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**"Increasing the value of Tennessee's economy through new, expanded and improved processing and marketing of agricultural, aquacultural and forestry products as well as home-based industries"**

## Progress Report 35

January 2007

### Center to Lead Extension's Statewide Priority Program on Value-Added Agriculture:

Associate Dean of UT Extension, Dr. Tim Cross, recently established a statewide priority program for Value-Added Agriculture. The Center's Megan Bruch and Rob Holland are among the 20 member team with Holland serving as Chair of the group. The team will work together to provide proactive leadership, planning and implementation for UT Extension educational programs in value-added agriculture. They will cooperate on grant-funded projects, create web-based resources, collaborate on value-added projects, provide in-service training for Extension agents and develop a five-year plan for value-added outreach across the state.

### Recent Outreach Accomplishments:

From September to December, Specialists in the Center developed 4 new educational presentations, provided instruction at 6 different events in 5 counties and developed 4 news releases. In addition, 8 farm visits were conducted in 7 counties and individual assistance was provided to 91 contacts via e-mail, telephone and direct-mail. Assistance was provided on meat processing, biofuels, grassfed pork, organic certification, agritourism, farmers markets and food processing regulations. Contracts were also finalized for an additional \$35,000 in external funding to support farmers market, agritourism and food processing educational resources.

### Serious about "UT AG"

The Center's own Kim Martinez is serious about her dedication, loyalty and pride to UT agriculture. She was thrilled recently when she was able to personalize her specialty license plate on her Saturn Vue with the plain and simple message "UT AG."

"I couldn't believe someone else didn't already have it – I love it," Kim said.

Leave it to Kim to find unique ways to spread the word about "UT AG" everywhere she goes.



**Appreciation Extended to Amanda Ziehl** – From October 2004 to December 2006, Amanda Ziehl served as a Marketing Specialist in the Center. Amanda recently resigned from the CPA to begin a career with the Agricultural Economics Department at the University of Georgia on their Tifton Campus. Amanda has done exceptional work for our Center and will certainly be missed. We appreciate the time and effort she devoted to our program and we wish her well with her future.

**Search Committee Named to Fill Marketing Specialist Position** – With the departure of Amanda Ziehl, we are in the process of searching for a new Marketing Specialist in the Center. A search committee, comprised of Dan Wheeler, Megan Bruch, Troy Dugger, Rob Holland and Finis Stribling, has been assembled and will be working during the coming months to identify quality candidates for the position. We hope to have the position filled by April 2007. The job announcement for this position is available on the CPA web site or by clicking:

<http://ext1.ag.utk.edu/Employment/Jobs.nsf/3ee22f2ad787729852569610074ccb9/6d57c64ec15cf0c285257236004af803?OpenDocument>

### County Extension Agents Trained on "Master Goat Producer Program"

**(MPPG)** – The Tennessee MPPG was launched during a 4-day training of more than 40 Extension agents during October at the *Middle Tennessee Research & Education Center* in Spring Hill. The Center's Marketing Specialist, Megan Bruch, conducted the "marketing" training. Bruch, Amanda Ziehl and Rob Holland served as co-authors of the marketing and economics chapters of the training manual.

**Pastured Poultry Workshop** – The West Tennessee Pasture-Poultry Workshop was conducted in Jackson on October 19. Twenty-six "very enthusiastic" people attended. This workshop was provided through participation with the National Center of Appropriate Technology (NCAT). A sustainable agricultural poultry specialist, from the Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas division of NCAT, conducted the workshop with production, processing and marketing components. A free spiral-notebook containing all workshop materials was provided to each attendee. Most participants stayed late asking individual questions and networking with each other.

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**Grape Grower Teleconference** – On December 16, more than 85 people participated in an Extension educational program on considering and starting a grape-growing enterprise. The program was broadcast live via satellite to three locations across the state – Knoxville, Nashville and Jackson. Each location was a site for viewing the workshop and at least one instructor was live at each location. Rob Holland of the CPA teamed up with Extension Area Farm Management Specialist, John Campbell, and Extension Agriculture Economist, Charlie Hall, to teach the budgeting and marketing segments of the conference.

