

Kentucky

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COVER PHOTO:

Trimble Creek in Clark County.
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Governor Steve Beshear has proclaimed April 26 as “Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund Day” to recognize the 10th anniversary of our historic agricultural development initiative. Former Governor Paul Patton signed House Bill 611, the enabling legislation for the program, on April 26, 2000. That set the stage for a methodical reshaping of Kentucky’s farm economy.



I don’t have enough space to mention the many people who deserve recognition for making this a huge success. But I do want to mention that Kentucky Farm Bureau takes great pride in knowing that our organization was instrumental in this process. Personally, I feel our work with House Bill 611 is one of the top accomplishments in Kentucky Farm Bureau history. The results certainly point that way.

It all began when the tobacco settlement agreement was reached with the states in 1998. Our agricultural community was hoping that at least a share of the money from cigarette manufacturers would be targeted to help the tobacco farmers whose hard work helped produce that revenue for the tobacco companies. Farm Bureau responded by bringing farm groups together to develop a plan to present to Governor Patton and the General Assembly.

The so-called “Unified Investment Proposal for Kentucky Agriculture” targeted eight priority areas for agricultural growth. But most importantly, it showed the decision makers in Frankfort that Kentucky agriculture was united and focused on a future with greater diversity on its farms.

Farm Bureau’s touch didn’t end with the program’s establishment – dozens of our state and local leaders have served on the County Councils. In some counties, as many as half of the county council members are also directors of the county Farm Bureau.

Roger Thomas, a former president of Warren County Farm Bureau, was the chief sponsor of House Bill 611 in his capacity as Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee. It’s perhaps only fitting that today, he serves as Executive Director of the Governor’s Office for Agricultural Policy, the agency that over the years has done an exemplary job administering and overseeing the fund.

We have cause to celebrate the 10th anniversary of this landmark development. The impact will continue to be realized in the years ahead.

MARK HANEY

PRESIDENT

KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU

HSUS has people fooled

Seventy-one percent of Americans questioned in a new opinion poll wrongly believe the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) is an “umbrella group” for America’s local humane societies. Sixty-three percent incorrectly think their local “humane society” is affiliated with HSUS. And fifty-nine percent falsely believe HSUS “contributes most of its money” to local organizations that care for cats and dogs.

HSUS, which advocates a vegan society, is waging a national campaign against animal agriculture production. During this year’s legislative session in Kentucky HSUS opposed a KFB-backed bill establishing a system for livestock care standards in the state. HSUS waged similar unsuccessful battles in Ohio last year and at this year’s session in Indiana.

The poll, which sampled the opinions of 1,008 Americans, was commissioned by the nonprofit Center for Consumer Freedom (CCF) and conducted by Opinion Research Corporation (ORC) of Princeton, New Jersey.

“These numbers indicate that Americans don’t really know what the Humane Society of

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

At press time, KFB’s priority issues for the 2010 state legislative session had not been resolved but all signs pointed to success for some budget items, as well as for a bill to establish a system for setting livestock care standards in the state.

At the end of March a conference committee was negotiating the state budget. At that point the agricultural development fund had not been subject to cuts. However, a new Breathitt Veterinary Center for West Kentucky was not in the budgets adopted by the House and Senate. KFB’s public affairs team was still working on that issue.

Senate Bill 105, which creates a Livestock Care Standards Commission, was amended in the House and therefore the two chambers were working on a compromise measure. The KFB team was confident a bill would emerge that is acceptable to the agricultural community.

The May issue of KFB News will feature a full report on how agriculture fared in the 2010 session.

the United States is all about,” said CCF Director of Research David Martosko. “HSUS intentionally uses those sad dogs and cats in its TV infomercials as props in an animal rights fundraising shell game. Meanwhile, thousands of American pet shelters are underfunded and struggling.”

According to the federal income tax return filed by HSUS for the tax year 2008, less than one-half of one percent (0.5%) of the organization’s budget consisted of grants to hands-

on pet shelters. HSUS does not run a single shelter for dogs or cats anywhere, and it is not affiliated with any local “humane society” organizations.

Martosko continued: “This poll indicates that most Americans think HSUS is a worthy charity. But very few Americans understand what HSUS really is — a super-rich lobbying group that puts more money into its executive pensions than in the hands of local humane societies.”

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When it comes to balance of trade, U.S. agricultural exports have been in the black for many years. A recent report from the Agriculture Department predicts U.S. farmers will rise to the task again, putting \$22 billion of black ink onto the spreadsheet in fiscal year 2010.



Perhaps there will be additional opportunities to export not only raw commodities, but value-added ag products through the National Export Initiative introduced by President Barack Obama in his State of the Union speech. That initiative is supposed to foster government-wide support for all exports, not just those in agriculture. The result, we're told, will be restoring output and jobs to the U.S. economy.

The president's plan is a three-pronged approach. One of those prongs involves rigorous enforcement of trade laws to help U.S. companies get fair access to foreign markets.

Currently, it's our own Congress that's holding up fair access to three export markets interested in U.S. farm products. The president just needs to move enabling legislation to Congress so we can see how interested our representatives are in supporting export growth.

For three years, Free Trade Agreements with Colombia, Panama and Korea have languished on the desks of Washington, D.C., politicians. It is estimated that U.S. farm exports will increase by about \$3 billion each year after the agreements are ratified by Congress and fully implemented. For 2010, adding the additional value from these new exports would result in a 14 percent increase in the positive balance of trade contributed by U.S. farmers compared to current estimates.

The Korean Free Trade Agreement is the most significant of the three FTAs before the president and Congress. Korea already is the fifth-largest export market for our farm products and the country's ability to buy U.S. farm products continues to grow.

In the case of Colombia and Panama, both are good customers of U.S. farm goods, but Americans must pay very high tariffs to send products to the two countries. However, virtually all Colombian and Panamanian products are shipped duty-free to the U.S. When the FTAs are passed, the playing field will be leveled and tariffs on U.S. products will be eliminated.

This president, and the administration before him, allowed Congress to be the bully in this game. Today, members of the House threaten to hold up and defeat any attempt to move the Free Trade Agreements ahead. Members of Congress have said they don't like the accountability of the Colombian government. Many U.S. farmers are beginning to feel the same about Congress.

