

the
Southern Region
small fruit consortium



History

- Meeting in 1998 at NC State to discuss regionalization of small fruit efforts-VA, NC, SC,GA
- Research and/or extension directors from VPI, NC State, Clemson and Univ. of GA involved in meeting
- Creation of Regional Small Fruit Center suggested to share expertise and coordinate research and extension activities with small fruits

History

- Memorandum of Understanding signed by NC State Univ., Univ. of GA and Clemson Univ. in 1999 to create the Southeastern Small Fruit Center with an annual dues per institution of \$35,000. This was cash or in-kind in terms of salaries for the web master and coordinator. The MOU was renegotiated in Fall 2007 effective through 2012.
- Mission of the center is to promote the small fruit industry through education, research and outreach through regional collaboration utilizing the expertise of the member institutions

History

- Web site(www.smallfruits.org) established to disseminate info on small fruits
- Web master initially housed at Clemson Univ. and subsequently moved to Univ. of GA
- Center name changed in 2000 to Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium(SRSFC) to be more inclusive for membership
- University of Tennessee joined SRSFC in 2002
- Virginia Tech joined SRSFC in 2005
- University of Arkansas joined SRSFC in 2007

History

- SRSFC Coordinator at NC State Univ.-three coordinators since 1999.
- Present coordinator is Tom Monaco (tom_monaco@ncsu.edu)
- Coordinator is responsible for managing SRSFC budget; overseeing web site; managing grant program; facilitating agent training; organizing annual meeting of steering committee; soliciting sponsors and promoting the consortium

SRSFC Governing Body

- The SRSFC is administered by a Steering Committee(26 members) comprised of:
 - One administrator from each institution-executive committee
 - Two faculty from each institution
 - One grower rep from each of the six member states
 - Coordinator of the SRSFC (non voting member)
 - National Program Leader, NIFA

SRSFC Steering Committee

- Approves annual budget
- Reviews and ranks grant proposals
- Assists with agent training
- Contribute to the SRSFC web site
- Attend annual meeting

SRFSC Accomplishments

Sponsored Agent Training

- Goal--to enhance county agent expertise in small fruit production so they can be more effective in providing advice to growers
- Since 1999 the SRSFC has sponsored **22** agent training sessions involving a total of **548** agents from the member states and adjacent states
- The SRSFC has provided partial and full scholarships to agents from the member states to attend the trainings. Full scholarships(all expenses paid) are offered to four or five agents from each member state

SRSFC Accomplishments

Sponsored Agent Training

- **Strawberries**

1999-plasticulture, Raleigh, NC- 10 agents from NC, SC and GA plus nine agents from AR, MD and VA

2000-plasticulture, Columbia, SC-30 agents from NC, SC and GA plus 4 agents from AL and AR

2003-anthracnose, Research Triangle Park, NC-34 agents from NC, SC and GA plus one from VA

2008-plasticulture and protected culture, Charlotte, NC-24 agents from VA, NC, SC, GA, TN and AR

SRSFC Accomplishments Sponsored Agent Training

- **Blueberries**

2001-two blueberry production sessions sponsored, one in Wilmington, NC and one in Savannah, GA in conjunction with the Southeast Regional Fruit and Veg. Conference-15 agents from NC, SC and GA

2007-blueberry comprehensive workshop, June 19-21, Duplin County Center, Kenansville, NC-30 agents and faculty from VA, NC, SC, GA and TN

- **Brambles**

2002-bramble production, Research Triangle Park, NC-19 agents from NC, SC and GA

2005-bramble production, Savannah, GA in conjunction with the Southeast Regional Fruit and Veg. Conference-33 agents from NC, SC, GA and TN plus one from AL

2009-blackberry production, Lincolnton, NC-24 agents from VA, NC, SC, GA, TN & AR

SRSFC Accomplishments Sponsored Agent Training

- **Grapes**

- 2001-wine grape production, MHCR&EC, Fletcher, NC-15 agents from NC, SC and GA

- 2002-wine grape and muscadine grape production, Chateau Elan Vineyard, Braselton, GA-30 agents from NC, SC, GA and TN

- 2006-muscadine grape production, Duplin County Center, Kenansville, NC-19 agents from NC, SC, GA, TN received full scholarships to attend

- **Site Selection for Small Fruits**

- 2004-field site selection, Edgewater Hotel, Gatlinburg, TN-21 agents from NC, SC, GA and TN plus two from KY

- **Methyl Bromide Alternatives**

- 2005-agent training on alternatives to methyl bromide, Raleigh, NC-19 agents from the four member states received full scholarships to attend

SRFSC Accomplishments

Sponsored Agent Training

- **Organic Small Fruit Production**

2005-Organic small fruit production, Sheraton Imperial Hotel, Research Triangle Park in conjunction with the Southeastern Strawberry Expo. Agents attended one day of the Sustainable Agriculture Conference in Durham, NC on Nov 5.; the training on Nov. 6 and one day of the Strawberry Expo on Nov. 7. Twenty two agents from VA, NC, SC, GA and TN received full scholarships to attend.

