

TACC NEWSLETTER

TEXAS AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE COUNCIL

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OFFICERS

President

Tony Morton

PYCO Industries, Inc.
Lubbock, Texas

Vice President

April Graves

United Ag Co-op, Inc.
El Campo, Texas

Secretary

Greg O'Brian

Frona Wheat Growers
Frona, Texas

Immediate Past President

Brian Lehmann

Ropes Farmers Co-op Gin
Ropesville, Texas

STAFF

Tommy Engelke

Executive Vice President

Christy Lewis

Director of Administration and
Member Services

Jessica Minter

Administration and
Communications Assistant



NEW TACC DIRECTORS

- **Cary Eubanks**, Texas Star Cooperative Gin, Slaton
- **Dr. Diane Friend**, Texas A&M University, Kingsville
- **Adam Hart**, United Cotton Growers, Levelland
- **Keith Lucas**, Plains Cotton Cooperative Assn., Lubbock
- **Daniel Luehrs**, EdCot Co-op Gin, Odem
- **Freddie Maxwell**, Farmers Cooperative Compress, Lubbock
- **Dr. Donna McCallister**, Texas Tech University, Lubbock
- **Kirby Pair**, COBA / Select Sires, Inc., Stephenville
- **Scott Smith**, Consumer Supply Cooperative, Canyon
- **Darryl Socha**, Rice Farmers Co-op, Inc., El Campo



2021 TACC DIRECTORY IS COMPLETE AND COMING SOON!

Once again, TACC has begun preparing the 2021 TACC Directory and Handbook which gives members access to a multitude of information. It contains contact information on all ag, electric, telephone and farm credit co-ops in the state AND has the information cross-referenced three ways: by city, by managers last name, and by type of co-op. The book also has a section on "Co-op 101", history of co-ops, and state and federal agencies / trade associations that impact cooperatives. Everything you need to know about co-ops in Texas in one place!

RETIRING TACC DIRECTORS

- **Evan Autry**, Texas Electric Cooperatives, Austin
- **Larry Bartlett**, Cooperative Finance Assn., Athens
- **Buzz Cooper**, Texas Star Cooperative Gin, Slaton
- **John Dunlap**, Farmers Cooperative Compress, Floydada
- **Gene Felder**, Driscoll Grain Co-op, Inc., Driscoll
- **Clay Grebe**, Triangle Insurance, Enid, OK
- **Ron Harkey**, Farmers Cooperative Compress, Lubbock
- **Norman Hoff**, COBA / Select Sires, Inc., Tyler
- **Kyle King**, Terry County Co-op Gin, Brownfield
- **Bob Little**, Rice Farmers Co-op, Inc., El Campo
- **Stan Ray**, Farm Credit Bank of Texas, Austin
- **Phil Sell**, Booker Equity Union Exchange, Booker
- **Eddie Smith**, Plains Cotton Cooperative Assn., Floydada
- **Lee Tiller**, Smith Gin Co-op, Odem

TEXAS AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE 2021–2022



President	Tony Morton , PYCO Industries, Lubbock
Vice President	April Graves , United Ag, El Campo
Secretary	Greg O'Brian , Friona Wheat Growers, Friona
Imm. Past President	Brian Lehmann , Ropes Farmers Co-op Gin, Ropesville
Exec. Vice President	Tommy Engelke , Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council, Austin

COTTON DIVISION

Chair	D. J. Robertson , Yoakum County Co-op Gin, Plains
Vice Chair	Guyle Roberson , Texas Producers Cooperative, Amherst
Secretary	Aaron Hendricks, Floydada Cooperative Gin
Imm. Past Chair	Paul Schwertner , Lone Star Farmers Cooperative, Mereta

ALLIED & GRAIN DIVISION

Chair	Dean Sasser , Hereford Grain Corp., Hereford
Vice Chair	Kreece Wiginton , Woodsboro Farmers Co-op, Woodsboro
Secretary	Jason Lee , Planter's Grain Cooperative, Odem

SERVICES DIVISION

Chair	Dr. John Park , Texas A&M University, College Station
Vice Chair	Chris Looney , CoBank, ACB, Lubbock
Secretary	Blake Moore, Lyntegar Electric Co-op, Tahoka

