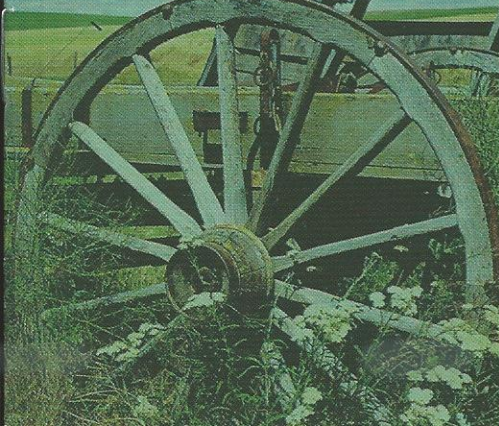
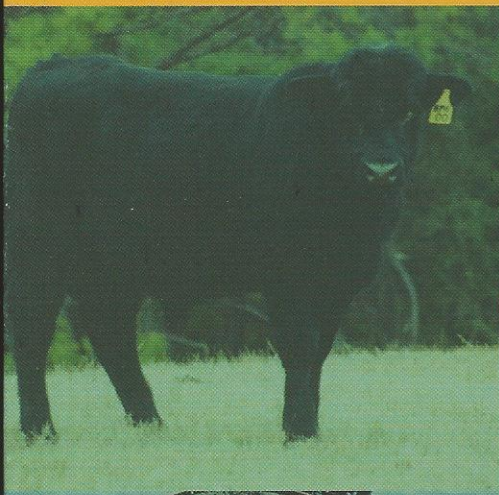
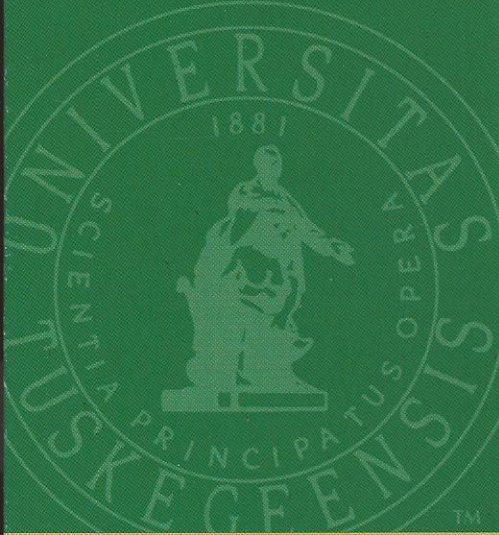




February 23-24, 2006

Kellogg Conference Center  
Tuskegee University  
Tuskegee, Alabama



*Celebrating 125 years of Excellence and Service*  
**TUSKEGEE**  
**UNIVERSITY**

114<sup>th</sup> Annual

*Farmers Conference*

"Small Rural Farms: Developing Partnerships with Local, National and Global Markets"





# 2006 Merit Farm Family Award

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**Alphonso Hooks Family Farms**  
Shorter, Alabama

Walter Baldwin  
County Extension Agent  
Macon/Montgomery Counties  
Cooperative Extension Program  
Tuskegee University



The first Farmers' Conference was held at Tuskegee University on February 23, 1892. The purpose was to arouse public sentiment among the farmers and create a real interest in the common, mundane and practical affairs of life. The morning was spent identifying problems, while the afternoon portion of the conference focused on solutions. Today, this conference's main focus is still on the problems and remedies for small-scale farmers, landowners, and their communities in managing change in agriculture.

The objectives for this year are: (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 agriculture and rural communities.

# Farmers Conference



# THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2006

8:30 a.m. . . . . Registration (Conference Registration Desk)

9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. . . . . Natural Resources Management Tour & Luncheon  
(Ballroom A)\*

\*Caravan departs for tour site at the Tuskegee University VA Management Tract at 9:15 a.m.

