



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APRIL 23, 2009

CONTACT: TOM WOMACK
615-837-5118
Tom.Womack@TN.gov

TENNESSEE AGRICULTURAL ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM APPLICATIONS NOW AVAILABLE

- Farmers Encouraged to Apply for TAEP Funding -

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The Tennessee Department of Agriculture has released the 2009 application for the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program. The program will begin accepting new applications June 1 and continue through July 1. Applications should not be postmarked prior to June 1. Applications are accepted on a first come, first serve basis, so producers are encouraged to apply early.

“Because of the economy, there may be fewer total dollars to go around, but the Ag Enhancement Program remains strong and we expect to be able to put several millions of dollars on the ground to help farmers make strategic investments,” said state Agriculture Commissioner Ken Givens. “We encourage farmers to apply early beginning June 1 as we expect another year of high demand for these cost share opportunities.”

This year’s program offers the same menu of cost share opportunities as last year. This includes the livestock equipment, cattle genetics, hay storage, feed storage, grain storage and producer diversification opportunities. To date TAEP has provided cost share funds for more than 14,500 projects. A recent study has shown that for every state dollar invested, an additional \$4.64 is generated in local economic activity.

New for agritourism operators for 2009 is the Tourist-Oriented Directional Signs (TODS) program. Through TAEP, agritourism operators can receive cost share funds to purchase TODS featuring TDA’s well known red barn icon. These signs can be used, along Tennessee highways, to direct motorist to agritourism venues.

TAEP is a state funded program established by Governor Phil Bredesen and supported by the General Assembly to increase farm income in Tennessee by helping farmers invest in better farming practices and by encouraging diversification and innovation. Through TAEP, farmers can qualify for 35 or 50 percent cost share ranging from a maximum of \$1,200 to \$15,000 on a variety of projects.

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ELLINGTON AGRICULTURAL CENTER
BOX 40627, NASHVILLE, TN 37204
Tennessee.gov/agriculture

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Applications are available at most farm agencies and farm supply stores including USDA Farm Service Agency, UT Extension, Farm Bureau and Tennessee Farmers Co-op locations. Producers can get important messages and updates on the program by calling toll 1-800-342-8206.

For more information or to download an application, visit www.TN.gov/agriculture/enhancement.

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