third Thursday

THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE UT
INSTITUTE of AGRICULTURE

JUNE 2012

4-H'ers and Social Media, inside

From the Chancellor

Larry Arrington

I want to thank everyone who participated in the first UT-wide employee engagement survey. In May, we presented the UTIA results of this survey at an open forum in Knoxville. If you haven't viewed the survey results, I encourage you to do so. The May presentation and survey results may be found at http://tiny.utk.edu/empsurvey.

Survey responses at 75 percent and higher are described as exceptional. The range of 54 to 45 percent represents a yellow flag; less than 45 percent, a red flag.

On our strengths, I am pleased with the pride that 86 percent of survey respondents said they have about the institute, and the understanding 90 percent said they have about how their job contributes to the UTIA mission. Seventy-five percent of UTIA employees indicated they have satisfaction with their jobs, and 84 percent indicated an appreciation for being given the responsibility and freedom to do their work.

I also learned about areas where improvement is needed. These include compensation (35 percent), adequate staffing (37 percent), a better orientation process (45 percent), and open communication and dialogue (54 percent). **We are striving to make improvements in these areas.** We continue to work with the Tennessee Higher Education Commission on staffing and workload issues, and we are developing a workload-based option for non-formula funded units. We are also reviewing current orientation programs and giving thought to an institute-wide orientation process. Regarding communication, we plan to solicit input from faculty and staff on additional communication methods. **Your opinions are important, and I want you to know we are listening to them and acting on them.**

I am pleased that Governor Haslam and the Tennessee Legislature have approved a 2.5 percent across-the-board pay raise for our workforce that is expected to take place July 1. We will be adding funding to create merit raises, as well. **These increases are certainly well deserved for what you do for the institute every day.**

Go Vols,

Robert Burns

A delegation from the Croatian food industry giant Agrokor visited UT Extension and toured East Tennessee in May. Agrokor is seeking a partnership with Extension.

Our Growing International Ties

In May, UT Extension hosted a delegation from Agrokor, Croatia's largest privately held company. Employing more than 35,000 people and with over $5 billion in annual sales, Agrokor is the leading food industry and retail group in the former Yugoslavia. Agrokor's operations span beef, dairy and swine production, more than 40,000 hectares of agricultural crop production, value-added food, wine, water and edible oils, exports and end sales through a network of wholesale and retail stores of varying sizes.

Realizing that acquiring the latest knowledge in scientific agricultural production and processing is central to success, Agrokor has established a continuing education program for its employees. **Agrokor has approached UT Extension with the goal of establishing a partnership that benefits both Croatia and Tennessee.** A memorandum of understanding is being developed between UT Extension and Agrokor that will establish a partnership in which UT Extension serves as a resource on production agriculture topics, while Agrokor shares its know-how on areas of production and value-added processing with Tennessee. (Contact Robert Burns, Extension, for more information.)

continued page 3

Going Digital

Starting with the August issue, *Third Thursday* will be distributed by email. The change from print to digital will allow color photos and more timely information. Our July issue will have more details about the upcoming change.

What's News

» In an effort to help pet owners celebrate the lives of their companion animals, both living and deceased, **the Veterinary Social Work program in the College of Veterinary Medicine will host its summer Pet Memorial Celebration from 6 to 8 p.m., Friday, July 20th.** The event will be held in the college's Sequoyah Room and is open to all.

» **Chuck Denney**, television and radio news producer in Marketing and Communications, **received an ACE Gold Award for script writing** for visual media for a news story about the alleged ghost of a German prisoner at an World War II internment camp in Crossville. The site is now part of the Clyde M. York 4-H Center. This is the second consecutive year he has won the award. **Denney and** Marketing and Communications Assistant Director **Doug Edlund received an ACE Silver Award for television programming** for a UT Connections episode from Summer Celebration. ACE is the Association for Communications Excellence, an international association. **UT Connections is a program Denney and Edlund produce representing the institute and airing on television stations statewide.**

» In a competition coordinated by the East Tennessee chapter of the Public Relations Society of America, **Margot Emery**, senior writer/producer, **and Jean Hulsey**, senior graphic designer, of Marketing and Communications **received awards of excellence for** *Third Thursday* **and the institute magazine,** *Tennessee Land, Life and Science*. **Emery received an award of merit for an article** in the fall issue of the magazine, titled "Jump starting research spinoffs." **Denney and Edlund received an award of quality for a news story** they produced about Winston Golf and the institute's turfgrass team.

