

A bouquet of pink carnations is wrapped in a brown paper bag. Two stickers are visible on the bag: one with the 'Sweet Grown Alabama' logo and another for 'American Flowers Week'. The background is a rustic wooden surface.

Sweet Grown
Alabama

Sweet Grown
Alabama



ANNUAL REPORT
December 2022 - November 2023

Sweet Grown Alabama

Connecting Alabama Farmers & Families

Board Members

Rick Pate
Jimmy Parnell
Horace Horn

Director

Ellie Watson

Assistant Director

Aisling Walding



Sweet Grown Alabama members and supporters,

Heading into year five, we are thrilled to share the accomplishments of 2023 with you. Without our dedicated members, financial partners, state legislators and community supporters we would not be able to promote local products. Thank you for walking alongside us for another year of connecting Alabama farmers and families! Please join us in celebrating the successes of this year, while also looking forward to the future. With \$380,000 budgeted for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, we are ready to make an even bigger impact on Alabama's economy.

Thank you,

Rick Pate, Jimmy Parnell, Horace Horn, Ellie Watson and Aisling Walding

Mission Statement

Sweet Grown Alabama enhances marketing opportunities for Alabama farmers by connecting retailers and consumers to Alabama-grown foods and other agricultural products.

MEMBER TESTIMONIALS

Read how membership in Sweet Grown Alabama has impacted these Alabama farmers.



“I love the idea that someone is out there everyday promoting us. We know we don't have time to do it all, because when we get home from our day jobs we are busy on the farm. Sweet Grown Alabama has allowed us to get done what we need to here on the farm, while they are out being our voice.”

JENNIE HILL
Granite Knoll Farm



“Up until we received a call from Terry Landry, owner of Bayou Pecan Company, we ordered our pecans for our cinnamon pecan honey from California. We didn't know it at the time, but Bayou Pecan Company was exactly what we needed to offer our customers a beautiful local product. Thanks to Sweet Grown Alabama, not only do we share products with Terry and his wife, Kim, but we have developed a wonderful friendship with them as well.”

JENNIFER PETTIS
Southern Farms Honey



“My business partner and I were out checking bees when I saw a Facebook post saying our creamed cinnamon honey would be included in this year's Christmas boxes. I told him to give it 10 minutes and my phone would be ringing with orders. Four minutes later, the first call came and since then many more orders have come in. I ask customers two questions, how do you use the honey and where did you hear about us. Many times they've found us through the Sweet Grown Alabama website! I just can't say enough good things about this organization and the ladies who work so hard promoting Alabama agricultural products.”

ALLEN MILLS
Prattville Honey Farm



“As a result of our membership with Sweet Grown Alabama, we were able to connect with the Alabama RC&D Councils. After seeing that we were a member of Sweet Grown Alabama, they contacted us to share our flowers at the Sweet Grown Alabama Luncheon during the 2021 annual convention. They have also invited us to return this year. This has been quite an honor and an amazing opportunity that would not have been possible had we not been members of Sweet Grown Alabama.”

