

THE COOPERATOR

DECEMBER 2020

CONNECTING THE **CO-OP** COMMUNITY

An unusual year

PAGE 16 After unpredictable 2020, growers look to tried and true methods for planning the upcoming season



CONNECT WITH US



CO-OP

ourcoop.com

WHAT'S INSIDE

PAGE 14 TFC annual meeting to go virtual

PAGE 22 Christmas tree farms allow families to bond

PAGE 26 Mid-state Co-ops merge to better serve

GASTROTECH[®]

EQUINE GASTRIC SUPPLEMENT

IT'S MORE
THAN
A GUT
FEELING

NEW!



Research-proven to significantly improve gastric function in performance horses and allows for a low daily feeding rate.



Concentrated formula complete with 12% protein, crude fat and fiber and other proprietary ingredients that meet the demands of different dietary needs.



Supports healthy digestive tract function in show and performance horses.

GASTROTECH[®]

GASTROTECH[®]

CO-OP
PINNACLE
HORSE FEEDS



NET WEIGHT 20 LBS. (9.07 KG)

CO-OP

PINNACLE
HORSE FEEDS

www.ourcoop.com/gastrotech



PAGE 22



PAGE 26



PAGE 5

THE COOPERATOR

December 2020

CONNECTING THE CO-OP COMMUNITY



PAGE 16

5

Getting reacquainted

Ag1 Co-op stages grand reopening for community.

10

A Co-op Christmas

Six gift ideas for your holiday shopping.

14

2020 TFC Annual Meeting is going virtual

Co-op Auction Barn to offer online bidding.

16

An unusual year

After unpredictable 2020, growers look to tried-and-true methods for planning the upcoming season.

22

Natural attraction

Christmas tree farms around the state allow families to bond over yuletide customs.

26

United for the better

Humphreys, Dickson, Maury, Marshall, and Williamson Farmers Co-op consolidate to serve members across Middle Tennessee.

IN EVERY ISSUE

4/Snapshots
300 and counting.

15/Neighborly Advice
Winter horse care tips.

30/What's Cookin'?
Perfectly paired holiday side dishes.

34/Every Farmer Has A Story
The Barham family carry on dairy tradition at Calhoun farm.

THE COOPERATOR

December 2020 Volume 61, Number 11

Published by Tennessee Farmers Cooperative in the interest of better farming through cooperation and improved technology, and to connect the Co-op community through shared experiences, common values, and rural heritage.

Editor: Glen Liford

gliford@ourcoop.com

Content Coordinator: Allison Farley

afarley@ourcoop.com

Communications Specialist: Hannah Lewis

hlewis@ourcoop.com

Senior Graphic Designer: Shane Read

sread@ourcoop.com

Graphic Designer: Morgan Graham

mgraham@ourcoop.com

Layout & Production Coordinator:

Travis Merriman

tmerriman@ourcoop.com

Editorial Assistant: Polly Campbell

pcampbell@ourcoop.com

Advertising Information: Jimmy Ogilvie

615-793-8453, jogilvie@ourcoop.com

The Cooperator is distributed free to patrons of member Co-ops. Since each Co-op maintains its own mailing list, requests for subscriptions must be made through the local Co-op. When reporting an address change, please include the mailing label from a past issue and send to the following address:

The Cooperator
P.O. Box 3003
LaVergne, TN 37086
Phone: (615) 793-8339
E-mail: tlewt@ourcoop.com

Guest Subscriptions:

Guest subscriptions are available for \$12.95 per year by sending a check or money order to Tennessee Farmers Cooperative at the above address.

TFC's website: www.ourcoop.com

Follow our social media sites:

-  www.facebook.com/TennesseeFarmersCooperative
-  www.twitter.com/TNFarmers
-  www.instagram.com/tennesseefarmerscooperative
-  www.pinterest.com/tnfarmers
-  www.youtube.com/TnFarmersCooperative

TFC Board of Directors:

Chairman — Mark Thompson,

Cumberland Gap, Zone 3

Vice Chairman — Keith Fowler,

Martin, Zone 1

Amos Huey, Kenton, Zone 1

Tim Luckey, Humboldt, Zone 1

Benjie Daniel, Charlotte, Zone 2

Donald Jernigan, Christiana, Zone 2

Stephen Philpott, Shelbyville, Zone 2

David Sarten, Sevierville, Zone 3

George Smartt, McMinnville, Zone 3

Chief Executive Officer — Bart Krisle

NOTICE: This publication is for informational purposes only. Tennessee Farmers Cooperative, its affiliates, subsidiaries, and member Co-ops are not responsible for any damages or claims that may result from a reader's use of this information, including but not limited to actual, punitive, consequential, or economic damages. Tennessee Farmers Cooperative makes no warranties or representations, either express or implied, including warranties of merchantability or fitness of any product/material for a particular purpose. Each article, document, advertisement, or other information is provided "AS IS" and without warranty of any kind. Tennessee Farmers Cooperative reserves the right to alter, correct, or otherwise change any part or portion of this publication, including articles and advertisements, without detriment to Tennessee Farmers Cooperative, its affiliates, subsidiaries, or member cooperatives. Unless otherwise noted, stock images courtesy of gettyimages.com.

300 and counting

Latest installment of Our Country Churches is oldest in Tennessee



Glen Liford

Editor

This issue contains the 300th installment of Our Country Churches feature. Our Country Churches first appeared in the Cooperator in January 1986, and we've been showcasing the places our customers worship with a simple photo and brief description ever since.

Editor Jerry Kirk, who retired in 2001, conceived the column to replace the popular photo series that featured the state's county courthouses. When that sequence concluded, a complete collection was printed and many teachers throughout Tennessee would write each year requesting copies to use in their classes.

But be assured, we don't foresee ending the church series any time soon. Someone once asked me how many churches we had in Tennessee, and I really had no idea. But it's a lot. We're in the heart of the Bible Belt, and worship is important to lots of us. I think faith is integral to farming, too. It takes a great act of faith to stake your living on a crop or farming operation that sprouts from a seed every spring and is dependent upon so many factors beyond human control. We find comfort and commonality in our worship.

And I'd venture to say everyone can appreciate the simple beauty in many of these physical structures. We can't deny the role they play in the communities and countryside of our trade area.

Originally, Cooperator photographers would bring back images of these houses of worship from their travels. The feature would appear when a photo and related information was available, and it wasn't long before readers began to contribute, too. For many years now, Our Country Churches has appeared in each issue, and this month, we feature Sinking Creek Baptist Church in Johnson City, which members claim is the oldest church in the state. Thanks go to my cousin's wife, Makayla Liford, in Tazewell for sharing the church on her Facebook page and sending me on a quest to find it. If you have a church you would like to see featured, please share a photo with a short description.



Founded in 1772, Sinking Creek Baptist Church is the oldest church of any denomination in the state of Tennessee, according to church officials. The original log building was used by the congregation until 1924. It still sits alongside the modern church on Elizabethton Highway in Johnson City.

Story and photos by Hannah Lewis

Getting reacquainted

Ag1 Co-op stages grand reopening for community

Customers of Ag1's Cookeville store recently had the opportunity to get reacquainted with an old friend when the Co-op hosted a grand re-opening event Saturday, Sept. 12.

Numerous changes have taken place at the Co-op in Cookeville, many of which are a direct result of improvements after the merging of Putnam and Overton Pickett Farmers Cooperatives to create the new Ag1 Co-op. Officials felt the time was right to roll out those changes to the public and invite both old and new customers to stop by for a closer look.

"We wanted to do a re-opening because we've remodeled, painted, and brought in some new products," says Ag1 Farmers Co-op General Manager Brian Gilliam. "We would have liked to have done it earlier in the year, but we've been busy with re-merchandising the store. This event also gave us an opportunity to answer any questions the community might have about the merger and the name change."

Ag1 restructured to better serve the upper Cumberland area, says Gilliam. The merger allows the Co-op to operate more efficiently, and in many cases, offer additional products and services to its customers. Ag1 now has four locations including stores in Livingston, Cookeville, Byrdstown, and Monticello, Ky.

As the cooperatives came together, the board and management knew they wanted to continue to focus on agronomy and feed while adding products with greater appeal to a wide range of customers through emphasis on the "hometown store" side of their business.

"The Cookeville location has a lot of walk-in customers, so we thought bringing in some new products to appeal to them would be a good idea," says Gilliam. "We wanted to make sure to offer some merchandise they might not have expected from a Co-op."

Gilliam points to the Powersports CF Moto all-terrain vehicles and side-by-sides, Massey Ferguson farm equipment, and Exmark commercial-grade mowers as examples.

Along with food, vendor booths, and product displays, a petting zoo was among the many sights vying for customer attention at the September grand reopening.



