

THE CENTER FOR PROFITABLE AGRICULTURE

A LOOK BACK AT 25 YEARS

*Celebrating 25 years of helping farmers
develop value-added enterprises*



From the Director

25 Years of Adding Value to Tennessee Agriculture

Rob Holland



Milestones such as this provide an opportunity to reflect on all the accomplishments and all that has changed over the years. The Center's efforts have always focused on helping farmers and farm families develop value-added enterprises. We have conducted educational workshops, meetings, conferences, seminars, and summits; we have developed fact sheets, bulletins, project reports, articles, and publications; we have led and developed proposals, projects, and initiatives; and we have forged partnerships, collaborations, teams, and friendships across the state. Over twenty-five years, we have developed a formal partnership with the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation and have a deep and

long-standing record of direct collaboration and shared vision with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. We cover topics from meat marketing regulations and farm-based sales tax issues to poultry processing, e-commerce, developing cooperatives, farmers markets, and agritourism ventures. More recently, the Center's program responsibilities have expanded to include the Tennessee AgrAbility Project and Sustainable Agriculture.



The Center for Profitable Agriculture Highlights

1998

- UT Extension creates the Agriculture Development Center (ADC) headquartered in Knoxville with two specialist positions

2002

- The ADC becomes CPA through new partnership with Farm Bureau Federation CPA headquarters moves to Spring Hill

2008

- Center receives second of five Cavender Awards for Best Extension Publication

1999

- The first value-added workshops were offered in each region

2003

- CPA expands staff to include a second marketing specialist position and director



The Value Added Agriculture Team in fall 2022. From left to right, Troy Dugger, Rob Holland, Megan Bruch Leffew, Kim Giorgio, Rachel Painter, and Hal Pepper.

In twenty-five years, we have seen vast changes in agriculture and marketing strategies. Since 1998, Tennessee agriculture has experienced a significant increase in the number of:



Farmers markets



Farms offering agritourism and recreational sales



Farms with direct sales to consumers



Farms marketing products direct to retail outlets



Farms producing and selling value-added products

We are proud to assist farmers and entrepreneurs navigating these changes and to be a part of new and existing operations exploring value-added enterprises. It is refreshing to reflect on the volume of work that has been done, the number of workshops and meetings that have been conducted, and the miles of travel that have connected us to farm families.

We welcome the opportunity to celebrate and reflect on the growth, accomplishments, and successes both at the Center and by those we serve. The first twenty-five years of helping farmers develop value-added enterprises has been an amazing story. We look forward to the next twenty-five years of adding value to Tennessee agriculture.

2011

- Center launches value-added beef educational program

2018

- Headquarters moves to Columbia location and expands staff to include sustainability program coordinator position

2023

Center celebrates twenty-five years of helping farmers develop value-added enterprises

2017

- Center receives Gamma Sigma Delta Team Award for Value-Added Beef Program

2022

- AgrAbility Team joins the Center

A Vision Realized

The Center for Profitable Agriculture was created to offer a coordinated approach to all aspects of developing a value-added enterprise, from production, financial, and marketing analysis and strategies.

Specialists at the Center often teach at educational events and participate in conferences to connect with partners and clientele.



Megan Bruch Leffew teaches an educational program about capturing additional income by developing value-added enterprises.

Members of the Value-Added Team share educational resources available through the Center at a conference for Tennessee producers.



"The biggest challenge I hear from farmers – whether lifelong or new, large or small, and regardless of type of operation – is profitability. For twenty-five years the Center for Profitable Agriculture has provided information, resources, training, and dedicated staff who work diligently to help address these concerns. I'm proud to have been associated with the Center through the partnership between the Tennessee Farm Bureau and the University of Tennessee and congratulate them on twenty-five years of outstanding impact on Tennessee agriculture. More significantly, I look forward to the heightened influence of the Center for years to come."

Jeff Aiken
Deputy Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Agriculture
Past President, Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation



Powerful Partnerships

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA), Tennessee Farm Bureau, and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) are some of the key partners that collaborate with the Center to increase impact and fulfill the mission of assisting producers statewide.