2011 Organic small fruit production, Sheraton Imperial Hotel, RTP. NC in conjunction with the Southeastern Strawberry Expo. Twenty four agents from VA, NC, SC, GA and TN received full scholarships to attend. Nov. 8 at hotel, Nov. 9 tour of Vollmer organic farm, Bunn,NC

- **Pruning Workshop**

2006- hands-on pruning workshop, Maple Ridge farm located in Candys, SC. Agents attended the Southeast Fruit and Vegetable Conference January 7 and 8 and participated in the small fruit sessions. Twenty four agents from VA, NC, SC, GA and TN received full scholarships to attend.

SRSFC Accomplishments

Sponsored Agent Training

Freeze Protection Workshop

2007 –January 3-4, 2007 Savannah, GA. Twenty three agents from VA, NC, SC, GA & TN received full scholarships to attend this training which was held at the Bamboo Farm and Coastal Gardens. Agents also attended the Southeast Regional Fruit and Vegetable Conference January 5-6 in Savannah.

Food Safety

2008-January 9-10, 2008. Thirty agents from VA, NC, SC, GA, TN and AR received full scholarships to attend this training to be held at the Savannah International Trade and Convention Center, Savannah, GA. Agents will also attend the Southeast Regional Fruit and Vegetable Conference January 11-12 at the same location.

SRSFC Accomplishments

Sponsored Agent Training

Irrigation Workshop

2009 January 7-8, 2009 Savannah, GA. Twenty four agents from VA, NC, SC, GA, TN and AR received scholarships to attend this training at the Bamboo Farm and Coastal Gardens. Agents also had the opportunity to attend the Southeast Regional Fruit and Vegetable Conference January 8-10 in Savannah.

Pest Management

2011 January 6, 2011 Savannah, GA, Twenty four agents from VA, NC, SC, GA, TN, and AR received scholarships to attend this training at the Savannah International Convention Center. Agents also had an opportunity to attend the SE Regional Fruit and Vegetable Conference. Five agents from FL were in attendance.

2011 May 2011. Tour of grower locations in SC to view and diagnose pest problems. Twenty agents from VA, NC, SC, UGA, UT and UA received full scholarships to attend

SRSFC Accomplishments

Sponsored Agent Training

Postharvest Training

2012 June 25-27, 2012 Kannapolis, NC NC Research Campus, Piedmont Research Station, Salisbury and Kildeer Farm, Kings Mountain. Twenty four agents from VA, NC, SC, UGA, UT and UAR received full scholarships to attend.

SRSFC Accomplishments Grants Program

- Goal-to provide funding in support of applied research with small fruits in the member states
- Maximum award is \$5000
- An outreach category was established in 2004
- Awards first made in 2001
- Total amount awarded 2001-12=**\$982,240**
- Amount leveraged from IR-4=**\$101,500**
- Total=**\$1,083,740**

SRSFC Accomplishments Grants Program

- **Totals by year**

- 2001 \$47,000 research
- 2002 \$40,000 research
- 2003 \$58,700 research
- 2004 \$56,600 research^a+\$10,000 outreach
- 2005 \$60,000 research^b+\$20,000 outreach
 - ^a plus \$9,000 matching from IR-4 performance program
 - ^b plus \$9,500 matching from IR-4 performance program

SRSFC Accomplishments Grants Program

- **Totals by Year**

- 2006 \$75,831 research^c
- 2007 \$68,295 research^d+\$11,500 outreach
- 2008 \$101,733 research^e+\$20,000 outreach
- 2009 \$100,000 research^f+\$20,000 outreach
- 2010 \$74,938 research^g+\$19,500 outreach
- 2011 \$84,950 research^h + \$20,800 outreach
- 2012 \$68,945 research + \$17,948 outreach
 - ^c plus \$10,750 matching from IR-4
 - ^d plus \$11,000 matching from IR-4
 - ^e plus \$10,000 matching from IR-4
 - ^f plus\$15,000 matching from IR-4
 - ^g plus\$7,500 matching from IR-4
 - ^h plus\$5,000 matching from IR-4
 - plus \$7,000 matching from IR-4