Products like Powersports CF Moto all-terrain vehicles and side-by-sides and Simplicity mowers were displayed prominently during Ag1's Sept. 12 grand reopening event. Those product lines were among the new items available at the Putnam location.

(See Getting reacquainted, page 6)

Getting reacquainted

(continued from page 5)

Plenty of promotions, discounts, and door prizes were given away to further entice attendees.

“We wanted to show the community how we’ve reinvented the store and invite people to see the new brands and product lines we have brought in,” says Sydney Jones, Ag1 marketing manager. “We’re very versatile, especially here at our Cookeville store. We have clothing for women, men, and kids as well as home décor and a growing shoe department.”

Gilliam says he is optimistic attendees liked what they saw at the event and will appreciate the changes.

“There is something here for everybody; you don’t have to be a farmer to find value,” says Gilliam. “Probably 50 percent of the store is now geared more toward home-owners, but we still have all the agricultural products and inputs our traditional customers expect. There’s just a lot more here for everyone.” And o



LEFT: FFA member Carter Randolph proudly displays a cap with the new Ag1 Logo as he enters the Co-op. RIGHT: Sydney Jones, right, and Dillon Hughes, behind, Ag1 employees, assist customers as they register for door prizes at the grand re-opening.



Tennessee Farmers Cooperative Equine Specialist Grey Parks, left, shares info on Pinnacle horse feeds with long-time Co-op customer Terry Allen. To the right is Faithway Alliance Hardware Specialist Brian Wrather.



Customers kept employees at the sales counter busy during the event. Long-time customers along with lots of new faces stopped in to enjoy free popcorn and peruse the aisles.

WE ARE THE SOURCE

CO-OP

**REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST
DEADLINE APRIL 1, 2021**

- QUALITY, QUALIFYING EQUIPMENT.
- EXPERT ADVICE.
- UNSURPASSED SERVICE.

**OUR
NETWORK
OF BRAND
PARTNERS**



TAEP

Farm Investment Project

Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program



<http://www.tn.gov/taep>



LINCOLN FARMERS **CO-OP**

A STRONG PACK WORKS TOGETHER



GARMIN®

GARMIN DRIVETRACK™ 71 + ALPHA® 100 + INSTINCT™

Track your pack from your truck, handheld and wrist with Garmin GPS devices. Both the Garmin DriveTrack navigator and the Instinct watch connect wirelessly to Alpha for more tracking flexibility.

CONVEY-ALL™

DURABLE. FUNCTIONAL. RELIABLE.

LINCOLN FARMERS

CO-OP

1205 Winchester Hwy.
Fayetteville, TN 37334
(931) 433-4508



OFFICIAL DEALER
Zetor



LINCOLN FARMERS

CO-OP

1205 Winchester Hwy.
Fayetteville, TN 37334
(931) 433-4508

SEE US FOR THESE MODELS AND MORE

COMPACT



IDEAL FOR
SMALL
OPERATIONS
AND
UTILITY JOBS
AROUND THE
FARM



The Zetor brand represents tradition, quality and competitively priced products and services. The brand's philosophy is loyalty to its customers, listening to their requirements, innovation and extension of its equipment offering. Zetor has been a synonym for performance, endurance and total cost of ownership for 74 years. These attributes have become the main pillars of the brand.

HEAVY-DUTY



STRONG
AND BUILT
TO SERVE
ON THE FARM
NO MATTER
THE SIZE OF
THE TASK
AT HAND



Performance



Endurance



Efficiency

www.zetorna.com



A **CO-OP** Christmas



Heavy-Duty 2-Ga. Booster Cables

Heavy-Duty 2-Ga. 20-ft. Booster Cables (#168305) are manufactured to survive and thrive in extreme climates. These booster cables are rated up to 500 amps and made from highly flexible boned cable that will maintain flexibility when used in the most challenging climates and situations. Each cable is equipped with heavy-duty cable clamps that are color-coded for easy identification and work with any top- or side-post battery.

Melissa and Doug Sorting Barn

Kids can take farm animal fun wherever they go with the Take-Along Sorting Barn (#6833523). Fit the 10-wooden play pieces into shaped holes in the sturdy wooden barn, or stand the pieces up for pretend play. Flip up the barn roof for quick and easy access, and use the handle to take playtime anywhere. A perfect gift for toddlers and preschoolers two-years-old and older, the chunky pieces (ducks, horse, pig, goat, sheep, chicken, dog, cow, tractor, and farmer) are easy for little hands to grasp and maneuver, and help promote fine motor skills, matching and sorting, and creative play.



From beautifully decorated Christmas trees to the perfect gifts to put under them, Co-ops are the holiday shopping destination in communities across the state.

Although Co-ops statewide are different and have varied products, this makes them a shopper's dream where the perfect gift awaits. You can find the traditional Co-op

style items such as farm supplies, hunting equipment, clothing, and automotive accessories to consumer items like crystals, lamps, windchimes, cookbooks, candles, purses, and home décor.

Here are just a few of the quality products you'll find at Co-op. Visit your community store to see what's available.



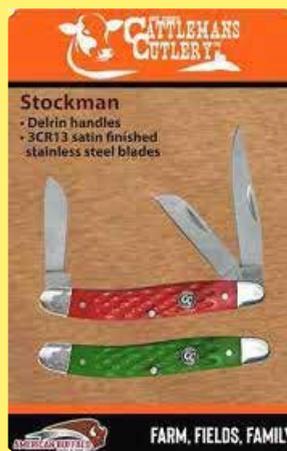
Lumax HD Quick Release Grease Coupler 1/8" NPT

Lumax HD Quick Release Grease Coupler 1/8" NPT (#2224508) provides a quick and simple connection. With the proprietary locking and quick-release mechanism, the coupler locks on and creates a leak-proof seal. The innovative design enables the quick-release coupler to firmly latch onto the grease fitting, allowing for hands-free greasing. No more fighting and struggling with stuck-on couplers. If a fitting becomes pressurized, just depress the thumb lever and release the coupler. No more broken-off fittings. No spurts or splashes when disconnecting. The waste and the mess are gone, creating a clean work environment at all times.



The Candleberry Harvest Sugar Cookie Candle

The Candleberry Harvest Sugar Cookie Candle (#2197738) smells buttery and crumbly, covered in sugar and dusted with just a little warm, sweet spice to make a sugar cookie hybrid fragrance. It's a perfect, powerful sugar cookie fragrance that has an approximate burn time of 50 - 60 hours in the 10-ounce jar. A perfect gift for a friend or loved one who enjoys sweet, seasonal smells.



Stockman 3.5" Cattleman's Cutlery Combo Knife

Cattleman's Cutlery Combo Knife (#6833426) was designed to be the right utensil for all your cutting requirements. Developed by American Buffalo Knife craftsmen using highly resilient materials, the combo blade will maintain an edge for extended periods of time before needing to be honed. The handle on the American Buffalo Knife Cattleman's Cutlery Green/Red Trapper two-pack promo provides the ultimate grip in practically any condition.



Dot's Pretzels 16 oz.

Dot's Pretzels Original Seasoned pretzel twists (#6832728) are dusted with the original, top-secret seasoning blend. Each pretzel twist envelopes your taste buds in a delightful swirl of buttery, sweet, and spicy tang in each bite. This bag is the perfect way to top off any stocking this Christmas!

satisfy their
HUNGER!
with **QUALITY Behlen Country®**
feeders approved by **TAEF**



10' All Metal Feed Bunk
• 10' long 44" wide 244 LB • TFC #15621 BC #22130101



V-Bar Feeder
• Will accommodate 2 large round bales
• A real hay saver
TFC #15610 BC #26000302



10' All Metal Utility Feed Bunk
• 10' long 33" wide 124 LB
• Long-lasting all-steel construction
BC #22120101

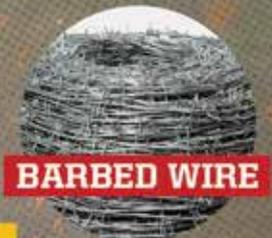


Creep Feeder
• All poly hopper
• Galvanized fence & adjustable cross bar
TFC #15607 BC #24121768

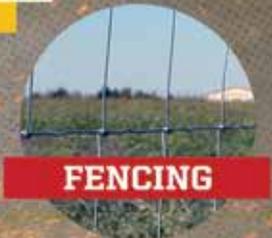
CO-OP

Now available at *Tennessee Farmers
Co-op Stores, ask for Behlen Country®*

**Behlen
COUNTRY**
Farm & Ranch Equipment



BARBED WIRE



FENCING



AND MORE!

