

TUSKEGEE  
UNIVERSITY

One Hundred Seventeenth Annual  
**Farmers**

C O N F E R E N C E

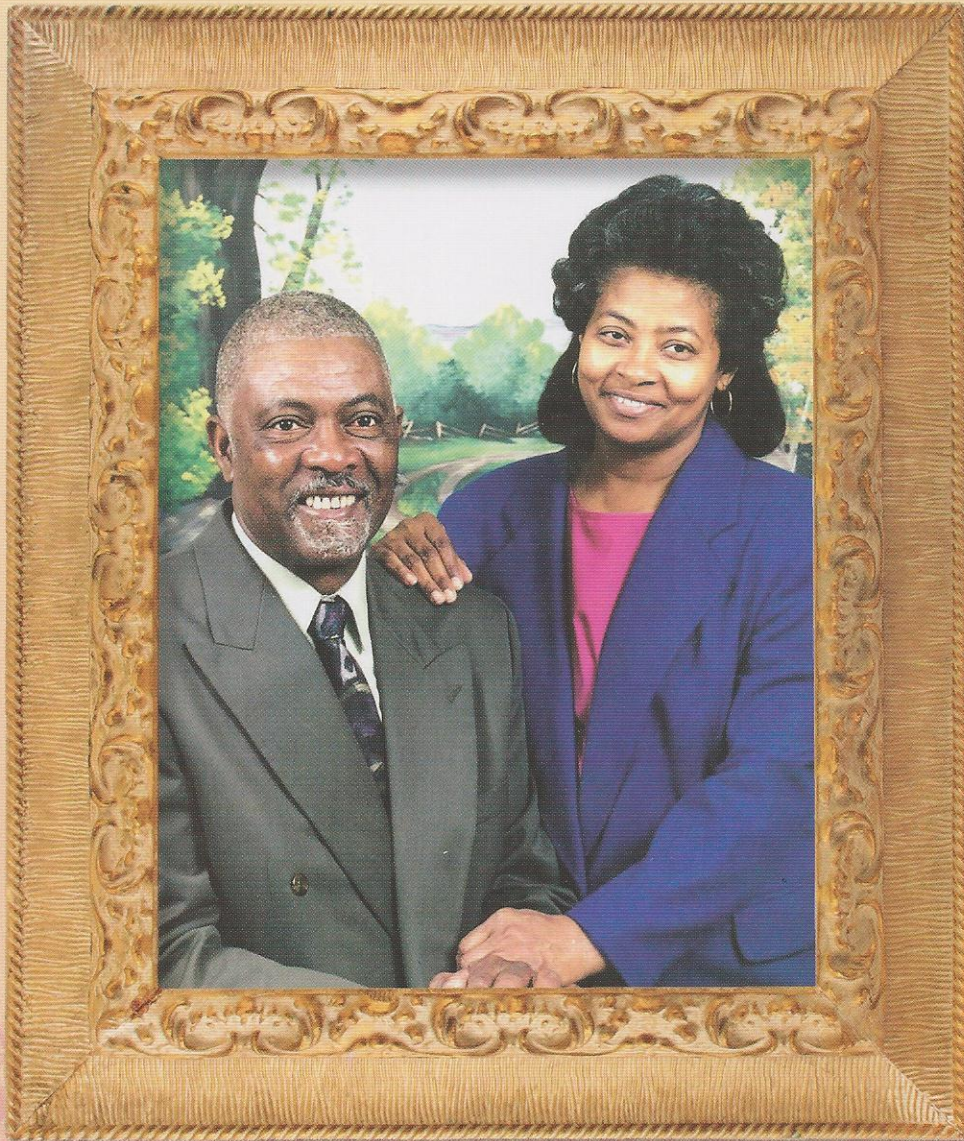
***“Building Hope and Empowering Alabama’s  
Rural Communities for the Future”***



**February 26-27, 2009  
Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center  
Tuskegee, Alabama**



# 2009 MERIT FARM FAMILY AWARD



## **The James Childs Family**

Mount Hebron, Alabama

Tuskegee University Cooperative Extension Program  
Greene/Hale Counties

Gwendolyn Johnson, County Agent  
Alfred Jackson, County Agent  
Wanda Morrow, Secretary



