



Food Forum



SOUTHEASTERN FOOD PROCESSORS ASSOCIATION

www.sfpafood.org

WINTER 2013

Asheville mountain gathering of the SFPA nation marks 2013 convention



Dot McCullum and Tiffany Garner model jewelry for the scholarship raffle.

SAVE THESE DATES IN 2014!

**October 16-19th
SFPA CONVENTION
King & Prince Resort
at St. Simons Island,
GA**

**Visit our web site
and Facebook site
for more details!**

**www.SFPAFood.org /
[www.facebook.com/
MySfpa](https://www.facebook.com/MySfpa)**



Evening reception at Biltmore Estate at Lioncrest.

Crisp mountain air, fall foliage and renewed friendships marked the 2013 edition of the SFPA Convention. Asheville's Doubletree by Hilton Hotel was an ideal spot for the annual event whose theme was "Together We CAN."

"Everyone looks forward to coming to Asheville," said association President Marion Swink. "The hotel was a great venue, but it is always the opportunity to renew friendships that bring people to our convention. Our welcome reception on Thursday evening was like a homecoming."

Founded in 1942 as the Georgia Canners Association, the SFPA leveraged its heritage by general session topics of mutual interest all members could embrace. Friday's general session began with a tradition, as Swink's president's showcase outlined a family business that began before the Civil War in Effingham, S.C. As a college student at Clemson, Swink and his brother would operate McCall Farms' canning operation while home during summer break. Today, the plant operates year-round, shipping on average

50 truckloads of canned and frozen products across America.

Canning was also the keynote of this year's conference as Tom Nagle and Sherrie Rosenblatt outlined an industry campaign to increase the awareness and usage of canned foods. The "Cans Get You Cooking Campaign" includes a partnership with ABC Network's The Chew television show, social media and in-store merchandising. The campaign also declares February as National Canned Food Month to build consumer awareness.

Sumantra Sengupta of EVM Partners spoke on the value of supply chain management for consumer products. Tony Treadway covered the details of the 2014 SFPA Buy the South's Best Foods Campaign. Then, scores of attendees donned their golfing gear and headed for Fletcher, N.C., for the convention's golf tournament.

Attendees gathered again on Friday night within the historic Biltmore Estate at Lioncrest.

continued on page 2



2013 SFPA Convention could be best ever

continued from page 1



Marion Swink and Anna Ondick strike a pose.



Gun toting Matt McCullum with two eager bidders.



Dinner at Lioncrest was superb.

The venue was specifically designed for banquets. Amid the beauty of the reserve under a starlit sky, a cocktail party and dinner was a fitting end to the first full day of convention activities.

Saturday morning welcomed an issues-and-answers roundtable discussion across broad topics ranging from marketing, packaging and production to Federal mandates impacting food processors.

Steve Smith, Director of Agriculture for Red Gold, led the lineup of speakers in the day's general session. Smith covered his company's involvement in a coalition to stop or delay the use of the herbicide dicamba, which is negatively impacting agricultural crops across the U.S.

Elliott Haverlack offered tips on organizational management while Chad Harris of Swift, Currie, McGhee & Hiers outlined trends related to workers' compensation.

The highlight of every convention is the Saturday night silent auction to raise funds for SFPA college scholarships and a gala dinner. The tradition of auctioning off a gun as well as ladies' jewelry was met with applause as well as a new tradition of auctioning off a quart of moonshine. This year's moonshine came from the North Carolina mountains ... something that TW Garner's Ann Riddle couldn't resist.

SFPA Executive Director Anna Ondick was recognized for her work on behalf of the association, and received a check in appreciation by the SFPA's board of directors.

"It was great to see new members attend this year's event. That is so important for our association."

Joe Rutzinski
SFPA First Vice President



Jay and Duke of Bush Beans



Auction chat



Stanley and Christy Dunbar



Ann Riddle raffles off the jewelry.



Lovely ladies



Taste of Southern perfection

Dr. Bill Morris was also recognized as one of only three SPFA Lifetime Achievement Award winners. Morris was acknowledged for his career in educating scores of students through the University of Tennessee's Food Science Department and for his decades of service to the SFPA. Morris is the chairman of the SFPA Scholarship Committee as well as chairman of the association's education committee that organizes the group's annual SFPA University, offering food safety training for plant personnel.

