To: Lawrence County Producers:

RE: Lawrence County Extension Spring Newsletter

From: Calvin Bryant
Lawrence County Extension Director

Lawrence County Salute To Agriculture Week Events & Activities

The 2024 “Salute to Agriculture Week” is scheduled for May 31st-June 7. There are many fun and exciting events and activities planned that week. A complete list of events is attached. The theme this year is Farm Family Health and Wellness. To kick off the week will be the Rumble at the Crossroads Truck and Tractor Pull set to go on Friday, May 31st and Saturday, June 1st. An Estate Planning Workshop to help farm families considering farmland legacy and transition planning is scheduled for Monday, June 3rd beginning at 5:30pm at the Southern Middle TN Higher Education Learning Center. An attorney will be on hand to discuss the very important topic of Estate Planning and participants will also have an opportunity to receive free educational farm stress related items. Farm Credit Services will be sponsoring a meal to kick off the meeting. Pre-registration is required by May 24th by calling 931-762-5506.

The Chamber of Commerce Farmer Appreciation Breakfast will be held on Tuesday, June 4th beginning at 7:30 am at the First Baptist Church Christian Life Center. UT Extension Family and Consumer Science Specialist, Dr. Heather Sedges will be the keynote speaker. The highlight of the breakfast will be the presentations of the 2024 Century Farm and Agribusiness of the Year. New this year will be the presentation of the inaugural Bent and Nina Larsen Memorial Agriculture Scholarship. All Lawrence County Farmers are invited to attend the breakfast. To make reservations please contact the Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce at 762-3153 by Monday May 27th. At the conclusion of the breakfast there will be a farm tour and a short program focusing on Farm Family Health and Wellness and agricultural policy updates. Speakers will be from UT Extension and Farm Bureau as well as any local, state or federal legislators in attendance. The location of the field day will be at the Hudson Farm located at 514 Main Street in Ethridge. Registration for the farm tour will begin at 9:30 with the tour and program set to begin at 10am. The Lawrence County Farm Bureau will be sponsoring lunch which will conclude the field day around noon. To register to attend the farm tour, please RSVP to the Lawrence County Extension Office at 762-5506 or email – ibryant1@utk.edu.

Another event that keys in on Farm Family Health and Wellness will be a Movie and Popcorn. This event will take place on Thursday, June 6 from 4-5pm at The Lakes Venue. The movie will feature 4 short stories of farmers and their families and the plights of how they had to deal with farm and life stress events. Later that evening and also at The Lakes Venue will be the second annual Farm to Table Dinner. The Lawrence County Chamber and UT/TSU Extension are partnering again this year for our
second annual Farm to Table Dinner benefitting FFA and 4-H programs throughout Lawrence County. This year, the dinner will be June 6th from 6:00-8:00pm at The Lakes Venue on Prosser Road in Lawrenceburg. The 3 course meal will feature all things grown by Lawrence County farmers and FFA members. Lincoln County Farmer Josh Ogle and his son Levi will be on hand to provide the entertainment. There are still several tickets available for the dinner. To attend please register online here: https://bit.ly/F2T2024. If you have any additional questions, don’t hesitate to reach out to the Chamber of Commerce at 762-3153.

Another event during Salute to Ag. Week that is planned for youngsters is Farm City Day. Lawrence County 4-H’ers, FFA Members and volunteers will have a variety of farm animals and agriculture related exhibits and games for kids to come and see on Wednesday, June 5th from 9am-Noon at the Orton Pavilion in Rotary Park. The week will conclude on Friday with a Youth Fishing Rodeo sponsored by Lawrenceburg Parks and Recreation and TWRA at the Bobby Brewer Pond from 4:30-6:30pm.

SAgE (Southern Agriculture Exchange) –TN & Farm Stress

Through the hard work of Lawrence County Family and Consumer Science Agent, Stacy Clark Lawrence County has been awarded the SAgE-TN Grant for the second year in a row. The goal of the grant is to help our county office bring awareness to farm stress through educational events, materials and resources. We have been able to incorporate some of these opportunities with the upcoming “Salute to Agriculture Week” with the 2024 theme of Farm Family Health and Wellness. One of the biggest stresses that many families go through is planning for the future. To help farm families learn about the process of farm transition we have scheduled an Estate Planning Meeting on Monday, June 3rd at Southern TN Higher Education Center located at 169 Southern TN Lane. A local attorney that specializes in Estate Planning will be the guest speaker. As a part of the SAgE Grant everyone attending the training will have the opportunity to receive free farm stress resources and potentially be awarded vouchers to help offset some of the cost that is required with estate planning. Farm Credit Services will be sponsoring a meal to kick off the meeting. Refer to the attached flyer for more information.

