Ky. Proud opens northern front
Retailer launches campaign with producers, celebrities

By TED SLOAN
Kentucky Agricultural News

The Kentucky Proud Army established a beachhead in northern Kentucky with a high-profile campaign in a regional supermarket chain in December.

The campaign launched Dec. 17 in seven Remke Markets. Remke stocked more than 250 Kentucky Proud items in special kiosks and in the dairy and deli sections. Local shoppers explored the Kentucky Proud kiosks and sampled foods from Kentucky Proud producers. They met former Miss Kentucky Maria Maldonado Smith at the Newport store and “Survivor” Rodger Bingham of nearby Crittenden in the Hebron store.

“It exceeded my expectations,” said Eric Rabe, president of Remke Markets. “We got good numbers. I’m really happy with that. It will only get better as we promote this through the year.”

See REMKE, page 6

2006 farm income may reach record level

By CHRIS ALDRIDGE
Kentucky Agricultural News

Cash receipts for Kentucky farmers are projected to grow slightly to a record $4.14 billion next year, given normal weather and continued world economic growth.

That was the conclusion of the Kentucky Agricultural Economic Outlook for 2006, authored by economists from the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture. They presented their findings Dec. 8 during Kentucky Farm Bureau’s annual meeting at the Galt House Hotel in Louisville.

Kentucky farm cash receipts topped the $4 billion mark for the first time in 2004 at $4.13 billion. Estimates for 2005 dipped slightly but are still expected to exceed $4 billion.

In the late 1990s, Kentucky’s agricultural economy was split almost evenly between livestock and crops, said economist Craig Infanger. In recent years, livestock has increased to more than two-thirds of all cash receipts. Livestock gained an estimated 6.3 percent in 2005, led by horses, cattle and poultry. Equine receipts exceeded $1 billion for the second time, followed by poultry, which grew 11 percent to an estimated $907 million.

Lee Meyer, the economist specializing in livestock, lauded the efforts of the Kentucky Department of Agriculture in helping the Commonwealth become the fifth-largest goat-producing state in the country. “We should applaud the KDA and [goat marketing specialist] Tess Caudill in particular,” Meyer said. The report stated that producers who participate in the graded and Tel-O-Auction sales pioneered by Caudill

See BUYOUT, page 8
Hot new farm products will warm winter chill

Special to KAN

Nearly 800 exhibitors are scheduled to meet in Louisville for the 2006 National Farm Machinery Show and Championship Tractor Pull Feb. 15-18 at the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center.

Vendors at the 41st farm machinery show will show off their brand-name equipment and services, give hands-on demonstrations of the latest agricultural technology and offer free seminars. Exhibitors will display a wide selection of equipment, supplies, services and more at the nation’s largest indoor farm show. Exhibit hours are 9 a.m.-6 p.m. EST daily.

The nation’s top drivers and most powerful tractors and trucks will compete for more than $200,000 in prize money in the Championship Tractor Pull, the oldest indoor tractor pull in America. Drivers will compete in evening performances plus an additional pull Saturday afternoon, Feb. 18. Fans are invited to visit “The Pit” in Broadbent Arena from 9 a.m.-6 p.m. each day to meet the drivers and get a close-up look at the vehicles. “The Pit” will close at 11 a.m. Feb. 18 in preparation for the 1 p.m. pull. The Championship Tractor Pull is sponsored by Syngenta.

Performances are scheduled for 7:30 p.m. each evening along with the Saturday afternoon pull. Tickets are $26 for the Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday afternoon shows and $36 for the finals Saturday night. Tickets may be purchased by calling (502) 361-3100 or 1-800-487-1212; on the Web at www.ticketmaster.com, or in person at the KFEC, the Kentucky International Convention Center or all Ticketmaster outlets. For more information on ticket sales, call (502) 367-5144.

Admission to the National Farm Machinery Show is free. Parking is $5. RV parking is $45 per night with electric hook-up and use of dump station.

The Ticket Information Hotline is (502) 367-5001. For more information, call (502) 367-5000.

For a list of speakers at the free seminars and other information, go to www.farmmachineryshow.org.

Grain outlook to be explored

Special to KAN

Soybean rust, farm finances and the market outlook will be the main topics of discussion at the 12th Kentucky Commodity Conference Jan. 6 at the Executive Inn in Paducah.

The Commodity Conference is the joint annual meeting of the Kentucky Corn Growers, Kentucky Small Grain Growers and Kentucky Soybean associations.

Don Hershman, plant pathologist at the University of Kentucky, will give the latest information on soybean rust. Ron Beaton, former anchor of News Channel 6 in Paducah, will talk about planning for financial success with information on retirement planning, employee benefits, taxes and other topics. Jim Bower of Bower Trading will share his outlook for the commodities markets.

The commodities groups will hold their respective annual meetings at the conference. The conference will conclude with an appreciation reception and awards banquet, where wheat, soybean and corn yield production contest winners, industry leaders and achievers will be honored.

The conference will run concurrently with the Paducah Farm Equipment Show Jan. 6-8 at the Executive Inn Expo Center. The show will feature 27 vendors, including 15 heavy equipment dealers.

