

# C.M. Stripling Irrigation Research Park

**Newsletter**

**Apr – Sept 2025**



**Ecology class students – BJ Washington**

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# From our Team

By Amilcar Vargas – *Superintendent*

Overseeing a research farm for the first time, diving into my first growing season, Field Day and 4H2O Camp, is exciting and overwhelming at the same time. Every day brings us a new challenge. Our Farm Manager, B.J. Washington and Ag Specialists Daryl Williamson & Kyle Matthews can tell you about that — equipment that does not cooperate, rebellious weather that does not follow the forecast, pests that walk-in uninvited and make our crops their home (cotton jassids) and temperamental irrigation systems that do not run smoothly as they should. Sometimes it feels that nothing goes as planned. Yet, in the middle of those struggles we have our moments of joy. We create memories to remember, and others turn into strategies for the future.

Moments of joy come in many forms such as seeing our graduate students successfully reaching the finish line and translating those research goals into science-based recommendations for farmers to efficiently manage irrigation. We wish you the best Dr. Emily Bedwell!

Hosting the 4H2O Camp, welcoming visitors to tour our facility, and inviting graduate students and scientists to share their stories of how we use technology to develop solutions for farmers are other moments of joy. We see these moments as big rewards—watching kids get excited about science and technology, visitors learning something new, and people leaving with a better understanding of the role of water in agriculture and the efforts to manage it efficiently.

Keeping a research farm ecosystem alive requires the interaction and collaboration of many teams—summer helpers/visiting scholars, technicians, graduate students, extension agents, faculty members, farmers, visitors, Ag industry and leadership team. Thanks to all of them and to you for your support.



# From our Team

By B.J. Washington – *Farm Manager*

Late summer update:

As I sit here on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of September and reflect on the goings on over the past few months, I continue to come back to the same word, **Teamwork!** We have navigated another summer full of fun and adventure. One of the many things that I like about my job is that no 2 days are the same, even if you have a plan for them to be. This summer has been full of surprises from lightning strikes to busted mainline pipes, each situation presenting its own challenges. Together, the team has been able to overcome these events.

We were able to host our annual ecology student visitors in late May, followed by our annual 4H2O camp, and our biannual Field Day. It is always important to me and our staff to host these and many other visitors throughout the year at the park. It is always a joy to show the park to visitors and discuss what we have done, are currently doing, and plan to do in the future to assist growers here and around the world with the conservation of the valuable resource of water.

Throughout the summer our researchers and their teams have been busy with data collection in their respective cotton, corn, peanut, and soybean plots. From early predawn data collections, to plant sampling in the hot mid-day hours, managing soil moisture sensors and data, and even multiple UAV flights, researchers, graduate students and technicians have put the work in to ensure the success of their individual projects.

For us, the summer has been full of irrigating the many different plots using VRI prescriptions, spraying pesticides, and park beautification (mowing). We have successfully completed the 2025 sweetcorn and field corn harvest. Peanut inversion has begun with cotton defoliation and harvest of both yet to come. The next 4 weeks will be equally as exciting as the rest of the year has been.

I would like to take the time now to thank the farm crew, Daryl and Kyle for all of the behind the scenes tasks that they accomplish. It has not gone unnoticed by me and I really appreciate your time and efforts. I also want to thank Ms. Candace and Dr. Vargas for their support in the office as well as in the field. It truly does take all of us working together to accomplish our goals. Finally, as always, none of this is possible without the support of our community, our researchers and UGA College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences and we THANK YOU!! It takes all of us!!



# In The News!

To learn more, click on:

## **New pest adds pressure to Georgia cotton producers facing tough season**

The cotton jassid, first detected in Seminole County in July 2025, has quickly spread across Georgia's cotton belt, damaging leaves and reducing photosynthesis critical for boll development. With cotton growers already facing tight margins from low prices and lingering hurricane damage, potential yield losses and added insecticide costs could make the season even tougher. UGA Extension specialists and county agents are rapidly conducting on-farm trials to develop management strategies, but because the pest is new to Georgia, recommendations are still evolving.

## **Updated Thresholds and Management Guidelines for Cotton Jassid in Georgia**

Cotton growers in Georgia are facing increasing pressure from cotton jassid (*Amrasca biguttula biguttula*). Updated scouting thresholds and new efficacy trial results are now available to help producers make timely, informed management decisions. When scouting for jassid: Examine the 3rd, 4th, or 5th mainstem leaf below the terminal (the 4th leaf is most commonly infested). Look for nymphs and cast skins (exoskeletons), especially on the undersides of leaves.