<u>PRODUCER REP.</u>	Steve Moore , Central Rolling Plains Co-op, Roscoe
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<u>BUDGET & FINANCE</u>	Eric Wanjura , Farmers Cooperative Compress, Lubbock
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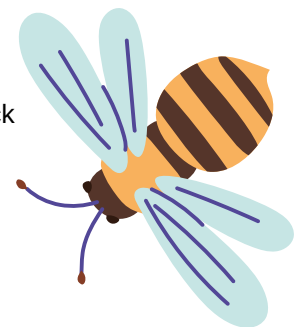
LEGISLATIVE & GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Chair	Seth Stephens , Producers Co-op Elevator, Floydada
Vice Chair	Robert Swize, Gulf Compress, Corpus Christi
Secretary	Dahlen Hancock, New Home Co-op Gin, New Home

EDUCATION & MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE

Chair	Tony Newton , Slaton Co-op Gin, Slaton
Vice Chair	Jeremy Speis, Calcot, Corpus Christi
Secretary	Charley Triplett, Plains Cotton Cooperative Association, Lubbock

- Names in bold are a member of the TACC Executive Committee



TACC ANNUAL AWARDS PRESENTED AT JOINT COOPERATIVE MEETING IN SAN ANTONIO



TACC's 2020 Cooperator of the Year is **Dennis Artho** with the Hereford Grain Corporation in Hereford, Texas. This award is reserved for those that have provided exceptional service and leadership, leaving a lasting impact on their local and statewide cooperative community. Dennis began his lifelong career at Hereford Grain working under his father in 1981 before taking over as General Manager in 2001. With quiet persistence, Dennis has made big moves for the co-op including starting an extremely successful food corn division, and was instrumental in bringing an ethanol plant to Hereford, opening up yet another new market for corn & grain sorghum.

The Cooperative Ginner of the Year is **David Wyatt** of Bayside-Richardson Co-op Gin in Woodsboro, Texas for his exemplary performance in and commitment to cooperative cotton and agricultural industries --- setting the gold standard for gin management. His cotton gin career began at 19 with his first general manager position! David has been the manager at Bayside-Richardson Co-op Gin since 1991 and has made numerous improvements that have increased the co-ops performance and profitability, setting new records year after year for bales ginned.



The Distinguished Service Award is presented to an industry leader devoted heavily to our kind of work. This year, the choice was too close to call, so two awards were presented to three very deserving people! The first award this year was given to **Kyle and Dayna King** of Terry County Co-op Gin in Brownfield, Texas, where they both served 31 years. Kyle's work in cooperatives started out in the gin yard as a tike with a little red wagon, and grew into a 41-year career with Dayna always working by his side.



A past president of TACC, **Ron Harkey** of Farmers Cooperative Compress in Lubbock, Texas is this year's second award winner. He began working at the local gin in high school, and eventually joined what would become Farmers' Cooperative Compress in 1995 before becoming General Manager two years later. Under his leadership, the co-op never lost money, leaving a substantial economic impact on West Texas.



TOMMY'S "TOODLES"



Wow, if it wasn't for the press & social media constantly telling us how bad things are, we really may have had it pretty good --- especially for our rural - oriented folks. It's the little things that matter; not the big things. Our rural folks don't know it, but they are leaving unbelievable leadership marks on an otherwise what appears to be a very disoriented society.

Can you believe an FFA kid from Flatonia, Texas had the gall to get a legislator to carry a bill that is moving rapidly through the legislative process in Austin to bring an ag study program down into the elementary public school level similar to vocational agriculture in high school? What a long-term win for our industry. Hey, even TACC got into the act. Can you believe TACC leadership had the wherewithal to put their foot down, against all odds, & insist that a Joint Co-op Meeting be held just a month ago in the high COVID - rate City of San Antonio, where ultimately nearly 375 people not only attended ---- but it felt like a family reunion!! That took guts & oh it was so special! But it also reiterates the legacy and unexplained imagination of rural leadership.

One of the longest serving state legislators in Texas history, a West Texan, once said on the campaign trail, "Elect me and I will run to not only protect your business & livelihoods, but I will also work to do nothing!" Say what? Yes, do nothing! In his eyes, our people, our families and our businesses are already over-regulated & overwhelmed by federal and state agencies that think they can run our lives better than we can ourselves. Someone asked me last week, what has been the highlight of the 2021 state legislative session and my response was, "Heck, it was the non-events that happened: no central filing discussion, no ag lien bill, no grain indemnity talk, no animal welfare fistfights, & no threats on our ag exemptions."