FORGED

TO STAND THE TEST OF TIME

A COOPERATIVE
BRAND OWNED
BY YOU



herdsmanbrand.com

SEE YOUR
CO-OP

January 14, 2021

12:00 PM

University of Tennessee



Bull Development and Evaluation Program Sale

Selling 60+ Lots of Performance Tested Bulls

- Angus
- Charolais
- Hereford
- Sim-Angus
- Simmental

- TAEP Cost Share Eligible
- Video Auction Via DVAuction
- Bid in person at Middle TN Research and Education Center - Spring Hill
- Auctioneer - Tommy Barnes

Matt Backus
(865) 363-1576
wbackus1@utk.edu

Justin Rhinehart
(615) 946-9598
jrhinehart@utk.edu

Kevin Thompson
(931) 797-6642
kthomp44@utk.edu

For More information visit
animalscience.tennessee.edu/bull-test-program

Sale Day Address:
Middle Tennessee Research and Education Center
1000 Main Entrance Drive
Spring Hill, TN 37174

Real. Life. Solutions.™



TPPA Annual Meeting set for Jan. 14.

All Tennessee Pork Producers who pay into the Pork Check-off are stakeholders in the Tennessee Pork Producers Association (TPPA) and are encouraged to attend the TPPA Annual Meeting on Monday, Jan. 14, 2021, in Cookeville.

Activities begin with a Pork Quality Assurance (PQA) training session at 2:30 p.m. in Hyder-Burks Arena at Tennessee Tech University.

The TPPA meeting allows for a time to discuss programs for the coming year and elect committee members and officers for the TPPA Executive Committee. Pork producers interested in serving as a candidate for the Executive Committee should contact the TPPA office at 615-274-6533 or email porkpromotn@tds.net.

As part of the annual TPPA activities, the State Junior Hog Show will be Jan. 14-16, 2021 at the Hyder-Burks Arena at Tennessee Tech University.

Because of continued uncertainty with meetings, the TPPA will host this meeting under CDC guidelines and conduct business of the association. At this time, there will not be a speaker or Taste of Elegance. It is being discussed when and how to host a Taste of Elegance as soon as a time is deemed appropriate and safe.

QUALITY SCRATCH FEEDS

Top-quality nutrition for healthy poultry flocks.

FEATURES AND BENEFITS

- An excellent source of supplemental energy.
- Highly palatable formula to ensure consistent consumption.
- Blend of high-quality, nutritious ingredients.

BETTER CLUCKS

for your

BUCKS!

TRY

CO-OP

POULTRY FEEDS

IT'S OUR NATURE TO NURTURE

BE SURE TO SEE YOUR LOCAL CO-OP FOR EXPERT ADVICE AND DIRECTION ABOUT YOUR POULTRY FLOCKS.

FEEDS, HOUSING, CARE, AND MORE!

2020 TFC Annual Meeting is going virtual

Co-op Auction Barn to offer online bidding

By Allison Farley

COVID-19 continues to change the way we live and work. Because of the virus, Tennessee Farmers Cooperative will conduct its 2020 annual meeting virtually to safeguard the health and well being of everyone involved and mitigate risk of exposure.

“This was not an easy decision to make,” says Bart Krisle, TFC chief executive officer. “But TFC board and management agree it makes the most sense for 2020.”

The TFC “Virtual Experience” Annual Meeting will be held on Dec. 15 at 9 a.m. CST on the Broadridge platform. Full instructions for how to participate will be distributed to member managers who will share them with member Co-op directors.

TFC Board Chairman Mark Thompson and Chief Executive Officer Bart Krisle will host the meeting to share financial results and report on the year’s business highlights. Zone director election results will also be ratified during the session.

While this will not be a traditional annual meeting, TFC will still host the Co-op Auction Barn that has proven so popular the last three years and provided extra funds to the state’s 4-H and FFA programs. Last year, the event raised almost \$18,000 for the youth programs. This year’s Co-op Auction Barn will be conducted virtually from Nov. 27 through Dec. 11 at 7 p.m. CST on www.COOP.gesture.com. Those interested in bidding should visit <https://e.givesmart.com/events/iR/signUp/> to create an account. Starting Nov. 27, sign up to bid by texting COOP to 76278.

Once a bid is placed on an item, the bidder will receive a text message each time he or she is outbid. Automatic bidding is also available. All registered bidders will receive a text message before the auction closes so they can revisit the items in which they were most interested. At the close of the auction, every time someone bids on an item, the auction will extend for five more minutes until no one bids for a full five minutes. After five minutes without a new bid, the high bidder of each item will receive a cart link via text to pay by credit card immediately following the sale as well as an invoice by email. Bidders then pay via check or credit card via smartauctions.com.

“We’re excited to open the auction to a greater number of potential bidders through this platform,” says Jimmy Ogilvie, TFC sales and event manager. “This is a great way for everyone to support these worthy youth organizations.”

We encourage you to check out this auction to help raise funds for Tennessee’s FFA and 4-H programs. If you have questions on how to bid, please reach out to Jimmy Ogilvie at jogilvie@ourcoop.com. If you are a local Co-op board member with questions regarding the 2020 TFC Virtual Experience Annual Meeting, please reach out to your local manager or regional TFC manager.



2020
ANNUAL
MEETING
PREVIEW

In order to use the QR code to visit the auction site, open the QR Code reader on your phone. Then hold your device over a QR Code so that it’s clearly visible within your smartphone’s screen and wait for the phone to either automatically scan and take you to the site or press the button to take a photo in the QR Code reader on your phone!



NEIGHBORLY ADVICE



Grey Parks, TFC Equine Nutritionist

Winter horse care tips

Winter weather brings management challenges for horse owners. Here are some tips to help make winter horse care a bit easier.

Increase Forage in Cold Weather

Cold temperatures increase a horse's calorie requirement by 1 percent for every degree below the Lower Critical Temperature (LCT). LCT is the point at which the horse starts using extra energy to maintain body temperature. This point varies depending on the horse's age, health, and coat condition and may be as high as 50°F or as low as 5°F. The best way to meet this increased calorie need is by increasing the horse's forage (hay) ration. Not only will this increase the horse's calorie intake, but the digestion of forage generates heat that will help keep the horse warm. Most adult horses will consume 2 to 2.5 percent of their body weight under normal conditions; in cold weather, the same horse may eat up to 3 percent of its body weight in forages. As a best practice, supply free choice hay to all horses. Using small-hole hay nets is a great way to reduce waste while allowing horses to eat their fill of forage.

Monitor Water Intake

Water intake is just as important in cold weather as it is in hot conditions. As horses transition from pasture-based to hay-based diets, they need to drink more water to compensate for the lower moisture level in their forage. Adult horses usually drink 10 to 20 gallons of water per day. Horses may be reluctant to drink water that is below 40°F; using a heater helps to encourage water consumption in cold weather, but be sure all cords are out of reach of horses and protected from the elements and rodents. If your horse suddenly stops drinking from a heated bucket or trough, check the cord for fraying or shorts. Salt should also be provided free choice in the winter months; adding one tablespoon of salt to the horse's grain meal can help encourage water consumption as well.

Manage muddy areas

Winter in Tennessee is usually very wet. Mud is an unavoidable part of winter farm life, and it can also be hazardous. Horses can slip and injure themselves in slick footing, and

deep mud is notorious for causing loose or lost shoes. Horses that spend extended time in wet, muddy environments are more susceptible to infections like thrush, white line disease, rain rot, and scratches. Management practices, however, can reduce mud in and around horse facilities. Spread out high traffic areas — like water tanks, feeding areas, and gates — so horses don't spend most of their day congregating in a single location. In small paddocks, remove manure and hay waste regularly. Avoid overgrazing your pastures and consider restricting horses to smaller "sacrifice" areas in wet weather to protect pastures from hoof damage. In sacrifice and high traffic areas, placing a layer of geotextile fabric covered by several inches of compacted screenings or crushed rock may be necessary to fully eliminate mud accumulation.

Consider blanketing

Healthy adult horses with full winter coats and access to shelter from wind and rain are unlikely to require blanketing during winter months. Horses that do not grow full winter coats because of illness or artificial lighting, or horses whose winter coats are clipped to avoid overheating during exercise, will require blanketing during inclement weather. Very old and

very young horses are less capable of regulating their own body temperature and often require blanketing. Additionally, blanketing "hard keepers" can help them conserve energy and body weight. When blankets are used, it is important they fit well and are adjusted snugly for safety. A common mistake is adjusting blanket surcingles much too loosely; you should be able to easily slide your flat hand between the strap and the horse's stomach. If you can fit a stacked hand or fist under the surcingle, then it is loose enough for a horse to get its hind leg caught while rolling. Choosing to blanket your horse also means committing to regular adjustments and changes. Tennessee winter weather is often unpredictable, with temperature swings of 20 to 30 degrees in a single day. A clipped horse may need only an uninsulated sheet on a sunny 45°F day but a medium-weight blanket overnight when the temperature dips to below freezing.

