



Press Contact:

SUSAN McALEAVEY SARLUND

Ph: 908-723-0645

Email: easternproducecouncil@gmail.com

On Tuesday, April 27th, the Eastern Produce Council hosted its first event of 2021 with the South Carolina Department of Agriculture on a beautiful spring night at TopGolf in Edison, NJ. This marked the Department's 49th year sponsoring an EPC Dinner, and it is sure to be remembered!

South Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture, Hugh Weathers, members of his staff, and representatives from the SC Peach, Watermelon and Specialty Crop councils addressed the council and mingled with the group throughout the night. "People were happy to be out, together with their colleagues from the produce industry. It was a fun event and showed us that people are ready to socialize again; it was great to see," said Susan McAlevey Sarlund, Executive Director of the EPC.

Mr. Weathers updated the group on the crop outlook and spoke about how the South Carolina Governor's School for Agriculture at John de la Howe will establish the Eubanks Farm in memory of Martin Eubanks, who spent 33 years with the SCDA strengthening the state's agriculture industry through innovative programs and lasting relationships. Martin passed away in January of 2020.

This on-campus commercial fruit and vegetable operation will provide a hands-on horticulture experience for students and prepare them for a future career in the produce industry through the use of state-of-the-art equipment and technology. To support this exciting endeavor for the produce industry and to honor Martin, a fixture at EPC/SC events for decades, the EPC presented the Commissioner and the South Carolina delegate with a check for \$5,000. For more information on the Eubanks Farm Memorial Fund, contact Hannah Arndt at harndt@scda.sc.gov.

Up next on the EPC's calendar is the Annual BBQ sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture on Tuesday, May 25th at Demarest Farm in Hillsdale, NJ.



Pictured above L to R: Chris Yonce, SC Peach Council President, Weatherly Thomas of SC Specialty Crop Growers Assoc., Susan McAlevey, EPC Executive Director, Stevie Stills of SC Watermelon Assoc., Hugh Weathers, SC Commissioner of Agriculture, Katie Pfeiffer, SCDA Mkt. Dev. Coordinator, Kelly Davis of Allegiance Retail Svcs and EPC VP, Michelle Cantey of SCDA, Marianne Santo of Wakefern Food Corp and EPC President, Tracy Simmonds of Affinity Sales and EPC Board Member, Jack Schuler, SCDA Economic Dev. Director, and Clint Leach, SCDA Asst. Commissioner.