Registration to the Kentucky Commodity Conference is free. For more information, go to www.kycorn.org/news_events/kcc.htm, e-mail info@kycorn.org, or call 1-800-BEAN-SOY.

For more information on the Paducah Farm Equipment Show, call Don VanCleave at (270) 559-6527.

Family farm meeting in Ky.

Special to KAN

The Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group’s annual winter conference will be held in Louisville in 2006.

The 15th annual Practical Tools and Solutions for Sustaining Family Farms Conference will be Jan. 19-22 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. The conference was moved from New Orleans because of damage from Hurricane Katrina.

More than 700 producers, researchers, educators and sustainable agriculture advocates are expected to attend.

More than 50 sessions will be given on direct marketing strategies, community food systems, and sustainable livestock, vegetable and flower production. Experts from throughout the United States will facilitate the sessions. Mac Stone, director of the Kentucky Department of Agriculture’s Division of Value-Added Plant Production and co-owner of Kentucky’s largest certified organic farm, will lead a session on protecting yourself from the risks of selling food.

Kentucky author and farmer Wendell Berry will give a reading Jan. 21 at 6 p.m. Foods produced by sustainable farmers from Kentucky will be served for dinner following the reading.

Optional half-day field trips will be offered Jan. 20 at Au Naturel vegetable and poultry farm in Smiths Grove; a community farm, farmers’ market sites and an urban farm; the Kentucky State University Research and Demonstration Farm in Frankfort; KSU’s pastured poultry operation, and another KSU tour on meat goats.

Intensive short courses scheduled Jan. 19 will cover cut flowers, organic vegetable production, pastured turkeys and management-intensive grazing of beef.

A silent auction will be held to benefit the Southern SAWG.

For fees and other information, e-mail jeannills@aol.com or go to www.sawg.org/conference-.html. For questions about exhibiting at the conference, contact Robin Verson, conference vendor coordinator, at (270) 432-0567 or hhcsa@scrtc.com.
‘Victory Garden’ stars top Garden Gurus event

Special to KAN

T
two well-known television hosts will highlight Garden Gurus VIII Jan. 14 at the Executive Inn Expo Center in Paducah.

Holly Shimizu will speak at 1 p.m. CST on “The Fragrant Garden.” Shimizu is executive director of the United States Botanic Garden and a former host of PBS-TV’s “The Victory Garden.” She had worked at other gardens in the United States and Germany and has led botanical and horticultural trips in many parts of the world.


Garden Gurus VIII will include workshops, a live auction, a silent auction, a plant sale and vendors.

Proceeds from Garden Gurus support educational programs, including the Demonstration and Trial Garden in Paducah, which twice has been honored with the National Garden Club’s Fisher Award as the best garden center in the United States.

A production of the Purchase Area Master Gardener Association, Garden Gurus began in 1999 as a lecture series to bring noted horticulturists into the community and give area residents an opportunity to purchase unusual specimen plants. Over the years the event has evolved into a daylong celebration of gardening.

PAMGA is made up of gardening enthusiasts who have successfully completed the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service’s master gardener program. In addition to Garden Gurus and the trial garden, PAMGA sponsors a flower show in June at the McCracken County Fair and holds plant sales.

Tickets for Garden Gurus VIII are available through county cooperative Extension offices and area nurseries and garden centers. Tickets are $25 in advance and $30 the day of the event. Doors open at 9:30 a.m.

For more information, contact Bill Baugh at baughpad@bellsouth.net, phone (270) 554-9520 or go to www.pamga.org.

Kentuckians featured at marketing meet

Special to KAN

A business author and a prominent Kentucky Proud businessman will be among the speakers at the fourth Ohio River Valley Farm Marketing Conference Feb. 21-22 at Clifty Falls State Park in Madison, Ind.

Barry Moltz, author of “You Need To Be a Little Crazy: The Truth About Starting and Growing Your Business,” will address the conference at the Feb. 22 luncheon. Jimmy Baird, owner of Little Kentucky Smokehouse, a ham processing plant in Union County, Ky., will speak at the closing of the conference. Janet Eaton, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture’s farmers’ market coordinator, will talk about “Sharpening Your Competitive Edge” at breakfast.

Conference workshops will explore starting a certified kitchen, cooperatives, marketing alliances, home processing and other agricultural marketing subjects. The conference also will offer one-on-one roundtable discussions with producers, panel discussions and trade show exhibits.

The conference will open Feb. 21 at the Venture Out Business Center with a wine and cheese tasting and a dinner of regional cuisine, during which a panel of chefs and producers will discuss the elements of a successful buying arrangement.

The conference is targeted to growers, agricultural entrepreneurs, agricultural educators, community leaders, local government officials and other agricultural stakeholders.

Kentucky conference sponsors include the Commodity Growers Cooperative, Kentucky Farm Bureau, the Kentucky Center for Cooperative Development, the Kentucky Rural Electric Association and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. The University of Kentucky College of Agriculture is a cooperating sponsor.

Registration is $40 before Feb. 6 and $50 after that date. The fee to attend one day is $25.

