



ADC Info #71

**Final Report and Summary for an
Ag-Tag Funded Project**

Funding Period July 2001 to June 2002

***Strengthening Value-Added
Enterprises and Markets in Tennessee:
Development and Dissemination of Feasibility and
Marketing Studies***

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**Submitted
by:
Rob Holland
Principal Investigator**

***Agricultural Development Center*
The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service
Knoxville, Tennessee
865-974-3824
www.utextension.utk.edu/ad/**

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Project Summary:

Proposed in the Spring of 2001, the “Strengthening Value-Added Enterprises and Markets in Tennessee: Development and Dissemination of Feasibility and Marketing Studies” project proposed to merge Tennessee “Ag Tag” grant funds with a portion of funds administrated by the Agricultural Economics Department from a “USDA Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems” (IFAFS) grant. The IFAFS project (which conducted studies and analyses seeking to remove distribution barriers facing fruit and vegetable growers) and the Ag-Tag funded project combined to develop a comprehensive, feasibility-approach publication for a start-up commercial kitchen project and established value-added resource centers stocked with educational materials. These centers will enhance the growth of Tennessee’s value-added agriculture industry across the state. Funded in August 2001, the project was launched in the Fall of 2001 with the following activities:

- assembling various options of display cases to be placed across the state as centers for value-added publications and literature
- surveying county Extension agents as to display case preference in their county
- developing an eye-catching identification label to be mounted on the display cases
- ordering the display cases
- assembling a team of six primary authors to contribute to the research, development and writing of a comprehensive guide with the primary objective of “considering and developing a commercial kitchen enterprise in Tennessee.”

In the latter months of 2001 and the first quarter of 2002, the team of contributing authors worked individually and collectively to develop and document interactive, systematic considerations to a value-added commercial kitchen enterprise. Overall publication organization and material compilation was provided by Anne Dalton, Extension Assistant in the ADC. The team of authors consulted various related production and marketing resources for the development of the complete guide titled, “*Adding Value to Tennessee Agriculture Through Commercial Food-Processing Enterprise.*” The publication was designed to present information pertinent to the development and success of a commercial food processing business. The publication was formatted for use as a stand-alone resource for one-on-one farm planning, a base for group educational sessions, mass media releases and educational exhibits, as well as serve as an evaluation tool for such businesses. The publication was reviewed by four outside reviewers composed of entrepreneurs and professionals working in or with the commercial food industry and four professional peer reviewers from four Institute of Agriculture departments.

After printing, the “*Adding Value to Tennessee Agriculture Through Commercial Food-*

Processing Enterprise” publication was assembled with five other value-added agriculture publications in the display cases and delivered to 84 locations across the state (primarily in county extension offices). The resource centers were placed to enhance the growth of the value-added agriculture industry across the state.

The following table provides a summary of the project objectives and the evidence resulting from the accomplishment of each of the objectives.

Project Objectives and Resulting Evidence		
<u>Project Objectives</u>		<u>Resulting Evidence</u>
To develop a feasibility-type analysis and guide for a hypothetical commercial kitchen enterprise	✓	<i>Adding-Value to Tennessee Agriculture Through Commercial Food-Processing Enterprises</i> publication written and printed
To develop a multi-disciplinary value-added education resource center and establish it across the state	✓	Eighty-four resource centers established across the state
To make educational resources readily available, accessible and usable to improve the chances of success for value-added enterprises	✓	Publication prepared in a manner that promotes accessible use as an evaluation tool for enterprise planning
To develop a product adaptable to multi-educational teaching opportunities	✓	Publication can be used as a stand-alone resource for one-on-one farm planning, a base for group educational sessions, mass media releases and educational exhibits
To effectively promote the “Pick Tennessee Products” and “Ag-Tag” programs	✓	Strategically placed and attractively designed logos and statements placed on the resource centers and on the publication

A summary of the project expenditures is given in the table below. Ag-Tag funds and matching funds are summarized.

Summary of Expenditures(*)		
	<u>Ag. Tag Funds</u>	<u>Matching Funds</u>
Display cases and identification labels	\$4,680.57	
Publication preparation and printing	\$6,332.84	
Analysis, research and publication of existing marketing operations and green grocers		\$20,000
Salary for data acquisition, literature review, survey administration, assembly of resource centers and publication development	\$8,440.56	
Travel and program supplies	\$546.03	
Sub-Total Per Funding Source	\$20,000	\$20,000
Total Project Funds	\$40,000	

(*) Invoices with detailed expenditures for the Ag. Tag Funds have been submitted by and to the appropriate billing offices for The University of Tennessee and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, respectively.

Pictured below is the multi-disciplinary team which developed the publication focusing on commercial kitchen facilities.



Adding Value to Tennessee Agriculture Through Commercial Food-Processing Enterprises-PB 1699, a publication including evaluation criteria, project development specifics, cost and return data, and general operational guidelines for commercial kitchen facilities as value-added food enterprises in Tennessee, was developed by the multi-disciplinary team pictured above. From left to right: George Grandle (Biosystems Eng & Env Science), Anne Dalton, Rob Holland and Shasta Hubbs (ADC), and Bill Morris and Mike Davidson (Food Science & Technology).

The picture below was taken during the distribution of the resource centers across the state.



Carla Kean (left), Extension Agent for Montgomery County, is shown accepting a resource center containing educational materials for value-added enterprises. The presentation was made by Shasta Hubbs (right) from The University of Tennessee *Agricultural Development Center* which spearheaded a market development project funded in part by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. This center, one of 84 being distributed across the state, will be placed in the local county extension office.

Below is a sample news release announcing the availability and placement of resource centers across the state. The release was give to recipients of the centers for use by local new media.

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For Immediate Release

June 2002

Contact:

Rob Holland
The University of Tennessee
Agricultural Development Center
865-974-3824
www.utextension.utk.edu/ad/

Ag. Tag Proceeds Provide Educational Materials for Value-Added Agriculture

Thanks to funds made available from the sale of agriculture licence plates, a new set of educational resources are available at _____ in _____ County. The new educational centers were recently placed in 84 locations across the state as part of a year-long program developed and implemented by The University of Tennessee’s *Agricultural Development Center* to enhance the growth of the value-added agriculture industry in Tennessee. This program was funded in part with revenues generated from the sales of agriculture license plates.

The “Ag Tag” grant program is administered by The Market Development Division of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. The “Ag Tag” program supports agricultural youth organizations and agricultural and forestry awareness, education and marketing programs. Stanley Trout, Chief of Marketing Services with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture said, “This project is a good example of Market Development programs made possible through partnerships between the *Agricultural Development Center* and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. The educational resources in these centers will make information on value-added enterprise development available in communities across the state.”

The ADC is comprised of a team of specialists who work to increase the value of Tennessee’s economy through new, expanded and improved processing and marketing of value-added agricultural and aquacultural products.

The resource centers are stocked with educational materials developed primarily by specialists in the ADC and feature information to enhance the growth of Tennessee’s value-added agriculture industry.