

2016 Nomination Form and Guidelines
TENNESSEE SMALL FARMER OF THE YEAR AWARD
Tennessee State University College of Agriculture, Human and Natural Sciences
Cooperative Extension Program

Introduction and Purpose

“Tennessee Small Farmer of the Year Award” program is a joint effort by the various agriculture agencies in Tennessee. The purpose of this program is to identify and recognize exemplary efforts of small farmers throughout Tennessee.

In order to assist in our efforts, the Tennessee State University, College of Agriculture, Human and Natural Sciences, invites you to support small farmers by participating in the Twelfth Annual Small Farmer of the Year Award Program.

You may nominate one or more outstanding small farmer(s) from your county for each of the four categories, namely, **Best management practices, Alternative enterprises, Innovative marketing and Most improved beginning small farmer of the year** to compete for the “Small Farmer of the Year” award. One nominee will be chosen as the winner from each category, and an overall winner will be awarded as the “Tennessee Small Farmer of the Year.”

The awards will be presented at the Tennessee State University, College of Agriculture, Human and Natural Sciences Cooperative Extension Program’s “Small Farm Expo and Awards Luncheon,” to be held at the TSU Agricultural Research and Education Center in Nashville, Tennessee (adjacent to the TSU Main Campus) at 1519 Ed Temple Blvd. on July 21, 2016. Your support is critical to the success of this program. The nomination form and eligibility guidelines are enclosed in this packet. The completed nomination, including any supplemental materials, must be received by Thursday, May 12, 2016 at the address below.

Eligibility

The farm operated by the nominee must:

- a) Be located in the State of Tennessee;
- b) Depend on family members for the majority of labor and/or management;
- c) Be operated by a family who depends on farming for a significant portion (not necessarily a majority) of its income; and
- d) Have direct or indirect gross annual farm sales of less than \$250,000 (based on an average of the past three years).

Nominations

Nomination is open to any producer who meets the criteria specified for each/any category, and may be made by an agency and/or the nominee. The nominator must include:

- a) A typed letter (no longer than two pages) that thoroughly describes the nominee or operation;
- b) A nomination form signed by the nominator and/or nominee.

Supplemental materials including up to 2 letters of support from sponsors and/or county officials are strongly encouraged.

Please return completed form and any supplemental materials by Thursday, May 12, 2016 to:

Mr. Christopher Robbins Extension Associate Farm Operations
Tennessee State University
Cheatham County Agriculture Research and Education Center
3101 River Road Ashland City, TN 37015
Telephone: (615)-792-5744
E-mail: crobbs@tnstate.edu

2016 NOMINATION FORM
TENNESSEE SMALL FARMER OF THE YEAR AWARD

All information reported and received is confidential. The award committee may ask to verify income if necessary. Please check the appropriate nomination categories:

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

ALTERNATIVE ENTERPRISES

INNOVATIVE MARKETING

**MOST IMPROVED BEGINNING
SMALL FARMER**

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Number of acres in farming operation: _____

Number of acres owned: _____ Rented: _____

Main Farming Enterprise: _____ Other Produce: _____

County where farm is located: _____

Please check the program supporters/agencies that have worked with the nominee:

- TSU/UT Extension Service
- Farm Service Agency
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Tennessee Department of Agriculture
- Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation
- Rural Development
- Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency
- TSU/UT Research or Teaching Staff
- Other (please specify) _____

Signature of Nominee _____

Signature of Nominator _____

Suggested Supplemental Materials

Supplemental materials are not required, but are strongly encouraged and may lend strength to the application. Consider supplemental materials such as:

- photos or videos of the operation, products, and/or practices implemented;
- advertising or other marketing documentation;
- newspaper articles or other mass media coverage;
- letters of support or other testimonies from cooperators.

Category Specific Considerations:

Best Management Practices

- List environmental and conservation practices implemented and acreage involved (e.g. field borders, riparian forest buffers, exclusion of livestock from water sources, rotational grazing, etc.).
- Include any documentation of benefits derived from practices (on-farm and off-farm benefits).
- Describe any involvement in research/applied research/demonstration on the farm.
- Did the nominee overcome any obstacles to implement BMPs?
- Has the nominee participated in a watershed conservation effort?

Innovative Marketing

- Describe marketing efforts (internet, direct ads, newspaper, TV, etc).
- Has the nominee developed his/her own product line?
- How has the farm operation impacted the local economy?
- What is the estimated income growth due to marketing strategy (%)?
- How has customer satisfaction and/or consumer feedback affected the nominee's marketing strategy?

Alternative Enterprises

- How many types of non-traditional items are produced/ marketed, and has the nominee done this through need (e.g. lost tobacco base) or to fill a foreseen niche (e.g. freshwater Prawns)?
- Describe the alternative enterprise(s) and how long the nominee has been involved (growing/producing, processing, packaging, distribution, etc).
- What type of consumer feedback system (if any) is implemented?

Most Improved Beginning Small Farmer

- Must be at least 18 years old.
- Must have less than 10 years of Agricultural Experience.
- Describe improvement in production or farm management practices.
- Provide potential reasons for the improvement in the operation.

This award program is open to all small farmers without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or family status.