Presiding: William A. Hodge, Environmental Education Specialist  
Cooperative Extension Program  
Tuskegee University

9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. . . . . Effective Forest Management Strategies  
Ron Smith, Extension Specialist  
Cooperative Extension Program  
Tuskegee University

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. . . . . Six Steps to Pond Management  
Russell A. Wright, Extension Specialist  
Department of Fisheries and Allied Aquaculture  
Auburn University

12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. . . . . Luncheon Discussions

2:00 p.m. - 2:45 p.m. . . . . Tour of Tuskegee University "Healthy House" Project  
Edith Powell, Health Specialist  
Cooperative Extension Program  
Tuskegee University

Heshmat A. Aglan, Professor and Associate Dean  
College of Engineering, Architecture, and Physical Sciences  
Tuskegee University

Laura Booth, Extension Associate  
Environmental Health Programs  
Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Auburn University

2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. . . . . Annual Meeting of the Tuskegee University  
Cooperative Extension Program State Extension Advisory Council  
(Meeting Room A)

3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. . . . . Health and Wellness Forum  
Essentials of High Blood Pressure and Stroke: Tips for a Sodium Restricted Diet  
(Meeting Rooms D&E)  
Habiba Shaw, Health, Diet, and Nutrition Program Specialist  
Cooperative Extension Program  
Tuskegee University



The purpose of this training is to provide a thorough review of the prevalence, distribution, and treatment of hypertension in Alabama. The training will also review the new guidelines from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) 's recommendation on preventing and treating high blood pressure and stroke. Upon completion of this program, participants will be able to understand: the causes of high blood pressure; the role of salt and sodium in high blood pressure; choosing foods low in salt and sodium; ways of adapting a low sodium diet, while shopping, cooking, and eating out. The workshop will include lecture, question and answer, discussion, and food demonstration.

Body and Soul: Skin Deep . . . . . (Meeting Rooms F&G)  
Presiding: Eunice A. Bonsi, Family Life/Foods and Nutrition Specialist  
Cooperative Extension Program  
Tuskegee University

Community Primary Health Care Information . . . . . Harry Batiste, Jr.  
Executive Director  
Thomas Reed Ambulatory Care Center  
Tuskegee, Alabama

Dark Skin - Possible Cancer . . . . . Tonya Rogers  
Sales Representative  
Mary Kay Cosmetics  
Montgomery, Alabama

This session is designed for farmers and other participants who work primarily in the sun to learn about the effects of constant exposure to the damaging rays of the sun, the dangers of the sun's ultraviolet rays, and factors that increase the risks of skin cancer. Participants will understand and develop preventive measures such as daily cleansing and skin care that can guard against the development of skin cancer.

**5:30 p.m. - 6:15 p.m. . . . . Tuskegee Enology Club Reception (Atrium)**  
Presiding: Leonard H. Billups, President  
Tuskegee Enology Club

**6:30 p.m. . . . . Thomas Monroe Campbell Memorial Banquet (Ballrooms A & B)**  
Presiding: Honorable Thomas Jackson  
Alabama State Representative, 68th District

Speaker . . . . . Honorable Bobby Singleton  
Alabama State Senator, 24th District

## **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2006**

**7:30 a.m. . . . . Registration (Conference Registration Desk)**

**9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. . . . . Exhibits and Health Fair Open**

**9:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. . . . . Opening Session (Auditorium)**  
Presiding: Evelyn Crayton  
Assistant Director, Family and Community Programs  
Alabama Cooperative Extension System

Choral Selection . . . . . Tuskegee University "Golden Voices" Choir  
Wayne A. Barr, Director

Invocation . . . . . Farrel J. Duncombe  
Pastor, Washington Chapel, A.M.E. Church  
Tuskegee Institute, Alabama

Greetings & Welcome . . . . . Benjamin F. Payton  
President  
Tuskegee University

Honorable Myron Penn  
Alabama State Senator, 28th District

Introduction of the Speaker . . . . . Benjamin F. Payton

Speaker . . . . . Ralph Paige  
Executive Director  
Federation of Southern Cooperatives  
Atlanta, Georgia

**PRESENTATION OF MERIT FARM FAMILY AWARD**  
**Alphonso Hooks Family Farms - Shorter, Alabama**

Natural Resource Conservation Service Updates . . . . . Gary Kobylski  
State Conservationist  
USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service

Commentary . . . . . Honorable Richard J. Lindsey  
Alabama State Representative, 39th District

Remarks . . . . . Velma L. Blackwell  
Administrator, Cooperative Extension Program  
Tuskegee University

**10:15 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. . . . . Break (Auditorium Foyer)**

**10:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon . . . . . Concurrent Sessions**

**12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. . . . . Merit Farm Family Luncheon (Ballroom)**



# **Session 1: Small Farm Cooperative Marketing and Value Added Product Development** (Meeting Room D&E)

Small Farms throughout the Alabama Black Belt are working together to improve farm incomes through cooperative marketing. Youth are participating in projects that teach the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to be successful in business, specifically agriculturally based businesses. The creation of a small farm marketing and packaging facility will enable even more opportunities for producers to supply a high volume of high value contracts. With guaranteed markets for key crops, producers can experiment with crop mixes and be entrepreneurial by adding value to the products they grow.