## **UGA climatologist answers our burning questions on weather and climate**

The best explanation I ever heard was from an 8-year-old: Climate is the clothes in your closet, and weather is what you wear today. It makes a lot of sense, right? Because with the climate, you have to be prepared for the full range of the year, but the weather is what's happening today.



# Finalizing Irrigation Moving to Harvest

Harvest is around the corner! Practical guides for farm operations. More guides can be found at the [Extension Precision Ag and Irrigation Blog](#)

Click on:

[Finalizing Corn Irrigation and Determining Termination to Prevent Yield Loss and Maximize Profitability](#)

[Finalizing Peanut Irrigation](#)

[Finalizing Cotton Irrigation](#)

[Peanut Inverter/Digger Set-Up](#)

[How to Calibrate Handler Weight on a John Deere Cotton Picker](#)

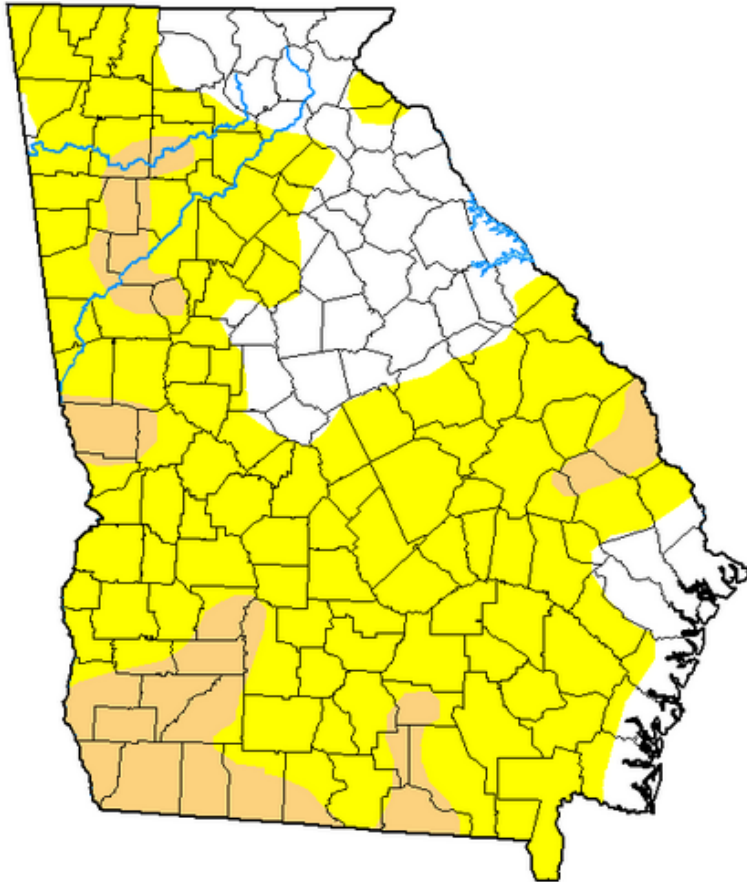




# Drought Conditions

## U.S. Drought Monitor Georgia

**September 16, 2025**  
(Released Thursday, Sep. 18, 2025)  
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
<b>Current</b>	22.78	77.22	13.65	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Last Week</b> 09-09-2025	72.51	27.49	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>3 Months Ago</b> 06-17-2025	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Start of Calendar Year</b> 01-01-2025	56.32	43.68	11.40	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Start of Water Year</b> 10-01-2024	98.35	1.65	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>One Year Ago</b> 09-17-2024	43.18	56.82	34.07	4.03	0.12	0.00

### Intensity:

None	D2 Severe Drought
D0 Abnormally Dry	D3 Extreme Drought
D1 Moderate Drought	D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

### Author:

Adam Allgood  
NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC



[droughtmonitor.unl.edu](https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu)

Drought Monitor map for Georgia as of September 16th. Abnormally dry conditions are high across the state, with 22.78% ample soil moisture conditions.