Winter weather requires extra attention and effort to keep your horses happy and healthy. Providing ample forage, ensuring access to palatable water, reducing mud, and providing shelter and/or blankets as needed are important management practices. Remember your local Co-op is an excellent source for all your winter horse care essentials.





Farmers in West Tennessee work late into the night harvesting soybeans to ensure proper moisture levels.

An unusual year

After unpredictable 2020, growers look to tried and true methods for the upcoming season

Story by Glen Liford

Photos by Morgan Graham, Hannah Lewis, and Glen Liford

The topsy-turvy nature of 2020 continues as farmers near the end of an unusual year.

In a Nov. 2 report, the USDA National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) stated that 94 percent of Tennessee's grain corn harvest was complete. Only 58 of the soybean crop and 52 percent of the cotton harvest was complete, due mainly to recent heavy rains.

Less than a month ago, USDA NASS decreased estimates for Tennessee yields of corn, soybeans, and tobacco. In the Oct. 9 crop report, corn production was forecast at 139 million bushels, down 12 percent from the agency's September estimate and down 14 percent from the previous year's crop. Soybean production was predicted to be down 1 percent from the September forecast, but still up 21 percent over 2019. Cotton was expected to be down 36 percent from the previous year. Burley tobacco production was anticipated to be down 3 percent from the September estimates and down 34 percent from last year.

The final numbers are yet to be tabulated, but as growers look back on the wild ride called 2020, there is hope for a return to normalcy and perhaps less volatility for the coming year. In evaluating the positive elements of 2020, many producers are choosing proven seed choices and dependable Co-op services as they plan for 2021.

In northern Georgia, Southeastern Farmers Cooperative customer Terry Owen says the 300 acres of corn he planted at Bar None Ranch in Rome is the largest crop he has ever grown. He chose to grow only corn this year because of the uncertainty around trade that continues to plague soybean growers. Terry says the weather cooperated early, but was followed by nearly a month of dry conditions.

"We have an irrigation system, but we didn't use it," he says. "We probably should have. But the weather [forecasters] kept promising rain, and we kept waiting."

Terry planted Croplan 5678 because of prior success with the variety.

"It demonstrated good performance in test plots and worked well on the farm," he says. "In my experience, 5678 has excellent standability and dries down real well."

Terry planted the corn in mid-April at 33,000 population, which he admits was a "a little too thick." But now fresh from the harvest, Terry reports a respectable 180 bushel per acre average.

"The test weights were unbelievable," he says. "We had some 63-pound test weights, and I didn't see a single ticket under 60 pounds."

Terry has been manager for the farm owned by Darrell Lowrey and Steve Sutts for the past 15 years or so. Along with worker James Spears and others, Terry keeps the farm productive, says Darrell, whose father bought the original property in 1946. Although his brother has farmed there, as well, Darrell has been at the helm for the past 20 years.

The growers utilize Southeastern Farmers Cooperative's store in nearby Lafayette for products and services like soil sampling and fertilizer spreading. Southeastern Farmers Outside Sales Specialist Lloyd Nelms works with Terry to ensure the operation has what it needs to be as efficient as possible and offers advice when he can.

"The technology is really important," says Terry, praising the GPS equipment in the Co-op's spreaders and sprayers. "But the people are important, too."

With the 2020 harvest complete and planting decisions right around the corner, Terry says he's "rolling some ideas around."

"I don't think it would be a mistake to concentrate on corn again," he says. "We find it harder to make the beans work for us."

But he's certain the seed will be Croplan.

James Knight in Greene County shares similar sentiments about the Croplan seed. He has been relying on Croplan for the last several years and chose to plant two different varieties this year — 6926 and 5975. He assigned 6926 to his upland ground, while the 5975 was used for bottoms.

"We always plant silage corn for a dual purpose," says the Greene Farmers Cooperative customer, who also manages a herd of some 200 brood cows. "If it does real well and we have a good year on hay, we'll shell it. It gives me a Plan B to consider."

This year, the area received abundant rainfall. Some 63 inches fell during a period

(See Harvest, page 18)



LEFT: Bar None Ranch Manager Terry Owen, left, and James Spears stay busy during harvest to keep the farm operating smoothly. After finishing up the corn harvest on the ranch, they also do custom work for neighbors. RIGHT: Mid-South Farmers Co-op Agronomy Sales Manager Phillip Rogers evaluates cotton as farmers begin to harvest the crop. With warmer weather lasting longer than usual this year, farmers have seen a delay in defoliation, which has slowed the harvest.

Harvest

(continued from page 17)

that normally would only receive around 40 inches, says James. The rain, however, came later in the season after many of James' neighbors had planted their corn early, leaving it dry during the pollination period.

"I was lucky in that I planted later this year," he says. "We fell into the rain window. I would rather be lucky as good any day, wouldn't you?"

James downplays the preparation he puts into his crops decisions every year, says Greene Farmers Cooperative Agronomist Jason Crawford.

"James completes soil sampling on a regular schedule and carefully evaluates hybrid performance from year to year," says Jason. "He also uses NutriSphere on every acre to make sure he gets the most out of his fertilizer applications."

NutriSphere allows more nitrogen to be available for plant uptake and inhibits nitrogen loss, explains Jason. This helps contribute to higher yield potential and can reduce the amount of nitrogen that winds up in surface or ground water through runoff and leaching.

"I'm a firm believer in the NutriSphere," says James. "I think it does a real good job. You can really tell it is working."

Billy Hatchet of Lexington says he "didn't mean to get started big in row crops." Originally, a cow-calf producer, Billy says he got started just raising "cow corn" for his 200 commercial brood cows. But since dipping his

toes in the water, the producer has expanded his row crop operation to encompass almost 1,200 acres. Billy operates the farm with help from his three sons, Trevor, John, and Jack. He plants a mix of seed varieties, including Croplan 5678 and 5340 corn hybrids and Croplan 4516, 4825, and 5225 soybeans.

"I really enjoy the whole process of growing a crop, watching it turn out, and seeing good yields," he says. "I love row crops and I love raising cows."

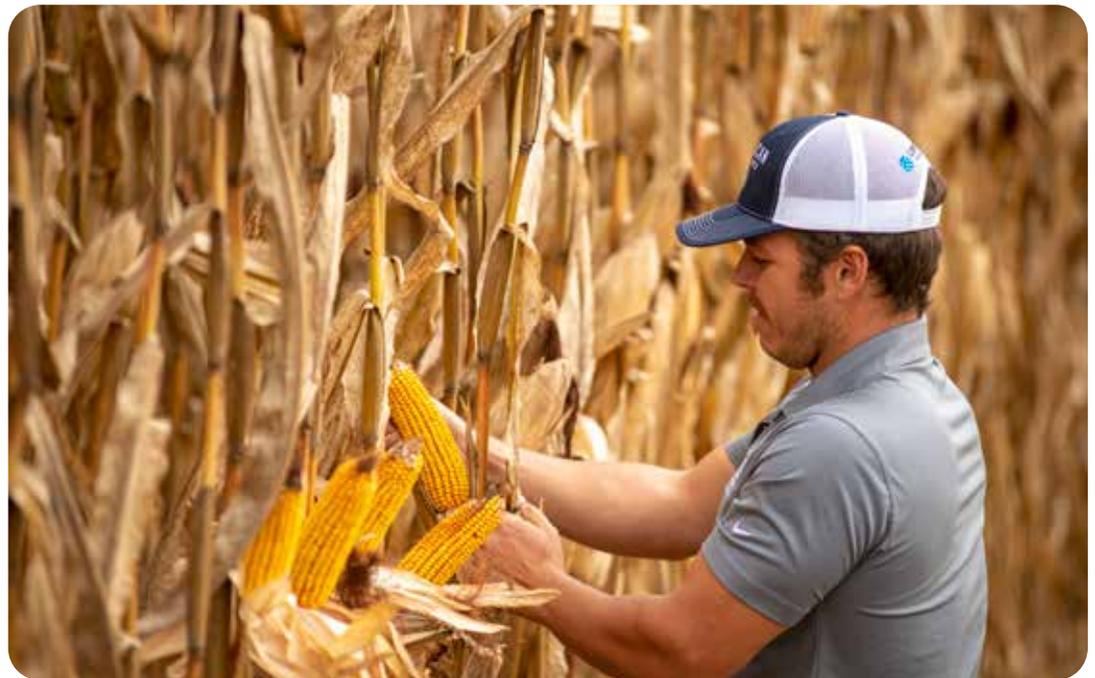
As of press time, Billy had just started harvesting some 800 acres of soybeans but was already optimistic about the yield results he was seeing.

