

# TDA Now Accepting Applications For Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement 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. Most applications are accepted on a first come, first serve basis and should be filled out completely and postmarked beginning June 1. The deadline for submission is July 1.

"This year, 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 expect another year of high demand for these cost share opportunities, so farmers should apply early."

This year's program offers the same menu of cost share opportunities as last year, including 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 15,000 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 is the Tourist-Oriented Directional Signs (TODS) cost share opportunity. 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 motorists 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.

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 800-342-8206.

For more information or to download an application, visit [www.TN.gov/agriculture/enhancement](http://www.TN.gov/agriculture/enhancement). Δ