



2022 Partners in Progress Report

By Ron Sholar, Executive Director Oklahoma Peanut Commission

Enhancing peanut production profitability through research and outreach

Oklahoma peanut growers are proud to play an important role in producing the safe, abundant, and relatively inexpensive food supply enjoyed by consumers here at home and around the world. Through skill, commitment, and resourcefulness, farmers reliably produce and deliver their crops even as they face persistent challenges from weather and markets over which they have no control.

In the last several decades, United States agricultural productivity has shown amazing growth. There are a number of reasons for this but none more important than the availability of science-based information provided through the partnership among producers, the land-grant University system, and U.S. Department of Agriculture - Agricultural Research Service.

Peanut producers rely on the results of research programs to help create sustainability in their complex and multifaceted farming operations. For producers to meet their goals, agricultural research isn't just valuable; it's vital. Agricultural research is not a cost – it's an investment. Producers gain by implementing practices that increase production or lower costs. Equally important, consumers also benefit from an abundance of food at reasonable prices.

Oklahoma State University and USDA-ARS research programs continue to provide essential knowledge for peanut producers during very challenging times. Recent peanut variety releases by USDA-ARS at the Peanut Improvement Center in Stillwater have been welcomed by producers and the industry. Due to high yielding ability, outstanding quality, and disease resistance, recently released varieties are positively impacting the Oklahoma peanut industry and the state's agricultural economy. OSU and USDA-ARS research programs are providing growers with much needed answers for yield robbing disease and weed problems.

The true value of these research programs is shown by steady, consistent improvements in on-farm production. During the 1990s, Oklahoma peanut yields averaged 2,280 lbs/ac. During the succeeding decade (2001-2010) farmer yields improved dramatically, averaging almost 3,000 lbs/ac. Improvements in production have continued and between 2011 and 2021, farmer yields averaged 3,567 lbs/ac.

The 2020 crop averaged 4,119 lbs/ac, which was a state record at the time. However, that high-water mark was quickly surpassed by the 2021 crop, which averaged 4,356 lbs/ac, an all-time high for the state. Season-long dry weather conditions negatively impacted 2022 yields, but growers were still able to average more than 3,000 lbs/ac with many individual producers exceeding this number.

OSU and USDA-ARS research programs produce results that are of immediate benefit to growers who make direct investments in this research with funding provided through the National Peanut Board (NPB) and the Oklahoma Peanut Commission. The NPB is a grower-funded national research, promotion, and education checkoff program with growers from 10 states submitting funds and in turn, receiving research and promotion funds back in those states.

As part of an ongoing partnership, in FY22 the Oklahoma Peanut Commission teamed with OSU and USDA-ARS to submit a research proposal to the NPB. NPB responded by providing \$20,000 in research funding for this effort. The funded research project was titled Peanut Management in Oklahoma. Results of this research project are of great interest to Oklahoma producers and are presented in this report.

U.S. peanut consumption is at an all-time high and now stands at almost 8 pounds per capita on an annual basis. For Oklahoma to benefit from this and additional good news from the industry, growers must continue to have access to research-based results and recommendations as they make production decisions. The OPC will continue to team with OSU and USDA-ARS, which will provide critical assistance and with NPB, which will deliver essential resources. All partners have a strong commitment to a robust peanut industry in the state and Oklahoma's peanut growers are very appreciative of that fact.

Oklahoma's peanut producers and the Oklahoma Peanut Commission are proud of their long and productive history with OSU, USDA-ARS, and NPB and look forward to the future and the shared benefits of continuing this partnership.

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