"On some of the rolling, sandy hills, I've been getting 55 to 56 bushels," he reports. "They look really good."

Billy works hand in hand with Seth McDaniel at First Farmers Cooperative to stay on top of his crop, he says. He utilizes the Co-op for soil sampling, fertilizer, spraying, and precision ag services like R7.

"They make my decisions easier," says Billy. "They keep track of my soil types and pull all the data in, so I can make informed choices."

Contact your local Co-op for agronomic information and advice for your 2021 crop plans.



First Farmers Cooperative Agronomist Seth McDaniel checks the Croplan corn at Billy Hatchet's farm in Lexington. Billy relies on First Farmers for products and services, including precision agriculture tools like R7.



LEFT: Billy Hatchet chose a mix of Croplan corn hybrids for this year's crop including Croplan 5678 and 5340. RIGHT: Grower James Knight, right, and Greene Farmers Cooperative Agronomist Jason Crawford test the moisture in James' corn to determine if the crop is ready to harvest.

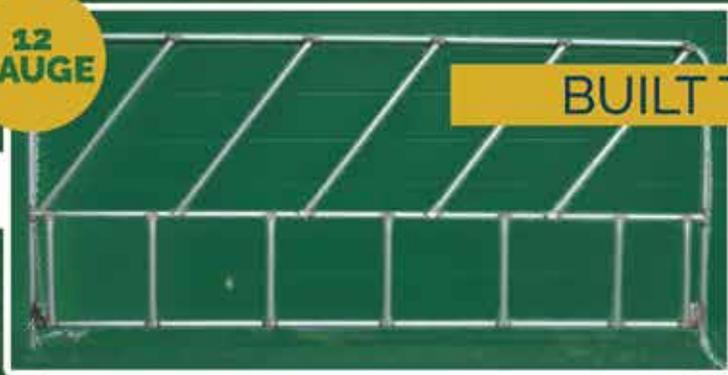
TENNESSEE MADE • OWNED BY YOU

HERD ESSENTIALS

MADE IN LA VERGNE, TN

INLINE FEEDER PANELS

12 GAUGE



BUILT TO LAST

INLINE FEEDER PANEL
8-FT. (15657) • 10-FT. (15658)
12-FT. (15659)

12 GAUGE



INLINE FEEDER PANEL (SHEETED)
8-FT. (15657-S) • 10-FT. (15658-S)
12-FT. (15659-S)



CO-OP



SEE YOUR LOCAL
CO-OP

METAL FAB

KRONE...for *Cutting Edge*™ Hay & Forage equipment



Claiborne Farmers Co-op • 423-626-5251
605 3rd Ave, New Tazewell, TN 37824-0160

Rutherford Farmers Co-op • 615-893-6212
980 Middle TN Blvd., Murfreesboro, TN 37130

Montgomery Farmers Co-op • 931-648-0637
1801 Wilma Rudolph Blvd., Clarksville, TN 37040-6795

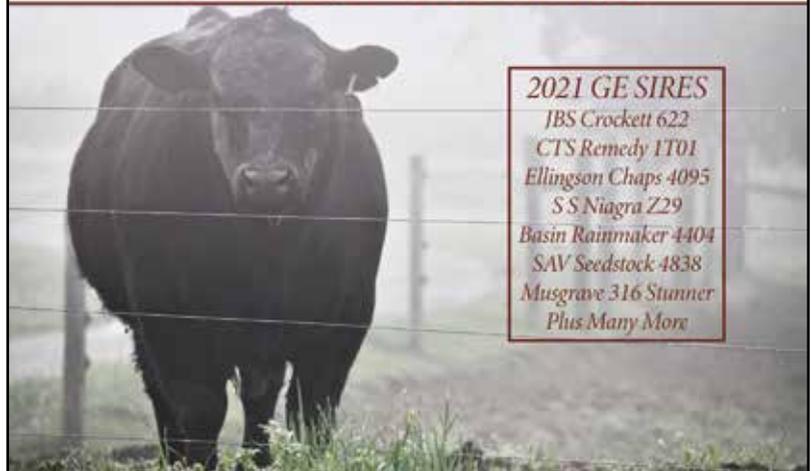
Ag1 Farmers Co-op • 931-823-1291
1500 West Main Street, Livingston, TN 38570-2210

Macon Trousdale Farmers Co-op • 615-666-2755
905 Scottsville Road, Lafayette, TN 37083-1498

17th Annual GENETIC EXCELLENCE Angus Bull Sale

Saturday, January 2, 2021 | 12:00 PM
Hyder-Burks Agricultural Pavilion | Cookeville, TN

Selling 80+ Registered Angus Bulls
& 120+ Commercial Heifers



2021 GE SIREs
JBS Crockett 622
CTS Remedy 1T01
Ellingson Chaps 4095
SS Niagra Z29
Basin Rainmaker 4404
SAV Seedstock 4838
Musgrave 316 Stunner
Plus Many More

Kent Brown
JBS Angus
931-265-9200

David Holt
Holt Farms
931-397-1751

Richard Brown
Spring Oak Farm
931-239-9785

GENETICEXCELLENCE.COM

This winter you can...

COUNT ON US.



Ford Super Duty® Chassis Cab

We subjected Super Duty to four-post frame twists, gravel, dust, water, salt brine, mud baths and even intentionally tested with worn or broken parts. We're talking here about extreme conditions that often went far beyond what you would likely encounter on your toughest of jobs.

Free delivery in the state of Tennessee.

Commercial Vehicle Center dealers are specially trained and equipped to sell, service and finance the most complete line of Class 1-7 work trucks.

John Hamby - Fleet Manager
Give us a call at 1-888-820-3654
jhamby@fordofmurfreesboro.com



1550 NW Broad St,
Murfreesboro, TN 37129



COMMERCIAL
VEHICLE CENTER





It's Christmas time across Tennessee and member Co-ops are celebrating in many ways. Keith Farmer, Maury Farmers Co-op general manager, celebrates their new store opening and Christmas by dressing-up like Santa on Saturdays during December.



Falcon Ridge Farm is a three-generation, family agritourism operation. Left to right: Becca, Becky, Bart, Riley, Josie, Ray, and Mary Ellen work hand in hand to keep the farm running.



Christmas tree care is a year-round job unlike many people believe. Ray and Mary Ellen take extra measures to ensure their tree are evenly shaped.



Ray and youngest son Bart measure trees to properly price each tree before opening to the public.

Natural attraction

Christmas tree farms around the state allow families to bond over yuletide customs

Story and photos by Morgan Graham

With the arrival of December, Christmas trees are going up in homes across Tennessee. Decorating the tree is a tradition for most families as they slow the hectic pace of the holidays. Nothing can replace the opportunity to share laughs and memories while sorting through old ornaments and stringing lights on the most iconic symbol of the season — the Christmas tree.

But for families like the Gilmers, who operate Falcon Ridge Farm Christmas tree farm in Toone in Hardeman County, and the Faircloths, who operate Pinewood Christmas Tree Farm in Franklin, Christmas has an additional meaning. During the holiday season, these families strive to make sure others have the perfect live tree around to make those precious memories.

“It’s great to see the same families year after year and watch their kids grow,” says Bart Gilmer, who runs the farm alongside his parents. “After a while, it’s like a family reunion when families come to get their trees. It’s also fun to make new friends every year.”

Once a Tennessee Walking Horse trainer in Shelby County, Ray Gilmer and his wife, Mary Ellen, decided to reevaluate the direction of their farm. With an overwhelming desire to spend more time close to family, they decided to leave the horse training business, which required lots of travel to shows, and focus on developing a different direction for their farm.

The Gilmers planted their first Christmas trees in 2009 in hopes of creating an agritourism venture that would bring customers to their farm. This year they have over 4,000 trees planted, including six species: Virginia pine, white pine, Murray Cypress, Carolina Sapphire, Blue Ice Cypress, and Leyland Cypress.

“It takes about five years for these types of trees to grow large enough to become good Christmas trees and be able to handle the weight of the ornaments,” says Ray, a customer of Mid-South Farmers Co-op’s Bolivar store. “To keep a reliable stock of harvestable trees available for each Christmas season, we usually plant 800 to 1,200 seedlings each winter.”

A visit to Falcon Ridge during Christmas includes a wagon-wide over the creek and through the woods to the field where the perfect tree stands waiting to be cut, taken home, and decorated. The Gilmers will help cut the tree or customers can do it themselves.

After the tree is loaded, there are still plenty of activities for kids and parents to enjoy, like spending a few minutes in a petting zoo, exploring the playground, or enjoying some warm hot cocoa by a campfire.