"This was a convention that everyone seemed to truly enjoy," says Joe Rutzinski, the association's First Vice President. "It was great to see new members attend this year's event. That is so important for our association."

Sunday, association members headed home amid the beauty of mountain colors and clear skies. Together, members renewed their professional and personal friendships and learned that together, they truly can make a difference in the industry of food processing. They will gather again in October 2014 at the King & Prince Resort at St. Simon's Island, Ga.



General Sessions were instructive and focused on industry insight.



Chad Harris on workers comp trends.



Sumantra Sengupta on supply train megatrends.



Steve Smith of Red Gold



A House Autry chat



Say hello to the Troutdales.



Round table discussion



SFPA President Marion Swink presents Dr. Bill Morris with SFPA's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Dr. Morris named as recipient of SFPA's Lifetime Achievement Award

A Midwestern farm boy turned employee of the storied Kellogg's Company and later a University of Tennessee professor, Dr. Bill Morris should not have been surprised by earning the SFPA's highest honor at this year's Asheville convention. A man with decades of service to major food processors and to agriculture students at a major university is a worthy recipient of the SFPA's Lifetime Achievement Award.



"My dad was a farmer. He worked the farm by himself with horses at 16 because his dad died, my mom was the oldest of 14 and she quit school to help," says Morris. "Neither my mom nor dad completed high school, but we had a good life on the farm and didn't know we were poor - never went hungry. My sister became a nurse and we were the first to go to college and graduate from high school."

Morris was the surprise recipient of only the third Lifetime Achievement Award presented to an SFPA member in the association's 71-year history. A proclamation read during the presentation outlined Morris' long career in the fields of agriculture and food processing. The proclamation also noted his long service to the SFPA, most recently as the chairman of the SFPA's education and scholarship committees.

"We would not be the association that we are today without the hard work of Dr. Morris," says association President Marion Swink. "We value his achievements and applaud his great career."

Thank You

I want to take this opportunity to thank all the SFPA members and the Board of Directors for honoring me this year with your Lifetime Achievement Award. It was an unexpected surprise and very humbling.

One of my passions in my career in the food industry and academia has been to help those involved in agriculture and the food industry. I guess this traces back to my farm background.

Many years ago this organization embraced Shirley and I as new members. It is due to this genuine commitment to your industry and to each other that make this association so unique. I have always considered it an honor and a privilege to serve the members of this organization.

I am proud of your generosity in supporting academic scholarships. I am inspired by your dedication to further training and education within the food industry. Mostly, I am honored and humbled to be your friend while working to achieve excellence within our profession.

Again, I thank you for this greatly appreciated recognition.

Dr. Bill Morris

Brown named Second VP, Krause added as member of SFPA Board of Directors

New leadership is in line for ascendancy within your SFPA's Board of Directors. At the October meeting of the board, Norm Brown Jr. was nominated as the Second Vice President and officer of the board. Kelly Krause was nominated as a new board member. The full membership voted unanimously for the two during the annual convention.

Brown is a fourth-generation food processor of family-owned and -operated SFPA member Bruce Foods. The company is one of America's largest privately owned food manufacturers with more than 1,200 employees and four processing plants in the U.S. Bruce Foods' products are distributed throughout the U.S. and in more than 100 countries, and are carried by most of the top retail grocery chains worldwide, so there's bound to be one near

you. Brown has served in a variety of roles for the company and is currently in charge of operations at the company's New Iberia, La., facility.

Brown will ascend to the First Vice President of the SFPA when Joe Rutzinski succeeds Marion Swink as President.

Krause is Chief Operating Officer of Atlantic Natural Foods, of Nashville, N.C. The company produces a line of vegetarian foods and recently began producing five-bean chili, meatless taco fillings, fishless tuna, vegetarian chicken patty and meatless hot dogs.

Krause will serve a two-year term as an SFPA board member.



Norm Brown Jr. Kelly Krause



“There are tremendous careers awaiting great students with appropriate degrees among SFPA member companies.”

Chad Clardy
SFPA Scholarship Committee

SFPA employee children can apply for a scholarship now under new, broader eligibility requirements

**The 2013 SFPA Employee
Scholarship Winners are:**
Kayla Brooke Armstrong
Camille Bauer
Joellen Paige Davis
Hannah Dunbar
Rebekah Murphy Kayla



Dr. Morris congratulates Hannah Dunbar on her winning one of the 2013 SFPA Employee scholarships.

