



**Commissioner Black
Named Georgia Trend's
2017 Georgian of the Year**

Congratulations to Commissioner Gary Black recently named Georgia Trend's 2017 Georgian of the Year.

Now in his second term as the state's elected agriculture commissioner, Black is a farmer who raises cattle on 72 acres of land near Commerce that his father bought in 1969 and is a former lobbyist for the state's agribusiness industry.

"I firmly believe that if agriculture in Georgia is healthy, then Georgia is healthy – from an economic standpoint," he says.

His department oversees agriculture, of course, but is also responsible for food safety, animal health, regulating grocery stores and food processing plants, protecting gasoline quality and licensing pest control companies.

Since 2011, Black and his staff have added a strong business dimension, notably through a rejuvenated and revamped *Georgia Grown* program, a marketing and economic development effort that promotes locally grown products and assists agribusinesses.

Source: Georgia Trend Magazine

Brooksco Dairy, Quitman



THIS ISSUE

GA Dairy Conference

2017 Southeast Dairy
Student Symposium

Perdue Nominated
USDA Ag Secretary

Hayn Receives Friend
of the Dairy
Industry Award

Dixie Dairy Report

Over 400 Attends the 2017 Georgia Dairy Conference

Global and domestic markets, driving demand, milk quality, investing in technology and connecting with consumers and fellow dairymen, were among the many issues discussed at the 2017 Georgia Dairy Conference, Jan. 16 -18, in Savannah.



More than 400 southeastern dairy farmers and agribusiness representatives listened to speakers, engaged in industry discussions and explored educational programs that focused on a wide range of issues covering dairy farm management.

On Monday, Danny Klinefelter, director of the Executive Program for Agricultural Producers and Executive Secretary for the Association of Agricultural Production Executives, served as the

keynote speaker. Klinefelter's presentation, *"20 Attributes of the 21st Farm Executive"* provided dairy farmers with many management techniques to implement on the farm in order to stay competitive within industry. Additional stimulating presentations were made over the course of the convention, including those from Mary Keough Ledman of Daily Dairy Report, Dr. Andy Johnson, The Udder Doctor, and Calvin Covington, former CEO of Southeast Milk, Inc. To view and download a copy of the presentations, [click here](#).

During Monday's evening banquet, the annual Georgia Dairy Youth Foundation fundraising auction saw another year of success, raising over \$23,000 to support various 4-H, FFA and collegiate-level dairy youth programs at the state and national levels.

On Tuesday morning, dairy spouses enjoyed fellowship over breakfast and then participated in a unique painting session featuring instructors from Savannah's own Painting with a Twist. All participants enjoyed painting a special one-of-a-kind dairy creation. (Continued on next page)



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2017 GA Dairy Conference *(continued)*



Throughout the conference, attendees had the opportunity to interact with representatives from 76 agribusinesses and organizations in the exhibit hall. With a record number of trade show exhibitors, GMP is grateful for the support of dairy industry affiliates in making this conference a success. A key component of the Georgia Dairy Conference is the financial support provided by industry organizations.

By joining with industry leaders and organizations, Georgia Milk Producer has successfully built a stronger, higher-quality dairy management conference for the Southeast.

Special thanks to the ladies of the GDC: Farrah Newberry, Kellay Watson, Peggy Gates, Whitney Dixon, Carol Williams and Nicole Karstedt. It takes many months of planning to execute a large conference like the 2017 Georgia Dairy Conference. The success of the conference is definitely owed to those working tirelessly in the background!

To view our conference picture gallery and blog highlighting the various events of GDC each year, visit our website online at <http://www.gadairyconference.com>.

2017 Southeast Dairy Student Symposium Connects Students with Industry – Written by Whitney Dixon, UGA



The 2017 Southeast Dairy Student Symposium was held Jan. 15-16 in Savannah, GA, in conjunction with the Georgia Dairy Conference. There were over 43 students and advisors in attendance representing Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Virginia Tech, Berry College, NC State University, the University of Georgia, and the University of Florida.

The SEDSS allows dairy science students from throughout the Southeast to come together and connect with dairy producers and industry affiliates.

"The Southeast Dairy Student Symposium in Savannah has given me connections and opportunities within the dairy industry that I would not have had otherwise. Getting to hear from people in the industry about their jobs and how they got there as well as any advice they have for us has been amazing and helpful in our pursuit of jobs after graduation in the dairy industry," said Kayla Alward, UGA animal and dairy science student.

On Sunday evening, students were entertained at a social, played Holy Cow Bingo and met other dairy students. During the game, they had to make conversation and interact to find out facts about each other in order to fill up their bingo board. It was a hit!

Three breakout sessions were held for students to hear about internship and career opportunities in the Southeast dairy industry. Speakers discussed everything from personal career pathways to daily farm operations. Students heard from the following speakers: Dr. Ray Nebel, SE Select Sires, Kristi Fiedler, AVP US Technical Services Genex Cooperative, Inc., Natalie Adan, Food Safety Division Director, GA Department of Agriculture, Lindsey Rucks, Milking R Farm, Okeechobee, FL, and Carol Williams, WDairy LLC, Madison, GA.

The students also attended a trade show where they interacted with representatives from companies such as Suwannee Valley Feeds, Balchem, Mycogen Seeds, Alltech, MarSyt, Reid Brothers Irrigation and Equipment Company, and Stuhr Enterprises.

This two-day event was packed full with networking opportunities and industry information for the Southeast's future dairymen and dairywomen, and we cannot wait to see how it grows next year!

