

Become a Master Beef Producer

The Master Beef Producer Program is coming to northeast Tennessee in January. Starting in 2007, anyone who has completed the Master Beef Producer Course will be eligible for the increased cost-share percentage of 50% instead of the standard 33% in the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program that helps cattle producers purchase bulls and cattle handling facilities. With this new benefit in 2007, there has never been a better time to become a Master Beef Producer!

The MBP Program is the most extensive educational project ever planned for the Tennessee cattle industry. The MBP program is designed to help individual cattle producers improve their profitability and competitiveness by enhancing production and reducing costs. Last year, forty-three cattle producers participated in the course held in Elizabethton and Jonesborough and all of them said they would recommend the course to others. Half of the participants reported that the knowledge they gained in the course would have an economic impact on their farm of over \$1000.

The Master Beef Producer Program will focus on 12 important issues facing cattle producers including managing and planning for success, marketing, genetics, forage production, reproduction, herd health, cattle handling, cattle behavior, and other topics. **The MBP program will be offered locally beginning on January 22. The course will consist of ten sessions held on Monday nights from 7:00-9:30 through March 26. The meetings will be held in Jonesborough at the Farm Bureau Building located a mile north of 11E on Boones Creek Road.** A special meal sponsored by Pfizer Animal Health will be provided on the last evening of the course.

Participants will receive a certificate recognizing their training, a Master Beef Producer cap, and an attractive Tennessee Master Beef Producer sign to display on their farm. **A registration fee of \$50 will cover the cost of the course materials including an extensive beef production reference manual. The fee is normally \$150, but as long as participants become BQA certified and obtain a premise ID for their farm, they will receive a scholarship from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture so that the registration fee will only be \$50.** Sign up by completing a registration form or attending the first session on January 22 (space may be limited so it is best to sign up early). Contact Ty Petty, Agriculture Extension Agent, at 743-9584 to register or for more information.

Cost Share Dollars for 2007 Increased for Master Beef Producers



NASHVILLE, Tenn. – State Agriculture Commissioner Ken Givens announced that beginning July 1, 2007, producers who have successfully completed the 12-week Master Beef Producer course will be eligible for increased cost share on cattle genetic and handling facilities improvements.

“If the increased profits enjoyed by those who become Master Beef Producers isn’t reason enough, we’re about to give Tennessee cattlemen another reason,” said Givens. “Next year, producers who complete the Master Beef course will be eligible for a larger slice of cost share under the Cattle Improvement Initiative.”

Tennessee cattle producers who become Master Beef Producer certified will be eligible for reimbursement of 50 percent, up to \$1,000, for genetic improvements in their herds.

Certified producers will also be eligible to receive a 50 percent reimbursement, up to \$1,250, for improvements to their cattle handling facilities. **In the current round of cost share disbursements, approved producers get a 35 percent cost share up to \$700 on genetics and up to \$850 on handling equipment.**

The Master Beef Producer Program is an educational program designed to help Tennessee cow-calf producers improve management skills and profitability and to ultimately help raise industry competitiveness with other states. The 12-session course, led by a team of University of Tennessee Extension specialists, covers business planning, marketing, genetics, feeding and forage, health management and cattle reproduction. Producers can learn more or sign up for the course through county UT Extension offices.

The Cattle Improvement Initiative is one of the cost share programs made possible through the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program, an agricultural development initiative proposed by Governor Phil Bredesen and supported by the Tennessee General Assembly with an \$11 million appropriation in the first two years.

“The great thing about the whole Cattle Improvement Initiative,” said Givens, “is that we accomplish so much for our cattlemen with every approved application. We don’t just reimburse these serious producers, we also help individuals and the industry as a whole by first making sure these folks have the most current knowledge and certification they’ll need to succeed in the future.

“By setting these high standards for a successful application, we get the greatest possible value of the cost share dollars the state contributes to a farm.”

The TN Department of Agriculture is now offering a \$100 scholarship to cover all but \$50 of the fee for producers interested in participating in the course.

In order to be eligible for the scholarship and cost share, producers must register their farms with the National Animal Identification System and have completed the Beef Quality Assurance course. The scholarship program is also made possible through the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program.

“The most important thing producers need to realize at this point,” says Givens, “is that these classes are only offered a few times a year. Producers need take the classes now so they can qualify for the greater cost share percentage next year.

“Producers who do not take the course will still be eligible to receive the 35 percent cost share,” said the commissioner, “but of course we’d like to see everyone get the most help possible.”

Additionally, equipment not previously accepted for cost share reimbursement, including hay rings and creep feeders, will be eligible items in next year’s round of applications, according to Givens. As previously established, producers must be approved before making their purchases.

Applications for the program will be available June 2007 at county UT Extension offices, county Farm Bureau offices and local co-ops.

For more information about farmer cost share opportunities through the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program, visit online at www.picktnproducts.org.



Southeastern Apple Growers Meeting

The 2007 Southeastern Apple Growers Meeting is just “around the corner” and the program and meeting arrangements are ready to go! The date for this year’s meeting is **January 10-11 and we will be back at the Crowne Plaza Resort Asheville, NC.** The hotel has undergone some major renovations with additions to the rooms to make your stay even more enjoyable. Be sure to book your room early and let them know you are with the SE Apple Growers Meeting to guarantee a reduced

rate. In addition to the two days of educational programs, commercial exhibitors, and entertaining banquet, is the opportunity to meet with other growers. **The educational sessions will begin at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 10th and conclude on the afternoon of Thursday, January 11th** with the exhibits open both days. We will have our annual banquet on Wednesday night, with after dinner entertainment provided by Mr. Jeff Darnell.

