

Newsletter

Southeastern Game Bird Breeders & Hunting Preserve Association

No. 12, 2020

NAGA Convention Postponed Until 2022 Event Relocated to New Las Vegas Hotel

The North American Gamebird Association is announcing that its annual convention, scheduled for February in Las Vegas, has been postponed one year and relocated to a different hotel. The convention will now be held January 31 – February 2, 2022 at Bally's Las Vegas.

Bally's is located in the heart of the Las Vegas Strip, between the Flamingo and Paris Las Vegas, and across from the Bellagio and Caesar's Palace. Hotel rooms are available with one king bed or two queen beds, and room rates start at \$144 per night, which is the same hotel rate planned for the 2021 convention.

People who have already registered for the convention have their choice of a refund, or to leave their registration fee with NAGA for the rescheduled event. If you would like a refund, please email info@northamericangamebird.com, otherwise your registration fee will carry forward for the 2022 convention.

“Postponing the convention was a tough decision,” explained NAGA President Brian Beavers. “Many, like me, have been attending since we were young, and value the information, the camaraderie and a chance to get away for a few days from our farms and hunting clubs. However, it was not possible to hold the event at our previous location. The folks with Caesar's Entertainment, which owns Bally's, have been great to work with, and we look forward to returning to Las Vegas one year from our previously scheduled event.”

NAGA will be providing additional information on the change as details are worked out. This announcement allows people to cancel their current hotel reservations and seek refunds on plane tickets that have already been

purchased. In the meantime, NAGA is working on plans for digital programming to take the place of the cancelled event.

“It is our hope to be able to provide some educational programming for those who are used to the important information normally dispensed at the annual convention,” explained Beavers. “We hope to make an announcement on this in the coming weeks.”

Laughing is Good for Your Mind and Your Body

Since March of his year, there sure hasn't been much to laugh about. Much research has shown that long term stress can severely reduce our immune function.

Researchers now appreciate laughter's power to enhance physical and mental well-being

PUBLISHED ON November 30, 2020

WASHINGTON (THE CONVERSATION) — Amusement and pleasant surprises – and the laughter they can trigger – add texture to the fabric of daily life.

Those giggles and guffaws can seem like just silly throwaways. But laughter, in response to funny events, actually takes a lot of work, because it activates many areas of the brain: areas that control motor, emotional, cognitive and social processing.

As I found when writing “An Introduction to the Psychology of Humor,” researchers now appreciate laughter’s power to enhance physical and mental well-being.

Laughter’s physical power

People begin laughing in infancy, when it helps develop muscles and upper body strength. Laughter is not just breathing. It relies on complex combinations of facial muscles, often involving movement of the eyes, head and shoulders.

Laughter – doing it or observing it – activates multiple regions of the brain: the motor cortex, which controls muscles; the frontal lobe, which helps you understand context; and the limbic system, which modulates positive emotions. Turning all these circuits on strengthens neural connections and helps a healthy brain coordinate its activity.

By activating the neural pathways of emotions like joy and mirth, laughter can improve your mood and make your physical and emotional response to stress less intense. For example, laughing may help control brain levels of the neurotransmitter serotonin, similar to what antidepressants do. By minimizing your brain's responses to threats, it limits the release of neurotransmitters and hormones like cortisol that can wear down your cardiovascular, metabolic and immune systems over time. Laughter's kind of like an antidote to stress, which weakens these systems and increases vulnerability to diseases.

Laughter's cognitive power

A good sense of humor and the laughter that follows depend on an ample measure of social intelligence and working memory resources.

Laughter, like humor, typically sparks from recognizing the incongruities or absurdities of a situation. You need to mentally resolve the surprising behavior or event – otherwise you won't laugh; you might just be confused instead. Inferring the intentions of others and taking their perspective can enhance the intensity of the laughter and amusement you feel.

To “get” a joke or humorous situation, you need to be able to see the lighter side of things. You must believe that other possibilities besides the literal exist – think about being amused by comic strips with talking animals, like those found in “The Far Side.”

Laughter's social power

Many cognitive and social skills work together to help you monitor when and why laughter occurs during conversations. You don't even need to hear a laugh to be able to laugh. Deaf signers punctuate their signed sentences with laughter, much like emoticons in written text.

Laughter creates bonds and increases intimacy with others. Linguist Don Nilsen points out that chuckles and belly laughs seldom happen when alone, supporting their strong social role. Beginning early in life, infants' laughter is an external sign of pleasure that helps strengthen bonds with caregivers.