DAL GROOMS

DAL GROOMS IS AN IOWA-BASED AGRICULTURAL WRITER AND PUBLIC RELATIONS SPECIALIST.

Kentucky Farm Bureau is a voluntary organization of farm families and their allies dedicated to serving as the voice of agriculture by identifying problems, developing solutions and taking actions which will improve net farm income, achieve better economic opportunities and enhance the quality of life for all.

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108 markets enrolled in program

KFB's Certified Roadside Farm Market Program is celebrating a landmark year in 2010 with a record 108 members. The program was organized in 1996 to help farmers market fruits and vegetables directly from roadside markets to consumers. It has expanded to include farm enterprises such as greenhouses, landscape nurseries, Christmas tree farms, vineyards/wineries, and meat/cheese farm markets.

Participants are identified by the cornucopia logo and are listed in the Certified Roadside Farm Market Directory. The program provides collective advertising, promotional items,

educational tour opportunities, and other marketing tools.

The 2010 Directory will be available soon. It is free and available by calling (502) 495-5106 or by e-mailing roadside@kyfb.com. Consumers will also be able to obtain the directory at any of the welcome centers, State Resort Parks, local chambers of commerce/tourism centers or county Farm Bureau offices.

To access a list of the 2010 Certified Roadside Farm Market Members visit the Roadside Farm Market website at kyfb.org/roadside.



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Call or email today for your free Certified Roadside Market directory :: roadside@kyfb.com :: (502) 495-5106

John C. Hendricks: 1949-2010

The KFB community was shaken by the March 15 passing of First Vice President John C. Hendricks. The Clark County farmer was admired and respected for his devotion to issues affecting the quality of life for farm families. In recent years he became a strong advocate for health care reform and addressing the federal debt. He often expressed his concern about how those issues would effect the next generation.

Hendricks, 60, was First Vice President of both KFB Federation and Insurance Company. He was raised on a Robertson County farm and loved farming and rural life.

“John was a very close friend and trusted advisor,” said KFB President Mark Haney. “He had wonderful sense of humor and determined spirit. I grew to rely on his counsel. He was a strong leader. His commitment to improving the lives of farmers across the Commonwealth and the nation will truly be missed.”

“Mr. Hendricks always wanted to do what was best for the farmer”, said Executive Vice President David S. Beck. “In every decision we made together, Mr. Hendricks’ primary concern was how it would affect the daily life of those in agriculture.”

Hendricks was elected to the KFB Board of Directors in 1997 and served on the Executive Committee for five years. He served as chairman of the Resolutions Committee, Beef Cattle Advisory Committee, Roadside Markets Advisory Committee and Health Care Task Force. He also was a member of AFBF’s Federal Deficit Task Force which worked last year to create recommendations for addressing the federal debt.

Hendricks was a member of the Clark County Cattleman’s Association, chairman of the Kentucky Tobacco Research Board, a member of the Ag Development Council and treasurer of the Clark County Soil Conservation Board.

He was a graduate of Eastern Kentucky University with a degree in law enforcement and a minor in agriculture. In 1999 he retired from a state government career with the Administrative Office of the Courts. He was very active with community projects.



John Hendricks spoke to participants of the 2008 Clark County agricultural field day during a tour of Payton’s Greenhouse Farm. Several of his closest friends are in this photo, including (behind him in blue shirt) Clark County Extension Agent Nick Carter, (orange shirt and white cap) Agency Manager Rick Mink, (panama hat) Thadd Taylor and (far right) Shane Wiseman. Hendricks helped initiate the annual event and urged KFB to publicize it in order to encourage other counties to conduct such an event for local farmers.

He farmed in Clark County, producing beef cattle, hay, fruits and vegetables. He is survived by his wife, Mary Beth, and two sons, Wiley and John Jr.

His popularity was evidenced by huge crowds at the visitation and funeral. Haney delivered a Eulogy along with Melinda Wheeler, a colleague from the Administrative Office of the Courts.

“He was a special person to a lot of people,” Haney recalled. “He had lots of things to celebrate in his life.”

Several of his friends fondly referred to him as “the taskmaster” in reference to his diligence in pursuing goals. “He wanted to do things right,” said Haney.

Ms. Wheeler emotionally recalled how Hendricks had crusaded nationally for abolishing the bail bonding system because of its unfairness to the poor.

Haney also noted Hendricks’ devotion to his family, Clark County FB and the community.

Among many things at KFB Hendricks helped initiate the annual “Beef Tour” which provides Kentucky cattle producers an opportunity to visit cattle operations and other industry-related facilities in other states. The event draws a full enrollment each year.

KFB has announced that the event will now be called “The John C. Hendricks Beef Tour.”

LEAD group meets with Governor and First Lady



A key element of KFB's Leadership Enhancement for Agricultural Development (LEAD) program is giving participants access to government and industry leaders. This year's class gained some insight from last month's two-day visit to Frankfort, where they visited legislators, met with Governor Steve Beshear, First Lady Jane Beshear and GOAP Executive Director Roger Thomas. They also had lunch at the Governor's Mansion.

The visit coincided with KFB's annual Legislative Drive-In. After attending a briefing session about KFB's legislative agenda, the young people joined the large group at the Capitol Annex for meetings with lawmakers.

Before meeting the Beshears the group had an informal chat with Thomas, a former President of Warren County FB. Thomas was chairman of the House Agriculture Committee and was the primary sponsor of the bill which established the agricultural development fund 10 years ago.

After explaining the history and process involved with the ag development fund, Thomas said the program's future

rests with sound leadership.

"Thanks goodness Farm Bureau and other farm groups see the importance of developing leaders," he said.

He cited what he feels are several characteristics of effective leaders, including "the uncanny ability to be able to do what's right, not just what's politically correct. It's putting values ahead of your own desires."

He also encouraged the young people to be willing to give credit to others for achievements.

"Leading isn't always about being up front," he explained.

Mrs. Beshear, a horse lover, spoke about state government's role with the upcoming World Equestrian Games, farmland preservation efforts and agricultural education.

Governor Beshear said he was excited about agriculture's future in Kentucky because of the increased demand for food and energy sources. "Energy and food - both mean agriculture," he said. "They will be the most demanded items in the world."

