Smart Cell Phones Join Computers As Topics At Farm Conference, Jan 7-8 At Osage Beach

COLUMBIA, MO.

Computers on the Farm Conference, Jan. 7-8, at Osage Beach, Mo., will cover more than computers, says John Travlos, University of Missouri program coordinator.

"Cell phones are becoming more sophisticated in offering farming aids," said Travlos, who heads the MU Agricultural Electronic Bulletin Board (AgEBB).

The program offers training for beginners and advanced users, Travlos said. A part of the history of the conference is farmers sharing their skills.

"Farmer users tell of their experiences in using computers and software." Travlos said. "The training is practical and farm tested."

For the future, participants will hear an update on MoBroadBandNow an effort to bring high-speed internet connections to rural areas of the state. With federal funding provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the goal is to provide access to 95 percent of the population.

The Act provides $7.2 billion to expand broadband access across the U.S. Contracts have already been let for several areas in Missouri.

"This is a chance for farmers and rural citizens to have input into the future development," Travlos said.

Traditional program topics will be offered: Ag production software, weather tools, precision agriculture technology, farm business financial software and tax tools.

Of growing interest is the use of mapping tools, Travlos said.

Software and hardware vendors will have booths at the trade show and will offer help at the conference.

Special sessions are held for young people in 4-H and FFA.

The conference can provide a weekend get away for farm families at Tan-Tar-A Resort. Conferees will have access at special rates to recreational facilities.

Individual registration fee of $115 includes meals and materials. Family rates are available.

Special room rates are offered to those enrolled. Call Tan-Tar-A at 800-826-8272.　　Δ