The first Farmers Conference was held at Tuskegee University on February 23, 1892. The morning was spent identifying problems, while the afternoon portion of the conference focused on solutions. The purpose was to arouse public sentiment among the farmers and create a real interest in the common, mundane and practical affairs of life. Today, this conference's main focus is still on the problems and solutions 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 on the 2008 Farm Bill, the current economic crisis, and the Stimulus Package and other that is relevant to small-scale farming and landownership as related to production of traditional and alternative agricultural products; (2) to create awareness about family health, nutritional challenges, and existing resources for rural families; and (3) to strengthen networks and partnerships that address problems of small-scale agriculture and rural communities with respect to local, national and global markets, challenges, and opportunities..



# FARMERS CONFERENCE



# THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2009

- 6:45 a.m. . . . . Macon County Farmers Market Board Meeting (Restaurant)  
9:00 a.m. . . . . Registration (Conference Registration Desk)  
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.. . . . . Exhibits and Health Fair Open  
10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. . . Tuskegee University Cooperative Extension Program  
State Advisory Council Meeting (Meeting Rooms D & E)  
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 Noon. . . . . Forestry Presentation (Ballroom A)

## **The Concept of Carbon Credit**

The goal of this session is to familiarize the landowner with the topic of carbon credit and related issues. The landowner will learn what a carbon credit is, who trades carbon credits, who buys carbon credits, what the landowner needs to do to sign up to sell carbon credits, and who to contact to sell carbon credits.

### Moderator:

Ronald C. Smith  
Extension Forestry Specialist

### Presenter:

Jerry Bettis  
Extension Forestry Specialist

- 12:00 Noon – 1:00 p.m. . . . Lunch and Panel Presentation (Ballrooms B & C)

Participants will have an opportunity to explore and discuss forest management issues, concerns and opportunities presented during the forestry tour.

### Panel Presenters:

Alabama Forestry Commission  
Natural Resource Conservation Service  
Extension Foresters  
Leh Bass, Forest Service Provider for AgraGate

- 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.. . . . . Conference Tour and Workshops

**SCHEDULE**



# FORESTRY MANAGEMENT TOUR

The goal of the forestry management tour is to allow participants an opportunity to explore and discuss forest management issues, concerns, opportunities, and best management practices.

Presiding . . . . . Ronald C. Smith, Extension Forester  
Tuskegee University Cooperative Extension Program

Discussion Leaders . . . . . Alabama Forestry Commission and Natural Resource  
Conservation personnel  
Extension Forestry Specialist

1:30 p.m. . . . . Depart Kellogg Conference Center by Bus

Stop #1 . . . . . Forest Management Discussion  
Travel to Camp Atkins. Short walk involved. Prescribed burn, Longleaf Pine release  
demonstration

Stop #2 Importance of Timely Thinning in Loblolly Pine Management and the Need  
for Wild Fire Protection Discussion  
Franklin Road & Motley Lane

Stop #3 . . . . . Non-Native Invasive Species Discussion  
Campus Road Milbank Hall

Stop #4 . . . . . Tour of Al Hooks Farm and Tuskegee University Caprine Research

5:30 p.m. – 6:15 p.m. . . . . Reception (Atrium)

6:30 p.m. . . . . Thomas Monroe Campbell Memorial Banquet (Ballrooms B & C)

Presiding . . . . . Getchel L. Caldwell, II  
Vice President for University Advancement  
Tuskegee University

Welcome and Introduction of Speaker . . . . . Benjamin F. Payton  
President  
Tuskegee University

Speaker . . . . . The Honorable Thomas E. Jackson  
Alabama House of Representative, 68th District