A new opportunity for cash to support their children's college careers awaits employees of SFPA members. In a dramatic change to the SFPA Employee Scholarship Program eligibility requirement, the association is broadening the opportunity to apply for up to a \$2,000 scholarship while encouraging students to enter food-related careers.

“We are broadening eligibility to apply for an SFPA scholarship to include high school seniors and existing college students of SFPA member employees through their junior year,” said SFPA Scholarship Chairman Dr. Bill Morris of the University of Tennessee. “We believe that by more than tripling the window by which a student can apply, we will get even more interest and applications.”

“Likewise, we want to encourage students to enter a field of study related to the food industry. Thus, for high school seniors and freshmen through juniors in college who are majoring in food-related studies, we will give these students first priority when considering their scholarship application,” Morris explained.

For example, applications from students who are either enrolled in a college or applying to a college (such as a high school senior), in food science, food engineering, chemical engineering, packaging science, the culinary arts or microbiology will have priority in our review of their application. These majors will be considered as tier one applicants. Tier two applicants enrolled or registering as a nutrition major will also receive a priority status.

However, any child within the immediate family of an SFPA member employee who is a high school senior or current college freshman, sophomore or junior is invited to apply, no matter their intended or declared major. The scholarship is for children wishing to attend, or attending, any four-year college in the U.S. Because the SFPA cannot anticipate the number of scholarship applications it will receive each year, there can be a good opportunity for earning a scholarship, no matter the major. But, food-related majors are encouraged and will be the priority when considering applications.

“There are tremendous careers awaiting great students with appropriate degrees among SFPA member companies,” explained Chad Clardy, a member of the SFPA's board of directors and scholarship committee. “These new rules should motivate more SFPA employees to encourage their children to apply for an SFPA scholarship. The deadline for applications for 2014 scholarships will be March 30th, 2014. Employees should look for additional information posted at their job site or they can visit www.sfpafood.org for more information and to download application requirements.” Clardy is an employee of C.F. Sauer (makers of Duke's Mayonnaise and other food products). Other SFPA member companies include Bush Bros. and TW Garner Food Company, maker of Texas Pete® Hot Sauce and Green Mountain Gringo® products. Other companies include Mt. Olive Pickle and House Autry. In all, more than 20 food processors are SFPA members.

In 2013, the SFPA awarded five scholarships of \$2,000 each to high school seniors.

A different SFPA college scholarship is available to sophomores and juniors who are enrolled in food-related majors at the following universities: University of Georgia, University of Tennessee, Virginia Tech, University of Alabama, NC State University and Clemson University. The scholarship, which can be up to \$2,000, is open to any student regardless of their parent's employment. The application for this scholarship is also available at www.SFPAFood.org and the deadline for that application is also March 30th, 2014. A notice has been sent to the heads of the Food Science Departments of participating universities to alert interested students.



Joellen Paige Davis was also a 2013 SFPA Employee Scholarship winner.



Top-notch experts set for 2014 SFPA University

Exceptional training and an extraordinary value for association members



Clemson University will host next year's SFPA University on March 19-20. The list of speakers is one of the best in the history of the association's annual food safety training session.

"Each year, the association lines up top-notch experts to speak on topics important to our processors, and this year's training will be exceptional," says Dr. Bill Morris, Chairman of the SFPA's Educational Committee. "It is one-of-a-kind training for plant personnel that you can't find anywhere else at the price that we offer."

Food and plant safety is the annual focus of the training and this year the line-up includes plant and worker safety training by Jodi Phillips of Chilton Consulting Group.

North Carolina State's Fletcher Arritt will discuss new developments in acidified foods and sanitation and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Bob Neligan will cover new developments in FDA inspections. Dr. Tim Haley of Bush Brothers will discuss his company's procedures in case of product recalls. Ben Chapman of North Carolina State will also cover the Food Safety Preventive Control Alliance.

"SFPA U is a great way to assure that your plant and operations personnel are up to date with best practices without a big investment in seminar fees, travel and other expenses," says Morris. "We think it represents one of the great values of being an SFPA member."