For more information, contact Sharon Ellison by phone at (317) 290-3100, ext. 429 or by e-mail at Sharon.ellison@in.usda.gov; Deb Conley by phone at (317) 232-8771 or by e-mail at dconley@isda.in.gov; Angela Caporelli or Janet Eaton by phone at (502) 564-4983 or by e-mail at angela.caporelli@ky.gov or janet.eaton@ky.gov.

Beekeepers will swarm to Ky. for national, regional meetings

Special to KAN

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tenucky will be all abuzz with no fewer than three beekeeping conferences in the coming months, including a national event in January in Louisville.

The American Beekeeping Federation Convention will be Jan. 11-14 at the Hyatt Regency in Louisville. More than 60 experts from throughout the country will lead workshops at the convention. Gene Killion, a retired apiarist for the University of Illinois and the Illinois Department of Agriculture, will give the keynote address Jan. 11. The convention will include a trade show of beekeeping suppliers and the American Honey Show. A free “Kids and Bees” program will be held at the Louisville Free Public Library on Jan. 14.

The convention will be preceded by an optional tour of the Walter T. Kelly Farm in Clarkson on Jan. 10. Pre-registration and a transportation charge are required for the tour. A “Serious Sideliner Symposium” for beekeepers who operate fewer than 300 colonies but are no longer hobbyists will run concurrently with the AFB convention program on Jan. 13-14 from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. EST each day.

For more information, contact the AFB office by phone at (912) 427-4233 or by e-mail at info@abfnet.org.

The Allen County Beekeepers Association will present the second annual Central Kentucky and Tennessee Beekeeping School Feb. 4 at the Western Kentucky University Ag Expo Center in Bowling Green. Beekeeping experts will conduct classes in three concurrent class tracks. Kentucky State Apiarist Phil Craft will provide information on how beekeepers can successfully enter their honey in the Kentucky State Fair. For more information, contact Martin J. Hickey at vonmannsteufel@yahoo.com.

The Bluegrass Beekeeping School will move to the Marriott Griffin Gate Hotel in Lexington for its third edition Feb. 18. Chuck and Karen Lawrence of Aurora, Ill., will serve as special guest speakers. The Lawrencees make a full-time living at beekeeping by making and selling value-added honeybee products.

The school will offer a total of 20 classes in class tracks for beginners and more experienced beekeepers. Registration will be $15 in advance and $20 at the door with a $5 discount for students high school age and younger.

For more information on these events, contact Phil Craft by phone at (502) 564-3956 or by e-mail at phil.craft@ky.gov, or go to the Kentucky Department of Agriculture Web site, www.kyagr.com, and click on Beekeeping Information.
Ky. ag: Strength in diversification

Isn’t it amazing? At a time when tobacco income in Kentucky is in decline, overall farm income is more than $4 billion – and is expected to stay there for the foreseeable future.

The University of Kentucky projects farm cash receipts for 2005 to be a little more than $4 billion and farm income for 2006 to possibly break the 2004 record of $4.13 billion.

Farmgate receipts for 2005 remained stable even though tobacco production fell by more than 30 percent in the first year since the tobacco quota buyout. Strong results in equine plus continued growth in poultry and beef cattle more than made up for a $150 million decrease in tobacco income along with declines in revenues from other row crops during a tough growing season.

UK’s ag economists think tobacco income might make a modest rebound ins future years as the remaining growers expand and imports decline. Increasing production of biofuels will support corn and soybean prices against large domestic supplies. Prices for most livestock are expected to slip a little bit in 2006 from their historic highs.

The strong results show that Kentucky agriculture is becoming diverse and resilient. Perhaps best of all, we still have plenty of untapped potential in many areas. The Kentucky Proud marketing program is helping produce growers get their fruits and vegetables into retail stores. Opportunities for Kentucky produce growers also are expanding in direct marketing outlets, such as farmers’ markets and produce auctions, and the state Parks Department, which paid more than $21,000 to Kentucky producers for fruits and vegetables in 2005 despite the drought. Kentucky is growing into a major poultry-producing state, and the swine industry is experiencing some growth.

Kentucky is the largest beef cattle state east of the Mississippi River, but there is still room for growth. U.S. beef will have more success in foreign markets when we have a fully operational national animal identification system that will enable us to verify the source and age of all our cattle. The first step in establishing this system is premises registration. Please go to the Kentucky Department of Agriculture Web site, www.kyagr.com, and register your premises. The sooner this system is up and running, the stronger our position in the world market will be.

We are succeeding at creating a stable, balanced agriculture industry in Kentucky. I commend you all for your vision and hard work, and I call on everyone in Kentucky agriculture to join together in taking our industry to the next level – from surviving to thriving.

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www.kyagr.com
Contest assignment: Imagine the future of ag

Schoolchildren are invited to create posters and essays about the future of Kentucky agriculture in the Kentucky Department of Agriculture’s 2006 Poster and Essay Contest.

“This annual contest inspires children to learn more about the importance of agriculture in our everyday lives,” Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer said. “I urge teachers and parents to encourage our young people to enter this contest. They will discover how farmers produce the safe, abundant and affordable food and fiber that we all enjoy.”