**SCHEDULE**





# FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2009

7:30 a.m. . . . . Registration (Conference Registration Desk)  
9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.. . . . . Exhibits Open  
9:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. . . . . Plenary Session (Auditorium)  
Presiding . . . . . Ntam Baharanyi, Acting Extension  
Administrator and Farmers Conference Chair  
Invocation . . . . . Gregory Gray, Dean  
Tuskegee University Chapel  
Greetings. . . . . The Honorable Myron Penn  
Alabama State Senator, 28th District  
Speakers. . . . . Issues and Opportunities for Agricultural Producers in the Farm Bill  
Jerry Pennick  
Federation of Southern Cooperatives

Implications of the Stimulus Package for Low Income Families  
Kimble Forrister  
Alabama ARISE

## Presentation Of Merit Farm Family Award

10:45 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. . . . . Break (Auditorium Foyer)  
11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. . . . . Concurrent Sessions  
12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.. . . . . Merit Farm Family Luncheon (Ballroom)

Presiding . . . . . William Hodge  
Cooperative Extension Program  
Tuskegee University

Greetings. . . . . Walter A. Hill, Dean  
College of Agricultural, Environmental and Natural Sciences  
Tuskegee University

W. Gaines Smith, Director  
Alabama Cooperative Extension System

Introduction of Speaker . . . . . The Honorable Teresa Smiley  
Alabama State Department of Agriculture and Industries

Keynote Speaker . . . . . The Honorable Ron Sparks  
Commissioner  
Alabama State Department of Agriculture and Industries

**SCHEDULE**



**Session 1:** . . . . Crisis Finance: Navigating Personal Finances during Troubling Times  
(Meeting Room A)

The continuing crisis in the American economy has impacted the finances of many families. From changes in household income to problems with mortgages, the crisis has raised difficult challenges that have made many families vulnerable to income losses, foreclosure, and bankruptcy.

This session will discuss options for farmers and family leaders to navigate personal finance issues, including those that affect spending, budgets, and the family home. Session participants will discover tools and strategies for addressing financial planning and management during crisis and also learn best practices to improve consumption, savings, and investment behavior for long term financial well being.

**Moderator:**

Nickey Jefferson  
Tuskegee University Cooperative Extension Program

**Presenters:**

Kenneth Lay, Esq.  
Alabama Legal Services Department

Joyce M. Kendrick  
Jonathan Daniels Community Development Corporation  
Selma, AL

**Session 2:** Grant Writing (Meeting Room B)

A professional grant writer will present on the grant opportunities available for farmers, cooperatives, and extension agents, from sources such as SARE, USDA, and other agencies. The two-hour session will include a one-on-one half-hour presentation on the basics of grant programs, calls for proposals, developing a fundable collaborative research concept, and strategies for writing a fundable proposal. This will be followed by a one-half-hour question and answer session. Of particular emphasis in this workshop will be the SARE Producer Grant and On-Farm Research Grant.

**Moderator:**

Barrett T. Vaughan  
College of Engineering, Architecture and Physical Sciences and Cooperative Extension  
Tuskegee University

**Presenters:**

John Perdeu  
Professional Grant Writer

**CONCURRENT SESSIONS**



**Session 3:** . . . . . Agricultural Career Opportunities for Youth (Auditorium)

The focus of this session will be on agricultural opportunities for youth. Youth participants will be presented with information concerning scholarships and internships in food, agricultural and natural resources careers; how to apply and fund their college experience; the agricultural loan programs for youths and will meet college students who are majoring in food, agriculture and natural resources.

**Moderator:**

Lenora Haynes  
USDA Forest Service/Civil Rights Staff Unit

**Presenters:**

First Generation to Attend College-Challenge: How I Made it Happen  
Bryesha Smith, Student  
Tuskegee University

**USDA Forestry Incentive Program**

Eboni Duke and Johnathan Lampley  
USDA Forest Service Scholars  
Tuskegee University

**USDA/1890 National Scholars Program**

Lenora Haynes

**USDA Summer Internship Program**

LaDissa Moore and Garrett Mason, Students  
Tuskegee University

**Tuskegee University**

Admissions Council/Recruiter

**Youth Loan Program**

Danny Lindsey, Farm Loan Manager  
USDA Farm Service Agency



**Session 4:** . . . . . An Update on USDA and State Agency Programs and Resources  
(Meeting Rooms F & G)

Increasing the awareness of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs and opportunities for the socially and economically disadvantaged persons and under-represented persons is a major goal of the USDA. Agencies such as Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, the National Agricultural Statistics Service, Rural Development and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Agency are committed to providing leadership to ensure that all programs and services are made accessible to all USDA customers, fairly and equitably, with emphasis on reaching the underserved.

