

# MU Extension Workshop To Help Farmers Access Government Programs

**COLUMBIA, MO.**

**T**here are a lot of programs designed to help farmers, but those programs often means negotiating a maze of agencies and navigating an alphabet soup of initials and acronyms.

A two-day University of Missouri Extension workshop will take some of the mystery out of farm programs and the process of applying to them.

“Accessing Farm Programs” will take place Oct. 3-4 at the MU Bradford Research and Extension Center in Columbia.

“The workshop will help farmers tap into the resources that are out there,” said Debi Kelly of the Missouri Beginning Farmers Program, which is a joint project of MU Extension and the Thomas Jefferson Agricultural Institute.

Participants will learn to make sense of the daunting array of initials designating government farm agencies and programs – FSA, NRCS, MDA, to name a few. The workshop will also explain the different kinds of help these programs offer, such as grants, loans and cost-sharing and technical assistance.

The first session, Oct. 3, 1-7:30 p.m., will include a general overview of government agencies and their programs.

Participants will have the opportunity for

“curbside consulting” with representatives from state and federal agencies. After a local foods dinner, farmers will hold a panel discussion about their experience with accessing farm programs.

The second session, Oct. 4, 7:30 a.m.-1 p.m., begins with a farm tour at the Jefferson Agricultural Institute’s Farm and Gardens, which will give participants a firsthand look at practices and concepts that figure prominently in many programs, such as wetlands, grass waterways, no-till planting and field borders.

The tour will be followed by a working session on obtaining necessary materials for developing a farm plan for the USDA Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). Staff from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service will be on hand to assist and answer questions.

Registration for the Oct. 3 session is \$15; the Oct. 4 session is \$10. Fees include educational materials and food. Registration will be limited to 75 participants. For a downloadable brochure and registration form, see <http://beginning-farmers.missouri.edu/workshops.aspx>.

For more information, contact the Jefferson Institute at 573-449-3518 or email [lchann@jefersoninstitute.org](mailto:lchann@jefersoninstitute.org). △



Link Directly To: **PIONEER**