# NICHOLAS SHAY – SOYBEAN RESEARCH PROFILE

Farmer Blog

Nicholas Shay, Assistant Professor and Extension Grains Agronomist, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, University of Georgia

**Why did you decide to pursue a career that includes soybean research?**
*I grew up in the Finger Lakes region of western New York, mostly disconnected from agriculture despite working for a dairy in high school. I became an environmental consultant in Atlanta, but I realized that I wanted to work outdoors. I went back to graduate school and earned a doctorate degree with research in agronomic weed science, including soybeans. Soybeans can be a good rotational crop in Georgia, in certain integrated systems, and it is now one of the crops I am responsible for in my extension role at the University of Georgia.*

**What research topic have you completed in the past or are working on now that could have or has had the most significant impact on soybean production?**
*Because of discussions with farmers, ongoing research on deer damage in soybeans has potential to impact soybean production. In addition, weed science research for local herbicide use is helpful in supporting special-use labels for herbicides in our integrated cropping systems. Georgia weed control strategies are slightly different because of the wide range of production systems, where soybeans can be planted as early as March or as late as August. Other critical research includes studying how to mitigate disease pressure in soybean-peanut rotations and learning more about best harvest management practices for Maturity Group 4 soybeans in Georgia.*

**How has the Soy Checkoff enhanced your ability to find answers to production problems for farmers?**
*The unified front for the Soy Checkoff is really cool, as it gives me access to resources I don't have available for other crops. I benefit greatly from the network connected to the Soy Checkoff, and I can use what I learn to benefit farmers. Soy Checkoff funding allows me to pursue research with the most potential return-on-investment, and to tackle issues as part of*

*a larger community.*

**Within your area of expertise, what are the top two or three general recommendations you would offer farmers to improve their management practices?**

- *The most limited commodity we all have is time. However, timeliness is critically important for any aspect of soybean production — planting, fertility, weed and pest control, etc. Seek to manage time to maximize the timeliness of soybean management.*
- *Each crop will face adversity, so farmers should build that into their management plans at the beginning of the year. Proactive strategies to mitigate challenges and manage expectations will support crop production.*

**Within your area of expertise, what do you consider to be critical soybean research needs that can impact the profitability of farmers in the future?**
*I would like to see more research on new soybean uses as the world market becomes more competitive, putting lots of pressure on our soybean exports. With our technology and resources, we can foster new industry partnerships for new uses of soybeans and other crops. I believe new uses are the biggest need for farmers, as they can impact acreage, demand and price.*

SOYBEAN RESEARCH & INFORMATION NETWORK

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