**Moderator:**

Audrey Zeigler and Youssouf Diabate  
College of Agriculture,  
Environmental & Natural Sciences

**Presenters:**

Vicky Lane  
Anthony McCarthy  
USDA, Farm Service Agency

Alice Love  
USDA, Natural Resource and Conservation Service

Quinton Harris  
USDA, Rural Development

Angela Hurst  
Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries

Don Wambles  
Alabama State Farmers Market Authority

**CONCURRENT SESSIONS**





**Session 5:** . . . Impact of the Present Economic Crisis on the Health and Nutrition of the Rural Family (Meeting Rooms D & E)

With today's volatile and challenging financing environment, crisis in nutrition and health management is even more difficult in rural families. Poverty and income disparity have widened over the past decade, laying the foundations for unhealthy behaviors, which may lead to malnutrition, obesity and related cardiovascular diseases and cancers. Presentations will highlight the impact of the economic crisis on food insecurity, decline in food production and related debilitating killers that have been classified "health disparity diseases" by the U. S. government.

**Moderator:**

Eunice Bonsi  
Tuskegee University Cooperative Extension Program

**Presenters:**

Kathy Chapman  
Alabama Department of Health

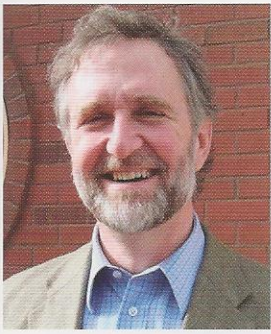
Eunice Bonsi

Tim Turner/Vivian Carter  
Tuskegee University Carver Research Foundation

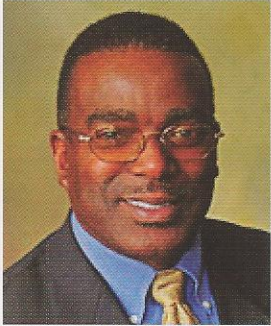
Lekan Ayanwale  
Tuskegee University Cooperative Extension Program

**CONCURRENT SESSIONS**





**FORRISTER, KIMBLE** is State Coordinator of Alabama Arise, a coalition of 150 congregations and organizations that promotes fairer public policies on issues affecting low-income Alabamians. He came to ARISE in 1991 after nine years as Southeast Regional Organizer for Bread for the World in Washington, DC. A native of Nashville, TN, Forrister received his B.A. degree from David Lipscomb College and his M. Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary. Forrister is married to Calli Patterson and they have three children.



**JACKSON, THOMAS E.** serves in the Alabama State House of Representatives for the 68th District (Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Marengo and Monroe Counties) and was elected in 1994. He is also the Director of the Upward Bound Program for Alabama Southern Community College and Associate Pastor for Church of God in Christ. Representative Jackson is a member of the Alabama and National Education Association, the National Black Caucus for State Legislators, the Board of Directors for the Southwest Alabama Boys and Girls Club, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, as well as many other organizations. He received his B.S. Degree in Psychology from Knoxville College and M.A. Degree in education and Counseling from Alabama State University.



**PENNICK, EDWARD "JERRY"** is director of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives' Land Assistance Fund. He coordinates all land related legal, technical and educational assistance to African American landowners. Jerry has worked on African American land tenure issues for over 30 years and has written and conducted extensive research on the subject. Pennick earned his B.S. degree from Stillman College and MSW from University of Alabama.