Middle Tennessee tree farmers Jamie and Laura Faircloth started their Christmas tree operation in 2016 after a search for land resulted in a move from Nashville to Franklin. After many years of just dreaming of owning their own farm, the family finally put down roots and started Pinewood

Christmas Tree Farm right off Interstate 840.

The first year, the Faircloths planted 2,000 white pine and Murray Cypress trees. However, beginner’s luck wasn’t with them. They lost all of their Murray Cypress trees because of the fall drought in 2016.

“This was tough, but it didn’t discourage us,” says Jamie, a customer of Williamson Farmers Co-op. “We learned from the setback, went back to the drawing board, and decided to grow the trees in pots for a year before transplanting them in ground.”

Jamie says the time in pots guarantees that the young trees receive proper water and fertilizer and gives them a better chance of survival.

“While raising trees may be difficult, it is worth the work when you see a family’s joy as they find a perfect tree for their home,” says Jamie. “Each Christmas season, we’re excited for the first day we get to watch a family discover their tree on our farm.”

Since the Faircloth’s don’t have any cut-your-own trees ready for the 2020 season, they are offering pre-cut Christmas trees for sale.

“Our goal isn’t only to sell a Christmas tree,” says Laura Faircloth. “It’s to give people a chance to make a memory with their family or create new traditions. My holiday memories are a big part of why we decided to start a Christmas tree farm.”

To locate a Christmas tree farm near you, visit <https://tennesseechristmastrees.org/> and use the “Find a Farm” tool.



LEFT: Jamie Faircloth and his wife, Laura, opened Pinewood Christmas Tree Farm in 2016. RIGHT: With the Faircloths both having full-time jobs, they rely on the help of their children, Maddox and Mia, around the farm. While Maddox, 13, likes to cut grass, Mia, 7, likes to help her parents plant the trees every winter.

WORK AND RIDE WITHOUT COMPROMISE



ZFORCE

www.ag1coop.com



LET'S EXPERIENCE MORE TOGETHER



UFORCE

Ag1
CO-OP

CFMOTO

1500 W Main Street Livingston, TN 38570 • 931-403-9273
541 W Broad Street Cookeville, TN 38501 • 931-526-7147

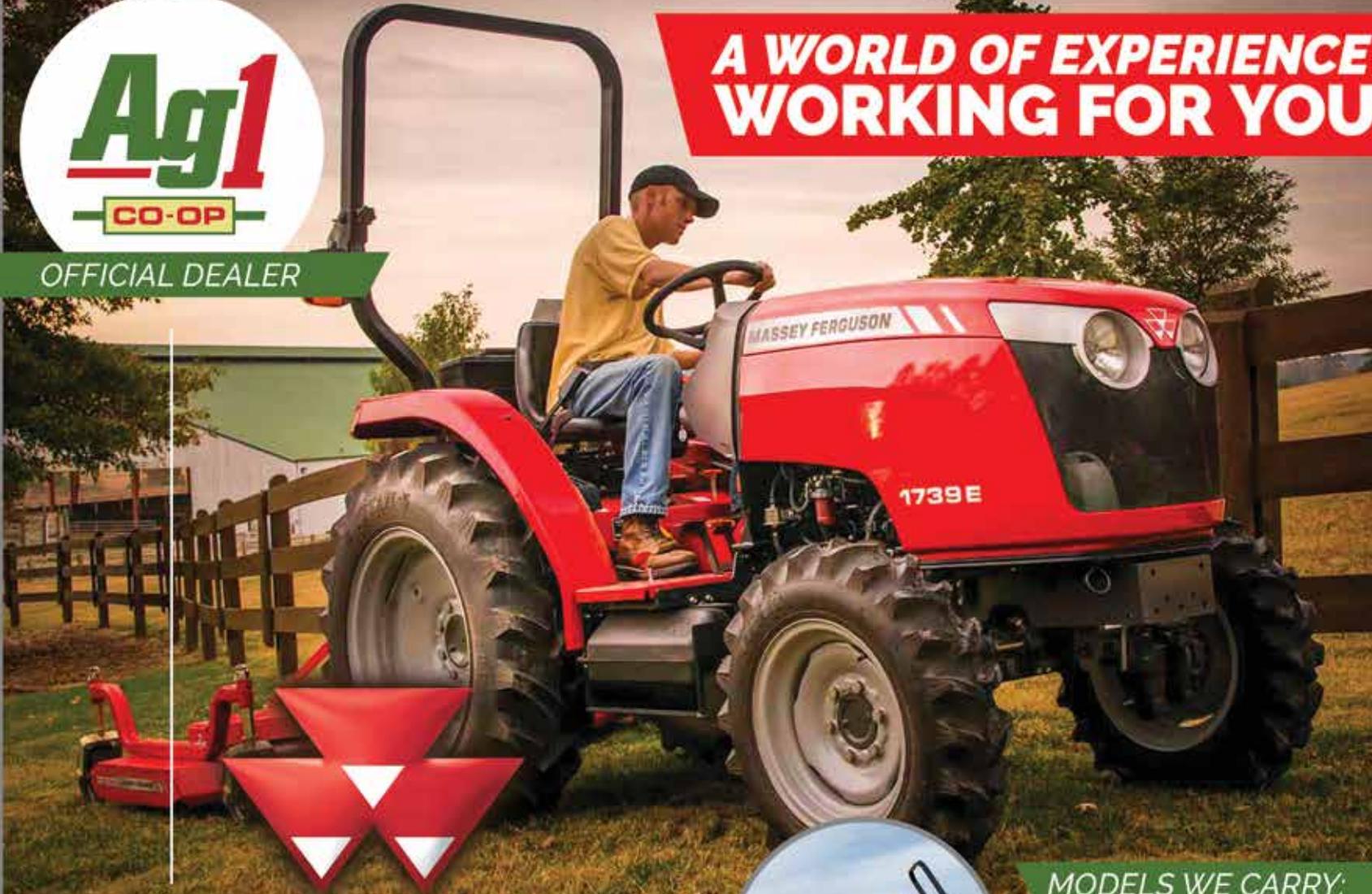
PROUD DEALER

WARNING: CFMOTO recreational vehicles are intended for off-road use only, and can be hazardous to operate. Read Owner's Manual and all product labels before operating. Never operate on paved roads. Operators and passengers must wear a helmet, eye protection and protective clothing. Operators must be at least 18 years old with a valid driver's license. Passengers, if permitted, must be at least 12 years old. Always use seat belts, cab netting and doors (if equipped). Never operate under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Avoid excessive speed and sharp turns, and never engage in stunt driving. Check state and local laws before operating on trails. Take a safety training course before operating. Contact your CFMOTO dealer for more information, call the ATV Safety Institute at 1-800-887-2887, or go to www.atvsafety.org. ©2022 Zhejiang CFMOTO Power Co., Ltd.



OFFICIAL DEALER

**A WORLD OF EXPERIENCE
WORKING FOR YOU**



MASSEY FERGUSON

MODELS WE CARRY:



COMPACT



UTILITY



MID-RANGE

1500 W Main Street Livingston, TN 38570 • 931-403-9273
www.ag1coop.com



United for the better

Humphreys, Dickson, Maury, Marshall, and Williamson Farmers Co-ops consolidate to serve members across Middle Tennessee.

Story by Allison Farley

The members of Humphreys, Dickson, Maury, Marshall, and Williamson Farmers Co-ops have voted to merge the five businesses into a new Co-op, which will operate as United Home and Farm Cooperative after the reorganization takes effect Feb. 1, 2021.

The newly merged Co-op will maintain its nine existing store locations in Waverly, Centerville, Erin, Dickson, Columbia, Lewisburg, Chapel Hill, Franklin, and Fairview as well as the two crop centers in Mount Pleasant and Dickson.

The new cooperative will have its headquarters in Columbia and has around 5,000

members — 600 from Marshall Farmers, 500 from Humphreys, 1,200 from Dickson, 1,000 from Maury, and 1,200 from Williamson Farmers.

United Home and Farm's board of directors will be Kenny Cecil, Sam Smith, Mike Henry, Will Gold, Claude Callicott, Tim Barnhill, John Moser, Beth Dawson, Lee Rushton, and Eric Law.

The first board chairman will be Dawson, a row crop and cattle farmer from Narrows of the Harpeth. Members of her family have been a part of Dickson Farmers for over 30 years and she is a six-year veteran of the Co-op's board. Dawson says she feels optimistic about the future for United and its members.

"This merger needed to take place," says Dawson. "It gives us more purchasing power and the ability to share assets and inventory, making us more competitive in the marketplace."

