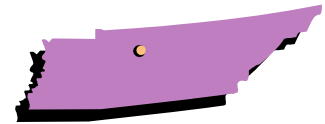


**Southern Region Program Leadership Network
Community Development Committee
2008 State Report
Tennessee**



1. Report Submitted by:

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2. Program Description and Staffing Plan:

Program

- The UT Extension initiative, “Sustainable Tennessee”, introduced in 2007, involves community development oriented programming including:
 - **Entrepreneurial Communities:** Entrepreneurship is critical to economic development. This program identifies key attributes communities need to encourage and support entrepreneurship. Strategies for community adoption and methods to measure success are being introduced. Programming options for youth, individuals, businesses and communities is included.
 - **Smart Growth:** Smart Growth is development that serves the economy, community and the environment. Research and experience shows that the built environment profoundly influences health. This program introduces the Smart Growth principles and showcase program successes. Programming options for youth, agriculture and family and consumer sciences is included.
 - **Healthy Housing:** The National Center for Healthy Housing is a non-profit organization supported by the EPA, the CDC, HUD and others. The mission is to develop and promote practical methods to protect children from environmental health hazards while preserving affordable housing. Tennessee has become a regional training center. Options for youth, agriculture and family and consumer sciences programming are included
 - **Affordable Housing:** Home ownership is the primary way many people build assets. There are many programs available to help consumers achieve the American dream of owning a home. This program attempts to contact current and potential homeowners with information regarding affordable housing programs and how to make informed choices.
- Area farm and financial management specialists continue to conduct highly successful “Using Computerized Records to Improve Your Business” workshops targeting small rural businesses.
- The Center for Profitable Agriculture (CPA) is a partnership between The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture (UTIA) and the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation. The CPA has been created to increase the value of Tennessee's economy through new, expanded and improved processing and marketing of agricultural, aquacultural and forestry products, as well as home-based industries.
- Established in 2007, The Office of Bioenergy Programs at the University of Tennessee is actively working toward a secure and sustainable energy future for the state and nation. Housed in the Institute of Agriculture, the Office of Bioenergy Programs coordinates a variety of research, development, and outreach programs, all involving bioenergy. Within the Office, the Tennessee Biofuels Initiative includes research on biomass crops, producer education, and construction of a pilot biofuel refinery to demonstrate and refine ethanol production from cellulosic biomass (principally switchgrass and woody materials) as well as to work out issues related to continuous production streams, feedstock transportation, and product distribution. UT Extension is providing expertise in all of these areas as

applied researchers and through the development of educational programming and materials aimed at potential Initiative participants and the public.

- A working group has been established in the Department of Agricultural Economics that focuses on rural economic development and partners with research, teaching and Extension faculty across the Institute of Agriculture and the University.
- Tennessee Rural Economic Development (TREND - <http://trend.ag.utk.edu>) provides Extension agents and clients timely information on a wide variety of rural development topics.
- Faculty in the Department of Agricultural Economics serve on the State Rural Development Committee which continues to provide a forum for communication and collaboration among member agencies and to recognize outstanding local accomplishments with its annual award program.

Staffing

- Tim Cross has been named dean of the University of Tennessee Extension. Dr. Cross is the former assistant dean for UT Extension. He replaces Charles Goan who has served as interim dean for the past 32 months.
- Agricultural Economics Professor George Smith has agreed to serve as interim assistant dean for UT Extension, where he will provide leadership in agriculture, natural resources, and resource development. He is also serving as agriculture, natural resources, and resource development program leader for Extension.
- The Department of Plant Sciences has hired Dana Saywell as an Extension Specialist in the area of organic vegetable production.

3. Program Highlights for 2008:

- In partnership with the Southern Growth Policies Board, twenty community forums were held across Tennessee in early 2007, which brought together a broad base of representation (~512 people) to discuss challenges, issues, and opportunities related to youth development in Tennessee. The University of Tennessee's Institute for Public Service and Institute of Agriculture (through UT Extension) worked in partnership with local and regional partners to conduct more than half of community forums in Tennessee. The Institute for Public Service and UT Extension released a Tennessee-specific report in August 2008 that will be used by local, regional and state entities engaged in youth development. The report can be downloaded at: <http://trend.ag.utk.edu/youth/2008TNReportYouthDevelopment.pdf>
- Over 100 Extension agents in the areas of Agriculture and Natural Resources and Family and Consumer Sciences received in-service training on community, resource and economic development topics.
- Extension became an official training partner of the National Center for Healthy Housing. Sixteen Extension agents became official trainers. Several have taken and passed the Healthy Housing Credential Exam. Twenty-six professionals, such as home inspectors, real estate brokers, social workers, etc., attended an in-depth training on healthy housing.
- Extension personnel served on 18 resource development committees across the state in 2007. Counties included: Hickman, Bedford, McNairy, Chester, Houston, Fentress, Benton, Decatur, Stewart, Wayne, Lawrence, Hamilton, Fayette, Madison, Carroll, Shelby, Hardin, and Gibson.
- Extension reported over 68,000 individual contacts in the base program of Resource Development for 2007. A breakdown by gender and race follows:

