

# PUBLIC FORUM BRIEFING



Kentucky Agricultural Council  
Task Force on the Future of Agriculture  
August and September 2012

# Task Force on the Future of Agriculture Public Forum Agenda



- Welcome & Introduction
- Overview of Process
- Discussion of Topic Areas
- Public Comments
  - Feedback on Existing Plan
  - New Ideas to Add to Plan
- Close

# Strategic Plan Process



- **PURPOSE:** Create focus for future of Kentucky Agriculture and rural communities
- **LAUNCHED:** November 2011 Ag Summit
- **WHO:** Over 500 Ky. Ag leaders attended
- **CHALLENGE:** Build upon success of 2007 Plan
- **LEADERSHIP:** Kentucky Agricultural Council

# Planning Process: Participation



- AgriBusiness Association of Kentucky
- Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative Association
- Center for Rural Development
- Commodity Growers Cooperative
- Community Farm Alliance
- Council for Burley Tobacco, Inc.
- Eastern Kentucky University Department of Ag Farm Credit Services
- Jackson Purchase Agricultural Credit Association
- Kentucky Agricultural Development Board
- Kentucky Agricultural Finance Corporation
- Kentucky Agricultural Resource Development Auth.
- Kentucky Alternative Livestock Association
- Kentucky Association FFA
- Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts
- Kentucky Association of Equine Practitioners
- Kentucky Bankers Association
- Kentucky Cattlemen's Association
- Kentucky Corn Growers Association
- Kentucky Dairy Development Council
- Kentucky Department of Agriculture
- Kentucky Division of Conservation
- Kentucky Equine Education Project
- Kentucky Farm Bureau
- Kentucky Farm Service Agency
- Kentucky Feed and Grain Association
- Kentucky Forest Industries Association
- Kentucky Goat Producers Association
- Kentucky Horse Council
- Kentucky Horticulture Council
- Kentucky Nursery and Landscape Association
- Kentucky Pork Producers Association
- Kentucky Poultry Federation
- Kentucky Sheep and Wool Producers Association
- Kentucky Small Grain
- Kentucky Soybean Association
- Kentucky Thoroughbred Association
- Kentucky Veterinary Medical Association
- Kentucky Vocational Agriculture Teachers Assoc.
- Kentucky Women in Agriculture
- Kentucky Woodland Owners Association
- Morehead State University
- Murray State University Breathitt Veterinary Ctr.
- Murray State University School of Agriculture
- PACE Board
- University of Kentucky College of Agriculture
- USDA NASS Kentucky Field Office
- USDA NRCS
- Western Kentucky University Dept. of Agriculture

# Planning Process: Vision Statement



*Together we will develop the conditions that will enable our agricultural sectors and our rural communities to prosper.*

– Language adopted by Task Force Members

# Planning Process: Principles



- ***Guide process, ensure inclusive thrust:***
  - Focus on planning for prosperity of agricultural sectors *in general*, so all segments will benefit
  - Economic future of rural communities and agricultural sectors are linked
  - Seek a sustainable agreement to reflect the interests of all participants; be enduring
  - Incorporate priorities, actions & benchmarks of Plan into Plans of all participating organization
  - Create a “living document”

# Plan Operating Procedures



- ***KAC Board of Directors:*** oversee process
- ***Task Force Co-chairs:*** provide day-to-day guidance and operating support
- ***Task Force Members:*** Responsible for developing Plan, identifying ideas and opportunities important to *their organization's* membership

# Timeline & Steps in Process



- **February 21:** KAC convenes process with 70+ Ag organizations
- **Initial Task Force Meeting (Elizabethtown)**
  - Adopted Vision and Principles
  - Presentations by KAC leadership and Ag experts, overview of process
  - Reviewed 2007 Strategic Plan & Progress Report
  - Brainstorming & visioning exercises surfaced initial challenges needing to be addressed
  - Written questionnaire distributed



# Timeline & Steps in Process



- Questionnaire input sought:
  - Critical challenges / opportunities facing ***ALL*** agricultural sectors?
  - Challenges / opportunities to address for ***individual members' sectors*** to prosper?
  - Critical challenges / opportunities that must be addressed for ***rural communities*** to prosper?