Cutting edge seems to be in fashion today! We are not exempt from it. Just this week, we interviewed a 3.8 GPA kid for our internship program at Texas A&M Kingsville (*our first time ever to that university*) and he is not even a resident of the U.S. One of those diamonds in the rough, bringing different experiences and more maturity & professionalism than most, we were glad to get him placed in a South Texas co-op. We even stepped out on a limb to hold our May 12- 13 board of directors meeting at a recently – opened water park and resort in Round Rock ---- and "hoping" for the best. Turns out, hoping for the best may be the understatement. If it all holds, we are likely to have our largest board meeting in recent times & the facility will be a pleasant surprise for those attending! The guest speaker will be a surprise too. He is the author of the often misunderstood HB 316, which asks for proper meat labelling by those in the plant – based, fake meat business. He's just another example of the John Wayne – type leaders we have in rural America --- willing to do their part to stand their ground for the silent majority.

I know weather – related events are staring us in the face for the umpteenth time in the last decade, but if you talk to old – timers, they take the high road and tell you that comes with the profession --- your forefathers before you have already weathered similar events, so just carry on the tradition, they say. Many would counter, that's easier said than done.

We all like unsung heroes. Agriculture got a good dose of that this past year when many unassuming people who never knew where their milk, eggs, meat & clothing comes from, finally got a wake-up call not only during the great February freeze but also during the pandemic. We don't wish for those ugly events, but there sure were some great takeaways. We saw exceptional traits & an inner strength within our rural leadership that, individually, was what seemed to be a surprise to those experiencing it!



TACC RETURNS TO RUIDOSO IN 2021

Now that “normal” is starting to peep its head out again, it’s back to our regularly scheduled program --- Ruidoso in July! TACC has two exciting programs coming up: one geared toward general and mid-managers on July 14-16, and another specifically for Board Chairmen on July 28-30. Both meetings will be hosted at the traditional location, Inn of the Mountain Gods Resort in Ruidoso, NM.

Although formal invitations have not yet been sent, TACC is holding a block of rooms at the special rate of \$129, with a cut-off date of June 15th for the Managers Conference. There will also be a \$15 resort fee / night.

The managers conference begins with a lunch at Noon, July 14, followed by an afternoon program and evening reception, a Thursday and Friday morning program --- complete with the traditional golf (\$95) tournament Thursday afternoon. TACC Cooperative New Managers conference for new managers AND new mid – managers hired or promoted within the last two years, will be held the morning of Wednesday, July 14. The registration fee for all attendees will be \$425.

Speakers for the managers meeting include **Joe Outlaw**, a Professor and Extension Economist in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Texas A&M University where he also serves as the Co-Director of the Agricultural and Food Policy Center. **Brian Kuntz**, an area director with the Oliver Group out of Cincinnati, Ohio, will be presenting a new hiring tool that assess the cognitive abilities and personality traits of an applicant called --- Predictive Indexing. In addition, **Dr. Jennifer Wells**, a Senior Account Manager at Sustainability with Truterra, LLC. out of St. Paul, Minnesota, will be down to explore the possibility of carbon markets. Other speakers / topics are pending!

Lead analysts and senior economist with the CoBank Knowledge Exchange division, **Ken Zuckerberg**, and **Tas Smith**, Vice President of Producers Affairs, from the National Cotton Council will be providing the group with a commodities market update. As is tradition, **Gary McLaren** and **Greg Taylor** will be joining the group to speak on recent and relevant court cases involving or concerning cooperatives, and breaking down Phase II of the Co-op Compensation Study that deals with compensation levels of everyone in the co-op except the CEO.

This will also be the group’s chance to meet our 2021 TACC Co-op Summer Interns and help them network with the co-op industry. Be on the lookout for this invitation!



FACEBOOK CONTINUES MAKING AN IMPACT

Facebook has become one of TACC’s main modes of communication with the membership -- keeping followers updated on council activities, providing updates on industry, legislative and regulatory changes, and sharing a funny, feel-good story every now and then. Here are some posts from the past couple of months that garnered considerable interaction. If you have not already, follow us on Facebook at Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council!



(March 18) Ag groups participated in the 8 a.m. House Agriculture & Livestock Committee Hearing at the State Capitol this morning. Two key bills were taken up: 1) one to not allow a city or county to establish an ordinance regarding working animals. Such law is already in state statute, and 2) a bill to crack down on vandalism of and trespassing on animal & crop facilities and property.