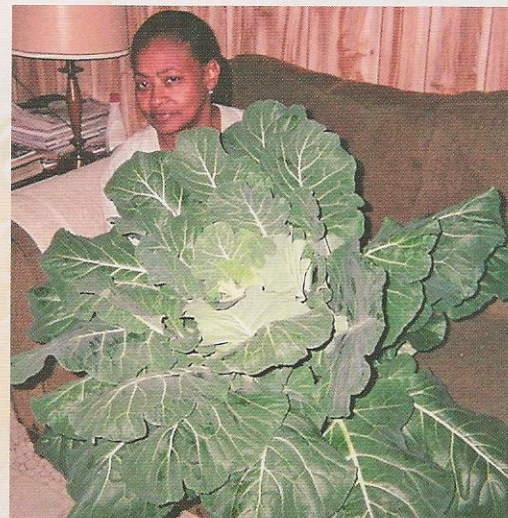
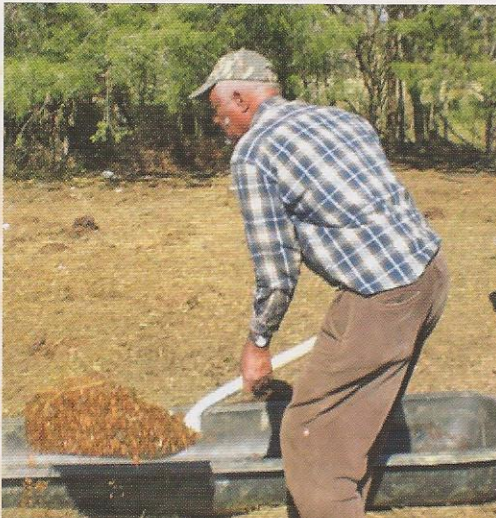
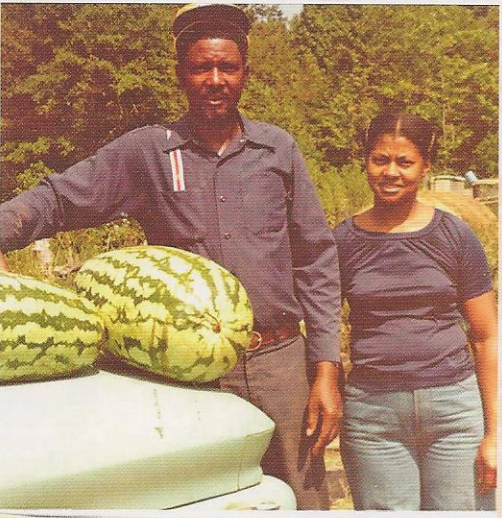
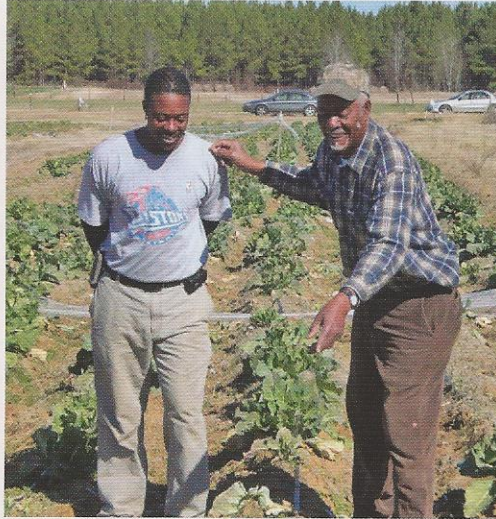
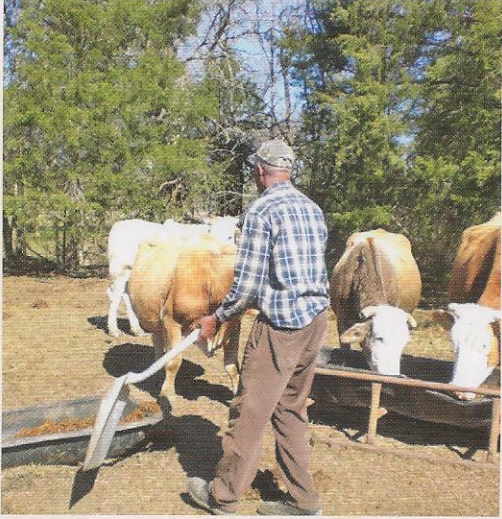


**SPARKS, RON** has served as Commissioner for the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries since 2003 has previously been appointed in 1999 as Assistant Commissioner. A native and successful businessman of Fort Payne, Sparks was elected DeKalb County Commissioner 1978, becoming at age 25, the youngest county commissioner in Alabama. Sparks graduated from North East State Community College after serving in the United States Coast Guard. He has also served as director of the DeKalb County 911 Emergency Response District and was elected State President. In 2008, Sparks was named to the board of directors to the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture and was elected President. Commissioner Sparks has three children and one grandchild.