Registration fees are \$125 per person for SFPA member employees. The association offers a group rate of \$100 per person for groups of seven or more people. Non-SFPA member fees are \$175 per person. Registrants will be responsible for hotel accommodations.

The event begins on March 19th at 11:30 a.m. with a luncheon, followed by introductions and the first training session. An event social begins at 6 p.m., followed by dinner. A full day of training begins at 8:30 a.m. on the 20th. More information on the 2014 edition of SFPA U will be provided directly to processors soon.

To register or for more information, contact SFPA Executive Director Anna Ondick at 407-365-5661 or e-mail anna_ondick@earthlink.net.

SFPA in support of two important legislative/regulatory issues in Congress

Support for a bill that would open opportunities for frozen and shelf-stable vegetable and fruit products to the Federal School Lunch Program and an effort to reform a regulation involving ethanol in gasoline were approved by the SFPA board of directors recently. Both are important moves toward political action by the association.

House Resolution (H.R. 2642), known as the "Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013" (Farm Bill) is under consideration by a conference committee of the Senate and House. The House version includes a provision that would allow schools to serve more fruits and vegetables, including those in frozen, dried, and shelf-stable packaging, under the USDA's Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.

A letter to key members of both the House and Senate committees reviewing the legislation says, "Expanding the program will teach kids how to get the most nutrition 'bang for their buck' as frozen, shelf-stable and dried produce are often the most affordable. In fact, many of the low-income schools this program is meant to reach do not have the staff or infrastructure to handle raw, fresh-cut produce. The Senate version of the Farm Bill will restrict this

program to the status quo and relegate school nutritionists to utilize 'fresh only' when and if they can." Current USDA requirements put an emphasis on serving fresh fruits and vegetables to the detriment of frozen, dried and canned products for schools.

The second matter involves a Federal mandate to increase the percentage of ethanol in gasoline from 10 percent to 15 percent. In a letter to key House and Senate legislators, SFPA Executive Director Anna Ondick said, "As the Executive Director of a regional association, I speak for more than 100 businesses across the Southeast United States in the food processing industry. Keeping costs to a minimum is of great importance to members of my organization as well as those who assist in the distribution and transport of the goods our industry produces. The Southeastern Food Processors Association (SFPA) is concerned by the inadvertent consequences brought on by the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), a federal policy requiring ethanol to be blended into fuel. Rising food prices and vehicle maintenance costs caused by the RFS have had adverse affects on SFPA members and all consumers who rely on and transport products from food processors."



Get the MOST out of your 2014 advertising and marketing dollars

The 2014 “SFPA Buy the South’s Best Foods Campaign” is ready for you!

How do you get the most from your advertising and marketing investment in 2014? The SFPA has a solution.

“Our cooperative advertising program can give SFPA members the power of a significant advertising and marketing campaign at a fraction of the cost of going it on your own,” says Tony Treadway, the coordinator of the annual campaign.

The campaign is designed to enhance the value of being an SFPA member and to attract new food processors to the association. It also lets consumers know that your brand is a product of the South to build affinity and long-term purchases.

“We declare May each year as ‘Buy the South’s Best Foods Month’ just before the summer selling season starts on Memorial Day,” Treadway says. “This declaration lets retailers and the general public in the South know more about Southern brands who are part of the SFPA and their importance in job creation, agriculture and the economy. We do this by distributing a news release to the media in the South.”

Through a shared investment in advertising, companies can participate in an integrated program that includes coupon-driven newspaper inserts to promote trial and identify a company’s brand as a Southern brand to consumers. As a participant, a company can secure coupon space in the newspaper insert that will be distributed to more than 17 million homes on May 11th or May 18th, 2014.

“We plan to distribute more than 400 million coupons during the two weeks of newspaper inserts. That is a powerful component of the campaign that will increase trial and sales of our participating companies,” explains Treadway.

“Nearly 90 percent of all food coupons that are distributed to consumers are done so through newspaper inserts, also known as free-standing inserts (FSIs),” says Treadway. “FSIs are a great way to build brand awareness and promote trial among consumers who may not be aware of a company’s brand.”

Our campaign helps to alert retailers that they should stock up on participating company brands ahead of the release of the FSIs to help increase sales through an ad in The Shelby Report, a trade publication targeting supermarket category buyers.