Resource Development						
	White/Not of Hispanic origin	Black/Not of Hispanic Origin	Hispanic	Asian or Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaskan Native	Total
Female Adult	24448	1790	182	62	42	26524
Female Youth	3423	385	36	14	1	3859
Male Adult	33033	1524	373	49	42	35021
Male Youth	3108	168	38	12	1	3327
Total	64012	3867	629	137	86	68731

- Extension agents working in the area of small business development and entrepreneurship reported that through their programming in 2007:
 - 8 existing small businesses are now operating with a business plan.
 - 366 individuals increased their entrepreneurial/business skills.
 - 258 individuals started a small business
 - 19 small business owners reported increased income and quality of living.

4. Plans/New Directions for 2009:

Program

- Continued expansion of the Sustainable Tennessee program across Tennessee
 - Smart Growth*
 - Pilot testing of middle school *Smart Growth for Kid's Sake* curriculum
 - Healthy Housing*
 - Healthy Housing Specialist training and credentialing
 - Affordable Housing*
 - Workforce Housing Options workgroup with Tennessee Housing Development Agency
 - Entrepreneurial Communities*
 - Work with Extension agents and community leaders in several counties to perform asset mapping and begin the groundwork for developing entrepreneurial community attributes in addition to meeting Three-Star Program benchmarks in entrepreneurship.
- Continued development of the Biofuels Initiative's pilot cellulosic ethanol plant and development of cellulosic feedstock markets

Staffing

- Department Head of Agricultural Economics will be filled.
- Endowed chair in agribusiness development will be filled.

5. Collaborative Activities and Funding Sources:

- The Department of Agricultural Economics, led by Dayton Lambert and Michael Wilcox, is conducting a baseline analysis of entrepreneurship in Tennessee. Jointly funded by the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, this project specifically aims to measure entrepreneurship in Tennessee and the region using a range of metrics and will determine the level of service and support that entrepreneurs in Tennessee are currently and could be receiving. A particular emphasis will be placed on noncore (non-metropolitan) areas across the state.
- The Department of Plant Sciences is creating the Tennessee Organic Agriculture Consortium, a collaborative network of growers, university researchers, extension specialists, industry, and government to address critical issues in organic agriculture across the state. This is in cooperation with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, through a grant focused on organic production and market development.
- The Department of Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science reports:
 - "Around 1600 Dogwood trees lie along the Sequoyah Hills Dogwood Trail. This is the oldest Dogwood trail in Knoxville, TN and geospatial data was collected to indicate that the trail is in decline. The data also shows that most of the trees are classified as old growth trees and future plantings of young trees must be undertaken to maintain the viability of the trail." (reported by Mike Buschermohle)
 - "The Tennessee AgrAbility Project (TNAP) assisted 30 farmers, completed 17 on-site assessments, and assisted 13 individuals in selecting appropriate assistive technologies for homes and workplaces. Project staff and collaborators developed plans for modifications and adaptive controls that are awaiting funding approval for installation on several agricultural machines. TNAP educated more than 5000 farm family members and others about the impacts of disabilities and secondary injuries during on-site assessments and 43 presentations and exhibits at agricultural field days and conferences, and vocational agriculture and 4-H curricula." (reported by Tim Prather)
 - "Work continued on the Pond Creek watershed improvement project in Loudon, Monroe and McMinn counties where best management practices have changed farming methods to improve stream quality. This project has secured additional external funding to support one full-time watershed coordinator as well as establish additional best management practices." (reported by Forbes Walker)
- The Department of Forestry, Wildlife & Fisheries reported:
 - Holding a December 07 workshop with rural county leaders to raise their awareness of development trends and engage them via a workshop regarding their needs in future development work. Worked with multiple natural resource and EC&D agencies to develop awareness of potential areas of working together. The primary goal of the workshop was to strengthen natural resource and economic and community development institutions' ability to work together to address rural development needs.
- The Department of Family and Consumer Sciences reported:
 - *Smart Growth*
 - Middle school curriculum – *Smart Growth for Kid's Sake*
 - FCS agent involvement in local community development groups
 - *Healthy Housing*
 - Implementation of healthy housing programs with building science, health care and social services professionals – fee-based program
 - HUD/USDA Healthy Homes Program – grant
 - Lead-Based paint program – grant