

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 321

By Bone

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate the staff and leadership of the Center for Profitable Agriculture on the occasion of its tenth anniversary.

WHEREAS, census data shows a 33 percent increase in the number of Tennessee farmers participating in direct farm sales to consumers between 1997 and 2007; and

WHEREAS, in this same period, the total value of agricultural products sold directly to consumers by these farmers grew by 83.5 percent; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, the value of Tennessee agricultural products sold directly to consumers totaled nearly 8.5 million and by 2007, this figure had risen to nearly 15.5 million; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, the UT Extension, an off-campus educational unit of the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, established the Agricultural Development Center to foster agritourism in the State and encourage policy and regulatory changes in support of value-added agriculture; Dr. D. Ray Humberd, Associate Dean, UT Extension, was appointed its first Director; and

WHEREAS, the result of a specific recommendation from the Governor's Council on Agriculture and Forestry, the Center began building relationships with other institutions and organizations; from the outset, the Center was closely aligned with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Market Development; and

WHEREAS, in 2002, the Center became a partnership program between UT Extension and the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation; the name was changed to the "Center for Profitable Agriculture," and Dan Wheeler was appointed its Director; and

WHEREAS, in its first incarnation, the Center was housed on the Agriculture Campus in Knoxville; now it is headquartered at the Middle Tennessee Research and Education Center in Spring Hill, and Rob Holland currently serves as its Director; and

WHEREAS, in its ten years of service to the farmers of Tennessee, the Center for Profitable Agriculture has developed scores of partnerships with other agencies; secured more than 1.25 million in external funding; developed countless educational publications and analyses for farmers and agritourists; conducted over 500 workshops, seminars, and conferences; trained Extension agents; and led educational tours in support of the State's farmers and their efforts to market their products more effectively; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, the Center hosted a national value-added agricultural conference, providing a significant opportunity for education and relationship-building; and

WHEREAS, for its leadership in the burgeoning field of value-added agriculture, the Center has received several accolades, including two Extension Publication of the Year Awards and the 2002 Epsilon Sigma Phi Team Award; and

WHEREAS, given the energy and spirit of innovation that the Center for Profitable Agriculture has brought to bear in fulfilling its mission, there is little doubt that the Center has contributed in no small part to the recent increase in value-added agriculture in Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and congratulate the staff and leadership of the Center for Profitable Agriculture on the occasion of its tenth anniversary, thank them for their efforts on behalf of Tennessee's farmers, and wish them the very best in all their future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.