

Indiana Nut and Fruit Growers Association
Regional Pecan Grafting Workshop – Presenter Biographies

Dr. William Reid

For 37 years, Dr. Reid served as the pecan research and extension specialist for Kansas State University and the University of Missouri. He also directed the operations at K-State State's Pecan Experiment Field located near Chetopa, KS. During his tenure with the University, he authored numerous articles on northern pecan culture and held grower-training sessions for pecan growers across the Mid-west. Over the years, he has trained hundreds of growers how to graft pecan trees. His research with northern pecans cultivars helped establish Kanza as the leading pecan cultivar in northern pecan states. Dr. Reid's online blog, "Northern Pecans", has become the go to site for information on northern pecan culture and management.

In his retirement, Dr. Reid continues to work with pecan trees on his own 120-acre farm. His young orchard includes a pecan breeding block in addition to trees grafted to scab-resistant cultivars such as Kanza, Lakota, Hark, and Oswego. Along with his wife, Brenda, Dr. Reid also operates a diversified fruit orchard that produces apples, pears, peaches, blackberries and raspberries. All fruit and pecans produced on the farm are sold directly to area consumers at their roadside market.

Mr. Ralph Voss

Mr. Ralph Voss is a life-long farmer and pecan grower from Clinton County, Illinois. Along with his wife and 3 grown children, Ralph manages 2500 acres of agronomic crops and 250 acres of pecans. Although Ralph has picked up native pecans since he was a kid growing up in an area blessed with native pecan trees, his pecan business really started when he first purchased a pecan shaker to help his kids make some extra money by hand harvesting pecans. Ralph has developed 120 acres of native pecan timber into productive nut groves and has planted 130 acres of grafted trees to several northern pecan cultivars. He currently sells his pecans both at his on-farm store and at regional farmer's markets. Ralph has a portion of his nut crop custom shelled in Oklahoma allowing him to market pecan nut meats directly to consumers and to area bakeries.

Mr. Voss is past president of the Illinois Nut Growers Association and is widely respected for his pecan growing know-how. He continues to plant more pecan orchards on his farm and is enjoys teaching his grandkids the joys of nut harvest.

Mr. Virgil Vaughn

Virgil Vaughn has been growing pecan trees for 35 yrs. The past 23 yrs. as a cooperator with the USDA Agricultural Research Service pecan breeding program, College Station, Texas. Pecan cultivars from the breeding program are tested at the Vaughn farm to find cultivars suitable for commercial pecan nut production in northern United States.

Many of the cultivars now in production at the Vaughn farm have been released by USDA, are not patented and can be freely propagated.