

# Peanut Educational Efforts in Irwin and Ben Hill County, Georgia

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## ABSTRACT

Peanuts are an important agronomic crop to Irwin and Ben Hill County with nearly 20,000 acres grown in Irwin County and 5,000 in Ben Hill County annually. Maintaining peanut profitability and quality is a major concern for farmers. Production issues such as variety selection, herbicide usage, efficient and effective fungicide programs, tillage choices, crop budget planning, pest management, improving peanut harvest timing, production efficiency, maintaining crop rotation, earlier planting dates, safe pesticide usage, accurate calibration, and irrigation are all constant concerns. The county agents' objectives are to plan and provide ample educational opportunities to peanut farmers, the agricultural community and consumers through numerous and diverse methods. Issues are addressed through production meetings, office and farm visits, phone contacts, area meetings, email, newsletters, news articles, on-farm applied research trials, hull scrape maturity clinics, and similar activities. A successful peanut crop means money is filtered through the local economy numerous times and impacts agricultural and non-agricultural businesses in both communities.



Farm Visits



Peanut Maturity Clinics

## RESPONSE

### County

Meetings: Peanut Production Meeting - GA Peanut Commission Update - TM Hobbs Irwin County Farmer Recognition, Crop Budget Meeting, Weed Management Meeting, and Ag Awareness Day  
Tools and Issues: Farm Visits, Office Visits, Phone Calls, Soil Testing, Pegging Zone Testing, Soil Temperature, Peanut Maturity Clinics - Daily during harvest, Crop Budget and Crop Comparison Tools, Peanut Rx, Pesticide Training, Farmers Market Grant, Erratic Stands, Weed Resistance, and Peanut Disease and Insects

Trainings and Demonstrations: Peanut Variety Trial, Stink Bug Migration Study, Organic Peanut Trial, Irrigator Pro - Peanut Irrigation Computer Model, Pesticide Trainings, Nematode Study  
Media: Newsletters via email, Current Webpages, News articles – Ocilla Star, Fitzgerald Herald Leader

### State and National

GA Association of County Agricultural Agents - Poster  
Peanut Education for Excellence  
American Peanut Research Education Society - Poster  
Southeast Peanut Growers Conference  
Georgia Peanut Achievement Club  
Georgia Peanut Commission Grants  
Georgia Peanut Commission Research Update  
Georgia Peanut Farm Show  
International Tours from India and Mexico  
Television /Video - GA Farm Bureau, America's Heartland, WSST - Cordele  
Newsletters submitted to Ag Fax



