

TENNESSEE CENTURY FARMS

The Land • The People • The Legacy

A joint program of the MTSU Center for Historic Preservation and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture

Fall 2004

Vol. 1 Issue 2



Signs Bring Families to the Fairs

From Lake, Shelby, Johnson, Monroe, and 71 other counties, Century Farm families came to the fairs this summer and fall to claim their new signs—

bright yellow ones that announce to all passersby “This is a Century Farm.” More than 700 Century Farm family members who were honored by the fair boards, the Center for Historic Preservation (CHP) at Middle Tennessee State University, and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA) attended these special events. The farm owners proudly accepted their signs from Commissioner of Agriculture Ken Givens as Caneta Hankins, director of the Century Farms program at the CHP introduced those attending the ceremonies. Lynne Williams, fair administrator with TDA, transported the signs and worked closely with fair officials for months to arrange the events. Joe Gaines, assistant commissioner of marketing for TDA, was also on hand to greet the farm families. Presentations were made at the Appalachian Fair in Gray, the Tennessee Valley Fair in Knoxville, the Tennessee State Fair in Nashville, and the Mid-South Fair in Memphis. Additionally, presentations were made at the Wilson County Fair and the Charlotte (Dickson County) Bicentennial Celebration.

The ongoing Century Farm sign program is funded by the “Ag Tag” specialty license plate. Funds from the sale of Ag Tags go to the Agricultural Development fund, which supports statewide innovative marketing projects and activities. Century Farm families, including those who were awarded similar signs in the 1970s when the program began and those certified since, are all eligible to receive signs. Designations are made for farms over 100, 150, and 200 years. One sign is provided to each farm, compliments of the

TDA, though family members may purchase additional signs if they wish.

For those farm owners who could not attend the fair presentations, signs are being sent to county extension agencies, soil conservation districts, or other county offices for distribution. If you have not been contacted with information about where you may pick up your sign, please contact Lynne Williams at TDA. For the quickest response, please do not phone Ms. Williams, but e-mail her at Lynne.Williams@state.tn.us; send a fax to (615) 837-5194; or mail an inquiry to Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Ellington Agricultural Center, P.O. Box 40627, Nashville, TN 37204. There are many signs and many counties; thank you for your patience as their delivery is arranged. When you hear that your sign is available, please arrange to pick it up as soon as possible.



Century Farm owners pick up their signs at the annual lunch and presentation ceremony at the Wilson County Fair in Lebanon.

Century Farms (Certified from June to November 5, 2004)

ARNOLD FARM

County: Hawkins
Owner: Cordell Arnold
Date Founded: 1887

ASHBY FARM

County: Lincoln
Owner: Curtis L. Ashby
Date Founded: 1819

BAKER FARM F.L.P.

County: Smith
Owner: Jerry W. Baker
Date Founded: 1891

BATEMAN MILL-SULLIVAN FARM

County: Houston
Owners: Ralph and Laura Sullivan
Date Founded: 1841

CASTELLAW CORNER FARM

County: Haywood
Owners: Thomas Edward Castellaw,
Betty Castellaw Sims
Date Founded: 1903

CEDAR VIEW FARM

County: Sullivan
Owner: John Phillip Torbett
Date Founded: 1788

CROWNOVER FARM

County: Franklin
Owner: Ethel G. Crownover
Date Founded: 1880

GRIFFIN FARM

County: Obion
Owner: Laverne Griffin Forrester
Date Founded: 1887

HITCHCOCK FARM

County: White
Owner: Dorothy Diane Hitchcock
Clark
Date Founded: 1819

HUNT FARM

County: Gibson
Owners: David and Polly Hunt
Date Founded: 1901

JOHNNY SAMPLE FARM

County: Gibson
Owner: Johnny K. Sample
Date Founded: 1888

KNOB VIEW FARM

County: Washington
Owner: Marcella Thomas Epperson
Date Founded: 1848

LAGOON PLANTATION FARM

County: Haywood
Owners: Martha and Robert Bailey,
Louise Bailey Downing
Date Founded: 1828

MASENGILL FARMS

County: Sullivan
Owner: Sarah Lou Masengill-Bell
Date Founded: 1775

McLENNAN PLACE

County: Tipton
Owners: Durward and Jean-Leigh
McLennan
Date Founded: 1902

MICHAEL KROUSE FARM

County: Washington
Owners: Margaret and George Holley
Date Founded: 1801

MILLER FARM

County: Dyer
Owner: Elizabeth Miller
Date Founded: 1880

MIRES FARM

County: Wilson
Owner: Monty Mires
Date Founded: 1853

NEAS FARM

County: Cocke
Owners: Kevin R. and Hugh Glen
Neas
Date Founded: 1885

NICHOLS FARM

County: Montgomery
Owners: Mrs. Charles R. Nichols,
Mrs. Justine Nichols Jones
Date Founded: 1900

PIN HOOK FARM

County: Perry
Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Joe Burns
Sweeney, Donna Sweeney Carroll
Date Founded: 1889