## **Moderator:**

Charlotte Ham, Economic Development Specialist,  
GWC Agricultural Experiment Station, Tuskegee University

## **Recorder:**

Alphonso Elliott, County Extension Agent, Dallas/Perry Counties  
Cooperative Extension Program, Tuskegee University

## **Presenters:**

### **Macon County Farmers Market**

Decetti Taylor, Executive Coordinator

### **Youth in Agriculture**

Jacob Waddy, Coordinator Sundown Ranch

### **Star of the Black Belt Farmers Marketing Cooperative**

Karen Wynne, Executive Director Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network

### **Black Belt Family Farm Fruit and Vegetable Marketing Center**

John Brown, President Selma-Dallas County Farmers Association

### **AgroTech Communications, Inc.**

Peter Nelson, Co-Founder/Project Consultant

### **Captain Compost and Company**

William Curaton II, Captain Compost

### **Alabama Floriculture Initiative**

Robert Dickey, Marketing Specialist, Star of the Black Belt Farmers  
Marketing Cooperative



**Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program**  
Joe Kemble, Auburn University Extension Vegetable Specialist

**Current Trends in Muscadine Production in Florida**  
Violeta Elova, Florida A&M University

**Muscadine Research Areas TU/FAMU**

**Session 2: Obesity Management: Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity**  
(Meeting Room A)

Obesity is the most common disease in the United States. This two hour program will provide general information and strategies that are essential for assessment and treatment of overweight and obese patients. The program details a step-by-step approach that includes: self-assessment and reasons for being overweight. Upon completion of this program, participants will be able to understand their health status and will set realistic goals to eat healthier foods in reasonable portions, reduce complications of diabetes, reduce risk of stroke and heart disease, and increase physical activity.

**Moderator:**

Metara Austin, County Extension Agent, Macon/Montgomery Counties  
Cooperative Extension Program, Tuskegee University

**Recorder:**

La Tanya Hunt-Haralson, County Extension Agent, Barbour/Bullock Counties  
Cooperative Extension Program, Tuskegee University

**Presenter:**

Habiba Shaw  
Health, Diet & Nutrition Specialist  
Cooperative Extension Program, Tuskegee University



## **Session 3: Wills, Estate Planning and Personal Finance Management for Financially Distressed Families (Meeting Room B)**

Quite often low income and minority families find themselves in financial distress due to poor money management and the overwhelming effects of the global economy. There are basic strategies that ought to be followed in order to avoid the high interest rate rip off programs, bargain for major purchases, handle credit cards wisely and become smart consumers. Understanding of predatory lending, the dangers of co-signing on loans, "as is" car warranties and other related consumer issues is a must for families that need to reduce financial stress in their mist.

### **Moderators:**

Ntam Baharanyi  
Extension Economist  
Cooperative Extension Program, Tuskegee University

Carolyn Varner, Legal Services Alabama, Inc.

### **Recorder:**

George Hunter, County Extension Agent, Lowndes/Wilcox Counties  
Cooperative Extension Program, Tuskegee University

### **Presenters:**

Thomas Keith  
Director of Consumer, Law Advocacy, Legal Services Alabama, Inc.

Lemesia Pearson  
Beasley Allen, Consumer Law Fellow, Legal Services Alabama, Inc



## **Session 4: Who Else is Farming Your Land; It's Their Crop but It's Your Liability** (Meeting Room F&G)

This session is designed to raise the awareness of you the farmer or landowner about your liability in the illegal use of your land. Learn 1) what constitutes "illegal" land use, 2) how to recognize the signs of methamphetamine (meth) production and how to spot signs of a clandestine meth lab and 3) how to use your voice to protect Alabama's land from effects of the production of methamphetamine, cultivation of marijuana, and other potentially toxic materials that persons may be dumping or growing on your land.

A partnership with the Alabama Sheriff's Association the Alabama Beverage Control Board will provide the tools for the implementation of this educational initiative designed to prevent the necessity of legal action in situations where farmers and other landowners find waste and dispose of waste they may not realize is toxic.