Contestants will draw posters and write essays about “Kentucky Agriculture: Growing for the Future.” They will be asked to demonstrate their understanding of the unique new opportunities that are emerging in agriculture such as biofuels, plant-based biodegradable plastics and research into plant-based medicines.

Statewide poster and essay winners in each of grades 1-8 will be honored in the Kentucky Agriculture Day Luncheon March 22 at the Kentucky History Center. Each winner will receive a $100 savings bond.

One Kentucky Proud Poster and one Kentucky Proud Essay will be selected from among all the winners. The classrooms of the students who produce the Kentucky Proud Poster and Kentucky Proud Essay each will be awarded $500.

Entries must be based on the contest theme. Posters must contain the theme. Drawings must be in color. Poster contest participants are asked not to use colored pencils. Posters should be no larger than 18 inches by 24 inches, drawn on white paper and framed with either poster board, heavy paper or mat board. Essays from students in grades 1-3 should be no longer than 150 words, and essays from students in grades 4-8 should be no longer than 250 words. Entries must be entirely student-created. Students may enter both contests.

Essays and posters will be used in various KDA publications and special events. They become the property of the Kentucky Department of Agriculture and will not be returned.

For full contest rules, information resources and other information, contact Rayetta Boone or Teresa Prather by phone at (502) 564-4696 or by e-mail at rayetta.boone@kyagr.com or teresa.prather@kyagr.com. For more information on the Web, go to the Kentucky Department of Agriculture Web site, www.kyagr.com, click on Education Resources in the pull-down menu and click on Agricultural Education.

KDA, KCA offer marketing grants to beef producers

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture is accepting applications from producers of Kentucky beef products for advertising and promotion grants from agricultural development funds granted to the Kentucky Cattlemen’s Association.

The grants are intended to help producers increase sales to consumers through point of sale materials, Web site development, advertising, or promotional activities. Grants also may be awarded to help producers meet legal labeling requirements and other merchandising requirements through upgrade of equipment, package labeling and UPC or bar coding.

“These grants are intended to help producers who want to expand their retail beef business,” said Michael Judge, executive director of the KDA’s Office of Agriculture Marketing and Product Promotion.

The cost-share grants will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Criteria will include product quality, consumer visibility, ability to meet high-volume demand, number of participants involved and ability to sell at the retail or foodservice level. Applicants must be members of the Kentucky Department of Agriculture’s Kentucky Proud marketing program and must have a current business plan.

All point-of-sale materials, print advertising, Web sites, labels and any other printed materials must include the Kentucky Proud logo and the phrase “Made possible through support from the Agricultural Development Fund.”

Transcripts of radio advertisements must be included with applications. Successful applicants may receive a one-time cost-share match of up to $5,000 for advertising, promotion, Web site development, equipment upgrading, package labeling, bar or UPC coding, or point-of-sales promotion of Kentucky beef or beef products. Applicants must provide at least a 50 percent cash match for all proposed funding. No previous expenditures will be accepted for cost-sharing.

A committee selected by the Department and KCA will assess the applications and award the grants.

Applications must be postmarked or received by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture before March 31. Faxed applications will not be accepted. Grants will expire on June 30.

Applications may be obtained by writing to Beef Advertising and Promotion Cost Share, Attn.: Warren Beeler, Kentucky Department of Agriculture, 100 Fair Oaks Lane, 5th Floor, Frankfort, KY 40601. Completed applications must be mailed to this address.

For more information, contact the KDA’s Warren Beeler or Tim Dietrich at (502) 564-4983.

www.kyagr.com
Show you’re Kentucky Proud

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture is continuing to take orders for the proposed Kentucky Proud license plate. The Transportation Cabinet must receive 900 orders by March 18 for the plate to be produced. An initial fee of $25 is charged at the time of application. Sales of the plate will benefit the Kentucky Agriculture and Environment in the Classroom program. To request an application, call (502) 564-4696, e-mail maria.maldonado@ky.gov, or write to Kentucky Proud License Application Request, c/o Maria Maldonado Smith, Kentucky Department of Agriculture, 500 Mero St., 7th Floor, Frankfort, KY 40601.
Kentucky farm supplies help hurricane victims

By TED SLOAN
Kentucky Agricultural News

Cattle roamed the roads of southern Mississippi for weeks after Hurricane Katrina marched through the Gulf Coast states. Wind, rain and trees had flattened fences throughout the region. Then Hurricane Rita raced through western Louisiana and eastern Texas, packing an even more powerful punch than its older sister and killing some 20,000 head of cattle.

Farmers, businesses and farm organizations in Kentucky rose to the aid of their brothers and sisters to the south. They donated feed, fencing and other farm supplies to the storm-ravaged farmers in the Gulf Coast states. The aid helped beleaguered farmers in Louisiana and Mississippi fence in their livestock herds and bought them some time to get back on their feet, according to leaders there who were involved in distributing the donations.

Some farmers are still struggling, but others have restored their operations to some point, they said.

“Our farmers are back to some sense of normalcy,” said Elmo Collum, coordinator for Mississippi’s pesticide safety education program.