Leaders from the five legacy Co-ops will assume management positions in the new cooperative. Randy Stubblefield of Williamson will serve as chief executive officer; Rob Eubank of Maury has been selected as chief financial officer; and Randy Hite of Humphreys will be chief purchasing officer. Paul Sullivan of Dickson will be Retail Division manager; Keith Farmer of Maury will manage the Agronomy Division; and Brian Ladd of Marshall will become Livestock Division manager/Eastern Region Operations manager.

The reorganization has invigorated the Co-ops, and Brian Ladd says employees and directors are excited about the potential.

“This agreement will allow us to continue to serve our members,” says Ladd. “The bottom line is a business has to remain relevant and helpful to its customers and a move like this is required to do so.”

Paul Sullivan, who has been at Dickson Farmers since 1983, says the merger brings hope for a better future.

“This merger will allow us to be much stronger all around and help to better serve our farmers and nonfarmer customers,” says Sullivan. “Retirement is getting closer each year for me, and I would like to end my more than 40-year adventure knowing we have made the right move to add longevity to our cooperatives.”

Stubblefield adds that United will expand and enhance services in a way that the individual Co-ops might never be able to offer on their own.

“We have 18 fertilizer trucks, 16 trucks, three custom spray applicators, a pasture sprayer, and high-clearance spreaders to be able to use across the system,” says Stubblefield. “We will also offer farm service trucks to help farmers in the area if tires go down in the field. Not all of these stores have offered these services before.”

United management is also optimistic about the new combination of staff and the services those individuals will bring to the table.

“Having people who can help farmers on their farm is a big advantage for us,” says

Stubblefield. “As individual Co-ops, we simply couldn’t afford a veterinarian, a team of livestock specialists, or agronomists. But as a group, we will be able to offer much more in the future.”

Because of the power these cooperatives will have together, they chose the name United Home and Farm because it reflected the focus on traditional customers and the hometown store aspect of the new combined business.

“These cooperatives are all successful and have a long history of helping farmers across middle Tennessee,” says Stubblefield. “But together, we can expand services and provide new opportunities to our farmer-owners and customers.”



Manager of Williamson Farmers Co-op, Randy Stubblefield will be the Chief Executive Officer for United. Randy has been with the Co-op System since 2010 and has been the manager at Williamson since 2015.



Among the key staff of United Home and Farm are, from left, Will Bowman, Paul Sullivan, Rob Jones, Chad Hargrove, Rob Eubank, Bruce Odom, Randy Stubblefield, Ryan Pilkinton, and Keith Farmer participated in the Shooting Hunger Event held at the Nashville Gun Club on Thursday, Sept. 24 to help raise funds to feed hungry Tennesseans



The new cooperative will be headquartered in Columbia at the newly opened store. The ribbon-cutting ceremony, above, took place in Columbia at the grand opening celebration on Friday, Sept. 25, 2020.

Rural Life In Focus



A wet winter snow clings to everything in sight. Forecasts for the next few months are warmer than normal, but fans of the white stuff can still hope. — **Photo by Glen Liford**

SALE AUCTIONEER
PIT KEMMER (931) 335-4628
pkemmer@frontiernet.net

The PLATINUM ALLIANCE

ALL BREED BULL & COMMERCIAL HEIFER *Sale*

December 5, 2020 at Noon · Hyder-Burks Ag Pavilion

There will be food and refreshments to purchase on sale day.

Info at platinumalliancebulls.com
Amanda Houser - 931-267-1802
For online bidding go to kemmerauctioneers.com

Thank You FOR YOUR SUPPORT



Your FY 2021 Beef Checkoff Contractors

(Oct. 1, 2020 – Sept. 30, 2021)



For more information about programs of work for each contractor visit beefboard.org or tntbeef.org/cattlemens-corner



SOUTHEASTCULVERT

Corrugated Metal



HDPE- Corrugated Plastic



At Southeast Culvert, Inc., we strive to have a positive impact, not just with our employees and customers but with the surrounding community.

www.southeastculvert.com

770-868-559

Our address is 1094 Bankhead Highway, Winder, GA 30680

CHRYSLER • DODGE • JEEP • RAM
of Columbia



WE HAVE AN EXCLUSIVE OFFER FOR ALL CO-OP MEMBERS TO TAKE HUGE DISCOUNTS OF UP TO **\$11,000 OFF MSRP**.

DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE ON MOST CHRYSLER, DODGE, JEEP AND RAM VEHICLES.

FREE DELIVERY ANYWHERE IN TENNESSEE!



CALL CRAIG BATON • CO-OP SALES SPECIALIST • (615) 243-1528 • CBATON@CDJRCOLUMBIA.COM

A close-up photograph of a round, gold-rimmed platter filled with various holiday side dishes. The platter is set on a rustic wooden surface with a white lace doily underneath. The dishes include several deviled eggs with orange and green garnishes, a pat of butter, a dollop of cream cheese, and two bright red cherries with stems. The text "Perfectly Paired Holiday Side Dishes" is overlaid on the left side of the platter.

Perfectly Paired
Holiday
Side Dishes

As you gather around the table this holiday season, you are sure to find these festive and distinctive side dishes to be a hit! Whether it is a holiday staple or something new, these crowd-pleasers will bring delicious variety to your menu this year!



Fruited Ambrosia

Nancy Darnell

Coldwater, MS.

DeSoto County Cooperative

- 1 can condensed milk
- 1 (8 oz.) plain yogurt
- ½ cup of lemon juice
- 2 (11 oz.) cans mandarin oranges, drained
- 1½ cups of grape halves
- 1 cup miniature marshmallows
- 1 (20-oz.) can pineapple chunks, drained
- 1 cup pecans
- 1 (3½ oz.) can flaked coconut (or small bag)

In large bowl combine milk, yogurt, and lemon juice; mix well. Stir in remaining ingredients. Chill for 3 hours or longer.

Potato Salad

Anita Martin

Wildersville

First Farmers Cooperative

- 12 cups cooked and shredded potatoes
- 12 hard-boiled eggs, diced
- 1½ cups chopped celery (3 large stalks)
- ½ cup chopped onion

Dressing:

- 3 cups salad dressing
 - 2 cups sugar
 - 3 tbsp. mustard
 - ¼ cup vinegar
 - 4 tsp. salt
 - ½ cup milk
- Mix dressing ingredients and

pour over potatoes, eggs. Add celery and onions. Let stand overnight to blend before serving. Yield: 1 gallon.

Pineapple Cheese Ball

Margie Gunn

McEwen

Dickson Farmers Cooperative

- 2 (8-oz.) packages cream cheese, softened at room temperature
- 2 tsp. minced onion
- 1 (8½-oz.) can crushed pineapple, drained
- ¼ cup finely chopped green bell pepper
- 1 tsp. seasoned salt
- 2 cups pecans, finely chopped and toasted

Mix first 5 ingredients together. Chill and shape into two balls, roll in pecans. Refrigerate.

Sweet Potato Casserole

Mary Lou Carden

Clinton

Anderson Farmers Cooperative

- 3 cups sweet potatoes, mashed
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup butter
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- ⅓ cup milk

Topping:

- ½ cup brown sugar
- 2½ tbsp. melted butter

¼ cup flour
¼ cup chopped pecans
Combine potatoes, sugar, butter, eggs, vanilla, and milk. Mix well, and place in a 2-quart casserole dish. Mix topping and place on top of sweet potato mixture. Bake 25 minutes at 325 degrees.

Stuffed Squash

Linda Bain

Bethel Springs

Mid-South Farmers

Cooperative

- 6 medium squash
- 1 small onion, diced
- 1 small bell pepper, diced
- 1 (8-oz.) can diced tomatoes, drained
- 2 lbs. ground beef
- 1 lb. bacon
- Salt and pepper to taste

Mix ground beef, onions, peppers, tomatoes, salt, and pepper together. Slice squash length wise. Scrape out most of the inside of each piece and leave some of the squash inside. Stuff with ground beef mixture. Wrap in bacon. Bake at 300 degrees for about 45 minutes. Let brown on top. Make sure bacon is done. Serves 12. Adds a new take on Christmas.

Pecan Salad

Howard E. Trail

Manchester

Coffee Farmers Cooperative

- 1¼ cup crushed pineapple
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 envelope unflavored

- gelatin
- 2 cups whipping cream, whipped
- ½ cup chopped pecans
- 1 cup grated American cheese

Cook pineapple and sugar for 5 minutes over medium heat. Soften gelatin in ½ cup cold water. Add ¾ cup boiling water, stir until dissolved. Mix with pineapple and chill until slightly thickened. Fold in whipped cream, pecans, and cheese. Pour into 8-inch square dish. Chill until set. Cut in squares and serve.