Later, it's an external sign of sharing an appreciation of the situation. For example, public speakers and comedians try to get a laugh to make audiences feel psychologically closer to them, to create intimacy.

By practicing a little laughter each day, you can enhance social skills that may not come naturally to you. When you laugh in response to humor, you share your feelings with others and learn from risks that your response will be accepted/shared/enjoyed by others and not be rejected/ignored/disliked.

In studies, psychologists have found that men with Type A personality characteristics, including competitiveness and time urgency, tend to laugh more, while women with those traits laugh less. Both sexes laugh more with others than when alone.

Laughter's mental power

Positive psychology researchers study how people can live meaningful lives and thrive. Laughter produces positive emotions that lead to this kind of flourishing. These feelings – like amusement, happiness, mirth and joy – build resiliency and increase creative thinking. They increase subjective well-being and life satisfaction. Researchers find that these positive emotions experienced with humor and laughter correlate with appreciating the meaning of life and help older adults hold a benign view of difficulties they've faced over a lifetime.

Laughter in response to amusement is a healthy coping mechanism. When you laugh, you take yourself or the situation less seriously and may feel empowered to problem-solve. For example, psychologists measured the frequency and intensity of 41 people's laughter over two weeks, along with their ratings of physical and mental stress. They found that the more laughter experienced, the lower the reported stress. Whether the instances of laughter were strong, medium or weak in intensity didn't matter.

Maybe you want to grab some of these benefits for yourself – can you force laughter to work for you?

A growing number of therapists advocate using humor and laughter to help clients build trust and improve work environments; a review of five different studies found that measures of well-being did increase after laughter interventions. Sometimes called homeplay instead of homework, these interventions take the form of daily humor activities – surrounding yourself with funny people, watching a comedy that makes you laugh or writing down three funny things that happened today.

You can practice laughing even when alone. Intentionally take a perspective that appreciates the funny side of events. Laughing yoga is a technique of using breathing muscles to achieve the positive physical responses of natural laughing with forced laughter (ha ha hee hee ho ho).

Researchers today certainly aren't laughing off its value, but a good deal of the research on laughter's influence on mental and physical health is based on self-report measures. More psychological experimentation around laughter or the contexts in which it occurs will likely support the importance of laughing

throughout your day, and maybe even suggest more ways to intentionally harness its benefits.

–Janet M. Gibson Grinnell College

The Conversation

Bird Flu Outbreak Grows in Japan

H5 strain of avian flu has been confirmed in Hiroshima, Miyazaki prefectures

PUBLISHED ON December 8, 2020

TOKYO — Bird flu has been detected at chicken farms in the western Japan prefecture of Hiroshima and Miyazaki in the southwest, local authorities said Monday, with the central government calling for strengthened hygiene controls at farms as the outbreak continues to spread in the country.

The H5 strain, yet to be confirmed as a highly pathogenic type, made Hiroshima the sixth Japanese prefecture to experience an avian flu outbreak this season. The farm in Mihara started culling around 134,000 chickens at the location and some other affiliated farms.

Several movement control points were set up around the affected farms to disinfect vehicles, while Hiroshima Gov. Hidehiko Yuzaki requested the deployment of Self-Defense Forces personnel to help with the cull.

Farm Minister Kotaro Nogami said the ministry plans to ask chicken farms around the country to check their sanitation measures, such as disinfecting workers' hands and vehicles.

“We aim to improve the sanitary management (of the farms),” he said. “We have been in an extremely difficult situation, but the migration season of birds continues.”

Bird flu was also confirmed at a farm in Miyakonojo, Miyazaki Prefecture, with about 60,000 chickens to be culled. It was also detected following a preliminary test at a farm in neighboring Kobayashi city, the prefectural government said.

The first case this year was reported in Kagawa Prefecture in early November, followed by Fukuoka, Hyogo, Miyazaki and Nara prefectures. All of the local governments carried out massive culls of chickens in and around infected farms.

–Kyodo

Associated Press

Promoting Females in Agriculture

American Agri-Women join with KEY Apparel to promote females in ag

PUBLISHED ON December 9, 2020

COLCHESTER, Vt. ([AgPR](#)) — American Agri-Women ([AAW](#)) recognize the dynamic roles of women on farms and ranches today and the diversity among them.

