SOLVING COMMON PROBLEMS IN UNCOMMON WAYS: SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION FOR THE PEOPLE

TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY
128TH ANNUAL FARMERS CONFERENCE

February 18-21, 2020
Doubletree by Hilton
Downtown Montgomery
Montgomery, Alabama
2020 Merit Farm Family Award

Triple G Goat and Beef Ranch
Gerald and Glenda Gooden
Opelika, Alabama

Sponsored by: First South Farm Credit
The first Farmers Conference was held at Tuskegee University on February 23, 1892. Its purpose was to convene farmers in an educationally stimulating environment that would arouse public sentiment and create an interest in the common, mundane and practical affairs of life. The morning was spent identifying problems associated with farming and the afternoon portion of the conference focused on their solutions.

Today, this conference has evolved into a multi-day event that focuses on the problems and solutions for small-scales farmers, land owners, and their communities in managing change in agriculture. Participants are engaged in intense courses of instructions, problem-solving and interactive demonstrations. Additionally, the conference provides an opportunity for small-scale farmers to network with colleagues and university educators. A unique conference event focuses attention on youth engagement opportunities in the ever changing agricultural environment.

From its inception, the Tuskegee University’s Farmers Conference has retained the following objectives: (1) to share up-to-date information relevant to small-scale farmers and landowners involved in production of traditional and alternative agricultural products; (2) to create awareness about family health, nutritional challenges, and existing resources for rural families; (3) to provide research-based information in a consumer adaptable format; and (4) to strengthen networks and partnerships that address problems of small-scale farmers and rural communities with respect to local, national and global markets.
Pre Conference Activity

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2020

8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  Cooperative Extension Professional Development (Closed Sessions)
   ANR – Rosa Parks
   FCS – Trenholm
   CED – Faulkner
   Administrative Staff – ASU

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.  Lunch (Agents, Resource Specialists and Invited Guests)

1:15 p.m.  Urban Ag Innovation Center Dedication
   (595 Grady Street, Montgomery, AL)
   Facilitator: Candace Clark, Tuskegee University

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  Tuskegee University Cooperative Extension
   (Rosa Parks Meeting Room)
   State Advisory Council Meeting
   Facilitator: Natilee McGruder

6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.  Mixer w/Live Music
   (Hotel Lobby)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  Registration
   (Lobby)

8:00 p.m. – 12:00 p.m.  Tuskegee University Cooperative Extension Program
   Annual eXert Competition

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.  Lunch

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.  Awards and Dismissal

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2020

6:30 a.m.  Morning Run/Walk
   (Meet in Double Tree Lobby)
   Facilitator: Denzel Veale, Tuskegee University

7:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  Registration
   (Conference Registration Desk)
7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.  Breakfast Panel: Innovations in Hemp  
(MLK Ballroom)  
Facilitator: Harold Higgins, Tuskegee University

Panelists:  
Bob Plaster, AL Department of Agriculture and Industries, Montgomery, AL  
Joshua Litrell, Veterans for Cannabis, Atlanta, GA  
Gagan Hunter, Fairview Farmers Market, Miami, FL

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.  USDA Updates

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  Concurrent Sessions

A. Local Food Systems Development  (Trenholm Room)  
Facilitators: Jasmine Ratliff and Lindsey Lunsford, Tuskegee University

B. Next Generation Agricultural Technology Working Session  (Faulkner Room)  
Facilitators: Terence Jackson and John Myers, Tuskegee University

C. Hemp Consortium Working Session  (Rosa Parks Room)  
Facilitator: Gertrude Wall, Tuskegee University

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.  Luncheon  
(MLK Ballroom)  
Facilitator: Cassondra Searight, State Outreach Coordinator  
USDA Farm Service Agency

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  Beef Cattle Track  (Meet in Hotel Lobby)

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.  Urban/Rural Food Systems Panel  
(MLK Ballroom)  
Facilitators: Lindsey Lunsford and Jasmine Ratliff, Tuskegee University

Panelist:  
Mchezaji Axum, College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences at the University of the District of Columbia  
Caylor Rolling, E.A.T. South, Montgomery AL  
Chistopher Newsome, Sankofa Farm and Food Resource Center at Bantram’s Garden, Philadelphia PA  
Flora Brown, Fairview Farmers Market, Montgomery AL
3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.          Concurrent Sessions

A. Importance of Genealogy in the African American Community and How to Start
   (Rosa Parks Room)
   Facilitator: Jeffery Moore, Tuskegee University
   Presenter: Frazine Taylore, Alabama State University

B. Risk Management (Rosa Parks Ballroom)
   Facilitator: Lila Karki, Tuskegee University
   Presenter: Laurence Crane, National Crop Insurance Services