**ABOUT THE SPEAKERS**



# 2009 Merit



**T**he James and Lee Ethel Childs family, located in Mount Hebron, Greene County, Alabama, has been selected as the 2009 Merit Farm Family by the Tuskegee University Cooperative Extension Program.

Mr. Childs, born and raised in Panola, Alabama, grew up on a farm with his grandparents. His life revolves around farming, and he is now engaged in full-time farming. He completed the Salem Elementary School and North Sumter County High School.

The Childs' family has owned and operated their farm for more than 45 years, with land access to exceed 200 acres. He realizes that he cannot continue to work indefinitely.

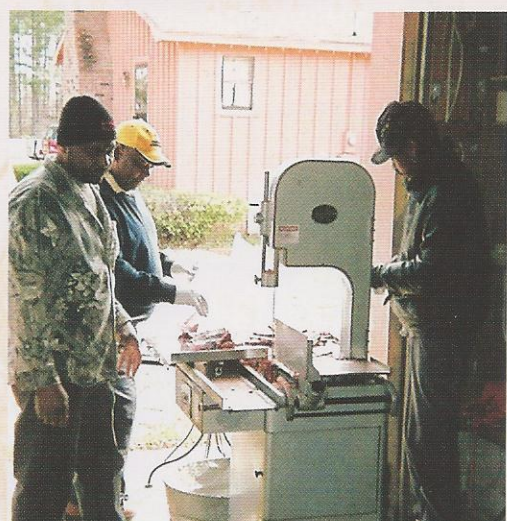
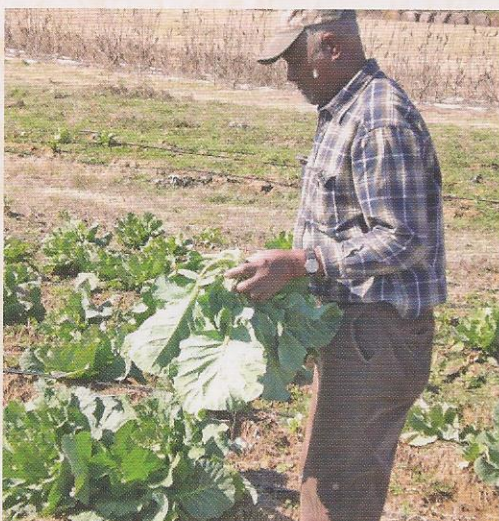
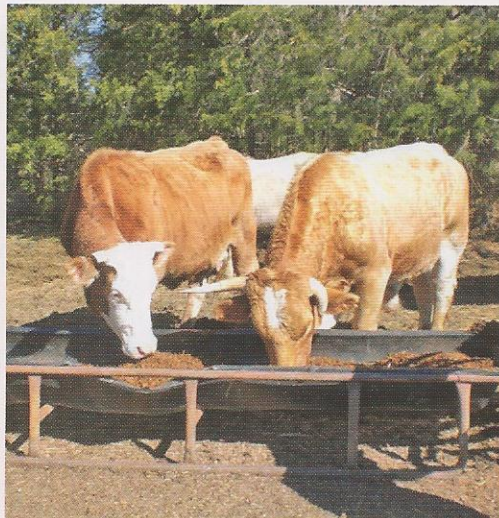
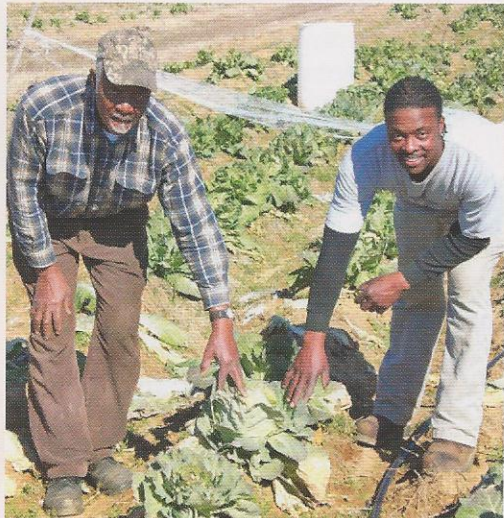
Therefore, his desire is to pass the land on to his children. The factors contributing to his success in farming are his willingness to work hard long hours, his love to grow farm produce, and enjoyment of "hands-on" work.