The Center has a long-standing relationship with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. The Center's educational programs and outreach complement the regulatory, business development, marketing, and funding efforts of the TDA. Center and TDA staff work together to connect producers to information, assistance, and resources needed.



The University of Tennessee formally joined forces with the Tennessee Farm Bureau in 2002 to expand the capabilities and capacity of the Center, then called the Agricultural Development Center, and rebrand it as the Center for Profitable Agriculture.



"We appreciate the partnership between the Center for Profitable Agriculture and the Tennessee Farm Bureau. CPA makes a positive difference by assisting and adding value to entrepreneurial farm operations. We are grateful for CPA's impact and are optimistic their work will continue to enhance farm income and rural opportunities for Tennesseans."

*Eric Mayberry
President, Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation*

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Center have many overlapping goals. The Center is committed to partnering with the USDA and securing funding through USDA grants and initiatives to continue supporting the family farm and strengthening communities through sustainable agriculture strategies. In 2022, the Center added two Extension specialists with the addition of the AgrAbility Team. Tennessee AgrAbility educates and assists Tennessee's farmers, farm workers, and their family members that have disabilities so they can increase their independence and productivity.



Since 1998, the Center for Profitable Agriculture
has been devoted to

DEVELOPING
104
PUBLICATIONS



TEACHING
OVER
1,800
EDUCATIONAL
SESSIONS

DEVELOPING
409
FACT SHEETS



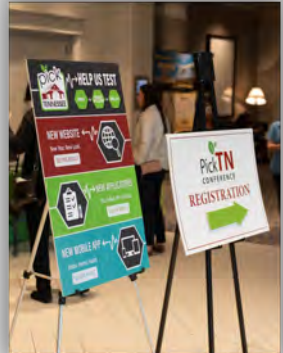
helping farmers develop value-added enterprises in all 95 counties.



PROVIDING
CONSULTATIONS
FOR FARM FAMILIES



DEVELOPING
COLLABORATIONS
WITH STAKEHOLDERS & PARTNERS



Producer

Producers share their experiences working with the Center over



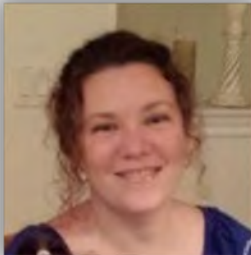
The CPA has been our first contact when considering new ways to diversify our farm for more than 20 years. When thinking about expanding or adding a new income source to the operation, it's easy to get super excited about a potential project. The Center is there to help you consider all aspects so you can make the best decision, even if that decision is to go a different direction. Listening and following the recommendations of the team at CPA can save you a lot of stress and money.

Andrew Dixon
Co-Owner and Farm Manager, Granddaddy's Farm



The Center came into my life in 2014 when I attended my first CPA educational session in Springfield. Megan was teaching about value-added techniques that I could implement on my farm operation. The entire team has been so helpful with my endeavors to be the best agriculture professional, and flower farmer, I can be. I appreciate the CPA in their support of my endeavors to bring more Tennessee veterans into agriculture and I hope to utilize them more as I continue my journey.

Charley Jordan
Jordan Farms



When I had no idea how to make my dreams reality the people at the CPA gave me exactly what I needed: a life raft, a plan, education, and a much better future. The first thing a farm ever grows is hope, and the CPA grows it for small farmers.

Moriah Williams
Serenity Cove Farm

Testimonials

the years and the impact on their value added operations.

Over the years, the folks at the Center for Profitable Agriculture have continually made me and many other farmers realize that farming is a business and our direct marketing and value-added activities help improve revenue and the overall business success from our farms. I'm glad the efforts of the Center have been focused on helping farmers add value in ways that improve farm income and that help keep farms sustainable



Reggie Marshall
Reggie's Veggies

We called on the Center for Profitable Agriculture early in the planning of our direct marketing venture and we have maintained a close relationship with them and their programs over the years. We appreciate the educational workshops and tours and the effective consultation they provide. We wish the Center a hearty congratulations on twenty-five years of adding value to Tennessee Agriculture and express our appreciation for the many ways their programs and efforts have made a difference.