Did you know that 56% of farms have at least one female producer, and 38% have a female primary producer, meaning the one making the decisions? As the number of male farmers is dropping, the number of female producers rose 27% over the past five years! (<https://psmag.com/.../ag-census-finds-more-female-farmers...>)

KEY Apparel, NY Farm Girls, and AAW have joined together to bring awareness to the ‘Face of a Female Farmer’. Jobs are just as diverse as appearances, but that doesn’t lessen credibility or work ethic. Agriculture has room for so many different careers that take you from the barn to the boardroom, and they all are forging the way for future generations to carry on. The traditional stigma of a man in overalls holding a pitchfork is universally recognized as a farmer, but for the past 50 years, it has been rapidly changing. As technology advances, daily tasks and chores are continually evolving. Men, women, and children work together to make the farm successful. With this, it means more women are stepping out of the house and giving a new meaning to the term ‘farm wife’.

These groups came together to design a shirt that embraces the faces of women in agriculture today. KEY apparel will donate \$4 to AAW for every [#FaceofaFemaleFarmer](#) item sold. Several female influencers in the ag industry are helping to promote this campaign by showing how different we all can be on any given day. By using [#FaceofaFemaleFarmer](#), you will access all their stories and

photographs. (<https://www.keyapparel.com/promo/faceofafemalefarmer/>)

“Many times, women feel competition not only amongst males in the industry, but women as well. Once we realize our farms are different, our dynamics are different, and our resources are different, we can embrace our individuality and accept that we are all needed,” states Carie M. Moore, AAW VP of Communications. “Women are active in politics, pig barns, and

production lines. No two appearances are the same and we all need to understand that. It's about mentally feeling good about yourself. Some days I'm in a dirty ball cap and greasy jeans, other days I may be talking to my state legislative members in suit coat and slacks."

AAW appreciates the partner opportunity to bring attention to females in the ag industry. It's important that we welcome each other in order to learn and grow through our different backgrounds. AAW is grateful to all the farmers and ranchers, male and female, working hard in and for agriculture.

KEY® Apparel, with over 110 years of experience in the workwear clothing industry, provides the most reliable workwear for rugged use at the best value. Their feature-rich products are the tried and true choice for those who demand consistent, comfortable, work-ready apparel.

American Agri-Women (AAW) promotes the welfare of our national security through safe and reliable food, fiber, and energy supply. Since 1974, AAW members have worked together to educate consumers, advocate for agriculture, and offer networking and professional development opportunities. For more information about

AAW www.americanagriwomen.org. Find AAW on social media at: [Facebook.com/AgriWomen/](https://www.facebook.com/AgriWomen/), [Twitter.com/Women4Ag/](https://twitter.com/Women4Ag/) ([@Women4Ag](https://twitter.com/Women4Ag)) and [Instagram.com/americanagriwomen/](https://www.instagram.com/americanagriwomen/) ([@americanagriwomen](https://www.instagram.com/americanagriwomen)).

— American Agri-Women

NASS Adjusts GA Soybean Production Forecast

Yield prediction was increased from 39 bushels per acre in October to a record-high 43 bushels per acre

PUBLISHED ON December 1, 2020

MACON, Ga. — Georgia's soybean crop could end up better than predicted earlier this year, according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service November Crop Production report released on Nov. 10.

Georgia's soybean yield prediction was increased from 39 bushels per acre in October to a record-high 43 bushels per acre. If realized, Georgia soybean production in 2020 is forecast at 4 million bushels, up 328,000 bushels (10%) from NASS' October forecast and up 60% from 2019. The state's estimated soybean yield was increased from 39 bushels per acre in October to 43 bushels per acre in November.

NASS' predictions for corn, cotton and peanut production were unchanged from October to November.

With yield forecast at a record high 182 bushels per acre, corn for grain production is forecast at 69.2 million bushels in 2020, unchanged from last month but up 24% from 2019.

Georgia cotton production is forecast at 2.4 million bales, unchanged from last month and down 12% from 2019.

Peanut production is forecast at 3.60 billion pounds, unchanged from last month but up 31% from 2019, primarily due to an increase in planted acreage in 2020.

—Georgia Farm Bureau

Deadline Approaching for Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2

Program provides direct relief to producers facing market disruptions due to COVID-19

PUBLISHED ON December 2, 2020

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers and ranchers to apply for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP 2) by Dec. 11, 2020. This program provides direct relief to producers facing market disruptions and associated costs because of COVID-19.