The campaign also includes a national recipe contest via the campaign’s website, www.BuyTheSouthsBestFoods.com, and an ad in Taste of the South magazine. The website and full-page ad alert consumers who love to cook of the participating brands and encourages them to use those brands to create a new recipe for the chance to win \$500. “This component of the campaign is powerful,” explains Treadway. “Because other websites and blogs pick up on the recipe contest, we earn national recognition and trial for our participating brands. We regularly get recipe entries from as far away as Chicago and Oregon. So, the recipe contest is an excellent marketing platform.”

A new element of the campaign is social media. “We will utilize Facebook and Pinterest to share information about the ‘Buy the South’s Best Foods Campaign’ in 2014,” Treadway concludes. “Pinterest is extremely popular among females who share information and ‘pin’ recipe and party ideas to be shared with other Pinterest users. Through social media, we will virally grow awareness among consumers everywhere of our participating Southern brands.”

To create an integrated advertising, marketing and social media campaign like the one offered by the SFPA, a single company would expend nearly \$200,000. By participating in the “Buy the South’s Best Foods Campaign,” a company can participate for just \$16,000 per coupon space. Many companies secure multiple coupon spaces because they have multiple brands they want to promote.

Several SFPA members, such as McCall Farms, TW Garner and House-Autry, have already committed their participation in the 2014 campaign. Non-SFPA members can participate for \$16,400 per coupon position. The extra \$400 pays for their membership into the organization.

The deadline for participation in 2014 is Dec. 11th, 2013. To participate, contact Tony Treadway at (423) 926-9494, ext. 112, or via e-mail at ttreadway@cenergy.com.





Mark your calendars for 2014 at the King & Prince Resort at St. Simons

It opened as a seaside dance club in 1935, and within six years the King & Prince Club transformed into one of the South's great beach and golf resorts. That is where SFPA members will gather for the 2014 convention, Oct. 16-19.

"It has been years since we visited the King & Prince, and I think our members will love the location," said Bill Keith, SFPA Treasurer. "The



resort is located directly on the beach, the golf course is on site and the accommodations are very nice."

St. Simons Island is part of Georgia's fabled Golden Isles and is rich in history, relaxed charm and natural beauty. Historic sites on the island include the St. Simons Lighthouse, Christ Church and Fort Frederica.

"We will bring back tennis to the convention's activities for 2014, and golfers will love the venue," explains Anna Ondick, SFPA Executive Director. "Be sure to mark October 16th to 19th on your 2014 calendar, because our next convention will be one that you don't want to miss."

Don't miss the Pickle Drop in Mt. Olive



If you can't make Times Square this New Year's Eve, go to Mt. Olive, N.C. That is where SFPA member Mt. Olive Pickle Company gathers town folk for its New Year's tradition – the Pickle Drop. By the way, they drop the giant pickle at 7 p.m. (EST), so don't be late.

The early New Year's event is because Mt. Olive claims they utilize Greenwich Mean Time as their cue for the big event (the other guys in NYC have it all wrong). Plus, everyone in town can shout "Happy New Year" and get back home before it's too late to get a good night's rest.

Key details of the Mt. Olive tradition:

- **See the lighted, three-foot pickle drop down the company's 45-foot flagpole and into a perfectly preserved redwood pickle tank precisely at 7 p.m.**
- **Enjoy live music, including some for those who love bagpipes.**
- **Free refreshments, including Mt. Olive pickles.**
- **Browse the Mt. Olive Pickle Company Gift Shop – just in case you didn't get what you wanted for Christmas.**

About 3,000 of Mt. Olive's 4,500 residents attend the annual event at the corner of Cucumber & Vine. Events begin at 6 p.m. For more information, visit www.MtOlivePickles.com.



www.sfpafood.org
407-365-5661

OFFICERS

President

Marion Swink – McCall Farms

1st Vice President

Joe Rutzinski – Bush Brothers

2nd Vice President

Norman Brown Jr. – Bruce Foods

Treasurer

Bill Keith – Crown, Cork & Seal Co., Inc

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chad Clardy – C.F. Sauer

Nick Gast – Beckman & Gast

Stanley Dunbar – Moody Dunbar

Lonnie Thompson – SOPAKCO

Kelly Krause – Atlantic Natural Foods

Executive Director

Anna Ondick

Educational Chairperson

Bill Morris – University of Tennessee