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2023 Annual Meeting Returns to In-Person Format

We are thrilled to share the exciting news that the Altamaha EMC Annual Meeting is making its grand return to an in-person format! Mark your calendars for Wednesday, November 1, 2023, as we gather at Southeastern Technical College in Vidalia for this highly anticipated event.

After three years of unforeseen challenges and adjustments, we understand the immense value of reconnecting with our cooperative community in a face-to-face setting. The decision to transition back to an in-person meeting reflects our strong belief in the power of personal connections and the vibrant spirit that fuels our cooperative.

Southeastern Technical College has been chosen as the venue for this year's Annual Meeting, providing an excellent setting that offers ample space and top-notch facilities to accommodate all our valued members comfortably.

We are excited to present an engaging program that promises to captivate and inform. The agenda for this year's Annual Meeting will encompass a variety of presentations, reports, and updates on Altamaha EMC's progress. We will delve into key cooperative matters, address member concerns,

and provide valuable insights into our plans for the future. This meeting is an invaluable opportunity for you to actively participate, ask questions, and share your ideas, ultimately shaping the direction and success of Altamaha EMC.

We encourage you to save the date, November 1, 2023, on your calendars and make plans to join us. This in-person meeting will allow us to reignite the sense of community, foster meaningful connections, and collaborate towards a bright and prosperous future for Altamaha EMC.

We extend our deepest gratitude for your continued support, dedication, and active participation in our cooperative. Your input and involvement play a pivotal role in shaping the success and direction of Altamaha EMC. We look forward to warmly welcoming you in person at this year's Annual Meeting, where we can celebrate our achievements, address challenges, and together, forge a path towards an even stronger cooperative.

Thank you for being an essential part of Altamaha EMC. We eagerly anticipate your presence at this much-anticipated event!



Tips For a Safe Harvest

Agriculture serves as the cornerstone of our nation, and the sustenance we derive heavily relies on the harvests cultivated by American farmers. Amongst the most labor-intensive vocations, farming stands out as one of the perilous professions within the United States.

The exhaustive toil and strenuous labor notwithstanding, hurrying through tasks to save time can prove exceedingly hazardous – even fatal – especially when operating agricultural machinery in proximity to electrical installations. Annually, unfortunate incidents occur where tractors and farming equipment inadvertently collide with utility poles and power lines, resulting in injuries and widespread power disruptions. Yet, these potentially disastrous accidents can be averted by simply directing attention upwards and being vigilant of one's surroundings while operating large-scale farming equipment. For those gearing up for the upcoming harvest season, here are essential safety pointers to bear in mind:

- Maintain a clear, 10-foot radius around all utility equipment in every direction.
- Employ a designated observer and prominently display warning flags to ensure a safe distance from power lines and other electrical infrastructure while working in the field.
- Should your machinery make contact with an energized or fallen power line, immediately contact 9-1-1 and remain within the vehicle until the power line is rendered non-operational. If encountering smoke or fire, exit the cabin with a solid leap (without making physical contact), and quickly move to a secure distance.
- Account for the dimensions of your equipment and any cargo it carries. Wood, hay, branches, irrigation pipes, and even bulk materials possess the potential to conduct electricity. Consequently, it's vital to prevent their contact with electrical apparatus.

Recognizing the significance of National Farm Health and Safety Week, scheduled for September 17-23, 2023, is paramount. Nonetheless, prioritizing safety throughout the year yields favorable outcomes. While we hope you never find yourself confronted by a situation involving the intersection of farming equipment and power lines or poles, should such an incident arise, we trust these safety recommendations will be firmly ingrained in your memory.



Don't Wait. Be Prepared Before the Storm.

The nightmare scenario has unfolded – a major storm that was predicted with surprising accuracy. Power lines lie in disarray, and it's anticipated that your electricity might be out for an extended period. Necessities like food, pet supplies, toilet paper, batteries, diapers, and medication are in short supply. Imagining yourself in this predicament is unnerving. While predicting weather forecasts is beyond your control, you possess the ability to prepare in advance. Equipping yourself with tools and resources to navigate through severe weather is key.

In such trying times, envision the reassurance of having a well-devised plan. The Department of Homeland Security offers valuable resources to aid in bracing for significant weather events and natural disasters. To access these resources, visit www.ready.gov/make-a-plan.

Essential Preparedness Steps and Supplies:

- Assemble a three-day stockpile of non-perishable food items, including canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water, as well as essential items such as diapers and toiletries.
- Ensure you have sufficient sanitation and hygiene supplies, encompassing towelettes, soap, and hand sanitizer.
- Check that your First Aid kit contains pain relievers, bandages, and medical essentials. Verify the currency of your prescriptions.
- Set aside fundamental household necessities, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener, and a portable, battery-powered radio or TV.
- Organize your emergency supplies in an easily accessible spot.