DEANNE BENEDICT
Flowers to Bless



2022-2023 PARTNERS

DIAMOND SUPPORTERS



GOLD SUPPORTER



SILVER SUPPORTERS



BRONZE SUPPORTERS

FIRST SOUTH FARM CREDIT
SUNSOUTH JOHN DEERE
UNITED BANK

Sweet Grown Alabama

Connecting Alabama Farmers & Families

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR FOUNDING MEMBER PARTNERS



Alabama
Power



PowerSouth[®]
ENERGY COOPERATIVE



ALABAMA
FARM CREDIT



First South
Farm Credit



BY THE NUMBERS

350+

Members

73,000+

SweetGrown
Alabama.org
Website Users

1,000+

Media
Features

16,000+

Facebook Followers

4,500+

Instagram Followers

820+

Twitter/X Followers

21+

Million

Impressions Made
Through Traditional
Marketing

100+

Events
Attended

8,000+

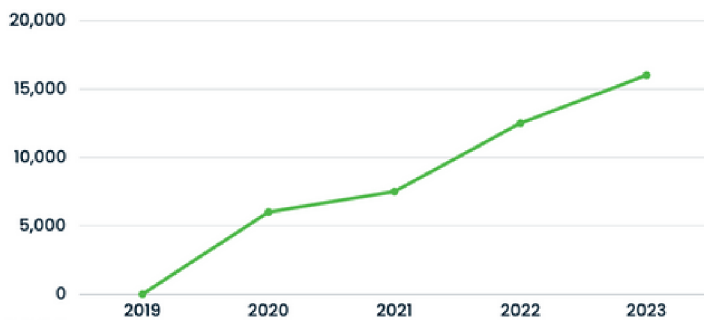
E-Newsletter
Subscribers

\$473,000+

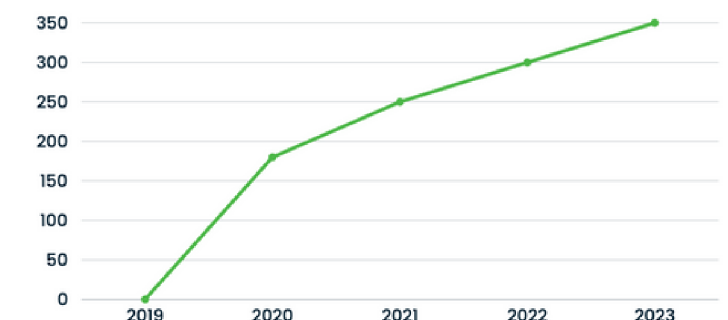
Funds
Brought In

BY THE NUMBERS

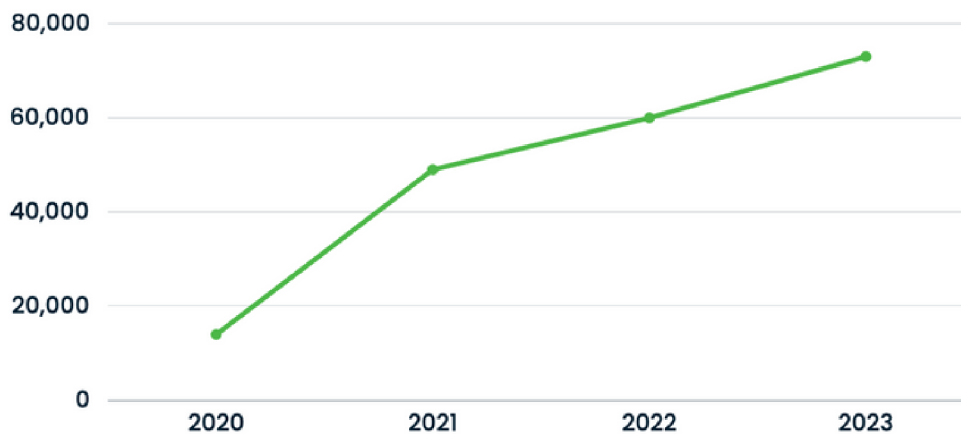
FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS



NUMBER OF MEMBERS



YEARLY WEBSITE HITS



Examples of the marketing creative
and platforms used in 2023



Billboard examples
(generic and crop
specific)



Magazine ad examples





18 videos highlighting specialty crops (paid for through USDA grant funding)



Audio ads on radio, podcasts, and Auburn and Alabama football and basketball broadcasts



Score Big With
Sweet Grown
Alabama



Alabama farmers work hard to grow products like sweet, seedless satsuma mandarins, beef, honey, peanuts, produce and more. Buying local is a slam dunk and helps reinvest dollars back into Alabama's economy.

Find local at SweetGrownAlabama.org



Banner ad online with Auburn Athletics

Print ad in Auburn basketball fan guides



Signage in Auburn's Jordan-Hare Stadium and Auburn Arena as well as Alabama's Bryant-Denny Stadium and Coleman Coliseum



WBRC Farm Spotlights

Sweet Grown Alabama sponsored two minute videos that aired every other Wednesday on WBRC Fox 6 Birmingham. This series highlighted several Sweet Grown Alabama members and educated consumers on where to find local products.



“What's in Season” Segments on Simply Southern

During Season 9 of Simply Southern TV, Sweet Grown Alabama filmed the “What's in Season” episodes. These aired monthly and explained to viewers what seasonal products were being harvested in Alabama. Also mentioned were Sweet Grown Alabama updates, what to look for on the website, how to find local products and more. Over half a million households were reached with these segments.



Sweet Grown Alabama

Connecting Alabama Farmers & Families

SUNBELT AG EXPO

Sweet Grown Alabama provided a cohesive theme as more than 10,000 visitors to the Spotlight State building traveled on a “Road Trip through Sweet Grown Alabama” during the expo Oct. 17-19 in Moultrie, Georgia.



Ellie Watson delivered the keynote address and educated nearly 1,000 Farmer of the Year Luncheon attendees about Sweet Grown Alabama.



SUCCESSES

Farm to Table Dinner

Sweet Grown Alabama hosted its third annual farm to table dinner July 13 in Prattville. More than 250 guests enjoyed food, wine, florals and a jelly take home gift from 11 different Sweet Grown Alabama member farms.



Sweet Grown Alabama Day

July 22 marked the second annual “Sweet Grown Alabama Day” celebration! Gov.

Kay Ivey issued a proclamation to commemorate the day, and thirteen farmers markets across the state participated with special events.

