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MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Givens Announces Key Marketing Appointments for TAEP

NASHVILLE, Tenn. -- State Agriculture Commissioner Ken Givens today announced key marketing appointments with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture to help the state's farmers invest in new and expanding opportunities in agriculture.

"We have had a tremendous response from farmers wanting to take advantage of cost share opportunities through the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program," said Givens. "These appointments will be critical to serving the farm community and for building upon the success of the program. Both Roger and Justin bring exceptional experience and talents that will help us move the program forward. We're proud to have them join our team."

Bedford County resident **Roger Richardson** has been appointed to the position of state administrator for the TAEP, which provides cost share assistance for farmers in the areas of cattle improvement, farm diversification and animal health improvement.

The TAEP was established in 2005 by Governor Phil Bredesen and supported by the Tennessee General Assembly with a \$26 million appropriation for the current fiscal year.

"The administrator oversees all TAEP operations," says Richardson. "This includes developing policies and guidelines that meet the goals of the program and comply with state policy; monitoring the direction and performance of the program; directing staff operations; and focusing on TAEP outreach and marketing.

"I have a passion for agriculture and I'm excited to be working with TAEP," says the new administrator, "where the goal of the program is to increase the income of the family farm."

Previously, Richardson was employed with Farm Credit Services in various locations for 16 years. The Rutherford County native is a graduate of Middle Tennessee State University with a bachelor's degree in agribusiness.

Justin Bryant has been named as the new TAEP hay and feed storage cost share program coordinator.

Bryant, a Montgomery County native, graduated from the University of Tennessee at Martin with a bachelor's degree in agriculture, and he earned a master's degree in plant science from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.

"As a graduate student, the things I studied were cover crop management, forage yields, and hay and pasture fertilization," said Bryant.

“These aspects of farming have always been my main interest. I can’t imagine another post that would give me as great an opportunity to use what I know to help our state’s farmers.”

The purpose of the hay and feed storage program is to increase farm income in Tennessee by encouraging producers to increase quantity and nutritional quality of hay and feeds through proper storage and management practices. To help achieve this goal, cost share funds are being provided for producers to install hay storage facilities which include the construction of new permanent hay storage facilities or the addition of new hay storage sheds to existing structures.

For more information about hay and feed storage cost share opportunities, contact Bryant at (615) 837-5323 or Justin.Bryant@state.tn.us. For more information about other TAEP programs, contact Richardson at Roger.Richardson@state.tn.us, (615) 837-5324 or visit www.picktnproducts.org.

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(Click these links for hi-res photographs of [Richardson](#) and [Bryant](#).)

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