

**Voluntary Report** – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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**Report Name:** South Carolina Agricultural Commissioner Visit - Builds Relationships with the Government of Egypt and Industry Contacts, Furthers Educational Exchanges

**Country:** Egypt

**Post:** Cairo

**Report Category:** Agricultural Situation, Agriculture in the Economy, Export Accomplishments - Other, Livestock and Products, Oilseeds and Products, Grain and Feed, Agriculture in the News

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**Report Highlights:**

FAS Cairo coordinated the visit of the State of South Carolina Agricultural Commissioner Hugh E. Weathers (and the past President of the Southern U.S. Trade Association Executive Advisory Committee, a USDA supported State Regional Trade Group) and 31-strong delegation. Meetings were arranged with Egypt's President el-Sisi, the Minister of Agriculture, and the Egyptian parliament's chairs and ranking members of the foreign affairs, economic, and agriculture committees. Included was a site visit to the SOYVEN (ADM-Cargill) soybean crush facility in Borg-el Arab.

## General Information:

U.S. Embassy Cairo\FAS Office of Agricultural Affairs coordinated the highly successful official visit of the State of South Carolina Agricultural Commissioner Hugh E. Weathers (and the past President of the Southern U.S. Trade Association Executive Advisory Committee, a USDA supported State Regional Trade Group) and 31-strong delegation (including state senators and representatives). The purpose of the South Carolina mission has been to build relationships with the Government of Egypt and industry contacts and further educational exchanges.

In an unprecedented first, for a U.S. state delegation, State Agricultural Commissioner Weathers, along with ranking senators and representatives, met with Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi to strengthen cooperation between South Carolina and Egypt, and convey the [South Carolina General Assembly's Resolution HR 3555 \(2017\)](#) recognizing and commending President el-Sisi for strides towards harmonious international relations, and his efforts fighting terrorism, and to express gratitude for the amicable trade partnership between Egypt and the State of South Carolina. At the behest of President el-Sisi, an impromptu visit to Egypt's New Administrative Capital City, its Parliament and Ministry buildings construction sites was organized; and hosted by Minister of International Cooperation and Investment Sahar Nasr.



Source: Al Ahbar. October 10, 2019.

(L-to-R): Sen. Gerald Malloy, Commissioner Hugh E. Weathers, Rep. J. Todd Rutherford, Rep. Alan Clemmons, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, Rep. David Weeks, DeWitt Zemp, U.S. Embassy Chargé d'Affaires Thomas Goldberger.

South Carolina State Agricultural Commissioner Weathers and delegation members went on to meet with Egypt's Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation Dr. Ezz El Din Omar Abu Steit, and discussed U.S.-Egypt bilateral trade situation, as well as opportunities for further cooperation in agriculture. For many years, the United States and Egypt have shared a robust relationship in the agricultural sector, which both sides hope to continue and to expand. South Carolina, out of the fifty states of the union, ranks sixteenth in terms of exports to Egypt. In another first, the delegation also met with the Egyptian parliament's chairs and ranking members of the foreign affairs, economic, and agriculture committees.

Commissioner Weathers and members of the delegation also took the opportunity to visit one of the leading U.S. agriculture investment projects in Egypt, visiting the [SOYVEN \(ADM and Cargill joint venture\)](#) soybean crush facility in Borg el-Arab (roughly 45 kilometers west of Alexandria city in Egypt's northern Nile delta region). Egypt imported from the United States a record \$1.16 billion in soybeans in 2018 (i.e., highest export level since at least 1970), with a percentage of these soybeans originating in South Carolina.

Agriculture has been the base of South Carolina's economy since the settlement of the American colonies. South Carolina top ten commodities are: broilers, turkeys, greenhouse nurseries, cotton, corn, cattle, soybeans, peanuts, eggs, wheat. The state has about 25,000 farms, which encompass 4.9 million acres. Forests cover two-thirds of the land in the state. South Carolina agriculture is worth \$3 billion annually, between crops and livestock.

**Attachments:**

No Attachments.