Consumers not located near one of these special events were encouraged to visit a local market or store, eat at a restaurant serving local products or cook a meal with local ingredients to connect with and support farmers in their area.



SUCCESSES

Legislative Luncheon

Sweet Grown Alabama hosted state legislators at the Alabama Cattlemen's Association for a lunch of local products in downtown Montgomery May 17. Guests enjoyed lasagna made with beef from Trinity Farms in Montgomery County. Four other Sweet Grown Alabama farms were also featured in the meal, which was catered by members FDL- Gourmet to Go.



Legislative Appropriation

Thanks to incredible support from the Alabama State Legislature, Sweet Grown Alabama received a \$300,000 general fund appropriation to continue connecting Alabama farmers and families.

SUCCESES

Sweet Grown Alabama Ambassador Program

We were excited to welcome our inaugural group of "Sweet Grown Alabama Ambassadors" this year. This class of influencers helped us promote local products on their respective social media pages to a combined 90,000 followers.



Alabama Cooperative Extension System Sweet Potato Study

Good news for Sweet Grown Alabama member farmers! A study conducted by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the Auburn University College of Agriculture at five different farmers markets across the state concluded that consumers are willing to pay a \$1.01 premium for locally grown sweet potatoes labeled Sweet Grown Alabama.



Sweet Grown Alabama Partners on Local Food Truck

Sweet Grown Alabama partnered with the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries and Wallace State Community College in Hanceville to cook local products at six events across the state. Recipe cards were shared to encourage consumers to use local ingredients in meals at home.

SUCCESSES



SUCCESSES

Pop-Up Farmers Markets

Sweet Grown Alabama hosted a farmers market outside of the Alabama Department of Agriculture's annual Tomato Sandwich Lunch in Montgomery July 28. Ten Sweet Grown Alabama members set up booths and sold goods to consumers after they enjoyed a meal of local tomato sandwiches, sweet corn and more.



Sweet Grown Alabama partnered with the Alabama Cattlemen's Association, Alabama Forestry Association and Alabama Poultry & Egg Association to host a block party in downtown Montgomery July 11.



Sweet Grown Alabama hosted a farmers market for employees of the Alabama Farmers Cooperative at their headquarters in Decatur Aug. 6. Employees purchased local beef, honey, eggs, produce, peach preserves and more from eight different Sweet Grown members.



SUCCESSIONS

Restaurant and Farmer Networking Events

Sweet Grown Alabama hosted two networking events, one in Ozark and one in Mobile, designed to connect farmers with restaurants and chefs.

Restaurants were educated on the importance of purchasing local and took home samples of products from Sweet Grown Alabama members.



Summer Intern

Auburn University agricultural communications student Maggie Holladay interned with Sweet Grown Alabama in summer 2023. She wrote feature articles on members, created social media graphics, assisted with events and more.

SWEET GROWN ALABAMA IS EVERYWHERE

Sweet Grown Alabama
Connecting Alabama Farmers & Families

Members have utilized the logo on hundreds of local products all across the state. Consumers can ensure when they see this logo, they are receiving a fresh, high-quality product.



LOOKING FORWARD

Here's an insider exclusive on a few things to expect from Sweet Grown Alabama in 2024...



Plans Include:

- Annual farm to table dinner in North Alabama
- Second class of Sweet Grown Alabama Ambassadors
- Third annual "Sweet Grown Alabama Day"
- Strategic marketing and specialty crop sampling booths at eight Alabama college football games across the state
- Joint symposium with Georgia Grown counterparts
- Launching a monthly members-only e-newsletter
- Increased logo exposure on local products
- Executing another statewide marketing campaign that includes billboards, television and digital outreach
- Continued exposure for Sweet Grown Alabama members through social media, online promotions and events
- And much more!

CONTACT



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Sweet Grown Alabama is a non-profit foundation that enhances marketing opportunities for Alabama farmers by connecting retailers and consumers to Alabama grown foods and other agricultural products. Our searchable database allows consumers to easily connect with local farmers in their area and find specific Alabama grown products. Farmers, product makers, restaurants, retailers and others are encouraged to join the branding program and use the Sweet Grown Alabama logo on their products.

Address:

Sweet Grown Alabama
1445 Federal Drive
Montgomery, AL 36107

SweetGrownAlabama.org

A vibrant collage of various fruits and vegetables. At the top left is a large, ripe strawberry with green leaves. Next to it are several blueberries and a cluster of blackberries. Below these are two sweet potatoes, one whole and one sliced into rounds. A whole ear of yellow corn is positioned in the center. To the left of the corn is a beet with its green leaves. In the bottom left is a whole peach and a slice of it showing the pit. To the right of the peach is a large, red tomato. The background is a light, textured surface.

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