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Ford To Represent TSU As CARET Delegate

Former State Conservationist James Ford will represent Tennessee State University as a delegate to the Council for Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching (CARET) for 2011. Ford, who served as Tennessee's State Conservationist from 1997 to 2007, was recently selected for the voluntary position by Dr. Chandra Reddy, Dean and Director of Research and Administrator of Extension in the Tennessee State University School of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences.

As a CARET Delegate, Ford will collaborate with agricultural producers, agribusiness leaders, local officials, consumers, and members of land-grant university advisory groups to enhance national support and understanding of the land-grant mission and involvement in the food and agricultural system. Federal dollars, administered through USDA, go directly to the land-grant colleges of agriculture to support "agricultural programs" as mandated by US Congress in 1862 and in 1890.

"As a second generation graduate of an 1890 land-grant institution, I believe in the mission and the goals of these institutions," he said. "The land-grant institution I attended afforded me the opportunity to obtain a quality education, and I would like to do all I can to advance their pursuits."

Ford, who worked with United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for 38 years in the National Resources Conservation Service, will participate in CARET activities regionally and nationally throughout the calendar year, including functions at Tennessee State University. He will work closely with Dr. Reddy as well as interact with members of Congress and other political officials.

A native of Jakin, Georgia, Ford has received *The Hammer Award* for his work on flood recovery efforts after Hurricane Alberto. He also received *The USDA Outreach Award* from the U.S. Forest Service for assisting and empowering communities in Tennessee.

Founded in 1982, CARET is a grassroots organization created by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) that works with national agricultural organizations to promote agriculture.