Potential developments in the biofuels industry, coupled with the ongoing

Steve and Jane Beshear posed for a group picture after speaking to the LEAD class. LEAD members (from left and along back row) are Chris Ammerman of Grant County, Jay McCoy of Hart County, Corey Payne of Crittenden County, Matt Gajdzik of Shelby County, David Fourqurean of Trigg County, Donevon Storm of Laurel County, Terry Ishmael of Fleming County and Darren Rice of Butler County. Front row from left are Byron Amburgey of Montgomery County, Michael McCain of Washington County, Governor and Jane Beshear, Jonathan Gosser of Russell County, Chad Hall of Logan County and Christina Thomas of Franklin County. Not pictured are Charlie Edgington of Fayette County and Denise Jones of Marion County.

diversification of the state's farm economy, present opportunities for Kentucky farmers.

"You're going to really benefit from what's going on in the state," he predicted.

Beshear also praised the LEAD program. "Stay involved," he urged the group.

Young farmers are **not warm** to climate change legislation

Profitability, increasing government regulations and the impact of activist groups are the top concerns of America's leading young farmers and ranchers, according to a survey conducted by AFBF.

Despite the challenges, 80 percent of those responding to AFBF's 18th annual survey of young farmers and ranchers say they are more optimistic than they were five years ago, while 82 percent say they are better off than they were five years ago.

"Last year was a tough year economically for many sectors of agriculture," said AFBF YF&R Committee Chair Will Gilmer, a dairy farmer from Lamar County, Ala. "But despite the challenges, the survey shows young farmers and ranchers are optimistic and hopeful. We expect a bright future ahead."

The informal survey shows young farmers and ranchers have a high level of apprehension about government climate change regulations, with 79 percent of those surveyed expressing high or very high concern.

A huge majority of those surveyed expressed concern about the impact of activist groups on their farm and ranch

operations. A total of 85 percent were concerned or very concerned about activist groups. Only seven percent expressed little or no concern.

"Activist groups are becoming more and more vocal, so that is something we always have to keep our eyes on," Gilmer said. "There is also a great deal of concern about all the ways the government wants to regulate us, whether it's cap-and-trade or different Environmental Protection Agency rules."

Respondents were asked to rank their top three challenges, and 24 percent ranked overall profitability as the top, followed by government regulations at 23 percent. Two other concerns tied for third on that list, with competition from more established farms and ranches, and willingness of parents to share management responsibilities each receiving nine percent.

And when it comes to what steps the federal government can take to help farmers and ranchers, 23 percent ranked cut federal spending as No. 1. Boosting U.S. agricultural exports ranked second, selected by 14 percent of respondents. Providing greater help to beginning farmers was third at 11 percent.

A sizable majority, 83 percent, said they believe farm income should come totally from the marketplace, while only 17 percent said farm income should be supplemented by government farm program payments.

The survey also shows the Internet is an important tool for young farmers and ranchers. Nearly 99 percent said they have access to and use the Internet, with the vast majority, 72 percent, saying they have access to a high-speed Internet connection. Only 20 percent rely on slower dial-up connections and 8 percent turn to more costly satellite connections.

The survey also reveals the group's strong commitment to agriculture, with 96 percent saying they consider themselves life-long farmers or ranchers. They also express hope for the next generation, with 98 percent saying they would like to see their children follow in their footsteps; 85 percent believe their children will be able to follow in their footsteps.

The informal survey of young farmers and ranchers, ages 18-35, was conducted during AFBF's 2010 YF&R Leadership Conference. There were 373 respondents.



This group of young farmers participated in the annual Young Farmers Futures Seminar in Chicago, visiting the Federal Reserve Bank and the Chicago Board of Trade. There also was a session on commodity trading during the whirlwind two-day trip. Also in this photo are KFB Market Information Director Ed McQueen (front row, fourth from right) and Area 6 Program Director Lynn Parsons (far right). Young Farmer Director Jay McCants took this photo.



Nothing goes to waste

Central Kentucky farms learning to turn a liability into an asset

On the Triple J Farm, just north of Georgetown, waste doesn't go to waste. In fact, it becomes a black gold mine.

Stewart Hughes gathers the muck -- a mixture of straw, wood shavings and horse manure -- from two local horse farms to bed the calves and stocker cattle he raises for freezer beef. The strawy mixture provides a warm, dry place for the cattle to rest on and they, in turn, liberally apply their cow pies to the bedding. After the cows have had their turn at mucking up their bedding, Hughes cleans out their lot and puts the waste into windrows four-to five-feet high and 150 to 200 feet long. In the windrows, the mixture heats up, reducing the volume and killing weed seeds and disease. When the mixture stops cooking, Hughes runs a compost turner over the rows to add oxygen, and the pile heats up again. Depending upon the weather, in 8-10 weeks, Hughes will

have reduced the volume of the muck by about 80 percent and have a stable, high quality fertilizer.

"There is no smell and no flies," Hughes said. "If it's done right, all you'll smell is dirt."

Hughes has replaced nearly all of the commercial fertilizer used on his farm with the compost. It is spread on corn, wheat, tobacco and hay fields. Only the tobacco gets an extra shot of nitrogen. The compost also is used by Hughes' daughter, Jessica McQuade, in her vegetable garden where she produces for the local farmers' market.

"We work the land hard because we do a lot of double-cropping. But our soil is better now, tests higher in Ph, than when we started," Hughes said. "And the best part of it is, you can spread the compost all year-round. Before, you didn't want to spread manure anywhere near the house because of the smell."

Article and Photos by Walt Reichert

ABOVE: Stewart Hughes examined one of his finished compost windrows, while Carolyn Oldfield dug in for a sample. Hughes' Triple J Farm sells bagged compost from off the farm under the Kentucky Proud label.

Hughes has even made a business of selling the compost to local farmers and gardeners, who buy by the bag or truckload. The bags of compost he sells are under the Kentucky Proud label.

Better water

Hughes' farm is one of several dozen in central Kentucky trying "hot composting" (as opposed to stockpiling manure) as a means of handling large volumes of waste.

