so Texas growers continue to pay a \$200 membership fee while receiving over \$2,500 in membership services per member.

For each aspect of the TPGA mission, we have highlighted some of the efforts and successes from this year. For a full listing of membership benefits, visit the webpage tpga.org/join-membership/

Education: TPGA works to give you the tools to grow your pecans and business.

- We work to ensure extension and research personnel get the resources they need, and there are positions dedicated to working for pecan growers. Due to TPGA's effort, Texas A&M AgriLife is currently hiring an entomologist to work on pecan pests across the state.
- The 103rd TPGA Conference and Trade Show will be in San Marcos from July 14-17, 2024. As one of the largest pecan conferences in the country, the show brings you educational seminars from varied speakers, networking with growers, buyers, and vendors, and many other opportunities to celebrate Texas pecans and its producers.
 - To make your conference hotel room reservation and to find more future details about the event, visit tpga.org/tpga-events/
- Labor? We heard you, it is affecting your business, so we wanted to provide a timely member webinar to give you the details about a possibly service opportunity. As a member, join is for the free webinar addresses labor on February 28 at 1:00 P.M. CST. We are also planning other educational activities, such as field days and programs.
- TPGA makes sure you have all the funding opportunities, education events, and industry news at your fingertips through our email newsletter. Be sure to take note of the resilient food systems infrastructure grant and other producer grant opportunities we have sent out in the newsletter, or email us for details.
- *Pecan South* is an incredibly valuable education resource published and provided by our office to TPGA members each month.

Research: TPGA initiates and supports the research you need, giving the industry input in the research being done.

- TPGA launched and lead, with the National Pecan Federation, in the advocacy efforts for millions in additional funding for the USDA – Agricultural Research Service (ARS) breeding program. These additional resources mean the breeding program can use more modern and efficient techniques with new personnel to bring better research in genetics, pathology, and entomology.
- Texas A&M continues to be a valuable research partner, and as we support research and grant proposals, we guarantee industry input goes into the projects. We also ensure current and new positions have a research element. One example this year was a Technical Assistance grant that gave the industry the information it needed to move Texas pecans more freely in the market.
- We continue to have wins when applying for grants, handling thousands of dollars in funding and allowing for projects that are not covered by membership dues. The Texas Pecan Innovation Center was created this year through TDA grant funding and will focus on creating useful research and education for management practices and market decisions by investing in people and projects with results.

Promotion: TPGA promotes its members year-round and gives you the resources to promote your business.

- TPGA and its exporting producer members worked year-round with TDA to promote Texas pecans across the globe, attracting

buyers and consumers from Europe, India, Mexico, Asia, and more. All of these promotions are accomplished through grant and federal funding. Even if you don't export, these promotions displace pecans on the market and help increase demand for every pecan.

- Do you know about all the promotion resources available to you as a TPGA member? Listings on two websites, new recipe and nutritional brochures, heart healthy stickers, *Pieces of Pecan* magazine, or get it all with member promotional bundles! More information can be found on our website at tpga.org/bookstore-gifts/

Advocacy: Being a constant voice and advocate for Texas pecan growers.

- As a founding and leading member of the National Pecan Federation, TPGA has been involved in the many successes such as disaster assistance funding to growers, a 70 percent reduction in the tariff for pecans going to India, ARS research funding, programs to help the market, improvements to crop insurance, and more. Of course, work on the pecan priorities for the Farm Bill are done both in Washington, D.C. and across Texas.
- In Texas, TPGA is an advocate and supporter for pecan producers through the Texas Ag Council, the university systems, and the Department of Agriculture. This important role means these groups are hearing about our industry and its needs.
- Within our own pecan industry, TPGA helps lead the way by connecting you with other programs and up-to-date information. In addition, our staff does contract work for other associations, giving our organization a leadership role in the industry.

TPGA is proud of these successes for its members! Items we are already working on for this year are consistent favorites like the Texas Pecan Show, TPGA Annual Conference, scholarships, and keeping the information flowing to you through TPGA communications and *Pecan South*. In addition, we have already begun new projects to help in the future and build upon last year's successes that will continue our consistent efforts to address your needs. We remain dedicated to developing the Texas Pecan Innovation Center, making sure you have the specialists available to help you as producers, and increasing the resources available to you through advocacy efforts. TPGA and our industry partners are also in the process of submitting grant applications focusing on improved packaging/shelf life, bio char, pecan leaf dieback, and the creation of a Texas pecan brand and certification. Stay tuned for more exciting updates as we are sure there will be many to come!