The second SAgE Event of the week will be a Movie and Popcorn which will be held on Thursday, June 6th from 4-5pm at The Lakes Venue. The movie is a compilation of 4 different farm family stories of the stresses that each family had to deal with. Everyone attending the movie will have the opportunity to receive free farm stress resource related items. This event is free but we do need folks to register by calling the Extension Office at 762-5506.

Lawrence/Wayne County Cattlemen’s Association Summer Field Day

The Lawrence/Wayne County Cattlemen’s Association will be hosting a Summer Educational Meeting on Thursday, June 13 beginning at 6pm at the West End Community Club Building located at 5514 Waynesboro Hwy., Lawrenceburg. The meeting will begin with a light meal. The featured speaker will be the UT Extension Forage Specialist, Dr. Bruno Pedreira. His topic will be “What’s In Your Bale”. For a meal count please contact either the Lawrence County Extension Office at 762-5506 or the Wayne County Office at 722-3229.
Farmland Legacy --- The Importance of Estate Planning

Agriculture is often thought of as an intergenerational venture that is handed down through the generations. A principal operator or a core group of family members often serve as the key decision makers and likely run or own the business. As these key family members age, day-to-day responsibilities may shift, but ownership often remains a much stickier situation. The 2022 Agriculture Census says that the average age of Lawrence County Farmer is 58.1 years and this has been on a steady rise in recent years. It is projected that 40 percent of the agricultural land in the United States will be in transition within the next 15 years and a majority of these farms do not have a confident succession plan.

Preparing for farm succession is often thought of as a daunting and overwhelming task. Because of this potential stressful situation, these very important decisions often get put off. Several studies have indicated that the majority of farmers do not have a plan for the transfer of their farm and most do not even have a will. A recent study (Caring.com, 2020 survey) suggested that while a majority of adults think it is important to have a will, 68 percent of adults in the United States do not have one. Although the intent may be to hand the family farm venture down from generation to generation, the devil is in the details. The situation becomes even more challenging if realizing your dream of ensuring your farm’s legacy is complicated by the lack of interested family members or those whose vision does not align with yours. In addition, many family farms are a relatively complex mix of relationships, business structures and revenue streams that make planning and succession challenging, as well as precipitating a need for professional guidance.

Having an estate plan is an important investment in the future of your farm and family. Estate planning allows for the transition of ownership of property from one generation to the next. It can provide for the needs of all family members, even those who leave the operation. Proper estate planning can address the settlement problems that arise because land is not a liquid asset. An estate plan is more than a will. A will alone cannot guarantee a secure future for the farm family, land or business. The cost of not having an estate plan or of having a poorly devised transition plan is a cost that can be avoided with the proper steps.

UT-TSU Extension has a wealth of information to assist farm families get started in the succession and estate planning process. A workbook titled “Planning Today For Tomorrow’s Farms is available online - Planning Today for Tomorrow's Farms | Tennessee Farmland Legacy.

As a part of the “Farm Family Health and Wellness” theme of Salute to Agriculture Week the Lawrence County Extension Office will be hosting a SAgE Estate Planning & QPR Meeting on Monday, June 3rd beginning at 6pm at the Southern Middle Tennessee Higher Education Center. Special guest speakers including an attorney that specializes in estate planning will be discussing important estate planning topics.

Lawrence County Agriculture 2024

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) recently released the results of the 2022 Agriculture Census. The census is completed every 5 years and provides a comprehensive snapshot of the farms and ranches across the United States. NASS also conducts some annual county estimate reports on major
commodities like corn and soybeans that demand more frequent reporting. The data from these reports comes directly from the information that is provided by the farmers and helps farmers, businesses, and governmental agencies see trends which aids them in their planning process.

What did we learn about Lawrence County Agriculture from the latest census? The general findings show huge increases in market values of commodities, farms and buildings. The market value of all Lawrence County farm products surpassed the 100 million mark and came in at $101,055,000 which was a 42% increase from the 2017 census. Both row crops and livestock made dramatic increases with market value of livestock increasing 50% and crops increasing 36%. The average value of farms and buildings jumped almost $350,000 to an average of $889,115 which was a 63% increase from 2017.

Lawrence County is a diversified agriculture county with almost an even split in the market value of crops and livestock. The market value of crops like corn, soybeans and wheat was reported at $53,747,000 while the market value of livestock like beef cattle, poultry and swine was reported at $47,307,000. Lawrence County ranks 5th in the state in beef cattle numbers and 2nd in the state in poultry numbers for layers and pullets for replacements.