Before composting, many farms were spreading raw manure on the land, or paying to have the bedding hauled away. In the mid-1990s the Thoroughbred Resource Conservation and Development Council (TRC & D), a non-profit resource conservation agency covering Scott, Woodford, Clark, Fayette, Jessamine, Franklin and Madison counties, obtained a \$250,000 grant from the EPA to develop methods of composting on those farms that produced a lot of waste. The goal was to improve water quality and to reduce the costs of waste management. Dawn Angarone, a compost consultant, was hired to offer farms waste management options. The grant also paid for composting experiments on six farms in the region. Water and soil quality were monitored before and after composting was initiated, and the results earned a national award from the EPA in 1998.

Part of the grant also required TRC & D to hold composting education seminars; representatives of about 60 farms in the region attended a large composting workshop held at the Kentucky Horse Park in 2002.

About 50 farms -- some cattle, some horse, some mixed -- in the region have opted to try composting as a waste management tool following the workshops. Some bought their own compost turners and some hired other farmers who had the equipment to turn their compost.

"Having a compost turner and using it on other farms has become quite a little cottage industry today," said Debbie Osbourne, president of TRC & D.

Racing to compost

Three Chimneys Farm, in Woodford County, is home to Smarty Jones, Big Brown and Dynaformer. Those big-name thoroughbreds produce waste just like the

other 500 horses on the farm. Brad Caron, director of facilities for Three Chimneys, said the farm produces about three million pounds of stall waste every year.

After seeing how composting could reduce the volume of waste and turn it into a valuable fertilizer, Caron bought a compost turner for the farm. About six acres of land is set aside for the composting operation. When the compost is finished, it is spread on the pastures, sold, or given away to friends and neighbors who use it in their gardens, Caron said.

David Craig, who oversees the compost operation at Three Chimneys, said the farm's pastures have become thicker with fewer weeds since he started spreading compost on the land. And because the heat kills diseases, he said he is not afraid to spread it on the land containing animals, even in paddocks holding some of

and to the race tracks. Turfway, in northern Kentucky, is composting muck from its stalls. Angarone recently completed a study of the benefits of composting for the Keeneland Race Track. The track was paying \$250,000 a year to haul off stall muck, she said. Angarone's study showed the track could compost the waste, reduce its volume by about 80 percent and cut its costs to haul away waste considerably. And it could use the compost on its gardens and grounds.

The next goal of the waste management program is to spread the word -- and the compost -- Oldfield said. She said the poultry farms in western Kentucky, which have large volumes of waste and often too little land for spreading, would be a perfect target for composting trials.

"With the horse industry down because of the economy, you're looking at chick-



the highest priced thoroughbred stallions in the world.

"That's one of the benefits of composting, that it can be spread with the animals in the field," said Carolyn Oldfield, who works for the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service and who coordinates the composting program with TRC & D. "Not every farm is big enough to have land to rotate the animals away while the manure is being spread."

Composting has also gone off the farm

as maybe becoming the state's largest agricultural enterprise," Oldfield said. "We've got to find environmentally friendly ways to handle that waste."

TRC & D is continuing to offer composting workshops. For more information, call 1-502-863-6010, ext. 4



Harrison County tobacco producer Ben Clifford will grow about 20 percent less tobacco this year because of a cut in his contract with RJ Reynolds.

Growing pains

Many burley producers face season with smaller or no contracts

Article and Photos by Walt Reichert

Ben Clifford considers himself lucky.

While many of his tobacco-growing friends and neighbors in Harrison County got Dear John letters from the cigarette manufacturers they grew for last year, and others took deep cuts to their contracts, Clifford will be allowed to grow in 2010 most of the burley he grew in 2009 for RJ Reynolds.

Last year Clifford grew about 25 acres of tobacco along with raising beef cattle and running a tree trimming business from his farm in the rolling hills near Cynthiana. This year, he will raise just 20 acres of burley.

Many of Clifford's friends and neighbors did not have their contracts with tobacco manufacturers renewed or were cut as much as 60 percent. Clifford estimates that Harrison County farmers will grow far less than half of the tobacco they grew last year.

"Harrison County farmers sold between 8 million and 9 million pounds of tobacco in 2009," Clifford said. "This year they will grow about 2 million pounds. That's \$10 million to \$12 million lost from the economy of Harrison County."

As planting season begins, there are grumblings all across the burley belt this year about the way farmers are being treated by cigarette manufacturers. It's not just the cuts they are complaining about – they knew they were coming as demand for cigarettes continues to drop – but they didn't expect the depth of the cuts and they are griping about the timing of the notices from companies as well as what they perceive as the random way cuts were made.

Clifford said several farmers in his county were taken by surprise by the cuts.

"Some farmers were already seeding their greenhouses when they got the letter telling them about the cuts," he said.





Others complained there appeared to be no clear criteria for who got cut and how much.

Shelby County FB Director Ray Tucker cited the case of a farmer who produced in the top 15 percent last year, earning a plaque from Philip Morris USA. That farmer took a 50 percent cut this year.

“There’s just no rhyme or reason to who they’re cutting,” Tucker said.

Tucker didn’t get his contract cut this year because he is in the first year of a multi-year contract with Philip Morris.

Christian County farmer Wesley Parker said he, too, has a multi-year contract with Philip Morris, and he received no cuts this year. He raised 20 acres of burley last year. But he’s not sure about the future, because this will be the last year of his multi-year contract.

“I don’t know what I’ll do next year,” said Parker, a Christian County FB director. “But I’m a grain farmer, and tobacco’s not my main business.”

Roger Quarles, president of the Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative, said many farmers are feeling let down by the companies they had contracted with since the buyout in 2005.

“The manufacturers were holding themselves out as partners with farmers, but a lot of farmers are feeling no sense of partnership right now,” Quarles said.

While cigarette manufacturers admit they are cutting back on contracts this year, they will not say how much, citing “competitive reasons.” University of Kentucky Extension Tobacco Economist Will Snell estimates 20-30 percent cuts in burley contracts this year. Snell said a number of factors are coming together this year to reduce the demand for cigarettes at home and abroad:

- More smoking restrictions.
- A whopping jump in the federal excise tax on cigarettes from 39 cents to \$1.01 per pack. And that is on top of increases at the state level in some places, including Kentucky.