SRSFC Accomplishments Grants Program

- **Distribution by Institution by year**

2012 Research: NC-5; GA-4; SC-1; AR-4; Outreach: NC-2; TN-1; VA-1

2011 Research: NC-6; GA-7; VA-1; AR-3; Outreach: NC-2; TN-2; VA-1

2010 Research: NC-7; GA-3; TN-1; VA-1; AR-3; Outreach: NC-1; TN-1; GA-1

2009 Research: NC-9; GA-5; VA-3; AR-3. Outreach: NC-2; GA-1; TN-1

2008 Research: NC-7; SC-1; GA-5; TN-3; VA-2; AR-3. Outreach: NC-3; VA-1; TN-1

2007 Research: NC-6; SC-1; GA-3; TN-3; VA-1. Outreach: SC-1; GA-1; TN-1

2006 Research: NC-4; SC-1; GA-7; TN-1; VA-3

2005 Research: NC-5; SC-1; GA-5; TN-3. Outreach: NC-1; TN-2

2004 Research: NC-3; SC-1; GA-4; TN-4. Outreach: NC-2; TN-1

2003 Research: NC-3; SC-2; GA-3; TN-5

2002 Research: NC-4; SC-1; GA-2

- Most of the grants involve Co-PI's or cooperators in two or more states. Award is credited to the lead PI's institution.

Web Site

- <http://www.smallfruits.org>
- Web Master-Brenda Willis (brendaw@uga.edu) located at the Univ. of GA, Athens, GA
- Web site revamped in 2003 making it easier to navigate
- Number of hits per day-4,600

Other SRSFC Activities

● Sponsorships of Small Fruit Meetings

- 2007 Berry Conference, Ventura, CA
- 2006 10th North American Blueberry Research and Extension Workers Conference, Tifton, GA
- 2006 North American Brambles Growers Association Meeting, Savannah, GA
- 2003-2011 Southeast Regional Fruit and Veg Conference, Savannah, GA
- 2004-2011 Southeastern Strawberry Expo
- 2002 North American Strawberry Growers Assoc. and North American Bramble Growers Assoc, Raleigh, NC
- NCCC 22 Meeting, Raleigh, NC
- 2011 North American Raspberry & Blackberry Association, Savannah, GA

Other SRSFC Activities

- 2000-Cosponsored two FQPA pesticide risk assessment reviews at NC State Univ. covering all small fruits. Involved specialists from NC, SC, FL and VA
- The SRSFC has been an advocate and taken leadership roles in pursuing registrations of pesticides for small fruit crops through the IR-4 program and state labels with manufacturers

Other SRSFC Activities

- Travel Grants to attend regional workshops
 - \$500 grant to each of the member states to support county extension agent travel to winegrape workshop August 17, 2006 in Winchester, VA
 - \$500 grant to each of the member states to support county extension agent travel to NC viticulture workshop Nov 17, 2006 in Raleigh, NC
- Support for State Extension Programs
 - \$1000 allocated to each member state for support of in-state small fruit extension education programs for grower. This is an annual allocation beginning in 2008.

Challenges

- Equal distribution of research and outreach grant funds among the member institutions
- Continuation of the consortium beyond 2017.
- Continuity in coordinators. Time commitment is about 20% of a full time position. Currently held by a semi-retired faculty member at NC State Univ.

Challenges

- Growth of the consortium beyond the six state members. Would like to expand to serve the entire small fruit industry in the south.
- Securing funds from granting agencies. The SRSFC submitted major proposals to the IFAFS initiative in 2000 and 2001 which were highly rated but not funded. More effort needs to be devoted to seeking outside support.

Opportunities

- Expand Membership. Other southern states have expressed interest in activities of the consortium. If you or your institution are interested in exploring the possibility of joining the consortium a representative from the consortium would be willing to travel to your institution to visit with your faculty and administration. Twenty five per cent of Hatch and Smith Lever funds are mandated to be expended on regional projects. The SRSFC offers a productive investment of these funds. Contact Tom Monaco at tom_monaco@ncsu.edu or (919)515-6963 to arrange a visit.