“With over 300 eligible commodities, from livestock and row crops to specialty crops and aquaculture, most farmers and ranchers are potentially eligible for CFAP 2,” said Richard Fordyce, Farm Service Agency administrator. “FSA offers several options for farmers and ranchers to apply. Don’t wait to check out our online resources and connect with our employees who are ready to answer your questions and help you get started on your application.”

Producers have several options for applying for the CFAP 2 program by the Dec. 11 deadline. Producers can find eligible commodities, payment rates, calculations and options to apply on farmers.gov/cfap.

Customers seeking one-on-one support with the CFAP 2 application process can call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer general assistance. This is a recommended first step before a producer engages the team at the FSA county office. The call center can also provide

service to non-English speaking customers. Customers will select 1 for English and 2 to speak with a Spanish speaking employee. For other languages, customers select 1 and indicate their language to the call center staff.

Additionally, farmers.gov offers a number of resources for producers interested in applying for CFAP 2, including:

- [Eligible Commodities Finder](#)
- Videos, including “[How to Apply for CFAP 2](#)”
- Blogs, including “[Myth Debunked: Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2](#)”

A correction to the CFAP 2 rule is pending. In case a producer is affected by this correction, FSA will provide additional time to apply or edit their application.

CFAP 2 is a separate program from the first iteration of CFAP, now referred to as CFAP 1. Participating in CFAP 1 is not a prerequisite for participating in CFAP 2. Additionally, producers who applied for CFAP 1 will not be automatically enrolled in CFAP 2 and must complete a new application to be eligible for assistance.

Both CFAP 1 and CFAP 2 are self-certification programs, which means the applicant certifies the information submitted is correct. As part of the internal controls portion of CFAP 1, FSA is conducting spot checks of applications, asking producers to provide supporting documentation to verify the information on them. Producers are being selected using a statistically sound methodology. These CFAP 1 applicants will be contacted by FSA staff and asked to provide supporting documentation to verify the information certified by the producer on their CFAP 1 application.

All USDA Service Centers are open for business, including those that restrict in-person visits or require appointments. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency should call ahead and schedule an appointment. Service Centers that are open for appointments will pre-screen visitors based on health concerns or recent travel, and visitors must adhere to social distancing guidelines. Visitors are also required to wear a face covering during their appointment. Our program delivery staff will continue to work with our producers by phone, email and using online tools. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

–USDA FSA

Georgia's Scott to Lead U.S. House Agriculture Committee

Replaces Rep. Collin Peterson, a Minnesota Democrat who lost his bid for reelection

PUBLISHED ON December 6, 2020

ATLANTA (AP) — Democratic U.S. Rep David Scott will become the first Georgian and the first African American to lead the U.S. House Agriculture Committee.

The House Democratic Caucus on Thursday ratified the choice of Scott to lead the panel.

“I was born on my grandparents’ farm in rural Aynor, South Carolina, during the days of segregation, and the hardships of those, on whose shoulders I now stand,” Scott said in a statement. He represents a suburban district south and west of Atlanta.

The committee oversees the U.S. Department of Agriculture as well as food stamps, school meals and soil and water conservation.

Scott says he wants to focus on climate change’s threat to the nation’s food supply and other issues.

He replaces Rep. Collin Peterson, a Minnesota Democrat who lost his bid for reelection.

Scott was a Georgia state representative from 1975 to 1982 and a state senator from 1983 until 2002, when he was first elected to Congress. He defeated Republican Becky Hites last month to win a 10th two-year term.

—Associated Press

Peterson Unveils Legislation to Expand CRP to 50 Million Acres

Instead of a cap, the bill establishes a minimum floor of 50 million CRP acres nationwide

PUBLISHED ON December 7, 2020

WASHINGTON — In a press conference Thursday, House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson of Minnesota announced the introduction of H.R. 8843, which makes an additional 25 million acres available over the next five years for general signup under the Conservation

Reserve Program (CRP). Instead of a cap, the bill establishes a minimum floor of 50 million CRP acres nationwide.

“CRP incentivizes farmers to remove sensitive land from agricultural production and plant cover to enhance wildlife habitat and provide other natural resource benefits,” Peterson told reporters. “CRP has a decades-long track record of engaging farmers in the effort to improve water quality, prevent soil erosion, and create wildlife habitat.”

“In addition to the increase in acreage, the bill will help CRP prioritize those applications that promote soil health and carbon sequestration,” Peterson added. “Applications for the enrollment of land on which deep-rooted perennials will be planted will also be prioritized.”