Phil and Kathy Baggett
Tennessee Grass Fed Farm

It would be hard for me to overstate how much our business has benefitted from the help of the folks at the Center for Profitable Agriculture. They have been a tremendous resource to us, we would not have had the success we've had if not for their help.



Ken Oakes
Oakes Daylilies and Oakes Farm

Developing Value-Added Enterprises

Value-added enterprises are those that allow producers to earn a greater portion of consumer expenditures by processing, packaging and/or marketing crops, livestock, or other farm resources, including agritourism enterprises and direct marketing ventures.



AGRITOURISM

Industry studies, tours, workshops, webinars, conferences, and consultations offered by the Center and industry partners have contributed to the remarkable growth in the number of farms and value of sales in Tennessee agritourism.



FARMERS MARKETS

Collaborations with the Tennessee Association of Farmers Markets and TDA have made Farmers Market Vendor Boot Camps and Farmers Market Manager Trainings a staple of Center programming since 1998.



FOOD MANUFACTURING

Growing interest and changing regulations have made food manufacturing topics in high demand. The Center has worked with the Department of Food Science and TDA to assess needs and offer up to date information, educational programs, and technical assistance.



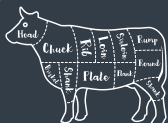
SPECIALTY CROPS

With the decline in the tobacco industry and increase in demand for local products, the Center has helped investigate new opportunities and access new markets for specialty crop growers.



VALUE-ADDED DAIRY

The Center has been instrumental in securing USDA funding to expand value added dairy operations in the state. The Southeast Dairy Business Innovation Initiative has received five grants to date for programming across twelve southeastern states.



VALUE-ADDED MEATS

The Center has helped producers meet regulatory requirements, understand consumer needs, assess processing facility feasibility, and reach consumers as demand has grown for value added meats.

Looking Forward

By utilizing our network of UT and TSU Extension agents and specialists, producer associations, and partners, we are able to plan and implement programming that meets the needs of producers in all ninety-five counties.

Our goal is to continually assess, develop, and implement strategies to ensure our programs are accessible, adaptable, and applicable for all.



Accessible

We strive to offer programs both in-person and online to fit the topic and clientele needs. In-person workshops are often held in rural areas to offer producers equal opportunity to attend and reduce any transportation barriers. Online teaching has enabled us to remove many barriers to participation. Recordings and online resources also mean participants can access content from anywhere, see lectures with closed captioning or at a slower playback speed, and view online publications at any magnification.



Adaptable

There have been vast changes in the agriculture industry and marketing strategies in the last twenty-five years, and we have continually adapted to provide education that is reflective of current trends and regulations. Adaptability means implementing strategies and exploring innovative approaches with individuals and farm families statewide.



Applicable

Our goal is to understand the challenges and opportunities producers are facing so that we may continue to meet the needs of farmers exploring and developing value-added enterprises. With the various and unique ideas and operations, we strive to be a resource and provide research-based information in a way that is applicable for each individual we serve. We will continue providing Real. Life. Solutions. for all.

Thank You

We are committed to helping farm families in all ninety-five counties improve income and increase the sustainability of value-added enterprises. The successes over the last twenty-five years would not have been possible without the support and collaborations of organizations and associations spanning all areas of agriculture. Some of these dedicated partners are represented below. We want to thank you for your willingness to serve and advocate for agriculture with us.



While the Center for Profitable Agriculture is celebrating twenty-five years, it is the Tennessee farmers and farm families impacted by the Center's work and those who have dedicated themselves to its efforts that make the Center so successful. The growth of value-added agriculture in our state since 1998 is incredible, and the Center's mission is just as important and relevant today. I want to thank the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation for its vision and partnership with UT Extension - a partnership that has helped so many Tennesseans ensure the profitability and sustainability of their operations.

Dr. Ashley Stokes, UT Extension Dean



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