



**TESTIMONY OF  
JOHN TURNER**

**Pecan Federal Marketing Order Hearing**

**Docket No. AMS-FV-15-0023; FV15-986-1**

**Central Region – Dallas, Texas – July 23 and 24, 2015**

My name is John Turner. It is spelled J-O-H-N T-U-R-N-E-R. I live in Texarkana, Arkansas. I am the heir and operator of Nash-Turner Ranch. In the early 1900's, my maternal Great Grandfather, Nash, and my paternal Great Grandfather, Turner, purchased their farms next door to each other. And today, Nash-Turner Ranch has three pecan farms in Miller County, Arkansas. We have over 250 acres of pecans currently in production. Last year we produced 80,000 pounds of pecans. On our farm we grow 97% native and 3% improved varieties pecans. Attached is my resume.

Nash-Turner Ranch has less than \$750,000 in annual gross revenue from pecans and, therefore, under the Small Business Administration guidelines we are classified as a small business.

I have reviewed the economic analysis summary prepared by Dr. Marco Palma, specifically, the projected average price increase from promotion of 6.3¢ per in shell pound for improved varieties and 3.6¢ per in shell pound for natives versus the average 2.5¢ and 1.5¢ per in shell pound cost, respectively. Overall, I

am aware of the costs that the proposed federal marketing order may impose on my farm and I do not believe those costs are unduly burdensome. Further, I believe that the benefits of the federal marketing order to my farm will greatly outweigh any costs associated with it.

. In recent years, I have seen wide variation in the prices I have received from my pecan crop. It is hard to negotiate when you don't what the price is. Such wide variation in pricing makes it extremely difficult to plan for the future operation of my farm. While prices for pecans go up and down dramatically from year to year, my costs of production have steadily increased. Costs of fertilizer, insecticides and equipment have all increased in recent years.

I have been giving advice about pecan farming for over 26 years, but one area that I could not give advice on was the market due to the instability. The lack of accurate market information on the anticipated size of the pecan crop in any given year also makes it difficult for me to negotiate a fair price for my crop and to make reasonable business decisions about investments in my farm. Increased price stability and more accurate market information would greatly benefit my small family operation.

I think my farm and the industry would also benefit in the future from grade, size, quality, packaging and other handling requirements as we compete with other tree nuts for shelf space and consumer attention.

I also understand that under the proposed order, only growers with more than thirty acres of pecans or more than 50,000 pounds of average production per year over the last four years will be allowed to vote on the proposed order. In my opinion, this threshold is reasonable because a grower that does not meet this threshold is not a commercial grower. Any grower that is smaller than the proposed threshold could not justify the cost inherent in such a small production.

The American Pecan Board has kept me informed about its efforts to propose a federal marketing order. Dan York personally visited with me to explain the federal marketing order. I feel like I have been informed about the process and have been given an opportunity to participate.

In conclusion, I fully support the proposed federal marketing order for pecans and encourage the Secretary to implement the order as proposed by the American Pecan Board.

I would be glad to answer any questions anyone may have.

## AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born as John Lee Turner, Jr., to Mr. and Mrs. John Lee Turner, Sr., in Texarkana, Arkansas; he is the fourth born of eight children.

Much of his childhood was spent on Sims Island, 20 miles east of Texarkana, Arkansas. It was there that he attended Harvey Elementary School, a small three-room building, where he developed a love for the field of agriculture as he accomplished a number of farm skills.

John Turner's first real look at the outside world came when he attended Booker T. Washington High School in Texarkana, Arkansas, in 1962, where he later graduated in 1966.

After completion of his secondary education, John enrolled and attended Texarkana Community College for six months. From there, he attended the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, where he received a B.S. degree in the field of Agriculture Education, May, 1973.

Mr. Turner's graduate work was completed at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, where he earned a M.S.E. in 1980.

After earning his M.S.E., he pursued a Specialist Degree in Secondary School Administration. He completed 24 hours toward his Specialist degree. It was then that John was called to his present position.

Mr. Turner attended Texas A&M University and studied pecan production in 1990 and is presently the number one authority on pecan production in Arkansas. He also gives advice in parts of Texas, Oklahoma, as well as many other states.

John Turner is married

### EMPLOYMENT

- Taught Vocational Agriculture/Vocational Director in West Helena, AR for 14 years.
- University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, Agriculture Agent for Miller County from 1988 until present.

### MAJOR CAREER ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 1990

- Organized Four-States Farmers Market.
- Advised on re-organizing Gateway Farmers Market.
- Organized Red Dirt Master Gardeners.
- Organized 4-H Back to Nature program for disadvantaged youth.

- Organized 4-H Fishing Derby.
- Organized Train the Trainer Leadership Program specializing in Parliamentary Procedure, By-Law Writing, and How to Have An Effective Meeting.

John's favorite youth program is the 4-H Back to Nature event. This program is held on 40 acres off of his family farm and is designed to introduce disadvantaged youth to a rural environment. It consists of 3 hours of education on careers in agriculture and 2 hours of recreation. It is in its 12<sup>th</sup> year and averages 150 youth, 60 volunteers and over 40 sponsors each year.

John worked with Faith, Love and Hope, ensuring that kids were included in all his youth programs. He also worked with Boys and Girls Clubs, Salvation Army, Garland youth, Mittons' Sportsplex, and other various 4-H youth throughout the county.

He is also called upon throughout the state of Arkansas and parts of Texas for his advice on parliamentary procedure, writing by-laws, committee appointments, board responsibilities, and how to solve organizational meeting problems.

#### MAJOR BOARD ASSIGNMENTS

- Miller County Conservation District Board
- Farm Services Agency Board
- Red River Cattlemen's Association Board

#### MAJOR COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

- Southwest Arkansas Electric Cooperative Service Nominating Committee
- University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Promotion Evaluation Committee
- University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Strategic Planning Committee

#### MAJOR AWARDS

- University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service County Agent of the Quarter in 2005.
- Train the Trainers Leadership Development Award
- Arkansas Association of Conservation District Outstanding Directors Awards in 2001.
- Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts Outstanding Conservation Leader of the Year Award in 2002.
- Twin City NAACP Presidential Award in 2007.

- National Association of Parliamentarians Recruitment Award District 6 (a seven state district).
- Master Gardener Agent of the Year (2013)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Education Award
- Alpha Phi Alpha Distinguished Gentleman Award (2010)

#### WRITINGS

- Six Keys to Having an Effective Meeting
- Basic Parliamentary Procedures
- Pecan Production in Southwest Arkansas
- Backyard Pecan Production
- Landscape Pecan Production
- Techniques of Pecan Grafting
- Officers Responsibilities
- Wrote seasonal pecan newsletters to alert pecan growers on pest outbreaks and control measures

#### HOBBIES

He presently manages three family farms known as the Nash/Turner Farm, located on the Red River.

After 40 years of service to the field of agriculture, John Turner retired January 5, 2015.