- Higher production of tobacco in Africa.

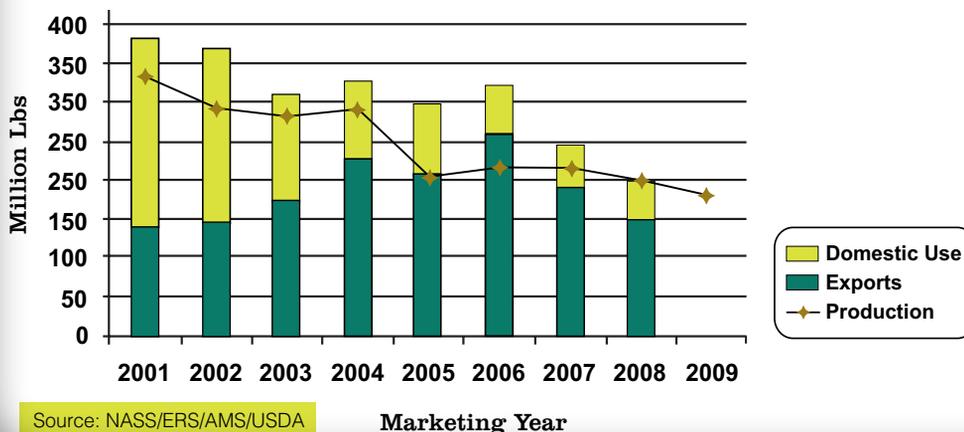
- A weakened global economy that cuts demand for the burley that produces higher quality cigarettes (Most of Kentucky’s burley is exported).

David Sutton, spokesperson for Philip Morris USA and U. S. Smokeless Tobacco Co., said manufacturers experienced an 8-10 percent cut in demand for cigarettes last year as a result of the above factors, which led to cuts in contracts this year.

“We’ve always had to make adjustments

U.S. Burley Production vs Disappearance (Use)

Potential Needs for 2009-10 at “profitable” prices ... Less than 200 mil lbs?



as we look for the type of leaf, stalk position and geography, where tobacco is grown affects flavor,” Sutton said.

Monica Montero, external communications executive with Philip Morris International (PMI), said the company has had to make adjustments to contracts this year but is aware of the need to maintain good relations with producers.

“The decision to reduce our U. S. leaf purchases for 2010 was not an easy decision as we have been happy with the quality of tobacco we have purchased,” Montell



“Some farmers were already seeding their greenhouses when they got the letter telling them about the cuts.”



said. "However, our raw material requirements vary from year to year, which is what led to the decision."

Quarles said he thinks tobacco manufacturers are also facing "a big unknown" now that the FDA can regulate tobacco, and companies do not want to get stuck with tobacco they can't sell.



"Tobacco used to be held to a different standard in Kentucky. But farmers are going to have to get used to it being treated like any other commodity sold in the state."

The one bright spot in the tobacco patch this year might be dark tobacco – demand is growing. Sutton said demand for dark tobacco is growing 6-7 percent a year, which "we expect to continue." Sutton said U. S. Smokeless Tobacco Co. has not cut any contracts for dark tobacco in Kentucky this year. Parker, who grows nine acres of dark air-fired tobacco for Swisher Co., said his dark tobacco

poundage was not cut in 2010.

As far as the complaints about the randomness of who got cut and why, tobacco manufacturers said growers get a "scorecard," which, they say, should be clear. Sutton said the company's scorecard rates a grower on quality, moisture, and ability to fill a contract.

Montero said PMI decides which contracts to enter based on recommendations from receiving stations.

Snell said that while contract cuts will likely be in the range of 20-30 percent this year, acreage will probably not drop that much. Many farmers did well selling at auctions last year, Snell said, and may be tempted to grow more acres this year without contracts. The number of farmers without off-farm jobs this year may make many farmers feel they have no choice but to raise more tobacco, he said.

Quarles said there are no firm numbers, but he estimated that last year 20 to 35 million pounds of tobacco went through the auction system.

But if farmers produce too much tobacco this year in the face of dropping demand, prices could plummet below cost of production, Snell said.

"There is the potential out there for disaster," Snell said. "The train wreck didn't happen in 2009 but the same scenario is setting up for 2010. The lower quality stuff could be especially hard hit. High quality tobacco will likely always sell well."

Quarles said this year the Burley Co-op is opening its own company, United States Tobacco Growers Company, which will let farmers retain ownership of tobacco and thus smooth out some of the price fluctuations. But he said, with the old quota system gone, tobacco farmers in the state are going to have to work with company control and fluctuating markets.

"Tobacco used to be held to a different standard in Kentucky," Quarles said. "But farmers are going to have to get used to it being treated like any other commodity sold in the state."

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KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU BEEF EXPO

The Kentucky Farm Bureau Beef Expo was held last month at the Kentucky Exposition Center with 220 consignors from 16 states. Total gross sales were \$729,615 on 502 lots, an average of 1,453 per head.

The annual pen heifer sale had the highest gross, \$127,050 on 120 head. That was followed by Angus, \$112,725; Simmental, \$87,075 and Shorthorn, \$67,400. All told there were 12 breed shows and sales in addition to the all breeds pen heifer event.

The top money-earner was a Limousin bull consigned by HB Farms of Midway, which sold for \$10,000. Other Kentucky-consigned sales highlights included:

- The Supreme Champion Angus bull, consigned by James Shaw of Hodgenville, sold for \$2,000 while the female, from Chuck and Toni Druen of Eminence and Ann Patton Schubert of Taylorsville, fetched \$4,200.
- The champion female Chiangus from Wolfridge Land and Livestock of Maysville brought \$3,900.
- A female Hereford consigned by Boyd Beef Cattle of Mays Lick sold for \$5,100.
- The top Red Poll bull from Young's Red Polls of Simpsonville brought \$1,150 while the female, from Dill's Red Polls of Union, fetched \$2,500.
- Willis Farms of Frankfort had the two champion Salers with the female \$3,000.
- The champion female Shorthorn came from SharBen Shorthorns in Sharpsburg and brought \$4,600.
- The top Simmental bull came from Hudson Pines and Rockin P of Maysville, fetching \$1,900. The top female from Embry Show Cattle of Winchester earned \$1,800.