With Advanced Notification:

- If a powerful storm, like a hurricane, is predicted, with high winds and persistent rain, take extra measures to safeguard your home. Secure windows and tightly seal exterior doors.
- Fully charge all cell phones, laptops, and devices, ensuring maximum power during potential power outages.
- If you intend to use a small generator, ensure it's suited for your power needs and adhere to manufacturer's instructions for safe operation.

During an Extended Outage:

- Turn off appliances, TVs, computers, and sensitive electronics to prevent power surges and circuit overloads during restoration. Keep one light on to indicate when power is reinstated.
- In case of a small household generator usage, consider using energy-efficient LED holiday lights for illumination. Solar lights are also an option if they can charge during daylight hours.

During Thunderstorms:

- Heed the advice of the American Red Cross by avoiding electrical equipment during thunderstorms.
- Stay away from windows. Stay informed via local news, NOAA Weather Radio, or Altamaha EMC's social media for restoration updates.

After the Storm:

- Exercise caution around downed power lines and flooded areas with submerged power lines. Allow utility crews ample space to perform their tasks, including on your property.

Is your oven energy-efficient?

Buying products that bear the Energy Star label is a surefire way to save electricity around the house. But the government doesn't require energy-efficiency labels for ovens, so it's up to you to conserve energy as you prepare your meals.

Here's how:

- Use the microwave rather than the conventional oven whenever you can. Microwaves use half as much energy as the oven and cook food faster.
- Preparing a small meal? Cook it in a portable appliance like an electric frying pan, grill or toaster oven. These small appliances eat up about two-thirds less electricity than an oven's broiler.
- Cook as much of an oven-baked meal at once as possible. Variations in heat of 25 degrees in either direction will still brown your food nicely.
- Skip the preheating, especially when broiling or roasting.
- If you need to rearrange your oven shelves, do it before you turn the oven on. That helps you waste less heat by opening the door of a heated oven—and it can prevent burns.
- Avoid opening the door while your food is cooking.
- Wipe up minor oven spills with a damp cloth and use the oven's self-cleaning cycle only for major messes. When you need the self-cleaner, run it right after you prepare a meal when the oven is already hot.
- Never use an electric oven as a room heater or to dry damp clothes.

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Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know fall is the perfect time to schedule a tune-up for your heating system? Home heating accounts for a large portion of winter energy bills, and no matter what kind of system you have, you can save energy and money by regularly maintaining your equipment.

Combining proper equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings can save about 30% on your energy bills.

Source: Dept. of Energy



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Photo Courtesy Georgia Grown

Member RECIPES

Roasted Okra and Heirloom Tomato Tart

INGREDIENTS:

2 to 4 medium or small heirloom tomatoes,
different colors, sliced 1/4 inch thick
Salt, to taste
8 to 12 okra pods, thinly sliced on a mandoline or
with a very sharp knife
2 teaspoons Georgia olive oil, plus more for
drizzling
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
1 sheet puff pastry, thawed
4 ounces goat cheese, fully softened
1/4 cup heavy cream
2 tablespoons finely chopped chives
Basil leaves, for garnish

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line a rimmed baking sheet with a layer of paper towels. Season tomato slices with a sprinkle of salt on both sides as you lay them on the baking sheet. Cover with another layer of paper towels. Set aside for 15-20 minutes. Meanwhile, prepare the okra. Line another large, rimmed baking sheet with parchment. Toss sliced okra in a large bowl with the olive oil, salt and pepper. Arrange evenly spaced on baking sheet. Roast okra for 15-17 minutes, depending on thickness, until brown in a few spots and slightly crisp. Remove from oven and set aside. Raise oven temperature to 425 degrees. Dust work surface lightly with flour. Using a rolling pin, roll out puff pastry into a 10x12-inch rectangle. Dock it with a fork, leaving a 1/2-inch border. Roll it gently around the rolling pin and then unroll it onto a baking sheet lined with parchment. In a bowl, whip softened goat cheese and heavy cream together with a mixer until it is the consistency of whipped cream. Add chives and whip again for a few seconds to combine. Use an offset spatula to spread half of the whipped goat cheese mixture evenly on the pastry, staying within the 1/2-inch border. Cover the rest of the goat cheese mixture with plastic wrap and place in the fridge to chill. Shingle the salted tomato slices over the whipped cheese layer (they should be only slightly overlapping, in 3 rows of 4, or 4 rows of 5). Sprinkle with black pepper then bake for 30 minutes, rotating pan halfway through. When baked, the pastry should be deeply brown and crisp all the way through. Remove tart from oven and sprinkle roasted okra over the top, then dollop the chilled whipped goat cheese mixture using 2 spoons and spread it out with the spoons' front tips. Drizzle with more olive oil, and garnish with basil leaves. Slice to serve. Serves 3-4 as a light meal, or 6-8 as an appetizer.



*For recipes from farms and producers across
our state, visit www.georgiagrown.com.*