Mr. Childs is open to new ideas and practices to improve his farming operation. He has adopted plasticulture technology in raising his vegetable crops and uses research-based knowledge in livestock production, including herd management practices. He approaches farming with a very positive attitude. He does not deny that the hours are long. He maintains that farming is no harder than other jobs, if you desire to do it. It takes long hours and hard work to really achieve in other professions as well.



# Farm

## The James Childs Family



The current Childs' farming enterprise includes collards, turnips, mustards, watermelons, okra, peas, poultry, corn, syrup processing, potatoes, and honey bees. His produce is in high demand, and he more often than not sells all of his harvest.

Mr. Childs serves as a role model to other farmers in the community, and he is engaged in community affairs. He is a member of the Greater Salem AME Zion Church in Panola, Greene County Farmers Market, Panola Economic Development Council, and Shaping a Community Organization to Reward Everyone. According to The Democrat, James Childs won the prizes for both the largest watermelon and the sweetest watermelon...His prize-winning watermelon

weighed in at 39 pounds, four ounces." (July 23, 2008, p. 1)

When he is not working on his farm or marketing the fruits of his labor, what does Childs like to do? Fish and/or hunt. His wife, Lee Ethel, for 45 years, enjoys cooking.

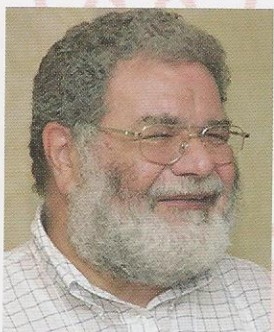
The Childs family also includes four adult sons: Marvin, James, Jr., Christopher, and Alvin and one daughter, Sharon.



## T. M. CAMPBELL DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP AWARD



**SPARKS, RON** has served as Commissioner for the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries since 2003 has previously been appointed in 1999 as Assistant Commissioner. A native and successful businessman of Fort Payne, Sparks was elected DeKalb County Commissioner 1978, becoming at age 25, the youngest county commissioner in Alabama. Sparks graduated from North East State Community College after serving in the United States Coast Guard. He has also served as director of the DeKalb County 911 Emergency Response District and was elected State President. In 2008, Sparks was named to the board of directors to the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture and was elected President. Commissioner Sparks has three children and one grandchild.



**ZIPPERT, JOHN** is director of Program Operations for the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund at their Rural Training and Research Center in Epes, Alabama. Prior to working for the Federation, he was a fieldworker for the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in Louisiana. Zippert received his B. A. degree from the City College of New York. He and his wife Carol are co-publishers of the Greene County Democrat, a weekly newspaper. They are the proud parents of three children and nine grandchildren.

LEADERSHIP AWARD



## SPONSORS

USDA Cooperative State Research,  
Extension and Education Service  
USDA Farm Service Agency  
Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries  
Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA  
Natural Resource Conservation Service, USDA  
Mid-South Resource,  
Conservation & Development Council, USDA  
Southern Region Risk Management Education Center  
Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA (through the  
Rural Business and Economic Development Program)

## PARTNERS

Alabama Cooperative Extension System  
Alabama Department of Environmental Management  
Alabama Farmers Federation  
Alabama Farmer's Market Authority  
Alabama Forestry Commission  
Farm Service Agency, USDA  
Federation of Southern Cooperatives  
Forest Service, USDA  
Southern Rural Development Council

