

Future Directions **of the** *Center for Profitable Agriculture*

October 7, 2003

Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation

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Improving Farm Successes

*Sometimes you have to
back up . . .*

To go forward

Where We've Been

- GCAF – 1995
- *Agricultural Development Center* – 1998
 - State's Primary Program in Value-Added Agric.
 - Analysis of Value-Added Farm Projects
 - Team Approach (financial, marketing, technical analysis)

Where We've Been (1998 – 2002)

- 70% - - One-on-one analysis with farmers
- 25% - - Teaching, Outreach and Training
- 5% - - Surveying, Industry Analysis and Grant Projects
- Value-Added Projects
- Publications, Fact Sheets, Workshops and Conferences
- Case-Studies, Market Analysis and Pro-active Studies

Some of our activities

- Farm Projects
 - Agri-Tourism
 - Bagged Waste Products
 - Food Products
 - Meat Products
 - Corn Products
 - Wood Products
 - Farm-Based Businesses
- Other Topics
 - Firewood Regulations
 - Produce Scales
 - Milk Mktg. Orders
 - Liability Insurance
 - Glass Jars
 - TDOT Road Signs
- Outreach and Pro-Active
 - General Guides to:
 - Value-Added
 - Marketing
 - Agri-Tourism
 - Food Processing
 - Survey Results:
 - Slaughtering Facilities
 - Grocery Stores
 - Wineries
 - Gift Baskets
 - Aquaculture
 - Grape & Wine, Hydroponic Lettuce, Case Studies

Where We Are! (2002 – 2003)

- 20% - - Value-Added Farm Projects
- 25% - - Developing Partnership Efforts
- 25% - - Outreach, Teaching and Training
- 30% - - Administration, Planning, Re-Establishment

Accomplishments (2002 – 2003)

- Facilities: renovated and re-located
- Fully Staffed: Fully Staffed, 6 full-time positions
- Grant Proposals: Innovation Center, Agri-Tourism, Cooperative Development, Appalachian Spring, Risk Mgmt. SARE, FSMIP.
- Partnerships & Collaborations:
- Input & Direction: V-A Council & CPA Board

What We Have Learned (1998 – 2003)

- Production Issues

- Soil Type
- Rainfall
- Fertility
- Variety
- Row Spacing
- Yields
- Labor
- Equipment
- Facilities
- Marketing
- Transportation

- Value-Added Issues

- All Production Issues
- Pre-Processing
- Input Acquisition
- Equipment (Processing/Packaging)
- Regulations
- Labor
- Storage
- Packaging
- Distribution
- Marketing
- Management
- Transportation
- Consumers

What We Have Learned (1998 – 2003)

- Growth over an 8-year period
- Strong commitment to long-term success
- Cash flow critical in early years
- Quality control and large volume critical
- Detailed understanding of regulations is needed
- Significant marketing costs in early years
- Word-of-mouth very effective in short and long run

Where We Are Going . . .

- Value-Added Farm Projects

(wheat-board straw, bio-diesel, dairy 3x, aquaculture, agri-tourism, winery, horse hay, meat processing, goat)

- Emphasis in Cooperative Efforts (\$50,000 KCCD)

- Outreach & Training

(5 County meetings, Agent Training, 5 conferences, agri-tourism manual, publications)

- Agri-tourism (\$40,000 USDA, Inventory, Training Manual, Training Conferences)

- Pro-active Industry Analysis (Dairy Processing, Coop Legislation, Bio-Diesel)

- Grants . . . and *Grants* (7 grants @ \$200,000, Innovation Center, producer grants))

Experience is the best teacher.

- The rules have changed!
- Analyze “each” farmer project!
- If you always do, what you’ve always done...
- Unique resources matched to unique needs.
- Importance of funding!!!
- Can’t judge a book by the cover.
- Strength in numbers.

continued. . .

- More to *hickory nut pie* than hickory nuts.
- There is a market for everything.
- It's not always *build it and they will come*.
- There is success in failure.
- “If you show me it will work, I’ll do it.”
- Success takes time!

Future Directions of the *CPA*?

- Thinking Outside the Box!
- Pooling Cooperative Resources.
- Evaluating Value-Added Opportunities.
- Asking and Answering Important Questions.
- Improving Farm Successes.