To ensure you get all the updates from TPGA and *Pecan South*, make sure your membership is up-to-date. Check on your membership at: tpga.org/join-membership/ Membership will also subscribe you to our email newsletters and mailers. You can also follow us on social media to keep up with all that is going on in the pecan world!

As we work each day on behalf of our members, we are proud of the work our staff and board of directors have accomplished. The TPGA team looks forward to continuing to carry out the mission of TPGA and the many more successes to come. If you have questions about your membership, need anything, or simply want to say hello, just reach out!

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Welcome these new members of the Texas Pecan Growers Association!

Jeff Yarbrough	San Diego, CA	Lovelady Farms	Tornillo, TX
Tom Wise	Comanche, TX	Norberto Mendoza	Ennis, TX
Jayma DeGroot	Pecan Hill, TX	Martin Jeffers	Tuscan, AZ
Jennifer Bugge	Somerville, TX	Cody Bruner	Corena, TX
Rajesh Devineni	DeLeon, TX	Phillip Ward	Bartlett, TN
Robert Howell	Dallas, TX	Toni Cotton	Katy, TX
Laura Miller	Fort Worth, TX	Mercedes Castellanos	Lakewood, CA
David Gloyna	Salado, TX	Ruz Shokrollahi	Mount Juliet, TN
Brian Patterson	Fulshear, TX	Cora Moore	Mineral Wells, TX
Irritec/Fernando Sanchez	Fresno, CA	Steve Reger	South Bend, TX
Wizard Mfg./Donald Willis	Chico, CA	Charles Hrcncir	College Station, TX
RKJ/Ty Foster	Las Cruces, NM	Dolores Hawkins	Princeton, TX
ICL Group/Mark Wiesepape	St. Louis, MO	Olan Tisdale	Fredericksburg, TX

TPGA Conference & Trade Show **July 14 - 17, 2024 • San Marcos, Texas**

The room block is open, for details visit TPGA.org/tpga-events/

A Letter from the TPGA President

Dear fellow TPGA members,

For many of us the 2023 crop is not yet in the rearview mirror, though I know many of us wish it was. This year's crop and market conditions did little to give us blue skies. I wanted to share a few things that have been helpful to us at our farm as we make it through tough times.

- Stay in touch with your county Farm Service Agency (FSA) agent. Make sure they are keeping good records and report everything they need to. That way they and you can stay up-to-date with all the programs you qualify for.
- Keep good records of your production and sales to use in crop insurance reporting.
- Work with your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). They have programs to help improve your farm and reduce your inputs.

Hopefully this year will be behind us soon, and before you know it, the summer and our conference season will be here. The Texas Pecan Growers Association (TPGA) Conference and Trade Show will be from July 14-17, 2024 in San Marcos. I want to highlight a few opportunities below, and I hope you will join me and other members in attending.

- The meeting is a fantastic opportunity to connect with other growers, industry, and exhibitors. It is also a chance to have your voice heard with the industry groups and leaders who are shaping policy and promoting pecans.
- The Texas show is an excellent time to see what equipment and technology is out there to help you streamline your operations and reduce costs. The Trade Show offers a simple opportunity to visit and discover all that is available.
- Support the National Pecan Federation (NPF). TPGA is one of the organizations funding and leading NPF so the pecan industry has representation in Washington, D.C. However, every little bit industry members can voluntarily contribute to the PECAN PAC helps to pull on the ears of congressional lawmakers, which leads to benefits during times of bad weather or markets. This group is a gold mine.

Finally, I know when markets and production are tough, it is hard to see, but the national marketing programs are vital to keeping markets afloat and turning the ship right. At the national programs, we have a new staff of energetic people. From my interactions with them, they have great ideas and understand the most important measurable is a good return to growers.

In that same vein, I want to thank the TPGA staff for their hard work year after year. The team has given you some examples of the work being done on behalf of growers in this letter. I'm proud to say that each year the membership benefits are accomplished through efficient use of resources and a high level of dedication to serving growers. TPGA is the leading grower organization and we are here working each day for producers.

In a closing note, the 2024 crop is almost on the tree. It's farming and it's not for everyone, but big crops and big prices will come back. Be ready for it!

Jake Montz
TPGA President

TPGA Mission

To assist Texas pecan growers in growing pecans profitably through education, research, promotion, and advocacy.

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Join the Texas Pecan Growers Association!

You can join or renew your TPGA membership by visiting our website or print a form to mail in. Join online at tpga.org/join-membership/

If you need any assistance, give us a call or email.

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