4:00 p.m. -- 5:00 p.m.          Concurrent Sessions Continued

C. Weather and Disaster Preparedness for Small Farms & Communities (Faulkner Room)
   Presenter: Rashidah Farid, Tuskegee University
   Facilitator: John Myers, Tuskegee University

D. Risk Management (Cont’d) (Rosa Parks Ballroom)
   Facilitator: Lila Karki, Tuskegee University
   Presenter: Laurence Crane, National Crop Insurance Services

5:00 p.m. – until                Dinner on Your Own
                  Downtown Montgomery

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2020

6:30 a.m.                      Morning Run/Walk
                                (Meet in Double Tree Lobby)
                                Facilitator: Denzel Veale, Tuskegee University

7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.          Breakfast
                                (IMLK Ballroom)

9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.          Ag Expo (E.A.T. South Urban Farm)

WILCOX COUNTY SMALL FARMERS AREA WORK CONFERENCE
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2020  |  8 AM - 2 PM

Elijah Tracy Shaw III Convention Center
17349 Alabama Highway 5  |  Catherine, Alabama

An Annual Educational Forum for Area Small Farmers and Producers
Hosted by the Tuskegee University Extension Program and Area Agency Partners and Supporters.

Program Contact: George Hunter, Jr.
Coordinator, Agriculture and Natural Resources Program
Lowndes County Extension Office  |  334-548-2535
TU FARMERS CONFERENCE BEEF TRACK

Value Added Practices for Small Beef Cattle Producers

“SUSTAINABLE COW-CALF PRODUCTION IN THE SOUTHEAST”
Preventing Herd for Optimal Breeding From a Nutritive Perspective

Thursday, February 20, 2020

AGENDA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Presenter/Institution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:15 AM</td>
<td>Opening Remarks</td>
<td>Drs. Shange/Bolden-Tiller/Hill</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30 AM</td>
<td>Breeding Management</td>
<td>Lauren Mayo and Ronald Davis, Tuskegee University</td>
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<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>Forage and Grazing Management</td>
<td>Joshua Elmore &amp; Dr. Kim Mullenix, Auburn University</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:45 AM</td>
<td>Breeding Herd Health Management</td>
<td>Dr. K. NewKirk, DVM, TU Vet School</td>
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<td>Dr. R. Bridges, DVM, TU Vet School</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:15 AM</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
<td>Supplementing Options for Improving Herd Reproduction</td>
<td>Dr. Nar Gurung, Tuskegee University</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:15 AM</td>
<td>Producer Panel</td>
<td>Terry Cooper, Rod Smith, Felix Richardson</td>
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<td>12:00</td>
<td>Lunch (On the Bus)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 P.M.</td>
<td>Site Visits</td>
<td>Joe Witt Farms, Alfonso Menefee Farms, TU Beef Cattle Operation</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00 P.M.</td>
<td>Q&amp;A &amp; Discussions (On the Bus)</td>
<td>Russell Johnson</td>
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<td>4:40 P.M.</td>
<td>Arrive at Doubletree Hotel</td>
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Triple G is the 2020 Merit Farm Family. The 2020 Merit Farm Family is Triple G Goat and Beef Ranch of Lee County, Alabama. Gerald and Glenda Gooden are goat and cattle owners who have been ranching for over 20 years. In 1998, they were able to purchase land in the Lee County to start a cow-calf operation. On the 83-acre ranch, the Goodens have cattle, horses, donkeys and in 2009 added goats. “I had a dream to own land and be able to have cattle,” said Gerald Gooden. “I had this dream as a teenager, when I was growing up and worked odd jobs with livestock at other farms in my community.” The Goodens partner with programs offered by NRCS and receive financial assistance to outfit the operation with fencing, covering and grassing for an old county road that ran through the property, as well as establishing water trough sites for the animals. “I was close to retirement from Bell South, as a Data Tech Specialist when I read an article on having cattle and goats on the same acreage, Gooden recalled. “I became very interested in having a herd of goats to manage along with my cows.” Mr. Gooden joined the Master Goat Producer Program at Tuskegee University and became a Master Goat Producer Class II in 2008. From his participation in the classes, Gooden and TU partner in winterfeeding program and 3 different grazing programs. This partnership lead to further activities, including continuing education classes offered by TU and assessments on the herd. “The relationship built with the faculty and staff have been so rewarding,” continued Gooden. “Both the Animal Science students at the farm and conducting lab
session were enjoyable and educational. I was able set up the labs in my barns and share the things I had learned with them.” Mr. Gooden have participated the Annual Goat Day at TU and attended the National Goat Conference. He is a mentor to local farmers interested in obtaining goats, by offering advice and assistance to them. Gerald and Glenda, who is a nurse at East Alabama Medical Center (EAMC) open up their ranch to the community. They host a Spring and Fall event for their church and often have staff from EAMC to come out and enjoy a day at the ranch. The events include, but not limited to hay rides, petting zoo, inflatables and opportunity to take pictures. The Merit Farm Family is an award to recognize superior management and innovation by farmers associated with Tuskegee University Cooperative Extension Program (TUCEP). They participate and support TUCEP activities and demonstrate leadership in their field production. The recipient receives a cash prize, sponsored by First South Farm Credit Association, several other tokens including a Merit Farm Family sign for their farm and is often used as an ambassador for TUCEP and small scale agriculture. The selection committee is an outside review panel of professionals......USDA, Industry and Community and previous recipient of the award.