“What [Kentucky farmers] sent was very important,” said Wayne Wyatt, a professor at Louisiana State University’s Iberia agricultural research station in Jeanerette. “It helped a lot of people.”

Kentucky farmers and farm organizations raised about $20,000 in feed, fencing and other supplies for farmers in Mississippi and Louisiana who were affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

“I applaud all Kentuckians who gave so generously to this cause,” Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer said. “You threw a lifeline to farmers in the hurricane-affected areas in their hour of need. On behalf of everyone who got a roll of barbed wire or a few sacks of feed to get them through the day: Thank you.”

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture spearheaded the drive to raise donations of feed, fencing and other supplies. The Kentucky Cattlemen’s Association accepted cash donations that were used to buy more farm supplies.

Collum and Roger Jones of New Augusta, Miss., an official with Heifer International, said donations of barbed wire and electric fence helped producers get their livestock back together, assess their condition and restore them to health.

The donated farm supplies were distributed to dozens of farmers in Louisiana and Mississippi.

“Our goal was to give people breathing room for their immediate needs so they could make good decisions,” Wyatt said.

Collum said farmers who benefited from the donations of farm supplies were amazed at the outpouring of aid from other parts of the country.

“Our farmers can’t believe that people would do something like this,” he said. “It is appreciated what everybody has done. It shows what type of people are in agriculture.”

Collum and Jones said much of the fencing in Mississippi that was damaged by Hurricane Katrina has been restored.

 “[Farmers] are getting their fences up, and they have got their herds back together to where they are in a pretty healthy position now,” Collum said.

Near the end of 2005 the entire region was suffering from a shortage of hay. The hurricanes were followed by a lengthy dry spell. Collum said Mississippi farmers had to graze some of the pasture they normally would grow for hay and were having a hard time making a stand of fall ryegrass for the winter.

Jones said farmers started feeding hay in mid-September.

Much of the affected land was left with elevated levels of salt as a result of the storm surge and subsequent dry spell, Wyatt said. Pastures of Bermuda-grass, which is salt-tolerant, are coming back, but ryegrass sown since the hurricanes is struggling to germinate.

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture thanks the following for giving farm supplies, cash and services for farmers in the Gulf Coast states:

- Air Joy Heating and Cooling
- Anderson Circle Farm
- Frances Aprile
- Bagdad Roller Mills
- Phillip Bagwell
- H.H. Barlow III
- Timothy Bentley
- Burkman Mills
- Central Farm Supply
- Virginia Christian
- Dudderar Farm
- Mariani Duncan
- Lowell Fultz
- Hardin County Cattlemen’s Association
- Hinkle Contracting
- Kentucky Cattlemen’s Association
- Kentucky Dairy Development Council
- Kentucky Division of Emergency Management
- Kentucky Farm Bureau
- Kentucky FFA
- Kentucky 4-H
- Kentucky Pork Producers Association
- Kentucky Veterinary Medical Association
- Larry Jaggers
- Norman Lasley
- Lincoln Trail Area Homemakers
- Thrashley Markland
- Minter Veterinary Clinic
- Otis Bryant and Son Farm Supply
- Owen County Conservation Service
- Brooks and Pat Peavler
- Prewitt’s Bluegrass Ag
- Jimmy Sadler
- Shelby County Cattlemen’s Association
- University of Kentucky Block and Bride Club
- University of Kentucky College of Agriculture
- Charles Wells
- Carolyn Winters

The red area of this map of south-central Louisiana represents parts of three parishes that were affected by Hurricane Rita in September 2005. The northern part of the impact zone is agricultural grassland; the rest of the impact zone is marshland where cattle also graze.

The purple areas are bodies of water. The sections in blue at the bottom are coastal areas.

Mark Broussard, left, and Ryan Dore, employees at the Iberia, La., research station, unload livestock feed from Kentucky onto a forklift in October.
Where farm and city meet

The annual Farm-City Celebration Luncheon took place Nov. 11 at the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center in Louisville. Top: Greg DeMuth of Stock Yards Bank in Louisville tries to rope the “calf” for the City team in the Wing Tip Rodeo. The Farm team won the weathered horse collar trophy. Left: Montrose “Monty” Justice, right, co-founder of Monty’s Plant Food Co. of Louisville, accepts the company’s award as 2005 Agribusiness of the Year from Don Carr, 2005 chairman of the Agribusiness Industry Network. The award, sponsored by Greater Louisville Inc., honors an agribusiness in the 13-county Louisville metropolitan area for its contributions to the farm economy.

Buyout payments cushion decline in tobacco income

Continued from Page 1
“can expect very competitive prices” next year.

“We have a very strong livestock sector,” Infanger said. “Crop prices have been the roller coaster.”

Crop cash receipts declined an estimated 19 percent in 2005, led by a more than $150 million drop in tobacco and a $123 million dip in the state’s major row crops, including corn, soybeans and wheat.

The only crop registering an increase was floriculture/ornamental, which reflected a national trend by registering a 10 percent gain to $8 million. “Nationwide, total grower receipts for bedding plants have doubled,” said economist Tim Woods, who specializes in horticulture.

