

## State Farmers Markets Availability Listing

### Seasonal In-State Featured Products

Columbia SFM  
Bluff Rd.,  
Columbia  
(803) 737-4664  
green onions  
rape greens  
sweet potatoes

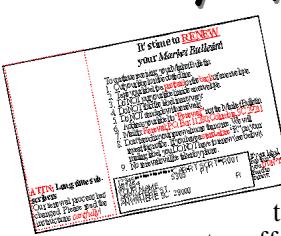
Greenville SFM  
1354 Rutherford Rd.,  
Greenville  
(864) 244-4023  
seed potatoes  
onion sets  
turnips  
pecans  
sweet potatoes

Pee Dee SFM  
2513 W. Lucas St.,  
Florence  
(843) 665-5154  
plants & flowers  
pecans  
spring onions  
sweet potatoes  
ferns

## Changes in your Market Bulletin

You may notice a few changes in our ad categories in this issue. Each category now includes supplies and equipment that relate to it. For example, instead of placing the items in our Miscellaneous section, our Horses & Mules category now includes saddles, and our Plants and Flowers category now includes flower pots, etc. In your next issue, you can expect to find WANT ads within their respective categories, though we will continue to have WANT categories for those items that do not belong anywhere else. We feel these changes will make it easier for you to find what you need.

## Thank you, subscribers!



We at the *S.C. Market Bulletin* want to thank each of our renewing subscribers for properly sending in their renewals. As we requested, most of you either taped your mailing label to the back of a postcard or envelope and mailed it, without placing the label inside an envelope. Because of your extra effort, our small staff has been able to sift through almost 15,000 renewals in just two weeks. It may not seem like much, but with more than 40,000 pieces of mail, it has saved us a lot of time, which means your renewals are processed much faster. Also, if you tape your label to a postcard, you are saved 13 cents in postage.

Some of you have asked us to permanently place you on our mailing list, however, that is not possible. The state legislature requires a biennial renewal, and we are not allowed to exempt anyone. The "R" that appears on some labels simply means that person has already renewed his/her subscription.

For those of you who haven't yet sent in your renewal, please remember that we must have either your mailing label or a copy of your mailing label. Simply writing your name and address on an envelope is not sufficient, because we must have the ID# on your label.

Thanks again to all of you who enjoy the *Market Bulletin*.

-Editor

## SCMGA to meet

This year's S.C. Meat Goat Association meeting and field day will be filled with industry information and demonstrations.

The field day will begin at 8 a.m. on April 29 at the Sumter County Exhibition Center on Liberty Street.

Fred Homeyer, author of articles that have appeared in *Goat Rancher*, *Meat Goat News* and *Boer Goat Magazine*, will be a guest speaker. Gil Myers, a parasitologist and co-author of more than 30 publications, and Dr. Philip Prather and Dr. Ralph Zimmerman, experts on artificial insemination, will also speak.

The field day will also feature a hands-on artificial insemination clinic in the afternoon. Pre-registration is required and costs \$5 for SCMGA members, \$7 for nonmembers and free for children under 12. The clinic cost is \$15. For more information, call Larry Daves at (803) 478-8109 or Jerri McDonald at (803) 897-3078.

## Another grocer looks to local growers



Representatives from Food Lion stand with SCDA Marketing Director Wayne Mack at a meeting with local produce growers.

Chain grocer Food Lion Inc. is now looking to local growers for its fresh produce. Recently, three Food Lion representatives met with dozens of local produce growers in a meeting organized by the S.C. Department of Agriculture. As a result of that meeting, many S.C. growers will deliver their fresh produce directly to Food Lion stores across the state. Among other things, the SCDA Marketing and Promotions Division works to link S.C. producers and supermarkets. Food Lion Inc. is just the latest of many supermarket chains to feature S.C. products.