What Can You Do With An Agriculture Degree? Just About Anything!

Caula Beyl

by Caula Beyl, Dean, College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

Agriculture degrees are a hot commodity these days, as career opportunities abound for graduating students. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimated 54,400 openings for those graduating with bachelor's degrees in food, renewable energy and environmental disciplines between 2005 and 2010 (http://faeis.usda.gov/supplydemand/2005-2010/). The factors driving that need are expected to continue.

Contrast this with the recent article posted on Yahoo! Education titled, "College majors that are useless" (http://education.yahoo.net/articles/most_useless_degrees.htm). The number one major listed was agriculture, and the evidence used to support the author's claim was the projected need for farm and ranch managers. **This underscores the widespread misperception of agriculture as consisting solely of "sows, cows and plows" when, in fact, agriculture spans a wide diversity of discipline areas from the most applied animal, crop and forest production to cutting-edge, highly technological fields.** Scientists with agriculture degrees work on developing new food products, designing biomass processes to generate biofuels and developing new ways to use the residual lignin. They also identify disease organisms that threaten food crops and forests, breed plants for enhanced disease and stress resistance, forecast impact of climate on agricultural production and market values, and ensure animal health.

A bachelor's degree in agriculture provides all the options of a liberal arts degree plus careers in specialty areas. With a bachelor's degree in agriculture, students with a business mindset can look forward to careers in sales, marketing, finance, insurance or production statistics. If they are creative and enjoy plants and people, opportunities abound to become landscape designers or managers of public gardens, nurseries, golf courses, sports fields or parks. If their ultimate goal is to earn a pre-professional degree and attend medical, dental, pharmacy or veterinary school, an agriculture degree is an ideal foundation because of the specialized advising all our students receive. If they are interested in making sure that the food supply is safe and nutritious, food science or animal science may be the specialty for them. If they are concerned about the environment, they may want to study soil conservation, forestry, wildlife or water quality, all of which are options in agriculture. There are even options that allow them to study agricultural and environmental policy development. With an agriculture degree, they can work with private firms, county agricultural offices, foundations, nature centers, educational institutions, nonprofit agencies, consulting firms, farms or even be self-employed. This list is much too short to do justice to all that they can do and where they can go. **So, what can you do with an agriculture degree? Just about anything you can imagine.**

The UT Farmer's Market continues from 4 to 7 p.m. each Wednesday in the UT Gardens. Come join the fun!

International *from page 1*

This partnership with Extension is the latest example of UTIA's growing international ties, which are focused on mutually beneficial exchanges. Such partnerships are a goal for the institute and its faculty and staff for the benefits they bring to Tennessee.

"We operate more than ever in a global environment," says Chancellor Larry Arrington. "It is important that our faculty and students have the opportunity to learn about the global economy as it relates to Tennessee. Engaging with universities and businesses around the globe helps the Institute of Agriculture better serve our clientele, and it raises awareness of the quality of our programs."

Other ties that are being formed include:

• **Exchanges of scientists and students in areas of biofuels, wood processing, and statistical process control.** These exchanges are with the University of Salzburg and BOKU University in Vienna, Austria. The two universities are also collaborating with the institute to host international conferences on processing technologies in the bio-based industries (Tim Young, Joe Bozell and Adam Taylor, FWF, CRC).

• **Training in scientific writing and ongoing research with scientists on downy mildew at Germany's Leibniz University in Hannover and Hohenheim University in Stuttgart. Also training in how to write for Western journals at six universities in China.** Concepts learned in teaching are also guiding journal- and grant-writing training of CASNR graduate students. A partnership with one Chinese university is in place, and potential partnerships with the others are being explored (Bob Trigiano, EPP; Caula Beyl, CASNR).

• **Potential collaboration by CASNR with the College of Agriculture at the Federal University of Manaus in Amazônas, Brazil.** Brazil wants 100,000 of its students to participate in international exchanges in the next few years. Partnerships are also being explored with Brazil's equivalent of the USDA, known as INPA, which employs 1,000 people (John Stier, CASNR; Don Hodges, FWF).