FACEBOOK CONTINUES MAKING AN IMPACT (CONT.)



(April 8) From the department of "Why Haven't We Done This Before" comes the filing on March 9, 2021 of a one page bill --- HB 3383 --- at the State Capitol by new R) State Representative **Glenn Rogers** of Graford (75 miles West of Ft. Worth). His bill would require all students graduating from a college or university in Texas to have completed & passed at least one three credit course in agriculture prior to graduation. This bill must pass through the House Higher Education Committee on its way to the Governor's desk. That Committee has as its chair R) State Representative **Jim Murphy** of Houston, a very strong urban ag vote; R) State Representative **John Frullo** of Lubbock, another strong urban ag legislator, R) State Representative **Phil King** of Weatherford, who is avid rural supporter, and R) State Representative **John Raney** of Bryan, that is a huge supporter of the co-op business model. This sounds like a reasonable expectation for people needing to know where their food comes from, along with minimum requirements for English, math & sciences! Rogers is a practicing veterinarian.



(April 27) Increasingly, TACCs position in the area of advocacy on behalf of the ag industry has been, 'We no longer have a choice!' That approach speaks volumes; especially when it comes from an ag student in high school. It seems a Flatonia FFA (70 miles east of San Antonio on I-10) student approached & convinced R) State Senator **Lois Kolkhorst** of Brenham to file SB 801. Basically, the bill builds on the already strong FFA programs across the U. S. and asks the Texas Education Agency to implement such a similar ag study program down at the "elementary" levels in public schools across Texas. WOW! The bill passed the Senate on April 30.

OUT AND ABOUT (SINCE MARCH 9, 2021):

- Solicited attendees for and conducted the TACC Joint Cooperative Meeting in San Antonio on March 14-16, where nearly 375 people attended.
- Attended and presented to the Texas Chapter, National Society of Accountants for Cooperatives virtual meeting on March 12 regarding the 2021 State Legislative Session.
- Finalized plans for the July 14-16 TACC Cooperative Managers Conference in Ruidoso, NM.
- Attended and participated in weekly ag commodity group lobby meetings (Texas Ag Council) at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday's.
- Continued to update and share TACC's Legislative Bill Summary containing nearly 65 bills impacting rural Texas.
- Along with several other cotton groups, participated in "Cotton Day at the State Capitol" on April 15, where cotton linens were personally delivered to over 200 state legislative offices.
- Finished updating and began producing TACC's comprehensive Co-op Directory and Handbook to be distributed in May.
- Finalized plans for the May 12-13 TACC Board of Directors Meeting in Austin.
- Continued to assist co-ops on numerous personnel requests.
- Interviewed & finalized TACC's 2021 Summer Co-op Internship Class, placing several students in co-ops across the state.
- Distributed TACC's 2020 every-five-year Co-op Compensation Study.
- Presented to a virtual group of students on opportunities within the co-op industry on April 7.
- Attended the Texas Cotton Ginners' Association Annual Meeting & Gin Show & Plains Cotton Growers Annual Meeting in Lubbock on April 8-9.
- Hosted a planning meeting in Lubbock regarding TACC's Managers and Board Chairmen Conferences in July on April 8.
- Assisted as a judge for the State FFA Ag Sales contest on April 30.
- Participated in a Texas Department of Agriculture / United Kingdom virtual visit with ag commodity counterparts between the two countries on April 16.

WILL BE:

- Continuing to write daily Facebook & weekly educational LinkedIn posts.
- Monitoring the state legislative session.
- Hosting the TACC Board of Directors at a meeting in Round Rock on May 12-13.
- Hosting a three-day legislative learning event in Austin for the 2021 summer interns of Ag Workers Insurance of Ft. worth on June 14-16.

Calendar of Events

May

12-13	TACC Board of Directors Meeting – Austin
31	Memorial Day Holiday

June

10	Plains Cotton Cooperative Association South Texas Gin Workshop – Corpus Christi
27-29	Texas Cotton Ginners Association Summer Meeting – Austin

July

14-16	TACC Cooperative Managers Conference – Inn of the Mountain Gods, Ruidoso, NM
18-20	Plains Cotton Cooperative Association Gin Workshop – Ruidoso, NM
28-30	TACC Cooperative Board Chairmen's Conference – Inn of the Mountain Gods, Ruidoso, NM