



2012 GFVGA PROGRAM OF WORK

Developed from the Industry Roundtables held during the SE Regional Fruit & Vegetable Conference. All issues are equally important.

***Attempting something doesn't mean the dream will come true,
but not attempting it guarantees it won't.***

Jim Prevor, The Perishable Pundit

Legislative

1. Due to the continuing importance of fruit and vegetables in Georgia agriculture and the continued effect state and national legislation plays in our member's everyday farm operations, GFVGA should continue its relationship with the Redding Firm for national issue representation.
2. Major efforts should be extended in 2012 to work for passage of a Farm Bill with strong Specialty Crop program support.
3. GFVGA members should be educated and mobilized to be more effective in contacting state legislators and congressmen. Necessary communication tools (The UPDATE, Legislative Alerts!!, [Face Book](#) and web updates) should be continued to aid in quickly disseminating information to the membership.
4. GFVGA members and staff should continue to be encouraged to participate in National organizations and coalitions such as, United, USA Farmers, NCAE, CPC and others.
5. The Board of Directors should organize a Legislative Committee to develop a legislative plan of action to identify and address the association's position as related to the GFVGA National Issues Statement.

Labor

1. The association will work legislatively for comprehensive immigration reform and H2A regulatory improvements. A key to any reform must be to eliminate the AEWR and make the H2A more user friendly.
2. Follow potential legislation at the State level and oppose any bills that could make it more difficult for growers to produce or harvest crops.
3. Develop educational programs and workshops to update growers on labor policy and regulation changes as the new administration transitions.
4. Communicate to growers the importance of completing labor surveys honestly and completely.
5. Develop crisis management and media communications program to prepare members to serve as spokespersons for their farm and the GFVGA. .

Water

1. GFVGA staff should continue to monitor and be knowledgeable of water issues. Water issues should be reported at each Board meeting and communicated in The UPDATE and the GFVGA Grower News. GFVGA should be active legislatively on the water issues.
2. GFVGA supports developing a baseline of water usage so we know as an industry how much water we are using and saving. GFVGA should make efforts to prepare for the 'surface water' runoff regulations.

Farm to School

1. GFVGA will monitor, participate and develop programming to support the Farm to School state and national programs which will benefit GFVGA members.

Research & Extension/Education Funding

1. GFVGA should work with the University of Georgia and other appropriate individuals/ organizations to insure the College of Agriculture is adequately funded on all campuses. As needed, GFVGA will prioritize those commodities, areas of study and special interests that best serve the entire industry.
2. GFVGA should continue to expand its educational programs to include additional conferences at the SE Regional conference, audio recordings, regional workshops/seminars and other informational/training opportunities for both grower and allied members.

Food Safety/Security

1. With the passage of the food safety modernization act, GFVGA will monitor the proposed rules to insure the regulations are science founded, commodity specific and risk based.
2. GFVGA should expand its food safety and GAP consulting program to better meet the needs of the membership as industry standards move to Global GAP/GSFI oriented audits.
3. Develop a promotional program and communication plan to inform the general public what growers are doing to keep the US food supply safe.

Marketing/Communication

1. Internal communication between members, the association and outside suppliers/agencies is becoming more critical and more complex. GFVGA should continue to provide a Member Communications Coordinator to provide timely and programmatic information to the membership.
2. GFVGA should continue its efforts to reinstate the 'fruit and vegetable promotional funds' appropriated to the Georgia Department of Agriculture by the legislature. Funding efforts for GFVGA should also be focused in Washington to identify grants, partnerships, and programs that could be used to help promote fruit and vegetable marketing and consumption.
3. GFVGA should continue to promote and support using the GEORGIA GROWN campaign and work with regional chains for more in store activities. 'On-The-Farm' Buyer tours should continue and the number of tours be increased.
4. GFVGA should continue to support and assistance to the commodity commissions, as requested, to develop research priorities and identify grower needs to be addressed by the commission.
5. GFVGA should work to develop secondary and processing markets that Georgia growers can access to increase their return on their investment.

Member Services/Programs

1. GFVGA should continue to identify programs and services that will reduce member production costs, increase profitability and better serve the produce industry in GA. The following programs will continue and expand as member demand increases,
 - Georgia GAP Program
 - GFVGA Third Party Label Program
 - GFVGA Transportation Program
 - 'Donnie Morris' Extension Personnel Awards
 - Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Foundation programs:
 - GFVGA Scholarship Award
 - GFVGA youth program awards