# Timeline & Steps in Process



- **May 30: 2nd Task Force Meeting (Hopkinsville)**
  - Task Force Member questionnaire results summarized
  - Discussion and feedback on Themes and Issues emerging from questionnaire responses
  - Task Force voting process grouped outcomes into 7 topic areas
  - Task Force met in break-out groups to begin developing strategies for each area

# Timeline & Steps in Process



- **July 11: 3rd Task Force Mtg. (Lexington)**
  - All-day session in Committees to develop preliminary Strategies, Key Actions, Benchmarks for each topic area as “Building Blocks” for Plan
  - Preliminary results from 7 Committees reported to full Task Force and discussed
- **August 16: 4th Task Force Mtg. (Louisville)**
  - Revisiting “Charge” to Task Force
  - Overview “Economics of Ky Agriculture”
  - Further development of Plan “Building Blocks”

# Timeline & Steps in Process



- **August - September:** Seven Public Forums for input on plan -- to solicit fresh ideas not yet considered
- **October:** Task Force to review Public Forum input, Task Force Co-chairs with KAC Board of Directors to finalize Plan
- **November 8:** Adopt Plan at 2012 Ag Summit
- **December - January:** Formal roll-out of Plan

# Developing the Plan



Ideas and elements generated by the Task Force *to date* represent key Building Blocks for the Plan!

. . . There's more yet to come.

# Plan “Building Blocks”



- Seven Topic Areas will focus the plan’s strategies, goals, actions and benchmarks:
  - 1) Consumer Outreach
  - 2) Education (Formal programs)
  - 3) Policy-maker Education
  - 4) New Markets Identification & Development
  - 5) Next Generation Farming
  - 6) Regional Agriculture and Rural Community Development
  - 7) Governmental Policies, Initiatives, Programs

# Plan “Building Blocks”



- Plan today is a *work-in-progress*
- Public input is vital to Plan’s success and credibility - help mold the final Plan!
- Plan serves as a “living document” for Kentucky Agriculture and rural communities.
- Plan identifies near-term goals *and* long-term continuing agenda - *revisit 2007 Goals & Actions, but also look to the future!*

# Next Steps



- After release, Kentucky Agricultural Council will advocate for *formal adoption & endorsement* of Plan by key groups
- KAC will encourage individual Ag organizations to incorporate Plan's priorities & actions into their OWN plans
- All Kentucky Agricultural interests need to work together for *implementation* of Plan



# Topic Area #1: Consumer Outreach



## **GOAL 1:**

- Encourage consumers to value agriculture as measured by trust in KY Ag producers & products, knowledge of economic impact of agriculture in KY and at county level, and in terms of necessity

# Topic Area #1: Consumer Education (cont.)



## ***Specific Actions:***

- A. Consumer survey to benchmark attitudes & preferences; draw on pre-existing data
- B. Unified approach building on consumer dialogue w/ KAC member organizations; promote use via web sites, etc.
- C. Coordinate marketing & promotional efforts of KAC members w/ support of KADF
- D. Create an “Ag Elevator Speech” for Members
- E. Seek ways to establish 2-way communication w/ consumers

# Topic Area #1: Consumer Outreach



## GOAL 2:

Develop a state-wide network of trained Ag spokespeople to promote education *about* Agriculture, reaching youth and adults

- Deliver a unified, positive, consistent, informative message about agriculture that cuts across organizations, while acknowledging the general value of Agriculture

# Topic Area #1: Consumer Outreach



## *Specific Actions:*

- A. Develop a speakers bureau to deliver Ag's message
  - Main Street
  - Livestock Coalition
  - Farm Bureau (LEAD)
  - Ky Ag Leadership Program
  - Ag Business Association
  - Community Leadership Groups
  - Social Media
  - CES Agents
  - Adult Ag Teachers
- B. Develop / promote a state-wide youth agriculture leadership program (“Ky County Ag Ambassadors”)