## 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

Ntam Baharanyi, Chairperson  
Walter A. Hill, Co-Chairperson  
William A. Hodge, Program Chair  
Miles Robinson, Program Co-Chair

Program Committee: N. Baharanyi, W. Hodge\*, M. Robinson\*,  
A. Pierce, N. Jefferson, V. Singleton, L. Haynes, G. Paris,  
J. McBride, Y. Wright, A. Love, B. Montgomery, J. Bettis,  
E. Bonsi, J. Wilson, J. Hughes, L. Ayanwale, K. Craig

Merit Farm Family: A. Pierce\*, G. Hunter, L. Pringle,  
D. Threadgill

Printed Materials: K. Craig\*, V. Singleton, Y. Wright, W. Morrow

Publicity & Promotion: All County Staff, K. Craig\*, W. Morrow,  
J. McBride, W. Hodge, TU 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: N. Baharanyi, W. Hodge, A. Pierce,  
K. Craig

Evaluation and Survey: Agricultural and Resource  
Economics Program, T. Hargrove\*

Youth Opportunities Forum: L. Haynes\*, N. Jefferson\*,  
Y. Wright

Risk Management Education and Rural Business Development:  
T. Hargrove\*, Y. Diabate\*, G. Harris, M. Robinson

Audio Visual/Technology: W. Baldwin, K. Craig\*, W. Morrow,  
D. Threadgill

Awards: N. Baharanyi\*, V. Singleton

Exhibits/Vendors: J. McBride, V. Singleton\*, W. Hodge,  
M. Robinson

Health and Wellness: LeKan Ayanwale\*, Eunice Bonsi

Conference Tours: Alabama Forestry Commission, Federation  
of Southern Cooperatives, W. Hodge\*, R. Smith, J. Bettis

\*Indicates Chairperson

Published by the Tuskegee University Cooperative Extension Program, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Ntam Baharanyi, Acting 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.



# TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION AND OUTREACH EDUCATORS

## **Barbour/Bullock Counties**

P. O. Box 99  
Clayton, AL 36016  
334/775-3284

LaTanya Hunt-Haralson  
County Agent  
lhharalson@tuskegee.edu

Jeffery Moore  
County Agent  
moorej@tuskegee.edu

## **Dallas/Perry Counties**

P. O. Box 40  
Selma, AL 36701  
334/875-3202

Alphonso Elliott  
Master Extension Agent-Specialist  
awelliott@tuskegee.edu

Gertrude Wall  
County Agent  
gjwall@tuskegee.edu

## **Greene/Hale Counties**

P. O. Box 228  
Eutaw, AL 35462  
205/372-2107

Alfred Jackson  
County Agent  
jacksona@tuskegee.edu

Gwendolyn J. Johnson  
County Agent  
gjjohnson@tuskegee.edu

## **Lowndes/Wilcox Counties**

P. O. Box 874  
Hayneville, AL 36040  
334/548-2535

Millicent Braxton  
County Agent  
mbraxton@tuskegee.edu

George Hunter  
County Agent  
gxhunter@tuskegee.edu

## **Macon/Montgomery Counties**

101 East Rosa Parks Avenue  
Suite 400  
Tuskegee, AL 36083  
334/727-1320

Walter Baldwin  
County Agent  
wbaldwin@tuskegee.edu

Leslie Clark  
County Agent  
lmclark@tuskegee.edu

## **Sumter/Marengo Counties**

P. O. Drawer J  
Livingston, AL 35470  
205/652-9817

Decetti Taylor  
County Agent  
dtaylor@tuskegee.edu

Gary Walton  
County Agent  
waltong@tuskegee.edu

## **Hispanic & Native American Outreach**

Charlotte Pierce  
cpierce@tuskegee.edu  
334/552-1320

Bobby England, Resource Mgmt. Specialist  
334/552-1108

Bob Mants, Farm Mgmt Specialist  
334/421-2427  
romants@bellsouth.net

Erskine Minor, Farm Mgmt Specialist  
334/421-2427

Audrey Zeigler, Farm Mgmt Specialist  
334/552-1180  
azig@bellsouth.net