"The Southeast Dairy Student Symposium is an invaluable networking opportunity that allows students to explore many facets of the industry while getting to talk with industry professionals on a more personal level, both of which allow young people not only to see and learn about opportunities in the industry but provide them with the insight on how to seize those opportunities," said Dr. Jillian Bohlen, UGA assistant professor of animal and dairy science.

We greatly appreciate our sponsors for this event, Georgia Dairy Youth Foundation and Diamond V, as well as the students, advisors, speakers, and trade show exhibitors for participating and making this the best Symposium yet!



Sonny Perdue Nominated to Serve as USDA Secretary of Agriculture

President Donald Trump named Sonny Perdue, former governor of Georgia, to lead the U.S. Department of Agriculture on Thursday, January 18. Georgia Milk Producers congratulates Former Gov. Sonny Perdue on his nomination to serve as Agriculture Secretary for USDA. Gov. Perdue, who has a strong background in Agriculture, was raised on a small dairy farm in Central Georgia. Perdue is a veterinarian, businessman and known for pursuing several international trade agreements as Governor.

Cheryl Hayn Receives Friend of the Dairy Industry Award

Written by Whitney Dixon, UGA



Cheryl Hayn was presented with the 2017 Friend of the Dairy Industry Award on Monday, Jan. 16 at the Georgia Dairy Conference in Savannah.

Hayn has been a voice in the market for the Southeast's dairymen for over a quarter of a century. She recently retired from the Southeast United Dairy Industry Association with over 25 years of service and spent the last decade serving the dairy industry as SUDIA's general manager.

Hayn began working at SUDIA in December of 1988 as Director of Nutrition Communications. Since then, she has worked in a variety of jobs at SUDIA including

issues and crisis management, member and industry relations, food publicity, nutrition education and strategic planning. As a registered dietitian, Hayn acknowledged the significance of dairy nutrition and advocated for the implementation of RDNs at SUDIA.

She also represented the Southeast nationally by serving on Dairy Management Inc.'s Senior Leadership Team, Strategic Advisory Group, and Farmer Fluid Milk Advisory Group.

Thank you Cheryl Hayn for the impact you have made in the Georgia dairy industry!

Georgia Milk Producers awards the "Friend of the Dairy Industry" Award to an individual or company that has served as a strong advocate for Georgia's dairy industry during the previous year. The award is presented during the Georgia Dairy Conference banquet each year.

Dixie Dairy Report – January 2017

Calvin Covington

Highest Class I Mover in two years. The January Class I Mover at 3.5% fat is \$17.45/cwt. and 2.0% fat is \$14.09 (2.0%). This is the highest Class I Mover since January 2015. On the other hand, as the following table shows, the average Class I Mover in 2016 is the lowest Mover since 2009. Also, 2016 saw the greatest spread between the Class I Mover at 3.5% fat versus 2.0% fat, since the current method used to calculate the Mover was implemented in 2000. Due to the average fat content of milk used in Class I being about 2.0%, following the Mover at 2.0% fat is a better indicator of price changes in high Class I utilization markets such as the southeastern U.S.. As seen below, on a 3.5% basis the 2016 Mover was \$1.54/cwt. lower than 2015. However, on a 2.0% basis, the Mover was \$1.80/cwt. lower which is in more line with the decline dairy farmers saw in their 2016 milk checks compared to 2015.

Average Class I Mover (2009-2016)

YEAR	3.5% fat \$/cwt.	2.0 % fat \$/cwt.	Difference 3.5 vs. 2.0
2009	\$11.48	\$9.73	\$1.75
2010	\$15.35	\$12.74	\$2.61
2011	\$19.13	\$16.08	\$3.04
2012	\$17.46	\$15.04	\$2.42
2013	\$18.84	\$16.55	\$2.29
2014	\$23.29	\$19.98	\$3.31
2015	\$16.34	\$13.15	\$3.18
2016	\$14.80	\$11.35	\$3.45

Dairy demand remains strong, especially for manufactured products. Through the first ten months of this year, compared to the same period a year ago, commercial disappearance of butter and cheese is up 5.5% and 3.6%, respectively. On the international front, for the past two months, exports of butter, cheese, and powder are running ahead of last year.

Fluid milk demand continues to decline, but not as much as in previous years. Through October, conventional milk sales are down 1.1%, while organic sales are up 5.6%. In the three southeastern federal orders, combined fluid sales are up slightly compared to a year ago. However, the increase in fluid sales is from milk packaged by plants outside of the marketing areas. For example in the Florida order, total fluid sales are up about 1%, but sales by plants located in the Florida order are down 2.15%, while sales from outside plants are up 23%.

More milk and more cows. The nation's dairy herd is estimated at 9.339 million head, at the end of November. This is 4,000 more cows than October and 17,000 more cows than last November. November saw the third consecutive month with production increasing greater than 2%. Texas is leading the way with November production up 11.4%, and 28,000 more cows, compared to a year ago. In Texas, there is new plant construction and existing plants expanding, to handle the increased production. Production continues to increase in the Midwest and Northeast. New York produced 4.4% more milk in November, Michigan was up 5.3%, and Wisconsin up 2.2%. For the second consecutive month, California production was up at 0.2%. In the Southeast, November production was down 3.7% in Florida and 2.2% in Virginia.

Higher blend prices. We project December blend prices in the three southeastern orders to be the highest for all of 2016 with prices \$1.50 to \$2.00/cwt. greater than November. We project January 2017 blend prices similar to December. For all of 2017 we project blend prices about \$2.00/cwt. higher than 2016, about the same as 2015.