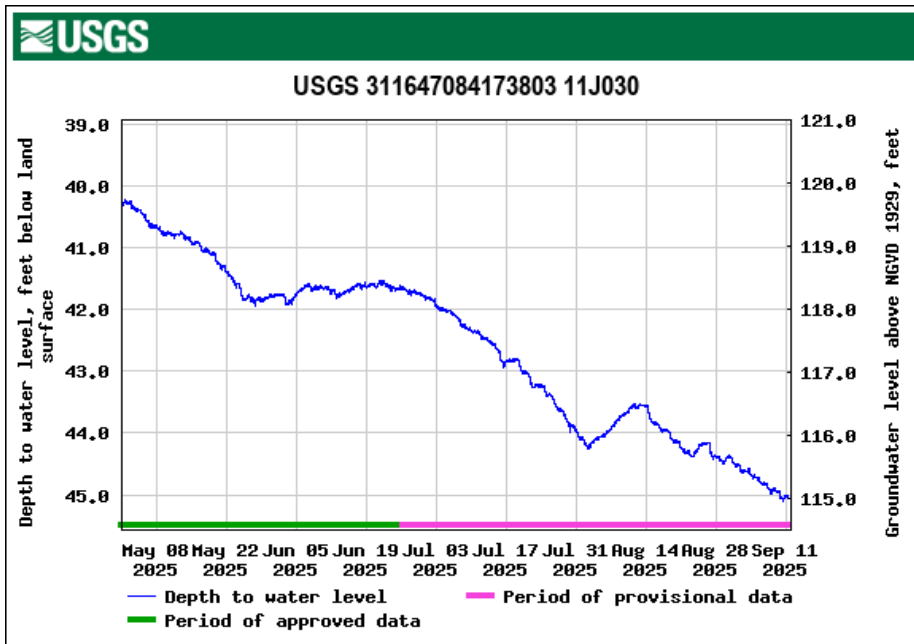
Currently, 77.22% of GA is abnormally dry, 13.65% moderate, and 0.0% for severe, and extreme drought. For more info:

<https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Maps/MapArchive.aspx>

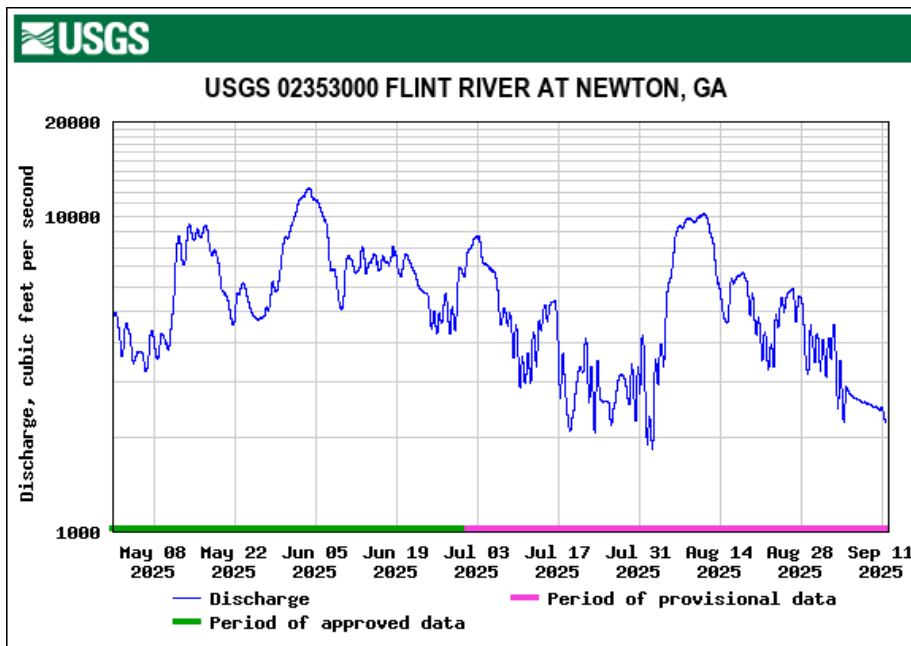


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# Water Resources



USGS data from May to September 2025. Above – Groundwater level here at the Park in the Floridan aquifer. Below - Stream gage on the Flint River at Newton, GA (3 miles from the Park).