Cash receipts for tobacco dropped from around $400 million in 2004 to between $250-275 million in 2005, the first growing season since the tobacco quota buyout, according to UK tobacco economist Will Snell.

Tobacco farmers received the first installment of quota buyout payments of $240 million in 2005, which will help offset the decline. Snell said many recipients opted to take a lump sum for the final nine annual payments. Kentucky burley farmers also divvied up nearly $200 million more from two grower lawsuit payments and their last Phase II distribution, Snell said.

Snell estimated that more than half of Kentucky’s estimated 40,000 tobacco growers from 2004 didn’t grow the crop in 2005, leading to a drop in acreage planted of 30 percent and a production drop of 35 percent. That’s nearly identical to the national decline of 34 percent in burley production.

At current price levels, Snell said tobacco farmers would have to produce at least 2,100 pounds per acre in order to turn a profit.

“[Tobacco] companies would like you to grow more burley in 2006,” Snell told the Farm Bureau crowd of mostly farmers. “But unless we get a 10- to 15-cent bump [in price], we’ll continue to see a decline.

“Demand has declined, but exports have increased. There’s an opportunity for remaining growers if profit and price incentives are present.”
Scanner checks ensure you pay the right price

By TED SLOAN
Kentucky Agricultural News

Kentucky Department of Agriculture inspectors work to make sure every Kentuckian who shops at a retail outlet in the Commonwealth pays only the price that’s on the tag.

“The Department checks price scanners for accuracy as one of its duties as a consumer protection and service agency,” Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer said. “Kentucky consumers should never pay more than the price that’s marked. Our inspectors are there to see to it that doesn’t happen.”

KDA inspectors check retail establishments at random and choose items to scan according to a random sampling plan. The UPC codes on the selected items are scanned to make sure the price on the cash register matches the price that’s marked on the item. Discrepancies between the marked price and the price on the register – even if the register price is less than the marked price – are placed in an inspection report.

A business fails the inspection when two or more UPC codes do not match the prices marked on the items. The Department usually issues a warning and revisits the establishment within 30 days. The KDA can fine a business that fails an inspection and even can order it to use a manual pricing system until the prices in its computer system are corrected.

About 30 KDA inspectors check price scanners all over the Commonwealth. They are cross-trained to perform other duties, such as gasoline pump inspections, motor fuel quality checks, and egg inspections. The Department has lost about 12 inspectors through attrition over the past five years.

By mid-November, KDA inspectors had conducted 36,092 scanner checks (including follow-up rechecks) in 2005, of which 541 failed.

Consumers who suspect a store’s price scanners may be overcharging customers may contact the Department at (502) 573-0282 and ask for a Weights and Measures Program administrator.

Landscape conference offers educational opportunities

Special to KAN

The Kentucky Landscape Industries Winter Conference Educational Program will be Jan. 3-4 in the Executive Inn East in Louisville.

Speakers will lead sessions on pesticide management training, propagation best management practices, employee training for garden center and landscape maintenance, installation and maintenance, garden center operations, plants, designs, and pesticide continuing education unit updates.

The Initial Pesticide Certification Exam will be given Jan. 3 from 4-6:30 p.m. Testing will be conducted for Turf and Ornamental, Demonstration and Research, Pesticide Sales Agent and Interior Plant Pest Control categories. Exam fees are $25 for one category and $10 for each additional category.

The Kentucky Certified Nurseryman Exam will be held from 8:30 a.m-4 p.m. on Jan. 4. Exam fees are $50 for KNLA members and $75 for non-members. Participants must pre-register for the conference separately in order to take either exam.

The KNLA business meeting will be 8-9 a.m. Jan. 5 in room C-112 of the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center.

The conference is sponsored by the Kentucky Nursery and Landscape Association, the Kentucky Arborists Association, the Kentuckiana Greenhouse Association and the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service.

Farmers’ market session, wine course highlight meeting

Special to KAN

Production workshops, a session on farmers’ markets and the Grape and Wine Short Course will highlight the 2006 Fruit and Vegetable Conference and Trade Show Jan. 10-11 at the Holiday Inn North in Lexington.

Sessions will cover commercial tree fruit production, drip irrigation, winemaking, vegetable integrated pest management, organic farming and gardening, heirloom vegetables and specialty crops, woody cut stems, vegetable production, tree fruit and brambles, farmers’ markets and blueberry production. The Grape and Wine Short Course will be Jan. 11. Vendor exhibits will open at 8 a.m. EST each day. A preconference round-table discussion on Kentucky’s fruit industry will be Jan. 9 at 7:30 p.m.

A banquet will be held Jan. 10 at 6:15 p.m. “A Celebration of Kentucky Wines” will begin at 5:15 p.m. The Kentucky Vineyard Society board meeting is scheduled for 8:30 p.m. The conference serves as the 150th annual meeting of the Kentucky State Horticultural Society and the 35th annual meeting of the Kentucky Vegetable Growers Association.

Presenters from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture will include Jack Custer, Janet Eaton, Jake Schmitz and Mac Stone. The KDA’s new farmers’ market manual will be unveiled at the farmers’ market session.