PIONEER HOMESTEAD

County: Washington
Owners: Margaret and George Holley
Date Founded: 1886

RENNER FARM

County: Greene
Owner: J. B. Renner
Date Founded: 1877

RIDGE VALE FARM

County: Marshall
Owners: Thomas C. and William S. L.
Wilson
Date Founded: 1796

ROBERTSON FARM

County: Hardeman
Owner: Mr. Evelyn C. Robertson
Date Founded: 1888

SHACKELFORD SONS

County: Knox
Owners: Charlotte H. Shackelford,
Karen L. Shackelford Hodge,
Scott Monroe Shackelford
Date Founded: 1899

SIDELINE FARMS

County: Greene
Owner: Wade Collette
Date Founded: 1895

SUMMER CITY FARM

County: Bledsoe
Owners: Mr. and Mrs. Harold M.
Howser
Date Founded: 1902

SUNLIT HILL FARMS

County: Smith
Owners: Mr. and Mrs. Charles M.
Beasley, Jessica Lynne Beasley,
Ted Maxey Beasley
Date Founded: 1803

SWEATT FARM

County: Henry
Owner: Charles A. Sweatt
Date Founded: 1858

TOSH FARM

County: Gibson
Owner: Leon Tosh
Date Founded: 1874

WILEY FARM

County: Lincoln
Owners: Don L. and Billy Joe Wiley
Date Founded: 1878

The Tennessee Ag Tag!

Consider purchasing an Ag Tag license plate in 2005 and help fund projects including 4-H, FFA, and the Century Farm sign program.





Four generations of the Baker family (along with the family border collies) are pictured with the Baker Farm (1891) landscape in the background. The late William Campbell Baker Jr. is standing. Jerry Baker, grandson Mitchell, and sons Philip and Danny carry on the family tradition.

Photo courtesy of Baker Family



The counties with the largest numbers of Century Farms are as follows:

Wilson - 57

Greene - 40

Smith - 39

McMinn - 37

Obion - 33

Robertson - 29

Blount - 28

Claiborne - 28

Williamson - 28

Giles - 25

Rutherford - 25



Three generations of the Bailey J. Clifton family of Cliftwood Farm (founded 1833 in Tipton County) receive their sign at the Mid-South Fair in Memphis.

Thanks to Patricia Wells for photographing the Memphis event.



Mr. and Mrs. John B. Conger and daughter Lane of the Beechlawn Stock Farm (1808) in Lincoln County attended the Tennessee State Fair in Nashville to receive their sign from Commissioner Ken Givens.

Thanks to Nancy Morgan and Tammy Allison for photographing the Nashville event.



Mrs. Agnes Hunter Powell receives her sign from Stanley Trout, Tennessee Department of Agriculture, as other Dickson County Century Farmers await their turn. The event honoring Dickson County Century Farms was part of the Charlotte Bicentennial Celebration.

Thanks to Michael Gavin for photographing the Charlotte event.



Hugh and Ruth McQueen accept the sign for the McQueen Farm in Loudon County. Just one week prior to this presentation at the Tennessee Valley Fair in Knoxville, the McQueens were married on the farm. They reported that three friends and 32 cows witnessed the event.

Thanks to Lisa Oakley for photographing the Knoxville event.

Did You Know?

The oldest Century Farm in Tennessee is the Masengill Farm in Sullivan County, which was founded in 1775, one year before the Declaration of Independence was signed and 21 years before Tennessee became a state.

Before Tennessee became a state in 1796, 30 Century Farms had already been established in what would become counties of east and middle Tennessee.

Before the Civil War, more farms (28) were established in 1850 than in any other year. In 1866, the year following the end of the Civil War, 32 Century Farms were founded. In the following decade, 176 Century Farms were created.



Sarah Lou Masengill-Bell, owner of the oldest Century Farm in Tennessee, receives her sign from Commissioner Ken Givens at the Appalachian State Fair in Gray.

Photo by Kris Hinds, Appalachian RC&D

This Tennessee Century Farms newsletter is produced as a public service by the Center for Historic Preservation at MTSU in cooperation with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture.

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The Tennessee Century Farms Program, a joint effort of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture and the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University, documents, recognizes, interprets, and supports the conservation of farms that have been in continuous production and owned by the same family for at least 100 years.

Please direct comments and inquiries regarding applications, existing farm files, and this newsletter to:

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Center for Historic Preservation
Middle Tennessee State University, Box 80
Murfreesboro, TN 37132
chankins@mtsu.edu
(615) 898-2947

Please direct inquiries about Century Farm signs to:

LYNNE WILLIAMS
Tennessee Department of Agriculture
Ellington Agricultural Center, P.O. Box 40627
Nashville, TN 37204
Lynne.Williams@state.tn.us
Fax: (615) 837-5194

This newsletter may also be viewed online at <http://histpres.mtsu.edu/histpres>. Click on "CHP Initiatives" and the "Tennessee Century Farms Program."

Note: If you attended one of the regional fair sign presentations and have not received your photograph, please contact Caneta Hankins.

**Happy Holidays
and a Prosperous 2005**

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