Peterson pointed to the importance of CRP in helping farmers and landowners meet environmental quality goals.

“Land enrolled in the program has helped to keep billion of tons of soil from eroding and sequestered millions of tons of carbon,” he said. “It has improved wildlife and pollinator habitat, and it has provided benefits to farmers through rental payments and drawing hunters and other recreationists, which in turn makes its way through rural economies. This is a good bill that uses a successful, existing program to pay farmers to store carbon – we don’t need a whole new regime – we have CRP.”

–House Agriculture Committee

Surging Feed Prices Will Challenge the Protein Sector's Recovery

Livestock producers will face more feed cost inflation next year than they have in a decade

PUBLISHED ON December 14, 2020

DENVER — The U.S. animal protein sector is expected to face a 12% increase in feed costs in 2021, which will mark the highest year-over-year inflation since 2011. With corn futures above \$4 per bushel and soybean meal futures around \$350 per ton, cattle feeders, hog producers and chicken producers will pay higher prices for feed than they have in many years, according to a [new report from CoBank’s Knowledge Exchange division](#). The higher feed costs come at a challenging time, as meat and poultry industry margins have been pressured by weak prices in 2020 due to COVID-19. Average producer margins for cattle, hogs and broilers fell into negative

territory this year after the pandemic disrupted foodservice demand and drove widespread meat plant slowdowns and shutdowns.

“Most producers lost money during the year, but that’s been in the midst of some of the most extreme volatility in global food demand anyone has ever seen,” said Will Sawyer, lead animal protein economist with CoBank.

“Industry margins are far better today than they were in the spring, but there will be tighter windows of opportunity for the livestock and poultry sectors to profit in 2021.”

Much of the increase in feed prices is being driven by Chinese demand for grain as it rebuilds its hog herd and overall animal protein supply after African Swine Fever (ASF) ravaged its herd the last couple of years. The USDA forecasts China’s corn imports to more than triple in the 2020-21 crop year, with much of that increase coming from the U.S.

The shortage of animal protein in China has drawn massive trade flows towards the world’s most populous country. Since China lost more than half of its hog herd beginning in late 2018, it has been the largest importer globally of beef and pork, and nearly surpassed Japan in poultry imports. While China’s protein imports are expected to decline a modest 3% in 2021, CoBank economists anticipate those imports will fall more sharply in the years to follow.

For most of the last decade, feed costs have generally been a tailwind for U.S. meat and poultry producers and have been lower than the year before for six of the last eight years. In 2021, U.S. hog producers are expected to face the highest level of feed cost inflation at 14%, closely followed by cattle feeders at 13%, and chicken producers at 11%. The impact of feed costs varies by species for several reasons, such as life cycle, feed ration, and components of other feed costs.

While feed costs will be more of a burden for the animal protein industry than in previous years, meat and poultry supply growth is expected to slow in 2021. USDA forecasts 0.8% overall growth for U.S. beef, pork, and chicken production in the coming year, the slowest rate of supply growth since 2014. That leaves reason for some level of optimism that higher feed costs can be offset by higher prices.

“While animal protein and poultry producers face a higher cost structure in 2021, margin opportunity will increasingly come from revenue rather than cost,” said Sawyer. “And fortunately, there are positive signs that producers

and processors may benefit from higher beef, pork, and poultry prices to cushion higher feed costs.”

Sawyer points to the emergence of COVID-19 vaccines as a positive first step towards the eventual normalization of food and animal protein consumption patterns, including the return of foodservice industry demand. Additionally, changes by major meat and poultry processors greatly reduce the probability of a repeat experience seen in April and May 2020.

CoBank estimates U.S. meat and poultry companies have invested more than \$2.5 billion this year in direct COVID-19 expenses to ensure safe working conditions and reduced risk of plant shutdowns. With plants operating at a more normal level, absenteeism levels improving, and far fewer workers falling ill, the financial impact of COVID-19 looks to be far less in the coming year than what the industry has endured in 2020.

Read the full report, [Surging Feed Prices to Test U.S. Animal Protein's Recovery](#).

–CoBank

Secretary's Corner

Don't be afraid of science. The science and technology to develop vaccines have greatly improved over the past 50 years. How did polio disappear? And small pox? When the opportunity arises, please accept the Corono-19 vaccine.

Happy Hunting

Dr. Gary S. Davis
Executive Secretary, SEGB&HPA
Happy Holidays