The conference is jointly sponsored by the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Kentucky State University and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture.

The $15 registration fee includes membership in the KVGA or KSHS and entrance into the Grape and Wine Short Course.

For more information, contact Mary Ann Kelley at (270) 365-7541, ext. 216; John Strang at (859) 257-5685 or jstrang@uky.edu; or your county Extension agent. The conference program is available on the Web at www.uky.edu/ag/horticulture/meetings.html.
Ag board offers farmers’ market, agritourism grants

KAN, GOAP reports

Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer urges farmers’ market leaders and people with agritourism businesses to apply for grants and forgivable loans from the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board.

The board is offering $2 million in the 2006 Farmers’ Market Competitive Awards Program and $1 million in the 2006 Agritourism Competitive Awards Program.

The farmers’ market program will award grants for regional farmers’ markets, capital expenditures at community farmers’ markets, and feasibility and business planning for regional and community markets. The deadline for applications for the first round of grants is April 1, and the deadline for the second round is Sept. 1. Any regional or community farmers’ market that meets the definitions specified in the program guidelines is eligible.

The agritourism program will award forgivable loans to agritourism businesses for business development and grants of up to $50,000 to regional agritourism organizations for promotion. The application deadline for the first round is Feb. 1, and the deadline for the second round is Aug. 1. Applicants shall not have received agritourism award funds through last year’s program.

For more information, contact the Governor’s Office of Agricultural Policy at (502) 564-4627 or go to its Web site, www.agpolicy.ky.gov.

GOAP seeks Phase II check recipients

GOVERNOR’S OFFICE OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY

The Governor’s Office of Agricultural Policy has made available a comprehensive list of Phase II check recipients whose checks were returned to the GOAP.

The list is on the GOAP Web site at http://tobaccourtin.ky.gov/phase_ii/. The list is sorted by the recipient’s last name within the county in which the farm was registered with the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Farm Service Agency. Certified recipients who did not get a check and whose names are on the list are asked to contact the GOAP call center toll-free at 1-877-549-2537. The representative who takes the call will verify personal information and take the correct mailing address to mail the check.

The checks will expire on June 30.

More than 5,000 of the 164,000 checks mailed to certified recipients of the Phase II Tobacco Settlement Program in June 2005 did not reach the intended recipients.

Beef marketing conference on tap

UK COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

Beef producers can get valuable information that will help them plan for future markets at the Kentucky Beef Conference Jan. 24 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. EST at the Fayette County Cooperative Extension office in Lexington.

Speakers include Randy Blach, executive vice president of Cattle-FAX and a Colorado native who was raised in the cattle business, and Harlan Hughes, professor emeritus at North Dakota State University and author of the “Market Advisor” in BEEF Magazine and on the Web. Blach will give a marketing overview and discuss long-term marketing and marketing strategies for 2006. Hughes will talk about “Investing in Your Cow Operation.”

University of Kentucky Beef Specialist John Johns will detail the Value Added Targeted Marketing Program as a way of using carcass data in cow-calf operations. Jim Akers, UK Extension beef associate, will discuss animal identification.

Registration is $10 and can be paid the morning of the conference. For more information or to pre-register, contact your local county Extension office by Jan. 20.

Swine organizations offer internships

Special to KAN

The National Swine Registry and the National Junior Swine Association are offering summer internships for 2006.

The NSR intern will be responsible for developing concepts and design for advertisements and editorial content for the official NSR publication Seedstock EDGE; will contribute to the design, layout and content of two NSR newsletters, and will assist with writing and distributing press releases about NSR events. Interested parties must submit a cover letter stating the purpose for the application, resume, three references and samples of work by Feb. 1 to Christy Couch Lee, Director of Communications, National Swine Registry, P.O. Box 2417, West Lafayette, IN 47996.

For more information, contact Christy Couch Lee at (765) 463-3594 or christy@nationalswine.com.

The NJSA internship is for a college sophomore, junior or senior to help with planning and executing shows and leadership events. The intern will help with production of the NJSA newsletter and other promotional materials.

Students interested in the internship must send a cover letter and resume by Feb. 1 to Jennifer S. Shike, Director of Junior Activities, National Swine Registry, P.O. Box 2417, West Lafayette, IN 47996-2417.

For more information, contact Jennifer Shike at (765) 463-3594, (217) 485-5315 or jennifer@nationalswine.com.

Conference explores extended grazing

UK COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

Extended grazing can lower animal feed costs and improve profits. It will be one of many topics addressed when the five-state Heart of America Grazing Conference comes to Kentucky Jan. 25-26.

Ed Ballard, an Illinois grazing educator, will be the keynote speaker during the opening session of the conference, which will be held at the Cave City Convention Center. He will discuss the potentials of year-round grazing in this area of the country.

The program includes information on grazing horses, replacement dairy heifers, goats, beef cattle and wildlife. It also includes information on environmentally friendly, economically sound and agronomically feasible grazing programs.