Submitted by Jacquelyn Carlisle
TU College of Agriculture, Environment and Nutrition Sciences
CONCURRENT SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Local Foods Working Session
In urban and rural communities across the Alabama Black Belt, many individuals and families are facing difficulty accessing fresh, affordable, and nutritious foods. In Alabama, 800,620 people are struggling with hunger - and of them 247,140 are children. This means 1 in 6 adults and 1 in 4 children are struggling with hunger in our state. These issues of access and hunger are indicative of a faltering food system in which breakdowns in communication and trust are arising throughout the food system.

The goal of this working session is to create intentional dialogues across diverse stakeholder networks to map issues and assist farms and families in co-creating solutions that foster strong options for farm profitability and consumer access in the local food system. Different programs in farmers market promotion, farm to school, and other market options will be represented as the outcome will be a plan of work for TU faculty and staff engagement for the upcoming year.

Next Generation Ag Technology Working Session
While there is a continued need for on farm sustainable management, there is also a collection of large amounts of data from both a physical and geospatial perspective. This compilation of data can become another impediment as you have to consider the volume of data, the variety of data, the veracity of the data, the velocity at which the data is collected and changes and getting value out of the data. The agricultural industry has long used predictive modeling to forecast the environmental and agronomic impact of planting, fertilization, irrigation and other land management strategies. Traditionally, however, this sort of analysis has required dozens of individual, custom-developed spreadsheets, access to academic supercomputers and weeks of processing time. Additionally, advances in satellite and sensor technologies have resulted in various spatial, temporal, radiometric and spectral resolutions, which now make it possible to use appropriate systems for specific agricultural studies and research of interest. Though these technological advances were used by medium and large farmers, the costs associated with the technologies have now put them in the reach of Small Farmers, Ranchers and Landowners (SFRLs).

The goal of this working session is to create intentional dialogues across diverse stakeholder networks to discuss the implementation of some of the newer sensor and precision technologies throughout our small farm base. Different technologies will be introduced and discussed, as the outcome will be a plan of work for TU faculty and staff engagement for the upcoming year.

Tuskegee University Hemp Working Session
With the Alabama’s second legal growing season of Industrial Hemp soon to be underway a lot of lessons learned have been recorded and will soon be implemented. Experienced growers from outside of the state, state representatives, University representatives, and local farmers will gather to share these lessons learned, as well as chart a course for the upcoming year for both research and commercial production. Topics are to include: basic education/information, collaborating for purchasing power, understanding the licensing agreement, preparing for state meetings, understanding seed/propagule application, understanding inspection and harvesting practices, identifying a seed source, processor, and making contracts/agreements, a crashing CBD market, and developing a grow plan.

Tuskegee University Beef Cattle Tour
For more than 100 years Tuskegee University (TU) has played a leading role in ruminant research and education, serving as a resource for farmers involved in cattle production throughout the state of Alabama, with an emphasis on providing assistance to small and minority producers. To continue that tradition, TU works to
address the challenges of today’s cattle producer through the TU Beef Cattle Program. The program is designed to provide information to Alabama cow-calf producers, helping them be the very best in the country, proving information how to improve their profitability and position the industry to be competitive with other states. The program is led by a team of Tuskegee University Extension specialists and agents, with the support and involvement of representatives of state level agencies, businesses and organizations that have an interest in the state’s cattle industry. The program is designed to educate new and experienced producers alike, bringing forth new information and techniques for all.

This Session will be an organized Farm Tour that focusing on breeding management, forage and nutrition management, as well as herd health and management on local ranches. A small forum of growers with success stories and lessons learned will also be presented.

Weather and Disaster Preparedness for Small Farms & Communities
This workshop aims to develop resilient thinking and approaches for agriculturalists and the communities that support them, as disaster preparedness goes beyond the responsibility of the individual. Specifically, this project will integrate research and extension by assessing the state of preparedness of stakeholders in Alabama (research), and then deploy a training program for extension and outreach professionals and agriculturalists (extension), followed by assistance in the development of management and recovery plans (extension).