# Topic Area #2: Education (Formal Programs)



## GOAL 1:

Promote, expand & advocate for 2012 Dept of Education program - “Unbridled Learning Initiative” (College & Career Readiness Model)

### *Specific Actions:*

- A. Start new programs
- B. Facility improvements
- C. Magnet / Academy models (urban / rural)
- D. Update / upgrade curriculum (+ technology)
- E. Professional development

# Topic Area #2: Education (Formal Programs)



## **GOAL 2:**

Promote education IN agriculture (across all age and generational groups) including youth-oriented agricultural education to increase participation of non-farm families.

# Topic Area #2: Education (Formal Programs)



## *Specific Actions:*

- A. Develop Model (Year 1) [Coordinate across all commodity groups and agencies]
  - Youth activities
    - (4H, FFA, Ag in the Classroom, School Gardens, etc.)
  - Secondary Level Ag Education
    - (4H, FFA, IFAL Classroom Instruction, Supervised Ag Experience Programs)
  - Post-secondary Ag Programs
    - (Certificate programs, advanced degrees, KCTCS)
  - Adult / community education
    - (KCTCS, Young Farmer Associations)
- B. Promote Model (Year 2 and Beyond)

# Topic Area #3: Policy-maker Education



## GOAL:

Ensure all legislators and policy-makers at local, state and national levels understand the economic and community impact of of Kentucky's agricultural sector.

- “An implementation plan for the Strategic Plan”



# Topic Area #3: Policy-maker Education



## *Specific Actions:*

1. Establish contact list of policy-makers, broadly defined (beyond legislators to include ED, civic organizations, media, “influencers” etc.)
2. Hand-deliver Strategic Plan to policy-makers statewide and establish ongoing, personal communication
  - “Blanket the background” with presentations via all farm organizations: “Same message, over and over”.
  - Coordination of efforts among all commodity groups, KAC Members

# Topic Area #3: Policy-maker Education



3. Host regular informational meetings with policy-makers, civic & leadership organizations on economic impact of agriculture in *their* communities, updates on progress of Plan
  - Prepare skeleton script for all groups to use; include history of Master Settlement
  - Involve new farmers as “face of next generation”
4. Every KAC member organization should acknowledge and act on their personal stake in informing policy-makers about agriculture
5. Increase use of social media to present “the face of Kentucky Agriculture”

# Topic Area #4: New Market ID & Development



## GOALS:

Increase on-farm incomes and strengthen economic vitality of rural areas through continuous identification and development of new market opportunities

- New crops / commodities for farmers to produce
- New markets (buyers) for Kentucky output (local, regional, national or international)
- New market segmentation, differentiation (e.g. value-added production)

# Topic Area #4: New Market ID & Development



## *Specific Actions:*

A. Encourage and support new markets research that helps foster expanded production and increased sales.

- Specific markets & products
- Value Chains
- International exports
- Domestic sales to buyers outside of Kentucky
- Increase sales of Ky products to Kentucky buyers
  - Consumers / Institutions
- Best management and marketing practices

# Topic Area #4: New Market ID & Development



## *Illustrative Opportunity Areas*

- Bio-mass, bio-energy crops & bio-based products
- Wood products
- Equine
- Goats & Sheep
- Honey & Sorghum
- Vegetables
- Mushrooms
- Agri-tourism
- Specialty / niche products (e.g. Kentucky Chia)

# Topic Area #4: New Market ID & Development



## *Specific Actions:*

### B. Establish “Ag Partnership Business Center”

- Increase producers’ knowledge of diversification opportunities through classes, networking, technical assistance, etc.
- Understanding of wholesale & retail buyers’ expectations
- Opportunities for producers to develop business skills
- Regulatory Information
- Education about collaborative models

# Topic Area #4: New Market ID & Development



## *Specific Actions:*

C. Promote new international trade opportunities for Kentucky products

- All commodities and product areas
- All value-added items

D. Continue / expand support for diversification through value-added production

- Infrastructure needed to support value-added production, e.g. processing facilities, commercial kitchens, etc.