Pre-registration is encouraged. The registration fee is $15 per person for one day and $25 for both days. To obtain a registration form, conference program and to learn about lodging accommodations, visit the UK forages Web site at http://www.uky.edu/ag/Forages or contact Garry Lacefield at (270) 365-7541, ext. 202.

Web site tackles gardening questions

UK COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

A new, interactive Web site developed by the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service has been developed to provide gardeners and consumers with a reliable source of updated horticultural information.

GardenData.org contains about 1,200 commonly asked questions pertaining to all areas of horticulture. Many of the answers on the site also list publications available for further information on the topic.

If a gardener can’t find the answer to a question at GardenData.org, new questions can be asked. These are sent to one of about a dozen specialists in areas such as horticulture, forestry, plant pathology, entomology and more. Several county horticulture agents also will respond to new questions.

Kentucky entry tops Angus show

Special to KAN

A Kentucky exhibitor showed the reserve grand champion female and junior champion at the 2005 North American International Livestock Exposition Super Point Roll of Victory Angus show Nov. 14-15 in Louisville.

Boyd Forever Lady 4004 is owned by Blake Boyd of Mayas Lick. She is a January 2004 daughter of BR Midland.

A total of 238 entries were led into the ring at the Angus show.
WANTED TO BUY: Ewe lambs. Simpson Farms, (606) 561-6860.

FOR SALE: Registered beagle pups from active gun dog stock. Shots and wormed. Phone (606) 379-1516. $100-$135.

CHAROLAIS PERFORMANCE YEARLING BULLS. Sired by TT Real Striker 1953H. Very good EPDs with above average weaning and yearling weights. Good pedigrees. $1,200 each. Free delivery within 50 miles. River Ridge Farms. Call (270) 528-5322, ask for Greg, or e-mail gilswet@scrtc.com. Canner, Ky.

FOR SALE: Registered service age Holstein bulls. A.I.-sired from high producing, high testing cows. Jm-Mar-D Holsteins, 3638 Trumble Rd., Adairville, KY 42202. Call Jim at (270) 539-9072.


BOER GOATS FOR SALE: Registered bucks and nannies, fullbloods and percentages with papers, quality breeding and show stock, contact Larry Cole, Cole’s Creek Boer Goats, Bowling Green, KY, (270) 777-0054 or (270) 535-0054.


FOR SALE: Registered Boar goats; bucks and nannies, fullbloods and percentage with papers. Garden Gate Boar Goats, (270) 325-2972.

MIniature horses, for fun and profit. AMHA registered. DNA’d horses of quality. Reasonable prices. Jean Daniels, Forest Farm Miniature Horses, 8080 Subtle Road, Edmonton, Kentucky 42129, phone (270) 432-8536, e-mail a1853@scrtc.com, Web page www.minihorse.ws


FOR SALE: Registered Boar goats; bucks and nannies, full bloods and percentage with papers. Call (270) 749-4232.


FOR SALE: Purebred Charolais Bulls. Hamilton Charolais, Stamping Ground, Ky. Call Jim Hamilton at (502) 535-6203 or (502) 535-6974 or e-mail hamil5@bellsouth.net.

FOR SALE: Registered Angus bulls and heifers. Bulls eligible for 50% cost-share. Call nights (502) 863-6342, days (502) 221-3958.


FOR SALE: Lovable and friendly llamas, males and females of all ages, breeding pairs, stud qualities/pet quality males. Guard llamas for small herd animals, sheep and goats. Over 10 years experience and expertise will serve you after your purchase. Call (859) 341-4188 or e-mail drycreek@fuse.net.

FOR SALE/STUD SERVICE: Horses/ponies (all types), new/used trailers, metal roofing & siding, Mule Kote Paint, new/used tack (over 30 saddles), feed store (10% horse feed $4.25/50lb), Wrangler, Panhandle Slim and Lucille clothing, watches, childrens and adult cowboy hats, chaps, ladies western purses, boots, etc. Gray AQHA stud service Poco & Easy Jet $200/$100. L&R Corder, 1533 Cooper Dearing Road, Alvaton, KY 42122.


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More than 200 youths were honored for their livestock’s performances in the show ring in 2005 at the Kentucky Proud Points awards luncheon Nov. 19 in Bardstown. Overall winners in each species are pictured with Steve Mobley, director of the Kentucky Department of Agriculture’s Division of Show and Fair Promotion. The overall winners are, clockwise from top right: Kelsey Culp, Nicholasville, beef; Tayler Renfro, Richmond, goats; Ben Sparrow, Owenton, dairy; John David Fourqurean, Hopkinsville, swine, and Amber Combs, Paris, lamb. The Kentucky Proud Points Program awards points to exhibitors, animals and breeders from their best performances in livestock shows sponsored by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. Top exhibitors, animals and breeders were recognized in beef cattle (bulls, heifers and steers), sheep (lambs, ewes and market lambs), goats (breeding does, bucks and market kids), dairy cattle (dairy heifers and dairy cows), and swine (commercial gilts and market hogs). The Kentucky Proud Points Program is sponsored by Purina, the KDA’s Division of Value-Added Animal and Aquaculture Production, and the Division of Show and Fair Promotion.