International Tours



APRES Meeting



GA Peanut Achievement Club



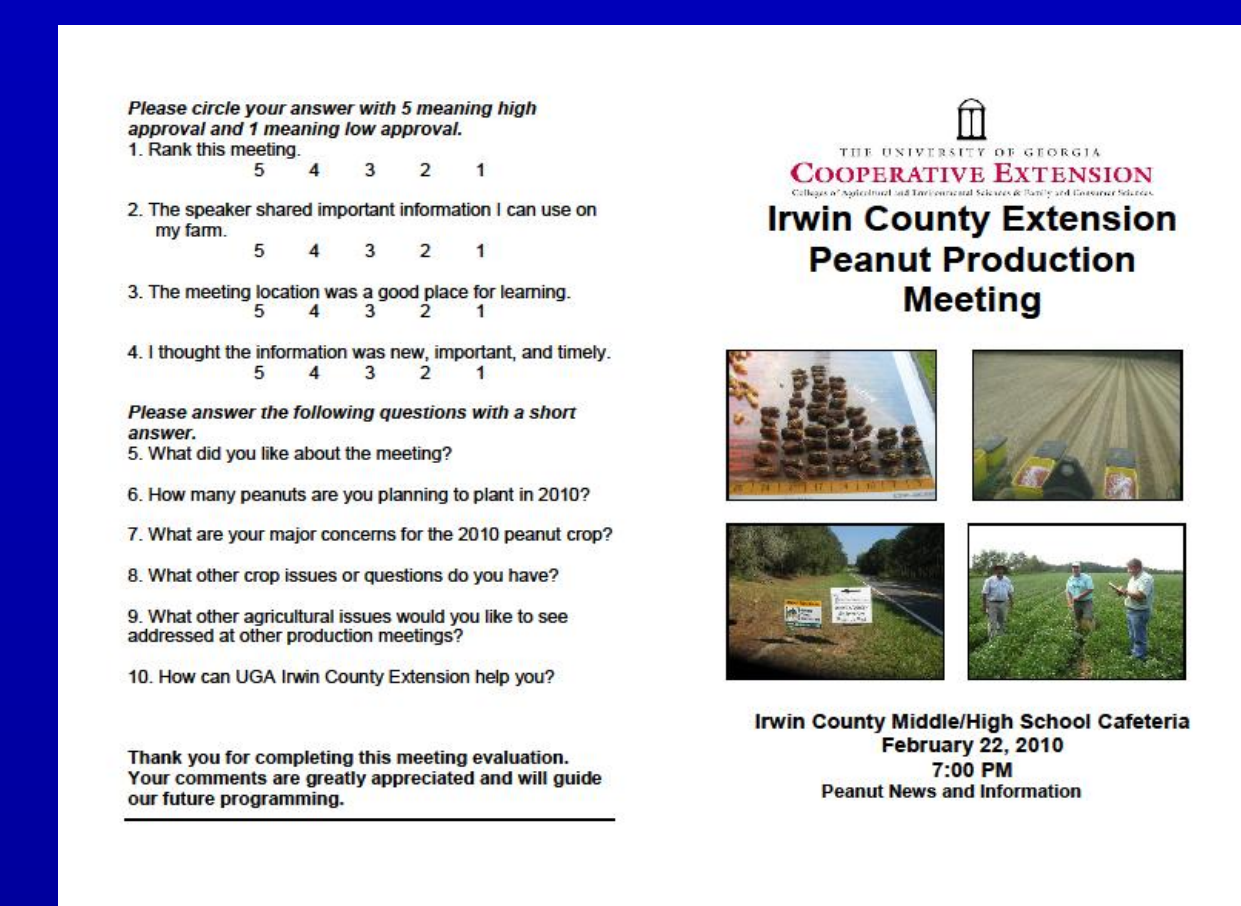
Ag Awareness Day



Irrigator Pro

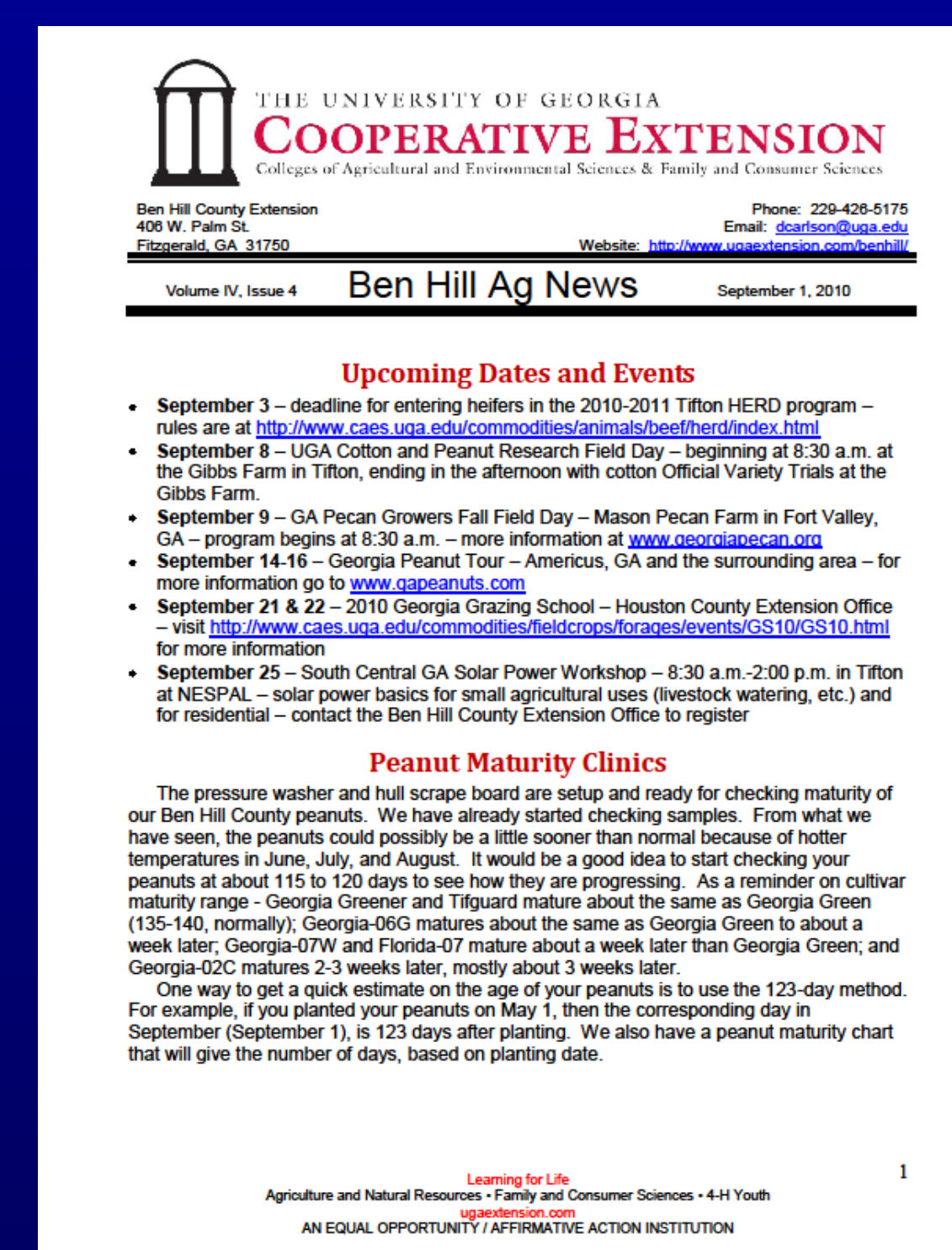


Peanut Variety Trial



## SITUATION

- ❑ Peanut production involves more farmers in both counties than any other single commodity
- ❑ Farmers demand and receive current, unbiased information from UGA Extension Agents
- ❑ Peanut farm gate value \$13,000,000 - Irwin, \$4,000,000 - Ben Hill
- ❑ Peanut production efficiency is important to total farming success
- ❑ Heavy insect and disease pressures, and irrigation demands has magnified need for quick response



## IMPACT

- ❑ Over 800 peanut maturity samples were checked by county agents in Irwin and Ben Hill County
- ❑ The use of email newsletters to convey information reach over 300 farmers and agribusinesses
- ❑ 72% of peanut acreage directly impacted by peanut maturity clinics
- ❑ Data from 2009 peanut trial was utilized by farmers in 2010 for peanut variety selection
- ❑ Agent in adjacent state asked to be added to our email list