# Topic Area #5: Next Generation Farming



## GOAL 1

Make farming attractive to the Next Generation of both Full and Part-time aspirants

### *Specific Actions:*

- A. Coordinated marketing campaign - highlight young farmers who have chosen the profession
  - Coordinate with educational programs in HS
- B. Student loan forgiveness program for returning from college to agriculture.
  - Partnerships with transitioning farmers



# Topic Area #5: Next Generation Farming



## *Specific Actions:*

- C. Encourage intergenerational transfer of land through tax reform / incentives to farmers who sell land to new farmers
- D. Ensure new farmers know about and participate in existing assistance programs
- E. Mentoring of new farmers via existing ag groups, including with social media and face-to-face support, i.e. “land-link program”.

# Topic Area #5: Next Generation Farming



## GOAL 2

Assure long-term sustainability of Kentucky's agricultural assets (land, water quality, etc.)

### *Specific Actions:*

- A. Promote participation in water quality plans by 100% of farm operations.
- B. Summit on future availability of water for Ag production & processing
- C. Promote full funding for PACE program to assure productive land resources are protected for the future.

# Topic Area #5: Next Generation Farming



## GOAL 3

Enhance risk management and financing choices for Kentucky farmers

### *Specific Actions:*

- A. Expand crop insurance to include additional commodities (e.g. livestock)
- B. Tax incentives for farmers who sell land to active producers
- C. Educational / professional development for lenders on agricultural trends, practices, emerging issues

# Topic Area #5: Next Generation Farming



## GOAL 4

Enhance new farmer educational programming

### *Specific Actions:*

- A. Focused recruitment of new farmers to existing Ag Leadership programs
- B. Expand Kentucky Farm “START” program
- C. Expand programs for new farmers to “learn the business” (e.g. apprenticeships with experienced farmers), learn management skills needed for success
- D. Increase opportunities for bi-lingual education of new farmers

# Topic Area #6: Regional Agricultural & Rural Community Development



**GOAL:** [NOTE: Hold-over from 2007 Plan]

*Specific Strategies:*

- A. Promote agriculturally related Community & Regional-based planning & development.
- B. Assist rural communities in addressing challenges associated with expansion of urban and suburban localities into rural areas.

# Topic Area #7: Government Policies, Initiatives & Programs



**GOAL:** Develop policies that support the overall health (economic & environmental) of farms in Kentucky, as well as lead to increased net farm income

## *Specific Actions:*

- A. Ensure an effective, properly funded Agricultural Development Fund to serve the broad interests of Agriculture on local, regional and statewide levels
- B. Investigate additional funding sources beyond the Master Settlement Fund

# Topic Area #7: Government Policies, Initiatives & Programs



## *Specific Actions:*

- D. Sustain efforts to increase access to large animal vets throughout Kentucky
- E. Expand Kentucky's role in Biotechnology
- F. Initiatives to address labor and workforce development in Kentucky
- G. Initiatives to address tax policies affecting Kentucky agriculture
- H. Initiatives to address regulatory issues affecting Kentucky agriculture
- I. Policies / Initiatives to address water resource management

# In Conclusion



- Questions about *process* to date?
- Questions about *format* for this Forum and ways to express public input?
  - Feedback on existing Plan
  - New, fresh ideas for Plan
  - Questionnaire (leave behind or send)
  - Web Site



# Input on Plan “Building Blocks”



- Seven Topic Areas will focus the plan’s strategies, goals, actions and benchmarks:
  - 1) Consumer Outreach
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# Input New Ideas



??????

# THANK YOU!



*The Kentucky Agricultural Council  
and its Task Force on  
the Future of Agriculture  
appreciate your attendance  
and input!*