This year's educational program includes speakers with a wide range of expertise from the Southeast. As in years past we will have an emphasis on topics of importance such as the 2007 Farm Bill, labor options, marketing as well as other production and pest management related issues. This year we will also have a focus on the economics of orchard establishment and production. The Board of the NC Apple Growers, in cooperation with leaders from other states, have made an effort to try and put together several budgets on the actual cost of apple production. Dr. Charles Safley with the NCSU Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics has provided a format in which this will be presented. In addition, for this year's meeting we will also have a Proceedings provided for you when you register that will have the budgets included as well as a summary of the other presentations can be used for taking notes as well as for reference during the year. Please take a look at the enclosed program to see the many topics that are going to be addressed. There is also an Auxiliary program with planned activities for those interested.

Due to rising costs we have had to increase the registration fee for this year's meeting. Registration for the 2007 Southeastern Apple Growers Meeting is \$20.00 in advance or \$30.00 at the door. The cost of registration will include lunch in the exhibit area on Thursday, January 11th as well as a printed Proceedings. The banquet will be held on Wednesday night, January 10th and the cost is \$20.00 in advance or \$30.00 at the door. In this issue of the newsletter you will find a detailed copy of the program and a pre-registration form.

(Enclosed in apple grower's letter only) .Plan now to attend and be sure to respond rapidly on the enclosed pre-registration form. For those needing to contact Mrs. Peggy Laughter, Executive Secretary for the NC Apple Growers Association, her phone number is (828) 685-3241 and her FAX number is (828) 685-3726. This is one meeting you will not want to miss and we look forward to seeing you in January at the Crowne Plaza Resort Asheville!

State Expands Cost Share Program to Cover Hay Storage



The Tennessee State Department of Agriculture has announced it will begin accepting applications for cost share assistance for farmers interested in building new hay storage structures or adding on to barns for more hay storage. **Cattle and hay producers can apply for 35% cost share assistance, up to \$3,500, toward the construction of a new hay storage structure or an addition to an existing structure.** To be eligible, farmers must be a Tennessee resident and operate a farm located in the state with at least ten head of cattle or fifty acres of hay. Producers must also register their premise, which can be done by mail or at Farm Service Agency offices.

The state only has funding for less than 300 farms through this new hay storage cost share. The funding is expected to go very fast with a lot of interest already. No applications will be accepted before January 1. In order to have the best chance of receiving the cost-share, **mail your application on January 2 and be sure that it receives a postmark dated January 2. Applications can also be faxed, but the fax may be busy and they plan to treat anything postmarked on Jan. 2 with the same priority as applications faxed or hand delivered on Jan. 2.** The applications will be approved on a first-come, first served basis and will probably all be given out within the first week. Be sure that the application is complete including the cost quote. Contact Ty Petty at 743-9584 or TN Dept. Ag 615-837-5323 for more information.

FORESTRY PLANTING SEASON IS HERE

Forest Land Enhancement Program
COST-SHARE DOLLARS AVAILABLE
For

- Reforestation projects to qualified landowners
- Timber and wildlife management
- Other forestland enhancement projects



Seedlings still available at
Tennessee Division of Forestry
Nursery 423/263-1626

Landowners having 10 acres or more that develop a project plan with a TDF forester will qualify for 50% cost-share reimbursement for eligible planting projects and 50 – 75% cost-share rates on other forestry projects.

Contact your nearest TDF District Office in Greeneville at 423-636-8805

UT Bull Evaluation Center Completes Fall 2006 Test

The University of Tennessee Central Bull Evaluation Center has just completed their Fall Bull Test at the Middle Tennessee Research and Education Center in Spring Hill. One hundred-twelve bulls began the test in July and Seventy-nine of those bulls passed all the rigorous requirements to qualify for the sale to be held at the Center on January 18, 2007. The on feed test identifies the bull's ability to gain rapidly from weaning to a year of age. The ability to gain rapidly is influenced by genetics and is transmitted to those bull's future offspring thus providing commercial cow-calf producers an excellent source for superior genetics to use in their herds. Breeds included in this year's test were Angus, Charolais, Gelbvieh and Herefords.

The high gaining bulls in this test was shared by two different bulls from two different purebred Angus breeders. Richview Angus of Lansing, Tennessee and Bill Baird Angus of Blountville, Tennessee were the co-

winners. Both of these yearling bulls were sons of the same purebred Angus bull, SA Neutron 377, and gained 5.34 pounds per day while on the 112 day gain test.

The Central Bull Evaluation Center is a cooperative program between the UT Extension, UT Research and Education Center, UT College of Veterinary Medicine and the Tennessee Beef Cattle Improvement Association.

Tennessee Cattlemen's Association 2007 Convention

MURFREESBORO, Tenn.-- "We have a terrific



convention planned this year with producers in mind," said Tennessee Cattlemen's Association Executive Vice-President, Luke West. The 2007 convention is scheduled

for **January 25-27 in Pigeon Forge, TN** at the Music Road Hotel. The convention will be beneficial to cattlemen on any scale. There are many events planned including a Producer's Tour, 'Cow College' featuring leading experts in the beef industry, tradeshow, Delegate Session, Issues Forum, auction, TN CattleWomen's Tour, student Beef Bowl and the annual awards banquet and entertainment. Bring the entire family to experience the famous wintry scene in Gatlinburg!

"Members from across the state and southeastern region will be in attendance and after many months of planning the time is almost here," said West. For more information on attending, call (615) 896-BEEF. For hotel accommodations call 1-866-615-6353.

The Tennessee Cattlemen's Association is proud to announce their 21st year serving the great state of Tennessee. The Association represents quality beef and dairy producers throughout the entire state and eight adjoining states. The organization has been praised for its active participation and leadership in the beef industry at the local, state, and national level.