Risk Management
Risk management planning continues to be a timely topic as farmers face historically high input and energy costs, fewer off-farm employment opportunities, and increased financial and marketing risks. The goal of this program has been to assist limited resource and African-American producers of specialty crops and underserved commodities in the Southeastern US in responding to risk in the five special emphasis areas of production (crop and livestock insurance), marketing (strategies and farmers markets), financial (farm management strategies), legal (liabilities and estate planning), and human resource (labor) management. Individualized risk management responses were formulated using the business planning approach.

This workshop will summarize and serve as a primer for the activities of an RMA funded Competitive Cooperative Partnership Agreement awarded to NCIS as part of the Risk Management Education and Outreach Partnerships Program. NCIS will present educational workshops this spring in cooperation with the Tuskegee University Cooperative Extension Program.

Importance of Genealogy in the African American Community and How to Start
Heirs Property continues to plague the transmission of generational wealth in African American communities in the Southeast. Estate planning remains a strategy to prevent property and land loss in this community. Another strategy in remediating the inequities brought about by heirs property is being able to sort through family history to trace ownership. Participants in this workshop will get organized for beginning family research and learn how to gather information through home-based research and oral interviews. They will learn about preparing an ancestor chart, family group sheets, and family history questionnaires. The workshop will also include an introduction to genealogy software and the Federal Census Records.
Dr. Ralph C. Noble is the dean of the College of Agriculture, Family Sciences, and Technology (CAFST) at Fort Valley State University. In this role, he guides the college’s global leadership in key areas such as plant science and small ruminants and the expansion of academic programming and research in cutting-edge fields such as genome decoding, biotechnology, bioinformatics, renewable energy production, and sustainability. Prior to coming to FVSU, Dr. Noble currently served as the chair of the Department of Animal Sciences at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University where he also supervised department academics, research, and outreach programs as well as the university farm and various community activities.

Dr. Noble’s professional experience includes serving as chair of the National Goat Consortium National Conference, coordinating animal, poultry, and veterinary sciences research, outreach, and academic programs at Tuskegee University, and serving as acting director of the George Washington Carver Agricultural Experiment Station at Tuskegee University. His research interests include improving reproductive management, overcoming infertility, food production and goat production. He has delivered over 100 presentations on livestock production to small and limited resource farmers, agricultural specialists, rural community organizations, and students. His publications and proceedings have included his work on enrollment growth models at an 1890 Land-Grant Institution, life choices for young men, livestock production, and global food security.

Dr. Noble earned a Bachelor of Science degree in agricultural sciences and a Master of Science degree in animal sciences from Tuskegee University, as well as a Ph.D. in reproductive physiology from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. He is married to Dr. Debra T. Noble.
It’s About

LAND

Let’s finance yours.

Your land is where your next chapter begins. It’s a place to put down roots, carry on traditions, or even raise a family.

If land ownership or refinancing your land is what’s next in your story, let First South guide you through financing the next chapter.
COMMITTEES

IT TEAM
Karen Craig
Doug Eaves
Peter Kanyi
Jamal Brown
Tatiana Eaves

FINANCIALS
Shannon Payne
Elizabeth Whetstone

AGENDA AND SPEAKERS
Raymon Shange
William Hodge
Russell Johnson
Ronald Davis
Millicent Braxton
Miles Robinson
Gertrude Wall
Lindsey Lunsford
Jasmine Ratliff

TM CAMPBELL LUNCHEON
William Hodge
Carmalita Pollard
Millicent Braxton
Yvonne Allen
Catrina Hoffman
LaTanya Hunt-Haralson

AGExpo
Demetrius Hooks
Lindsey Lunsford
William Hodge
Terence Jackson
Marquess James
Danielle Smith

REGISTRATION
Carmalita Pollard
Yvonne Wright
Karen Craig

EXERT
Millicent Braxton
Janet Sullen
George Hunter
LeVershaun Williams
William Hodge
Raymon Shange
Lindsey Lunsford
Kayla Marie Jones
Monyai Chavers

TRAVEL AND LOGISTICS
Marquess James
Demetrius Hooks
Janet Sullen
Lindsey Lunsford
George Hunter
William Hodge
Terence Jackson
Danielle Smith

EVALUATIONS
Lila Karki
Terence Jackson
Jasmine Ratliff
Lindsey Lunsford
Raymon Shange
Kayla Marie Jones

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING
Demetrius Hooks
Millicent Braxton
Lindsey Lunsford
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Jamal Brown
Jasmine Ratliff
Terence Jackson
Robyn James
Joshua Williams
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Cooperative Extension Program

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