## Charleston Spring Plant and Flower Festival

April 6 - 9, 2000

Thursday thru Saturday 8:00am til 6:00pm  
Sunday 1:00pm til 6:00pm

Exchange Park, Highway 78, Ladson, SC  
Phone: (803) 734-2210

## Midlands Plant and Flower Festival

April 13 - 16, 2000

Thursday thru Saturday 8:00am til 6:00pm  
Sunday 1:00pm til 6:00pm

Columbia State Farmers Market  
Bluff Road, Columbia, SC  
Phone: (803) 737-4664

## Southern Plant and Flower Festival

April 27 - 30, 2000

Thursday thru Saturday 8:00am til 6:00pm  
Sunday 1:00pm til 6:00pm

Pee Dee State Farmers Market  
2513 W. Lucas St., Florence, SC  
Phone: (843) 665-5154

## Piedmont Plant and Flower Festival

May 4 - 7, 2000

Thursday thru Saturday 8:00am til 6:00pm  
Sunday 1:00pm til 6:00pm

Greenville State Farmers Market  
1354 Rutherford Rd., Greenville, SC  
Phone: (864) 244-4023

The South Carolina

# M A R K E T B U L L E T I N

South Carolina Department of Agriculture

Volume 74 March 16, 2000 Number 6

Next Deadline: March 28, Noon

## Commissioner's Column

### Higher fuel prices equals higher food prices

Last year about this time South Carolinians were cruising along enjoying relatively low fuel prices. Gasoline prices were hovering below a dollar a gallon. In fact, at some service stations around the state, a gallon of unleaded regular gasoline was down to less than 90 cents a gallon.

The current high price for fuel, especially diesel fuel, is bad news for farmers and others involved in agriculture as well as every other citizen in this state. There has been about a fifty-cent a gallon increase in gasoline and diesel fuels since this time last year.

Truckers (primarily independent owner-operators) recently protested the high price of fuel in the heart of Washington. They were attempting to seek the federal government's help in finding relief.

This current oil price swing is not necessarily because of lower oil supplies and increased demand, but because of political ploys by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). OPEC is a coalition of oil producing countries that acts on specific economic oil price issues as they relate to enhancing their income. Those countries include Algeria, Ecuador, Gabon, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, and others.

It's ironic that many of these countries have an abundance of oil, but they lack potable drinking water or other essential necessities for life. Their oil export policies depend on how much support they receive from countries like ours in other areas. So, while short-term assistance will help now, we need long-term relief that comes from negotiations by the federal government with these countries. But, we need to negotiate without giving in to their demands. In addition, we need to encourage research and development of products that can be used in lieu of petroleum—products derived from agriculture.

The bottom line for us all is that when the price of fuel goes up, the price of everything else goes up—including agricultural supplies for production and maintenance. Farmers have worked hard to try to decrease their production costs, and now fuel costs have skyrocketed. Not only is the fuel they use in their farm equipment and in their trucks more expensive, but every product they use that is made from petroleum costs them more. The cost of herbicides and pesticides increases, and the cost of tires for farm equipment goes up. The list goes on and on of products made from petroleum that will go up in price as the cost of petroleum increases.

Traditionally, as production prices (like the cost of fuel) have increased, prices to farmers for their crops and livestock do not increase. So, our farmers' production costs grow, and their profits shrink. All that a farmer buys as a consumer goes up as well. Farmers are consumers—just like all other citizens—and their families will see an increase in their expenses for products like food, clothes, and building products with the increase in fuel prices.

Agricultural products are perishable and need quick delivery. We must have reasonably priced fuel to get products to market. For instance, during a normal harvest year in South Carolina, a total of 10,000 to 12,000 twenty-ton loads of peaches, watermelons, and tomatoes are shipped by truck, about 500 million pounds of only three of our state's agricultural commodities—a minuscule amount of the enormous quantities of agricultural products delivered by truck. Agricultural commodities shipped by truck also include other fruits and vegetables, grain, livestock, ornamental horticulture and floriculture products, and equipment and supplies. The list is almost endless.

For all of us involved in production agriculture, high prices just add fuel to the fire. Low farm prices and oversupply as well as bad weather have played havoc on South Carolina agriculture in the past few years. What we don't need is another factor added into that equation.

So, higher fuel prices? That only equals higher farm costs.

Les Tindall