• **Opportunities with Chile to develop articulation programs in food safety and agriculture** (John Stier).

• **Discussions with family-owned Winston Golf of Germany to develop a college or certificate program in golf course management. Also work toward establishing a certificate program for tropical turf managers** (John Sorochan).

If you are engaged in partnerships or mutually beneficial collaborations with another country, please contact Margot Emery, memery@tennessee.edu. Emery is developing an article for the fall issue of *Tennessee Land, Life and Science* about the institute's international programs.

4-H'ers to Train County Officials in Social Media Use

TransCanada, a North American energy infrastructure company, **recently presented a check for nearly $30,000 to be shared between the 4-H programs in Tennessee and Mississippi.**

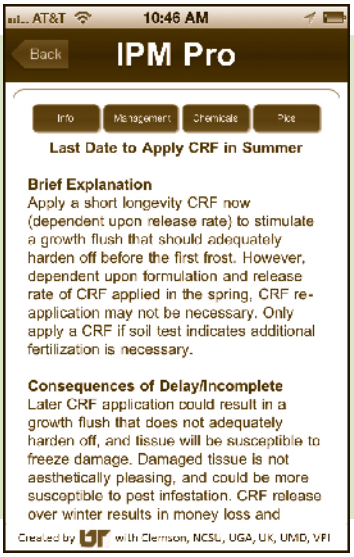
The money will be used to fund a program that uses 4-H members to train county officials on the role of social media, specifically, as a communication tool when responding to emergencies.

"We are honored to be associated with the Mississippi and Tennessee 4-H Foundations," says TransCanada's James Ethridge, area manager for Tennessee and Mississippi. **"We believe in investing in the communities where we live and work, especially when it comes to youth organizations."**

TransCanada is a leader in North American energy infrastructure including natural gas and oil pipelines, power generation and gas storage facilities. **TransCanada is the parent company of ANR, which has a presence in both states, with two compressor facilities and more than 300 miles of pipeline in each.**
–Ginger Rowsey

Mike Davidson

Go, team! The 2012 UT Food Science and Technology team finished in second place at the Institute of Food Technologists Student Association Midwest Region College Bowl Competition in Lexington, Ky. The event is a knowledge-recall competition among IFT-approved food science departments across the U.S. Teams compete in regional meets, with the winners advancing to a national competition. The CASNR team defeated last year's champion team as they advanced to their second place finish. –April Moore Massengill



Team Develops First Mobile App for Landscape and Nursery Professionals

Green Industry professionals often find themselves in the field needing immediate access to pest and plant disease information and plant care recommendations. Or, they need to be alerted when destructive pests emerge in their area. **Thanks to a collaborative effort of horticulturists, entomologists and plant pathologists at seven land-grant universities, now there's an app for that.**

The institute and its partners, Clemson, North Carolina State University, University of Georgia, University of Kentucky, University of Maryland and Virginia Polytechnic Institute, have **developed the first integrated pest management mobile app for nursery growers, landscapers, arborists, Extension agents and students.** The app includes the major horticultural practices and disease and insect recommendations.

"Nursery and landscape professionals conduct business on the go; they truly have mobile offices—often their trucks," explains Amy Fulcher, lead developer and institute plant scientist.

"IPM*Pro* dramatically simplifies day-to-day plant care and pest control decision-making in the field. It provides a library of information in the convenience of an app, and features real-time alerts to help professionals stay on top of emerging pests and timely plant care."

This is the first application of its kind developed in the U.S., and it was made possible through funding by the institute through its Extension and AgResearch units and in cooperation with the UT Research Foundation. IPM*Pro* costs $24.99 and is available through Apple and Android marketplaces http://www.IPMProApp.com. It will soon be joined by IPM*Lite* for homeowners.
–Lorna Norwood

UTIA News is published monthly by the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture. Send comments and suggestions to Margot Emery, memery@tennessee.edu. The University of Tennessee is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA institution in the provision of its education and employment programs and services. All qualified applicants will receive equal consideration for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental disability, or covered veteran status. Visit the Institute of Agriculture on the Internet at http://agriculture.tennessee.edu | E11-1101-00-001-12

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