

The Dept. of AG. is a regulatory agency, not directly involved in research or production. Working closely, though, with our colleagues at UGA we do provide educational programs to citizens in both the public and private sector. We also serve as consumer protection for this industry.

One of the major setbacks for agriculture as a whole is an uninformed public. People don't realize exactly all that is involved in agriculture. We are not just a mule pulling a plow anymore. Advancement in AG engineering allows a farmer to plant exactly a certain number of seed per foot at an exact depth at exact row widths. Advances in plant breeding have given the farmer cultivar choices that are tailored to his growing conditions. He can plant anything from conventional wheat to cotton that has been genetically altered to resist plant pests and herbicides. Electronic monitoring of water availability tells the farmer when crops need irrigation. At harvest, machinery is available to maximize yields for everything from peanuts to blueberries. All these advancements would not be possible without the effort of those trained or educated in life sciences. And there is so much more advancements to be made. And again the general public does not know this and they need to be educated. The Department of Ag has the same problem. There are a lot of people who do not know what we do.

So let me inform you a little bit as to what Plant Industry is and what we do and how important life sciences are to our mission.

Plant Industry is one of the most diverse groups within the department of AG. We are comprised of 6 divisions. Each with legislative mandates that govern the rules we enforce.

The Structural Pest Control division regulates structural pest control companies. Our inspectors must have knowledge of the pesticides that the industry is using as well as the entomology training needed to control insects. We also provide inspection services of treated structures for consumers.

The Pesticide Division enforces state and federal laws pertaining to the use and application of pesticides. We monitor the use of pesticides in a variety of pest management situations including commercial farming,

lawn care/landscaping, forestry, public health, right-of-way, etc. It also licenses private and commercial pesticide applicators and pesticide contractors. The division licenses restricted use pesticide dealers and registers all pesticides for sale and distribution in Georgia. Additionally, the Pesticide Division licenses wood treatment facilities, inspects irrigation systems for chemigation, coordinates a pesticide container recycling program and waste pesticide collection program.

The Plant Protection The Purpose of the Plant Protection Division is to promote the highest quality and integrity of plants and plant products produced by the Georgia Green Industry while ensuring consumer protection. In addition, we facilitate and encourage the export of numerous Georgia Grown™ plant commodities to many states and nations around the world through our regular inspections and phytosanitary certification programs. We promote sustainable agricultural practices and environmental conservation through integrated pest management (IPM) initiatives and public education. And finally, our goal is to protect Georgia's agriculture and natural resources from introduction, establishment, and spread of plant pests and noxious weeds through detection and management programs.

Plant Food Feeds and GrainThe Plant Food, Feed and Grain Division is responsible for the enforcement and administration of the feed, fertilizer, lime, soil amendment and horticultural growing media laws of Georgia, and is in charge of the official grain inspection program in the state.

The Seed Division administers the Georgia Seed Law and Rules by regulating truthful labeling and minimum seed quality standards for seed offered, exposed or transported for sale to protect consumers and prevent major crop failure. The Division is responsible for operation of the state seed laboratories in Atlanta and Tifton, licensing of seed dealers, investigating seed arbitration complaints, and supervision of inspectors for seed regulation at dealer locations.

The Laboratories Division of the Georgia Department of Agriculture is divided into four laboratory units. The Food Microbiology and Dairy Laboratories and the Food Chemistry and Pesticide Residue Laboratories. The Feed and Fertilizer Laboratories and the Pesticide

Formulation, Soil Termiticide, Treated Wood, Use/Misuse, and Groundwater Laboratories

We depend on trained people in Life Science in each division. As we become more consumer driven than farm driven, both the consumer and farmer rely on this training as well.

We depend on Colleges and Universities to supply us with qualified, educated people but these people are harder and harder to find.

Urbanization has changed the playing field. Money

People do not want to go into Ag related jobs due to low pay. This includes: Entomology, Agronomy, Biology, Genetics, etc...