# Events

## Past events

<b>May 27</b>	Ecology Class from –From Athens
<b>June 10</b>	Flint River Soil and Water Conservation District visit
<b>June 25</b>	4H2O Camp
<b>July 24</b>	Stripling Irrigation Research Park Field Day
<b>September 18</b>	IGEL 2025 visit

## Upcoming events

<b>November 27 - 28</b>	Thanksgiving holidays
<b>Dec 25 – Jan 1</b>	Christmas holidays
<b>Jan 7 – 9</b>	Beltwide Cotton Conf. (San Antonio, TX)





# At the Park



**Above: Aerial picture of the Park. Below: VRI system at work!**





## 4H2O Camp 2025



**Campers learning about soil and water conservation as well as wildlife**



# At the Park



**Campers also performed hands-on learning activities and enjoy the water games**





## Field Day 2025





## Field Day 2025





## Field Day 2025





# At the Park

## Visitors!



**Flint River Soil & Water CD**



**Ecology class students –from Athens**



**Mr. Campbell talking about water conservation efforts**



# At the Park

## IGEL



**Mr. Charles Stripling**



**Perri Cooper – Exec. Dir. FRSWCD**



**Vinicius Trevisan – UGA grad student**



**B.J. giving tour at the VRI field.**



**IGEL participants**





# At the Park



**Dr. Kemerait getting ready to spray his corn study**



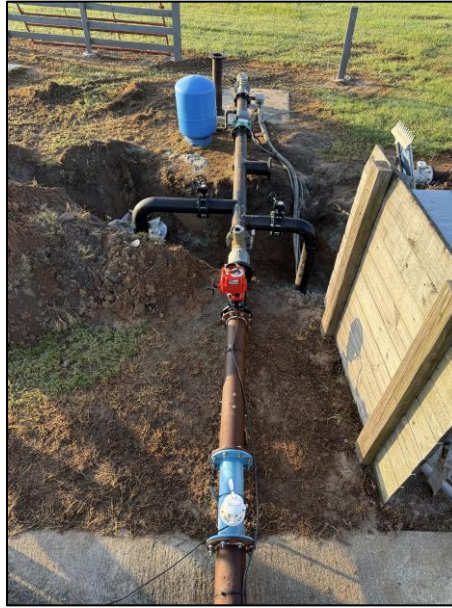
**Dr. Porter's crew. Great job Hannah!**





# At the Park

It is not easy...





# Trivia

What's the only planet in our solar system to rotate clockwise on its axis? Venus

How many states does the Appalachian Trail cross? 14

What is the only food that can never go bad? Honey

What guitarist notably performed on the Michael Jackson song "Beat It"?  
Eddie Van Halen

Johnny Depp notably modeled Jack Sparrow, his memorable character from "Pirates of the Caribbean," after which rock guitarist? Keith Richards

Where is the coldest place on Earth? East Antarctic Plateau

Who was the first woman ever inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame?  
Aretha Franklin

Where were Doritos invented? Casa de Fritos at Disneyland

What is the name of the world's hottest chili pepper? Carolina Reaper

What does Yahoo stand for? Yet Another Hierarchically Official Oracle

Who owns the Patent to Google's original search algorithm? Stanford University

Which insect holds the record for the fastest flying insect in the world?  
Dragonfly

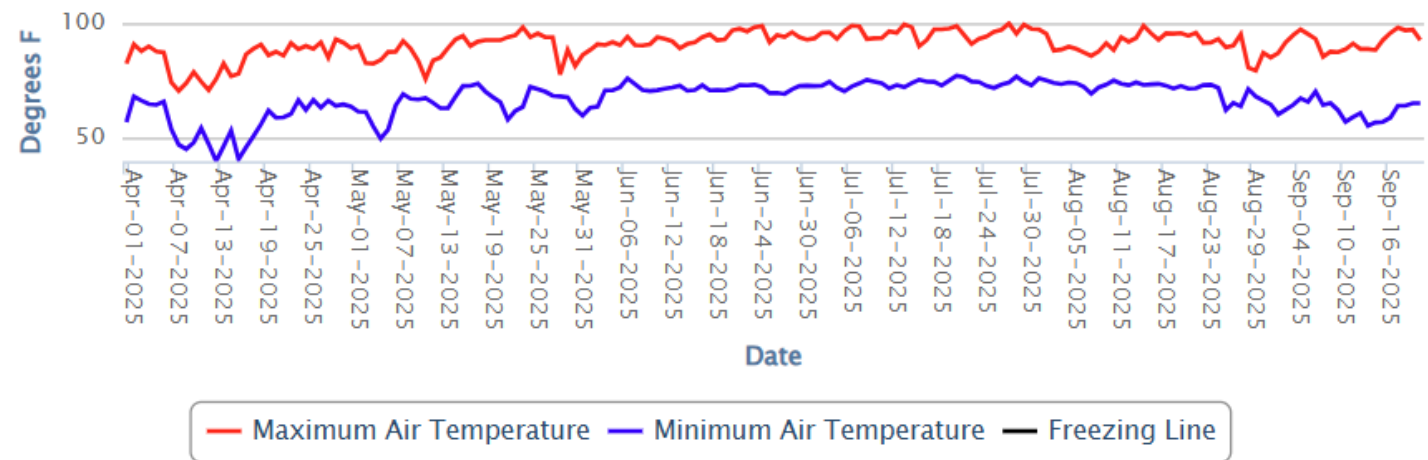
Who was the lead vocalist of the band Led Zeppelin, known for his powerful voice and charismatic stage presence? Robert Plant