Unlike the dramatic increases seen in market values of farms and farm products, Lawrence County lost 167 farms over the past 5 years which was a 12% reduction. The state reported a 10% reduction which matches up with what is taking place nationwide. The average size of farms increased by 29 acres which makes the 2022 average size of a Lawrence County Farm to be 194 acres. As the number of farms are in decline the remaining farms are larger, more specialized and more efficient. One example of this is shown with the Lawrence County Row Crop Producers. The 2023 crop yields were some of the best we have ever experienced. Last year’s corn crop averaged just under 200 bushels per acre which is a county record. To put this into perspective, 40 years ago in 1982 the county average for corn production was 84 bushels per acre.

An alarming statistic that has been steadily increasing over the past several census reports is the aging population of farmers. The average age of Lawrence County farmers is now 58.1 years which is a slight increase from 58 years as was reported in 2017. At an age when lot of people are beginning to consider retirement, farmers are still going strong. A positive trend noted in Lawrence County is the number of young farmers. There are 194 farmers 35 years old and younger in Lawrence County which was a 64% increase over the last 5 years. This ranks Lawrence County 3rd in the state in number of young farmers which is a very positive trend signaling a bright future for Lawrence County Agriculture.

Agriculture is an extremely important industry in Lawrence County. When you consider an industry of 1,227 small family owned businesses that producers over 100 million dollars of products annually in a rural community, the county economic impact is enormous. Lawrence County producers match up with the best farmers in the world. They stay on the cutting edge of technology and remain laser focused on production practices that allows them to do more with less and do it with a laser focus on safety and sustainability. The 2022 Census of Ag. report can be found at: [https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/](https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/)

Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating. UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.
**SAGE Estate Planning Meeting**

An Estate Planning Workshop to help farm families considering farmland legacy and transition planning is scheduled for Monday, June 3rd beginning at 5:30pm at the Southern Middle TN Higher Education Learning Center. An attorney will be on hand to discuss the very important topic of Estate Planning and participants will also have an opportunity to receive free educational farm stress related items. Pre-registration is required by May 24th by calling 931-762-5506.

**Farmer Appreciation Breakfast Farm Tour & Field Day**

Farmer Appreciation Breakfast will be held on Tuesday, June 4th beginning at 7:30 am at the First Baptist Church Christian Life Center. Following the breakfast there will be a farm tour and a short program focusing on Farm Family Health and Wellness and agricultural policy updates. Speakers will be from UT Extension and Farm Bureau as well as any local, state or federal legislators in attendance. The location will be at the Hudson Farm located at 514 Main Street in Ethridge.

**Farm City Day**

Lawrence County 4-H’ers, FFA Members and volunteers will have a variety of farm animals and agriculture related exhibits and games for kids to come and see. Join us for a fun day. Wednesday, June 5th from 9am-Noon at the Orton Pavilion in Rotary Park.

**SAGE Popcorn & Movie**

Free Event on Thursday, June 6 from 4-5pm at The Lakes Venue. The movie will feature 4 short stories of farmers and their families and the plights of how they had to deal with farm and life stress events. Everyone attending the movie will have the opportunity to receive free farm stress resource related items.

**Farm To Table Dinner**

The Lawrence County Chamber and UT/TSU Extension are partnering again this year for our second annual Farm to Table Dinner benefitting FFA and 4-H programs throughout Lawrence County. This year, the dinner will be June 6th from 6:00-8:00pm at The Lakes Venue on Prosser Road in Lawrenceburg. Advanced tickets are required for this event.
Lawrence/Wayne County Cattlemen’s Association
Summer Field Day

West End Community Club
5514 Waynesboro Hwy.
Lawrenceburg, TN 38464

For a meal count---RSVP
Lawrence Co. Extension Office—762-5506
Wayne Co. Extension Office ---722-3229
by Monday, June 10.
6:00 PM Sponsored Meal
6:30 PM What’s In Your Bale
Dr. Bruno Pedreira, UT Extension Forage Beef Specialist
7:15 PM Cattlemen’s Association Updates
**Estate Planning**

**Date:** Monday June 3rd  
**Time:** 5:30 PM  
**Location:** Southern Middle TN Higher Education Center  
169 Southern TN Lane, Lawrenceburg TN 38464

Register by May 24th! (931) 762-5506 or online!

Everyone attending will receive an opportunity to receive free farm stress resource related items.

**Movie & Popcorn**

**Location:** The Lakes Venue  
**Date:** June 6th  
**Time:** 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Call to register (931) 762-5506  
Everyone attending will receive an opportunity to receive free farm stress resource related items.

**Funding Acknowledgment:**  
USDA-NIFA Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network:  
Award # 2021-70035-35551