**2007 Agritourism Conference Slated for Pigeon Forge, January 22 - 23** – Agritourism entrepreneurs and farmers considering agritourism enterprises are encouraged to attend a special conference January 22 and 23 in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. The 2007 Agritourism: Cultivating Farm Revenue conference will include educational sessions, a trade show and opportunities to network with other entrepreneurs and service providers. The conference will feature presentations on branding, marketing, pricing, risk management, evaluating resources, growing enterprises, hospitality, safety, and visitor characteristics and preferences. The conference will also include several "Agritourism in Action" sessions where participants will hear from experienced agritourism entrepreneurs. The conference is among efforts sponsored by the Tennessee Agritourism Initiative partners to build farm income in the state. Initiative partners include the state's departments of Agriculture, Tourist Development and Economic and Community Development; the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation; and UT Extension. Funding for the conference comes, in part, from Initiative partners, the Tennessee Agritourism Association and USDA Rural Development. Conference information is available online at the Center for Profitable Agriculture's Web site at <http://cpa.utk.edu>. Online registration can be accessed on the site as well. There is a registration fee of \$75 if registered by December 15. Late registration is \$125. Early registration is encouraged as space is limited.

**Farmers Market Publication** – Through funding from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Megan Bruch and Rob Holland are in the process of developing a new Extension publication titled "A Guide for Considering and Developing a Farmers Market in Tennessee." This new publication is designed to assist community leaders and farmers that are interested in organizing a farmers market. It will include the basic steps of organization and operation and will provide guidance and examples of market rules and operating guidelines, sample organizational bylaws, location and facility considerations and tools to assist in assessing vendor and customer interest in a local market. The publication is slated for completion by June 2007.

**Agritourism Today Newsletter** – The fourth and fifth issues of the "Agritourism Today" newsletters were released in October and December, respectively. These web-based newsletters are sent via e-mail to more than 500 people interested in Tennessee agritourism. All of the "Agritourism Today" newsletters are available on the CPA web site at: <http://cpa.utk.edu/level2/agri-tourism/training.htm#news>.

**Regional Agritourism Workshops to Focus on Marketing** – Regional agritourism workshops will be held in Jackson, Cookeville and Jonesborough in late February and early March 2007. The workshops will focus on marketing concepts and techniques for agritourism enterprises. These events are made possible in part through the support of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. More details will be made available in January on the Center's Web site at <http://cpa.utk.edu>.

**DRB Conference planned for March 8, 2007 in Cookeville** – A capstone event of the "Developing Rural Businesses" program is the regional educational conference planned for March 8, 2007. The conference will be held on the Tennessee Tech. University Campus in Cookeville. The mission of the conference is to *provide agricultural entrepreneurs a knowledge and understanding of the resources necessary for a successful value-added enterprise*. More information for the conference will soon be available.

**Sunbelt Expo** – Tennessee was featured as the "spotlight state" at the Southeast Sunbelt Expo in Moultrie, Georgia October 17 – 19. More than 5,000 Expo attendees visited the Tennessee "spotlight state" tent where they observed Tennessee's agriculture, business, education and tourism success and enjoyed a bottle of Tennessee spring water. Rob Holland and Amanda Ziehl served on the spotlight state planning team and participated in the Expo.

## UPDATE ON COMPLETED PROJECTS:

**Estimating Wine Sales for a Start-up Winery** – An estimate of sales for a start-up winery in Tennessee can be calculated using demographic information and data on existing wineries. Variables that may predict wine sales include location, traffic count, population, years in business, number of varieties offered and the level of marketing used. Marketing appears to be very important to the amount of sales that a winery can expect per year. However, marketing is not just advertising. It includes attending trade shows, participating in wine competitions, writing news releases, having word-of-mouth referrals and other public relations activities. Traffic count and population are also important suggesting that a good location is critical to sales.