### **Moderator:**

Edith Powell, Health Specialist  
Cooperative Extension Program  
Tuskegee University

### **Recorder:**

Gertrude Wall, County Extension Agent, Dallas/Perry Counties  
Cooperative Extension Program, Tuskegee University

### **Presenters:**

Brice Paul, Director, Jail Services  
Alabama Sheriff's Association

Sgt. William Carson, Enforcement Division  
Alabama Beverage Control Board  
State of Alabama

Lt. Robert Chambers, Enforcement Division  
Alabama Beverage Control Board  
State of Alabama

Sgt. Donny Winters, Enforcement Division  
Alabama Beverage Control Board  
State of Alabama



## • • • KEYNOTE SPEAKERS • • •

### **HONORABLE BOBBY SINGLETON**

is Alabama State Senator for the 24th District which covers Bibb, Choctaw, Greene, Hale, Marengo, Perry, Sumter and Tuscaloosa Counties. He was elected January 25, 2005 to fill the unexpired term of former Senator Charles Steele, who resigned. Senator Singleton formerly served in the Alabama House of Representatives from 2002 until his election to the Senate.

### **RALPH PAIGE**

serves as Executive Director for the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund. The Federation has had many accomplishments under Paige's leadership including low-income housing developments, credit unions formed, cooperatives started and creation of a rural training center.

### **GARY KOBYSKI**

a dedicated conservationist for over 27 years, is the Alabama State Conservationist for USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). He has served at all levels within NRCS beginning with a field office in Alabama, various other positions in the Midwest and Washington before returning to Alabama.

### **HONORABLE RICHARD J. LINDSEY**

was elected to the Alabama State House of Representatives in 1983. He received his B. S. degree from Jacksonville State University and is Manager of Lindsey Bros. Inc. Representative Lindsey is a member of the Alabama Cotton Commission, Cherokee Chamber of Commerce and various other organizations.

### **HONORABLE RON SPARKS**

has served as Alabama's Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries since January 2003. Prior to being elected as Commissioner he was appointed in 1999 as the Assistant Commissioner and was responsible for the day-to-day operations of the department.

### **HONORABLE BRYANT MELTON**

was elected in 1982 to serve in the Alabama State House of Representatives for the 70th District (Tuscaloosa). He also serves as Director of Human Resources for Shelton State Community College. Representative Melton is a member of several organizations such as Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, the NAACP and others.

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## **T.M. CAMPBELL DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP AWARD**

**ANNIE B. JACKSON** was born in White Hall, Alabama. The seventh of thirteen children, she completed her primary and secondary education in Lowndes County. Jackson received her B. S., Masters and Education Specialist Degrees from Alabama State University. She did further studies at Atlanta University in Atlanta, Georgia. Her teaching career began in the Forsyth County Public School System in Forsyth, Georgia and ended after 37 years of service to the State of Alabama with the Lowndes County Public School System. She had the honor of earning a Leadership Development Fellowship sponsored by the Ford Foundation.

Annie Jackson serves on numerous church and community affiliations as a volunteer. She has worked diligently with the Sellers Memorial Christian Church Daycare Program, Public Library, Wil-low Dollars for Scholars Community Foundation, Historical Preservation for Matthew and Emma Jackson and the Lowndes County Historic Friends of the Trail. She also serves as a Councilperson for the Town of White Hall. She has one son and two grandchildren.



2006

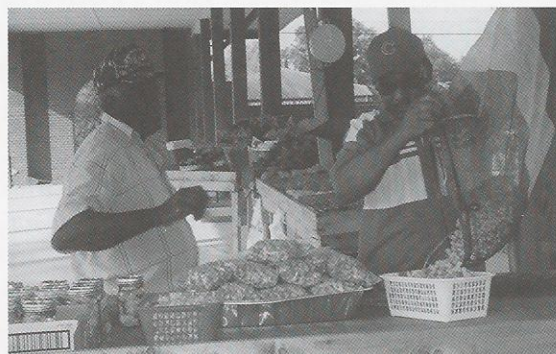
# MERIT

## ALPHONSO HOOKS



The Alphonso Hooks Family, located in Shorter, Alabama, has been selected as the 2006 Merit Farm Family by the Tuskegee University Cooperative Extension Program.

