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 TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
 TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE & INSURANCE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**August 6, 2007**
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## Application Deadline Nears for Farm Diversification Cost Share

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Tennessee farmers have until Aug. 31 to apply for cost share dollars to help improve or expand their farming operation in diversified agricultural projects announced state Agriculture Commissioner Ken Givens.

“This is a very generous program designed to help farmers invest in new or growing areas of agriculture that have the potential to generate farm income,” said Givens. “These are competitive cost share awards so it’s important that farmers get their application in before the deadline. We’re looking for progressive farmers who are willing to make the kind of investment that will pay off in the future, and we can help.”

The goal of the Agricultural Growth diversification cost share program is to build farm income by helping farmers expand or improve their operations through production of diversified agricultural products. Diversified agricultural products include agritourism, aquaculture, bees, fruits and vegetables, horticulture, goats and sheep, organics, value-added products, viticulture and others as approved by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture.

Tennessee farmers can apply for reimbursement at a 35 percent cost share up to \$10,000 for farm infrastructure, specialty equipment purchases and marketing activities. New for this year, farmers can apply for 50 percent cost share up to \$15,000 for investments in priority areas. Priority areas include agritourism, goats and sheep, organics and grapes of certain varieties.

In the first two years of the farm diversification cost share program, the state has awarded more than \$1.5 million dollars in cost share dollars for 352 innovative farm projects.

The diversification cost share program is part of the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program (TAEP), a comprehensive agricultural development initiative established by Governor Phil Bredesen and supported by the Tennessee General Assembly with a \$21 million increase in funding this year.

Applicants must be Tennessee residents and operate a farm located in the state. Producers with livestock must first register their premises with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture for the National Animal Identification System.

Applications will be evaluated on a competitive basis by industry sector. Only projects that are approved in advance by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture will be eligible for cost share assistance. All approved projects will be announced Oct. 1. Producers will have until June 30, 2008 to complete approved activities.



For more information, contact program coordinator Jan Keyser at the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 40627, Nashville, TN 37204, (615) 837-5346, or via e-mail at [Ag.Growth@state.tn.us](mailto:Ag.Growth@state.tn.us).

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