Which is colder the North Pole or the South Pole? South Pole

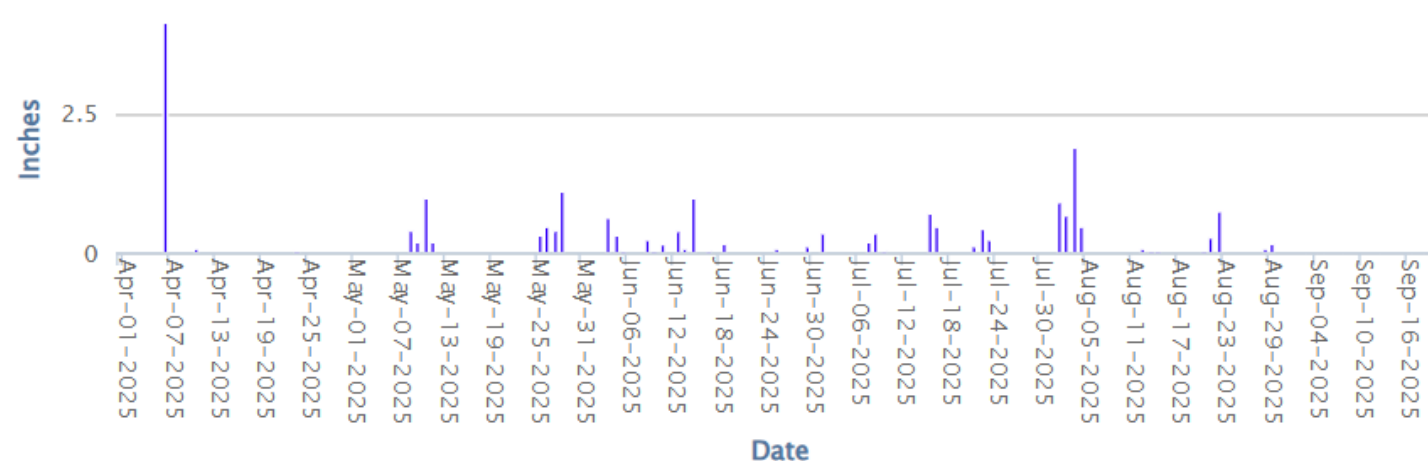


# SIRP Weather

Maximum Temperature, Minimum Temperature



Daily Cumulative Rainfall



For April through September, SIRP had 20.64 inches of rain, with 4.23 inches in April, 4.30 inches in May, 3.49 inches in June, 3.02 inches in July and 5.60 inches in August. So far, in the first 3 weeks of September we've had no rain. For this year already, we've had a total of 34.97 inches of rain, with a little more than 3 months left.

To explore weather information, visit [www.georgiaweather.net](http://www.georgiaweather.net).



# Contact us

## You can stop by

8207 Highway 37 West, Camilla, GA 31730

**Give us a call to 229 522-3623**

## Visit our website & watch our live camera!

[www.striplingpark.caes.uga.edu](http://www.striplingpark.caes.uga.edu)

## Or send us an email

Amilcar Vargas (Superintendent): [amilcar.vargas@uga.edu](mailto:amilcar.vargas@uga.edu)

B. J. Washington (Farm Manager): [bwashing@uga.edu](mailto:bwashing@uga.edu)

Candace Gray (Admin. Associate): [sirp@uga.edu](mailto:sirp@uga.edu)



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## Commit to Groundbreaking Research

Ag research keeps Georgia agriculture on the leading edge of the industry. Consider giving to the C.M. Stripling Irrigation Research Park today.

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