

# *Georgia Pecans*



Dr. Patrick Conner

The University of Georgia  
College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences



# Characteristics of Pecan

- Cross pollinated crop
- Similar to people
  - Takes two to make a seed
  - Seedlings are different from the parent and each other



# Seedling Vs. Cultivar

- Pecans may be either grafted cultivars or seedlings.
- Cultivar = Variety



Seedling trees have diverse nut size, nut shape, and kernel quality.

# Quality factors of pecan

- Nut Size
  - Generally sold as # nuts per pound
    - Large – 55 or less nuts per pound
    - Medium – 55-70 nuts per pound
    - Small – 71 or more nuts per pound
- Gram Weight
  - Large 8+ grams
  - Medium 6.5 – 8.0 grams
  - Small < 6.5 grams



# Quality factors of pecan

- $\% \text{ Kernel} = (\text{kernel weight} / \text{nut weight}) \times 100$ 
  - The kernel is the useful part, so the higher the percentage kernel the more valuable the nut.
  - Thicker shells reduce percent kernel.
  - Large nuts should have a higher percent kernel than small nuts.
  - Each cultivar has a characteristic percent kernel.
  - Higher percent kernel = better developed kernel = more oil and flavor.



- High % kernel

- Medium % kernel

- Undeveloped kernels

# Quality factors of pecan

- Kernel Color
  - Light colored kernels are generally favored.
  - Kernels darken as they age.
  - Different cultivars have different kernel colors.
  - Some cultivars have undesirable spots, or dark veins.

# Kernel Color Variation





# Color Defects

Kernel Spotting



Dark Veins



# Prominent Georgia Cultivars

- ‘Desirable’
  - Georgia’s leading cultivar.
  - Large size and high quality.
  - Less alternate bearing.
  - Disease susceptible.



48 nuts / pound  
51 % kernel

# Prominent Georgia Cultivars

- ‘Stuart’
  - Widely planted cultivar.
  - Large size.
  - Early harvest date.



55 nuts / pound  
47 % kernel

# Prominent Georgia Cultivars

- ‘Sumner’
  - Large size and good quality.
  - Late harvest date.
  - Disease resistant.
  - Becoming more popular.



56 nuts / pound  
52 % kernel

# Prominent Georgia Cultivars

- ‘Cape Fear’
  - Medium size.
  - Variable quality.
  - Golden kernel color.
  - Alternate bears.



55 nuts / pound  
51 % kernel



# Prominent Georgia Cultivars

- ‘Pawnee’
  - Very early harvest date.
  - Large size.
  - Good percent kernel.
  - Can have color defects (spotting and dark veins).
  - Disease susceptible.



56 nuts / pound  
54 % kernel

# Prominent Georgia Cultivars

- ‘Elliot’
  - Small nut size.
  - Alternate bearing.
  - Round kernel.
  - Oily, high-quality kernel.
  - Scab resistant.



77 nuts / pound  
51 % kernel

Questions?