Mr. Hooks, one of eleven children, was born in Millstead, Alabama. He attended the Prairie Farms



(Tysonville) Elementary School. After completing elementary school, he graduated from D. C. Wolfe High School in Shorter, Alabama. He attended Auburn University at Montgomery, Alabama, for training in Human Relationship and Marketing Management

Mr. Hooks has worked, owned, and operated their family farm of 200 acres for nearly fifty-one years. This



# FARM

## FAMILY

property has been in the family for more than sixty years. His major crops are corn, watermelons, greens, strawberries, sweet potatoes, squash, peas, and okra. This diversified farm also has beef cattle, meat goats, poultry, and catfish.

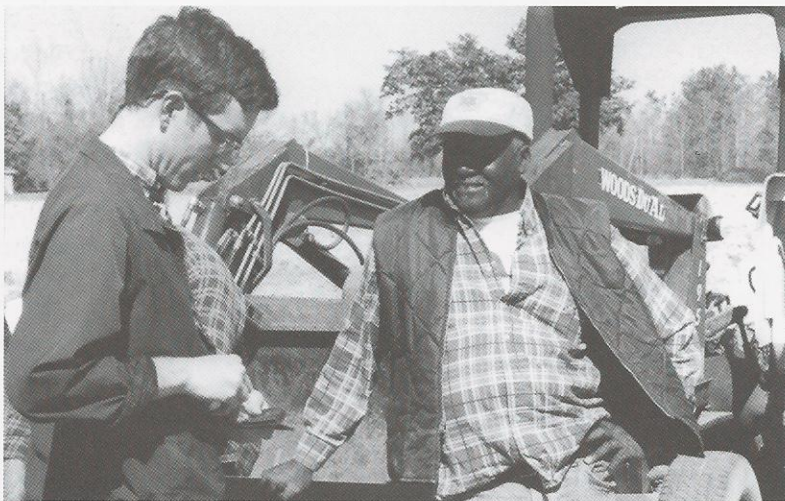
Mr. Hooks utilizes plasticulture technology in his crop production system. When asked to explain his most important

success in farming, Mr. Hooks replied "providing healthy products for the Macon County Farmers Market, the Senior Citizens' program in four counties, and the WIC program" were

the most contributing factors to his success. He explained that other factors contributing to his success were a family history of farming and faith in God, a willingness to try new or improved techniques, and modern methods of

farming such as plasticulture, drip irrigation, and the use of research based information offered through Tuskegee University Research and Extension Programs, the Cooperative Extension System, and the State Department of Agriculture and Industries.

Mr. Hooks is an active member of the Macon County's Farmers Market Board,



Macon County Farmers Organization, Bradford Chapel Church Brotherhood, and the Greater St. Mark Missionary Baptist Church, where he is a

member of the Usher Board.

The intent of the Hooks Family is to pass this possession to his children and future generations to come.



## **SPONSORS**

Cooperative State Research, Extension & Education Service  
Alabama Cooperative Extension System  
Alabama Farmers Federation  
State of Alabama, Department of Agriculture & Industries  
Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA  
State of Alabama, Farmer's Market Authority  
Farm Service Agency, USDA  
First South Farm Credit  
Natural Resource Conservation Service, USDA  
Resource, Conservation & Development, USDA, NRCS  
Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA (through the  
Rural Business and Economic Development Program)  
Southern Rural Development Council

## **PARTNERS**

Alabama Beverage Control Board  
Alabama Department of Environmental Management  
Alabama Forestry Commission  
Alabama Sheriff's Association  
Baseline Forest Services  
Diversified Forest Operations  
Federation of Southern Cooperatives  
Forest Service, USDA  
Risk Management Agency, USDA  
(through Risk Management Education Project)

## **TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY**

Cooperative Extension Program  
Continuing Education Program  
College of Agricultural, Environmental  
and Natural Sciences  
College of Business and Information Sciences  
College of Engineering, Architecture  
and Physical Sciences  
College of Liberal Arts and Education  
College of Veterinary Medicine, Nursing  
and Allied Health

## **COMMITTEES**

Velma L. Blackwell, Chairperson  
William A. Hodge, Conference Coordinator

### **Program Committee**

N. Baharanyi, W. Baldwin, E. Bonsi,  
C. Herron, B. Jones, M. Robinson

### **Merit Farm Family**

W. Baldwin, V. Blackwell, W. Hodge,  
G. Paris, A. Pierce\*

### **Conference Escorts**

MANRRS, University Escorts, Pre Vet Club, TUFANS

### **Transportation**

All County Agents, R. Smith

### **Printed Materials**

K. Craig\*, V. Singleton, Y. Wright

### **Publicity & Promotion**

All County Staff, K. Craig\*, W. Hodge, B. Jones,  
J. McBride, T.U. Office of Marketing and  
Communications