Youth exhibitors showed 151 steers and 329 heifers at the Junior Show. The top five Kentucky steers were shown by Taylor Tolle of Taylorsville, Sarah Ayer of Calhoun (2), Morgan Anderson of Stanton and Kyle Ayer of Calhoun. Top five Kentucky heifers were shown by Cramer Schneider of Georgetown, Caleb Stephenson of Carrollton, Taylor Tolle, Ramsey Johnson of Winchester and Reese Johnson of Slaughters.

KFB leaders participated in the awards programs and the organization had an exhibit in the trade show. It was the 24th rendition of the popular show administered by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. KFB is the primary sponsor.



TOP: KFB President Mark Haney gave the welcoming remarks at the awards presentation. He was joined by (from left) Second Vice President Eddie Melton, Commodity Division Director Susan Tanner, Executive Vice President David S. Beck, Beef Committee Chairman Fritz Giesecke and Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer.

BOTTOM: Consignors of breed winners are pictured with Fritz Giesecke, Mark Haney and Commissioner Farmer.

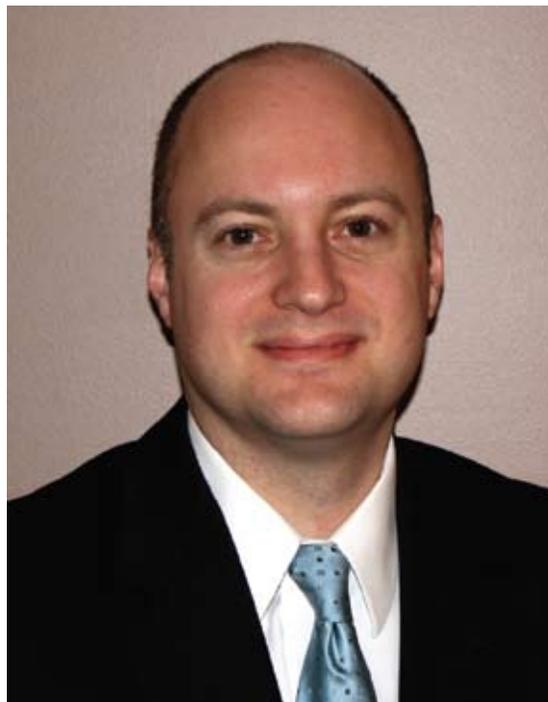
Dan Smaldone named PR Director

dan Smaldone is the new Director of Public Relations for KFB Federation. He comes to the position from SHPS, a third-party health and welfare benefits administrator, where he served two years as a Client Service Manager. Previously, he spent more than eight years in the Media & Public Relations Office of the Kentucky State Fair Board, serving nearly six years as manager of the Media Department.

Smaldone is responsible for planning and executing a full-range of public relations and media relations programs. These efforts cover the agricultural advocacy and other activities of the federation, as well as business and policyholder service programs of KFB Insurance.

A Louisville native, Smaldone holds a Bachelor's Degree in English from Bellarmine University. He is a past president of the Kentucky chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators, served as a regional director for the Kentucky Festivals & Events Association and was an active member of the International Association of Fairs & Expos. Smaldone also won numerous regional and state communications awards during his tenure with the Kentucky State Fair Board.

"I'm excited to have this opportunity to serve Farm Bureau members," Smaldone said. "My work with the State Fair Board gave me exposure to Farm Bureau and our entire agricultural community. Those experiences naturally led me to an interest in Farm Bureau, which I feel is a wonderful and very effective organization."



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KFB promotes "Agriculture Week"

KFB joined with other farm organizations to highlight the industry's importance as part of the annual recognition of "National Agriculture Week." Governor Steve Beshear designated March 20 as "Agriculture Day in Kentucky."

"The agriculture industry across Kentucky continues to grow and change everyday, but remains a strong, vital piece to our economic strength," said KFB President Mark Haney. "Recognizing National Agriculture Day in Kentucky allows us to focus on the importance of farming to our society and the critical role agriculture plays in providing food, fiber, fuel and other materials we use daily."

KFB and other agricultural organizations took part in events across the state to promote how agriculture positively impacts us economically, environmentally, and socially. In KFB's effort to educate the public, County Women's Committees were invited to visit elementary schools to read an agricultural book to students. They were then asked to discuss with the students the importance of agriculture in hope of reaching our next generation with factual and valuable information.

According to the USDA, Kentucky farmers grossed \$4.84 billion from the sale of farm products in 2008, a 39 percent increase from just five years ago. During 2009, the total number of farms in Kentucky increased by 200, for a total of 85,500. The most recent Census of Agriculture showed eighty-nine percent of Kentucky's agricultural operations are still run by individuals or families, and most are small farms.

National Agriculture Day is promoted by the Agriculture Council of America to recognize and celebrate the contribution of agriculture on our everyday lives. The program encourages every American to understand how food and fiber products are produced as well as appreciate the role agriculture plays in providing safe affordable products.

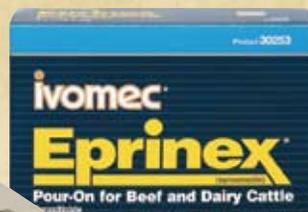
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Lamb prices up sharply

First-quarter 2010 Choice slaughter lamb prices are forecast by USDA at \$100 to \$101 per cwt, about 12 percent above the same period a year earlier. This price increase is likely due in large part to very tight domestic supplies in the face of increasing demand. First-quarter 2010 commercial lamb and mutton production is forecast at 42 million pounds, equaling the same period in 2009. Tight supplies are expected to continue through much of the year, which could result in even further price strengthening.