Corn Pudding

Jo Ann Hughes

Tompkinsville, KY

Macon-Trousdale Farmers

Cooperative

- 3 tbsp. flour
- 3 eggs, beaten
- ⅓ cup sugar
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- Salt to taste
- 1 cup reduced-fat milk
- 2 (10-oz.) packages frozen corn, thawed
- 2 tbsp. melted butter

Preheated oven to 350 degrees. Mix flour, eggs, sugar, baking powder, and salt together with wire whip. Add milk, and mix until thoroughly blended; add corn. Fold in butter. Pour into greased 1½ quart baking dish. Bake 30 to 40 minutes or until set.

Tip: Prepare this dish the night before; just mix ingredients together and place in refrigerator. Before baking, stir ingredients well.

At-home Brunch Bites in March

At-home brunch is a fun way to have a breakfast get-together or keep lazy weekend mornings easy. From egg dishes and homemade pancakes to quick bread and breakfast casseroles, we want to see how you prefer to warm up your mornings with brunch.

Share with our readers your sweet and savory brunch favorites to serve this spring. The person submitting the recipe judged best will be named "Cook of the Month" for the March issue of *The Cooperator* and receive \$10. Others sending in rec-

ipes chosen for publication will receive \$5, and each winner will also receive a special "What's Cookin'?" certificate.

Monday, January 25, is the deadline for brunch recipes.

Only recipes with complete, easy-to-follow instructions will be considered. Send entries to: Recipes, **The Cooperator**, P.O. Box 3003, LaVergne, TN 37086, or email them to afarley@ourcoop.com. Include your name, address, telephone number, and the Co-op with which you do business. Recipes that are selected will also be published on our website at www.ourcoop.com.

Our Country Churches



300th in a series to show where our rural Co-op friends worship

Sinking Creek Baptist Church in Johnson City

Tennessee's oldest church, Sinking Creek Baptist Church, is located at 2313 Elizabethton Highway in Johnson City. Founded in 1772 by Matthew Talbot, the church was originally named Watauga River Church after a local tributary, as listed in the Tennessee Historical Registry. In 1783, the original church building was built with pews made of flat logs. Today, the church is in the process of raising money for a restoration project to bring the building back to a place where God's ministry can be done. After 240 years of God's faithfulness, the church continues to hold worship services next to the original structure at 11 a.m. every Sunday with Sunday school preceding at 9:45 a.m. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the church has also offered an online message on both Sunday mornings and evenings on their Facebook page.

HARDWARE **CO-OP** MONTHLY

SPECIAL

Hurry in! Offer valid December 1 thru December 31, 2020.

\$46.99

Helton Inc. Medium
Cow/Calf Pair Silhouette



257346

\$37.99

Helton Inc. Medium
Bull Silhouette



257349

Pricing may vary. Only at participating Co-op locations.



CHEVROLET BUICK GMC
Murfreesboro

AMAZING SAVINGS ON ALL NEW VEHICLES!

Don't miss out on exclusive **CO-OP** Member

Discounts available ONLY at Chevrolet Buick GMC Cadillac
of Murfreesboro!

Choose a 2021 Chevrolet Silverado or
2021 GMC Sierra 1500 and save as much as

\$10,000 OFF MSRP!

(ON SELECT IN STOCK MODELS. CANNOT BE
COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER OFFERS.)

LIFETIME WARRANTY

Call Justin Young at 1-888-711-7709 or
e-mail at jyoung@gmmurfreesboro.com

960 John R. Rice Boulevard, Murfreesboro, TN 37129
www.chevroletbuickgmc.com/murfreesboro.com



Free delivery in
the state of Tennessee.

Some restrictions apply. See dealer for details.



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



WHOLESOMES™

FOOD FOR PETS

- ◆ NO CORN, NO WHEAT, NO SOY
- ◆ 3 GRAIN & GLUTEN-FREE NUTRITIOUS RECIPES
- ◆ QUALITY MEAT PROTEINS
- ◆ THE FARMLAND'S FINEST FRUITS & VEGETABLES

Join our Customer Loyalty Program
BUY 12 BAGS, GET 1 BAG FREE!



AVAILABLE AT **CO-OP**



sportmix.com



‘It’s all about family’

Barhams pursue dairying from different angles

Story and Photos by Glen Liford

Ed and Julia Barham moved their family from Illinois to the Sweetwater Valley in the early 1900s in hopes that farming, specifically raising tobacco, might provide for a better life for them and their four children — three boys and a girl.

It’s certain the roots the Barhams sank deep in the fertile ground of lower Spring Creek took hold and thrived. From those meager beginnings, the family found its future in farming.

One of the boys, Clyde, grew up and started a Jersey dairy with just a few cows, milking in an “old flat-stanchion barn” that still stands on the farm. Two old-fashioned 12-by-40-foot silos from the same time period still stand watch over the property.

Clyde’s sons Allen and Charlie took over the dairy’s operation after they came of age.

Allen’s sons Walter, Rick, and Bill and their sister, Betty, were all raised on the dairy. The Barham family members have been staunch supporters and members of the dairy industry now for the better part of a century.

“While we were in high school, Bill, Walter, and I would get up and feed calves before we caught the bus to go to school,” says Rick, who is now a livestock specialist for AgCentral Farmers Cooperative in Athens.

The boys grew up working alongside each other on the dairy, and even after attending college, they returned to the farm to live. Betty, resides in Chattanooga and works at Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, Ga.

Walter, the oldest Barham brother, attended Hiwassee College in Madisonville. After graduation, he returned home and began working in the family business full-time.

Rick, a UTK alumnus with a degree in animal science, chose a different career path and went to work at McMinn Farmers Co-op in Athens, now known as AgCentral Farmers. He still has a love of dairying and works closely with the Co-op’s dairy customers and other farmers to help them be successful.

Bill came back to the farm after a year at college, too. He says the experience taught him that school wasn’t for him, and his dad’s declining health made Bill’s choice to return

to the farm easier. He and Walter farmed together for some 20 years before Walter’s health forced his early retirement.

Today, Bill operates the dairy with his son, Tanner. They milk around 240 cows and feed a TMR (total mixed ration). The Barhams have remodeled and continued to improve the operation over the years. The Jersey herd produces an average of more than 15 pounds of milk per cow better than their dad averaged when the boys were growing up, says Bill.

Tanner graduated Chattanooga State Community College in 2012 with an associate’s degree in diesel mechanics and business. He felt the degrees would be helpful in the family business, and ever a pragmatist, says the degree also gives him options if he ever needs to leave the dairy business.

“Mom insisted I get a degree,” says Tanner. “But dairying is what I have always wanted to do.”

Rick is still involved with the dairy, too, says Bill, noting that his brother helps out on the family farm on the weekends.

“He usually does AI (artificial insemination) work, sometimes milks, and pitches in when there’s a project like chopping silage or baling hay that requires everyone to participate,” Bill explains. “It’s sort of like we have our own nutritionist on staff.”

Rick’s son, Brad, is a regional marketing manager for Premier Select Sires, and provides advice as the family seeks to improve their herd’s genetics.

“We’re a family farm,” says Bill. “Everybody works, everybody helps. If something happens to one, we all pitch in to pick up the slack.”

The industry has suffered some devastating blows in recent years, but the Barhams have persevered. The family has dealt with changes in demand for their product and how they sell to market.

“Technology has made things easier, but has also brought a new set of challenges,” Bill points out. “And certainly, less labor is available to help on the farm.”

Still, the family tradition is strong, and the Barhams are committed to keeping the farm going. Tanner’s son, Turner — who is only 2 years old — will be the fifth generation of Barhams to work the dairy if he chooses to do so, and Bill would like him to have that option.

“Before I remodeled the dairy barn, I looked at Tanner and said, ‘Is this what you want to do?’ And he said, ‘Yes,’” Bill recalls. “If he didn’t want to do it, I wasn’t signing my name to the note. But if this is what you want to do, then it’s what we will do. It makes me proud that he wants to keep dairying.”



Bill Barham, left, and his brother Rick, AgCentral Farmers livestock specialist, discuss changes at the family’s dairy at Calhoun. Bill operates the dairy with his son, Tanner, but Rick still pitches in to help when he can.



“I get to wake up every morning and I don’t regret going to work because I love my job. A lot of people can’t say that.” — Bill Barham

Sent to you compliments of:

Tennessee Farmers Cooperative
180 Old Nashville Hwy. (PO Box 3003)
LaVergne, TN 37086-1983

Presorted Standard
US POSTAGE
PAID
Pewaukee, WI
PERMIT NO. 1364

Visit our official website at ourcoop.com
Follow us on     

Tru-Test.
DATAMARS

Gift your operation this year

with scale systems that provide accuracy consistently to get the most out of your herd.



tru-test.com | 800.433.3112
customerservice@datamars.com