### **Banquet & Luncheon**

E. Bonsi\*, J. McBride, V. Singleton

### **Registration**

N. Boyd, J. Brown, J. McBride\*, V. Singleton,  
Y. Wright, P. Young

### **Fundraising/Finances**

V. Blackwell\*, W. Hodge, A. Pierce, J. Brown

### **Evaluation and Survey**

Agricultural and Resource Economics Program,  
T. Hargrove\*

### **Youth Career Opportunities**

M. Austin, W. Blakely, J. Burton, N. Boyd,  
A. Pierce\*, Y. Wright

### **Bioterrorism**

L. Ayanwale\*, S. Gorhum, G. Malone, S. Wilson

### **Risk Management Education and Rural Business Development**

N. Baharanyi\*, Y. Diabate, N. Duplessis,  
C. Ham\*, G. Harris

### **Audio Visual**

ACES Communications Dept., W. Baldwin,  
K. Craig\*, D. Eaves, C. Pollard, R. Stephens

### **Awards**

V. Blackwell\*, V. Singleton

### **Exhibits/Vendors**

J. Bartlett, W. Hodge, N. Jefferson\*

### **Health and Wellness**

L. Ayanwale, E. Bonsi, E. Powell, H. Shaw\*

### **Forestry Management**

Alabama Forestry Commission, M. Cole,  
Federation of Southern Cooperatives,  
W. Hodge, Ron Smith\*

\*Indicates Chairperson

Published by the Tuskegee University Cooperative Extension Program, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Velma L. Blackwell, Administrator. The Cooperative Extension Program offers educational programs and materials to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, or disability. It is also an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.



## | History and Purpose |

The Annual Farmers Conference evolved in 1892 out of a need to improve the conditions of rural black farmers in the South. Having just gone through slavery, black farmers in the South had a wealth of social, economic, educational and morale problems that desperately needed attention.

After observing these conditions upon his arrival at Tuskegee, Booker T. Washington developed and implemented monthly group meetings for the farmers. Those monthly group meetings of approximately 75 people were the stepping stones to the first Annual Farmers Conference, held in 1892, which drew a crowd of over 400 farmers and professional agriculture workers from all areas of the rural South.

The Annual Farmers Conference represented not only the pioneering spirit of Tuskegee University, but the real beginning of agricultural extension in the South. Historical milestones associated with this conference include: the appointment of Thomas Monroe Campbell as the first extension agent in the

United States, the development of Tuskegee University's movable school, and the establishment of the agricultural experiment station and cooperative extension program.

Since the appointment of Campbell in 1906, Cooperative Extension at Tuskegee University grew from one county agent covering Macon and surrounding counties to 12 agents serving 12 counties in a region known as the Black Belt of Alabama. Extension educators offer assistance in a variety of program areas such as youth leadership development, environmental health and water quality, alternative agricultural enterprises, economic development, forestry and natural resources, health and nutrition, and family well-being.

The goal of the annual farmers conference is to enhance the overall quality of life for our constituents and their families and, where possible, impact in a positive way the opportunities which are available.



# Cooperative Extension

Tuskegee University | Cooperative Extension Program | 204 Morrison-Mayberry Building | Tuskegee, Alabama 36088 | 334-724-4441

The Tuskegee University Cooperative Extension Program helps people, particularly the underprivileged residents in twelve of Alabama's Black Belt counties, to improve their lives through informal educational processes that use scientific knowledge to address their concerns and needs.

In terms of the geographical area that we serve, most of our programming occurs in twelve counties located across the area known as the Black Belt. The belt spans east-west across the central part of Alabama and is known for its dark colored soils and includes parts of sixteen counties. Tuskegee University is located in this agro-ecological zone and has historically focused its outreach in this area.

Program areas today span many subject matter disciplines due to the interrelated nature of the needs of the families and communities we serve. Currently, we conduct educational programs in the broad categorical areas of (1) Agricultural and Natural Resources, (2) Community and Economic Development, and (3) Youth and Family Life.

Although the primary focus of the Tuskegee University Cooperative Extension Program is to assist families with limited resources to improve their quality of life, the program offers its educational services to all state residents, without regard to race, color, age, national origin, religion, sex or disability.