Imports of lamb and mutton continue to offset tight domestic supplies. First-quarter 2010 lamb and mutton imports are forecast at 53 million pounds, four percent above the same period last year. Import strength is expected to continue throughout 2010 to satisfy the strengthening lamb market

Milk production declined in '09

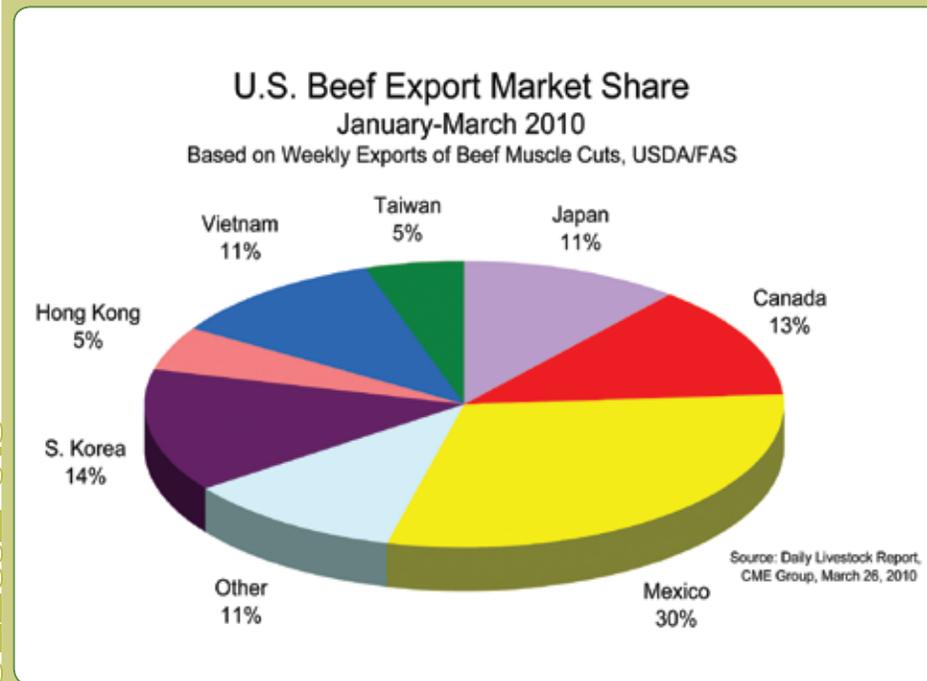
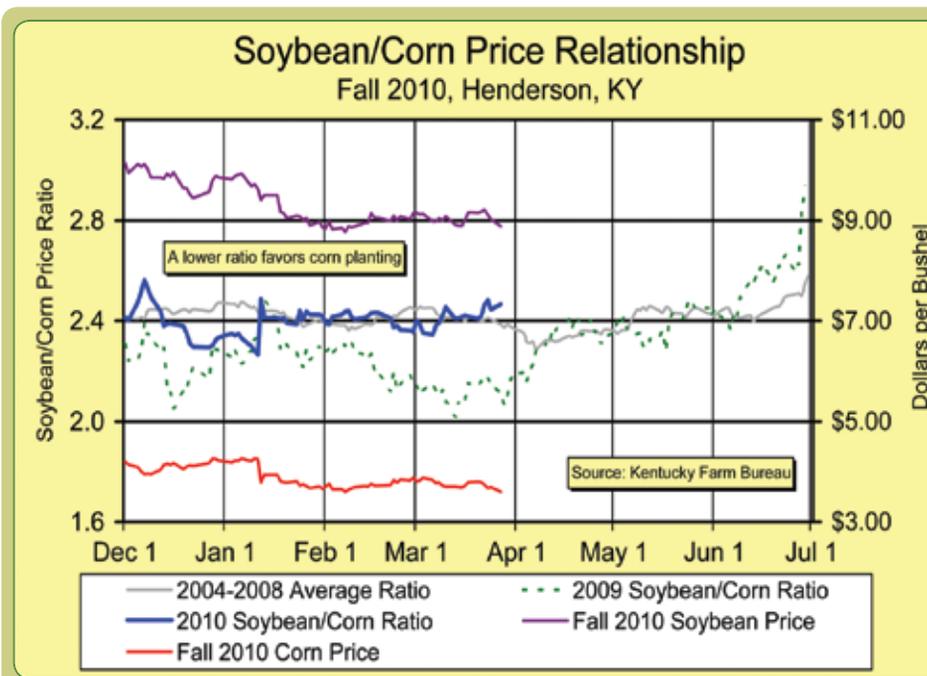
The production of milk for the U.S. during 2009 was 189 billion pounds, 0.3 percent below 2008. Production per cow in the U.S. averaged 20,576 pounds, 181 pounds above 2008. The average annual rate of milk production per cow has increased 13.1 percent since 2000. The average number of milk cows on farms in the U.S. during 2009 was 9.20 million head, down 1.2 percent from 2008.

Wheat used for food is down

Wheat used for food in the U.S. during 2009/10, estimated at 940 million bushels, is down 0.7 percent from 2008/09. USDA attributes this to a higher-than-expected flour extraction rate and lower-than-expected per capita disappearance. The Census Bureau's 2009 mill grind report revealed that the flour extraction rate for the first seven months of 2009/10 marketing year was 77.1 percent, nearly the same as 2008/09.

Corn export forecast is lowered

In March, USDA lowered its estimate of 2009/10 U.S. corn exports by 100 million bushels to 1.90 billion due to an increase in competition for the rest of 2009/10 from Argentina and to a lesser extent, South Africa. U.S. corn shipments for the first half of the marketing year were about seven percent above the same period in 2008/09. As of March 11, outstanding corn export sales were 14 percent higher than year earlier levels, supporting prospects for strong shipments to continue. However, a big Argentine corn crop, priced at a discount to U.S. corn, is expected to reduce additional U.S. export sales, especially to key markets like South Korea and Japan. The 1.90 billion bushel total is more than the 1.858 billion exported in 2008/09.



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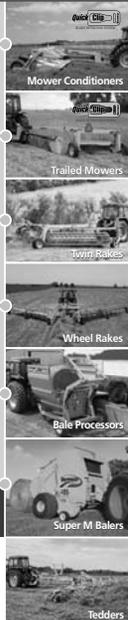
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USDA report affirms “cap-and-trade” concerns

The Agriculture Department released a status report prepared by the agency’s chief economist, Joe Glauber, that says previous studies by the Environmental Protection Agency and other groups show that a carbon offset program would provide a net benefit to farmers and ranchers, but much of the economic benefit would be caused by large shifts in land use as land-owners planted trees to sequester carbon.

