

AG NOTES
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UT/TSU Extension
May 19, 2020

EMAIL ADDRESSES

We have groups that we send email notes to concerning a wide range of topics. Many of you are already receiving these emails from us from time to time as we have what we consider important and timely bits of information that we feel you might want in making your own personal decisions in agriculture and/or family and consumer sciences.

In an attempt to reach as many people as we can concerning agriculture and family and consumer science issues, please send us your email address to be included in a group email by subject matter for newsletter-like blasts of information. Whitney Danhof and I are building these groups to be able to send out timely bits of information to as many clients as we can.

We will not be sending undue amounts of emails nor sharing your email addresses with anyone. We receive huge amounts of emails ourselves and appreciate the burden of having to go through a long list of them constantly, it seems. And we do not share these email addresses with anyone. This is strictly to help us serve you in a timely and cost-efficient way.

Just simply send either of us an email requesting that you be added to an appropriate group list, and preferably let us know what your interest is. Whitney can be reached at wdanhof1@utk.edu And I can be reached at jteague1@utk.edu

OFFICE HOURS

By order of the UT Knoxville Chancellor, we are still operating from home and the office at times with limited contact with the general public. We are still working on our mission of providing you with important information as soon as possible. We are responding to emails, phone calls and regular mail. We have still been able to do those things that folks have asked of us, we have just been more deliberate in social distancing, hygiene and scheduling.

We are working on a reopening plan under the guidance of UT/TSU and this will be based on the level of new cases of COVID-19 confirmed and the active cases per the state reporting service as of each day. When we reach the criteria set out by UT/TSU administration, we will be back in Phase One, with someone on site each day.

We are also dealing with clients by appointment when necessary. Soil sample drops at the office, any materials not able to be mailed or emailed, etc. We insist on remaining a safe distance, masks, and hand sanitizers, made available when and if we need to meet.

The good news is we are still here, very much involved, and willing to help you in any way. Call our office at 684-5971 and leave a message. We check the calls every day and will get back to you. Email us if you can and we will respond. Check our Facebook page at UT & TSU Extension- Bedford County.

FARMERS MARKET

We have been getting calls about the market. We are in discussion with our vendors to determine their readiness. Remember that the cold wet spring set them back, so we are trying to determine how many and when they will be able to provide a supply of market products.

CANNING COLLEGE

Whitney Danhof has provided this information on her annual canning college. Join Bedford County UT/TSU Extension for a virtual Canning College from your own home. Sessions will be offered on Tuesdays in June at 10:00 a.m. and cover Water Bath Canning, Jellied Products, Pressure Canning and Pickled Products. You can sign up for one or all four. Go to bedford.tennessee.edu for more information and to register on-line.

This is always a popular school and I recommend it. With food supply chain shortages, this may be a way to enable families to have a steady supply of vegetables and other foods purchased this summer.

USDA PROGRAMS

In April, USDA announced the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). CFAP will provide direct support based on losses for agriculture producers where prices and market supply chains have been significantly impacted and will assist eligible producers facing additional adjustment and marketing costs resulting from lost demand and short-term oversupply for the 2020 marketing year caused by COVID-19.

CFAP will provide assistance to most farms that have experienced at least a five percent loss and will be available to farms regardless of size. We are still working on the final details of the actual payment rates and those details will be determined and included as part of the rulemaking process. Once the rule making process is complete, the application period will be open and subject to the eligibility and payment limit criteria described in the rule.

As part of applying for the program, you'll need to contact the Farm Service Agency county office to schedule an appointment. Your local FSA staff will work with you to apply for the program, and through forms asking for this type of information: contact, personal, including your Tax Identification Number, farming operating structure, Adjusted Gross Income to ensure eligibility, Direct deposit to enable payment.

Please do not send any personal information to USDA without first initiating contact through a phone call. They take your privacy and security of your information very seriously. If you are an existing customer, this information is likely on file at your local Service Center.

While the application process has not started, you can start gathering/understanding your farm's recent sales and inventory. FSA has streamlined the signup process to not require an acreage report at the time of application and a USDA farm number may not be immediately needed.

USDA Service Centers are open for business by phone appointment only. Once the application period opens, please call your FSA county office to schedule an appointment. Their staff is working with agricultural producers by phone and using email, fax, mail, and online tools like Box to accept applications. Offices that serve Bedford County are in Lewisburg, Murfreesboro, Manchester and Fayetteville.

Information on CFAP can be found at farmers.gov/CFAP.