

TDA Now Accepting Applications For Cost Share Program

Farmers Encouraged to Apply for TAEP Funding

NASHVILLE, TENN.

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture has begun accepting applications for the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program. Applicants are encouraged to reach out to their county UT Extension agent for application information or the department at toll-free 800-342-8206. Most applications are accepted on a first come, first serve basis and should be filled out accurately and postmarked beginning June 2.

“We expect to be able to put a substantial amount of money on the ground this year to help farmers make improvements in their farming operations,” said state Agriculture Commissioner Ken Givens. “Despite some budget reductions, funding for core Ag Enhancement programs remains available. Because of expected high demand, it is important that producers apply timely and accurately.”

Through TAEP, farmers can qualify for 35 or 50 percent cost share ranging from \$1,200 to \$15,000 on a variety of projects.

This year, TAEP has added Grain Storage as a new cost share opportunity and expanded the Livestock Equipment and Handling Facilities, Hay Storage and Livestock Feed Storage opportunities. The Livestock Feed Storage cost share now includes funds for cattle, goats, sheep, poultry and swine, while the Livestock Equip-

ment and Handling Facilities and the Hay Storage cost share includes funds for cattle, goats and sheep.

Continued cost share opportunities include Producer Diversification and the Feeder Cattle Incentive. The Feeder Cattle Incentive offers funds for producers who participate in approved USDA age and source verified programs and meet state preconditioning requirements.

TAEP provided cost share funds for nearly 6,000 projects last year. Financial investment in these projects does not end at the farmgate. A recent study has shown that for every dollar invested, an additional \$4.64 is generated in local economic activity.

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.

Applications and additional information about cost share opportunities through the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program can be found online at www.picktnproducts.org or by calling toll-free 800-342-8206. Applications are available through local farm related businesses and agencies, including UT Extension Offices and farm supply stores. △