In his memorandum to Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, Glauber said such land-use shifts would “result in higher commodity prices and reductions in livestock production.” Glauber’s memo re-affirms his earlier statements that the House-passed climate change bill would lead to less acreage planted to crops.

Farm Bureau remains firmly opposed to cap-and-trade climate change legislation and continues to educate Congress on its dire consequences to agriculture and the overall economy.

Garrard and Martin Counties win Farm Bureau awards

Garrard County FB and Martin County FB were among 30 recipients nationally of \$500 grants for agricultural education projects awarded by AFBF’s Foundation. The money is used to fund new projects or extend existing ones.

Garrard County was selected for a mobile classroom with hands-on science experiments. Martin County has a program to teach students about the heritage of farming.

Sheep event set for May 14-16

The Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office is sponsoring the first Kentucky Sheep and Fiber Festival May 14-16 at Masterson Station Park in Lexington. The event will be held in conjunction with the Bluegrass Classic Stockdog Trial.

Workshops will be held May 14 and 15. The festival will be held May 15-16. Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office Executive Director Ray Bowman said the festival is open to vendors of fiber and fiber products from sheep, Angora goats, wool rabbits, llamas and alpacas.

“We hope to do this every year and eventually grow to the size of the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival, which draws some 70,000 visitors on a weekend,” Bowman said.

For more information, contact Sharon Koontz, Sharon@kysheepandgoat.org or call 502-352-2434. Or you can visit the website at www.kentucky-sheepandfiber.com.

AFBF wants to boost exports to Cuba

In testimony before the House Agriculture Committee, AFBF President Bob Stallman called on congressional members to support a bill which would lift some key U.S.-imposed restrictions on trade with Cuba.

AFBF has been an advocate for easing restrictions on exports to Cuba and is a supporter of H.R. 4645, sponsored by House Agriculture Chairman Collin Peterson (D-Minn.) and Rep. Jerry Moran (R-Kan.). The bill would reverse the restrictions on “payment of cash in advance,” eliminate the third country bank requirement and lift the ban on travel. According to AFBF, passage of the legislation would make agriculture a strong player in the Cuban market and increase U.S. agricultural exports.

U.S. agriculture has seen significant growth, but has also experienced significant setbacks, since being allowed to trade with Cuba in 2000. Stallman noted that the U.S. is not viewed by Cuba as a reliable supplier due to our sales restrictions and the ability of the U.S. government to “alter those restrictions at a whim.”

The U.S. exports a variety of commodities to Cuba. Of those, grain and feed has consistently topped sales, reaching \$369 million and making up more than half of agriculture’s total exports to the country in 2008. The U.S. also exports a wide range of other commodities to Cuba including oilseeds, meats and dairy.

AFBF asks court to address H-2A issue

AFBF believes the nation’s immigration system is broken and only Congress can fix it. The organization is asking a federal district court to delay the Obama administration’s final rule on a crucial foreign worker program because the administration failed to properly consider the impacts on small businesses.

“The solution offered by the administration’s final rule on the H-2A foreign worker program only makes an already bad situation worse, and it’s going to be especially hard for family-owned farms and other small family-owned businesses,” said AFBF President Bob Stallman.



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(*Sedum spurium*) You'll be thrilled with this hardy ground cover. Fills those ugly trouble spots with attractive, thick evergreen foliage all year and amazes you with brilliant, starlike red flowers June through September. These are hardy, northern, nursery-grown plants.

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Jersey Knight Asparagus

More productive — more delicious! Master gardeners have been known to pull the female plants from their asparagus patch (those producing red berries). This left the bigger, more succulent male plants. Now plant hybridizers have developed Jersey Knight Asparagus, a variety that grows only male plants. Stalks are much larger — up to 4" around. Yield 3-4 times more top quality asparagus than older varieties. These hybrid perennial plants are vigorous growers and are highly disease-resistant. Grow in poor, salty or alkaline soil. Hardy even in sub-zero weather. Grow bigger, more flavorful asparagus spears in 1/3-1/4 less space. 1 year old, first quality plants sent. Supply is limited — order today!

5 for \$4.95 + 5 for 1¢ = **10 roots for \$4.96**



1 more for
ONLY 1¢

Old Fashioned Lilac

(*Syringa vulgaris*) Produce thousands of fragrant blooms around Memorial Day! It's from this hardy species that the French Hybrid Lilacs were developed. Makes a beautiful 8-15' hedge that gives blooms and fragrance every year. Zones 3-8.

1 for \$3.75 + 1 for 1¢ = **2 for \$3.76**



2 more for
ONLY 1¢

Hummingbird Vine

(*Campsis radicans*) Plant this improved variety of the old-fashioned trumpet vine to attract hummingbirds. Shiny, dark green leaves are smothered in large, showy, orange-scarlet trumpet-shaped flowers from July to November. Vigorous grower. Reaches 20 feet or more. Covers arbors, brick walls and fences. Hardy plants thrive in poor soil, full or partial sun.

2 for \$3.95 + 2 for 1¢ = **4 for \$3.96**

Colorado Blue Spruce

(*Picea pungens glauca*) A shining blue, northern-grown specimen which will add an interesting contrast to your landscape. These make excellent corner plantings and windbreaks. Are often used as an individual specimen because of their beautiful coloring. You receive strong, nicely-rooted, nursery-grown, 3 year old, 10-18" seedlings.



1 more for
ONLY 1¢

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3 more for
ONLY 1¢

Siberian Elm

(*Ulmus pumila*) Forms a tall screen first year planted! Not for small, confined areas, as it grows so fast and large. If left untrimmed will grow to tree height of 45' or more. Can be trimmed to form a screen. Grows even in shade and drought conditions. Fall foliage turns red or purple in the North. Plant 3-6' apart. Zones 4-9. We send 2-3' plants. Sorry, cannot be shipped to California.

3 for \$3.98 + 3 for 1¢ = **6 for \$3.99**



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Award winning! This handsome, upward facing Oriental lily is ideal for growing in gardens, patio pots, along foundations, walks or driveways. It has a pleasant fragrance and makes long-lasting cut flower bouquets. Plant in April or May for blooms in June and July. 10-12 cm. bulbs. Order today!

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