

Strategic Marketing Workshop and Farm Tour to Feature Profit-Enhancing Tactics for Livestock Producers

Livestock producers and wholesale buyers of animal products are invited to attend a Strategic Marketing Workshop and Farm Tour on September 21, 2012, from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. The workshop will be held at American Legion Post 76, 506 Washington Street, Concordia, KS, and the farm tour will follow at Lazy S Farms, 616 N. 1000th Road, Glasco, Kansas.

The workshop will give livestock producers the information and tools necessary to incorporate new marketing strategies, such as direct and niche marketing, into their existing operations in order to help increase profit margins, manage risk in tough times, and expand their customer base. The workshop will also provide an opportunity for producers and buyers to connect and explore opportunities to work together to bring local meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products to consumers in Kansas and beyond.

Speakers will share their knowledge and experience on topics such as business planning and enterprise analysis, creating a successful “brand” and identifying the best market for your products, and regulations pertaining to direct marketing livestock products. Speakers include livestock producers who are successfully utilizing strategic marketing techniques to increase revenue, representatives from the Kansas Department of Agriculture who will answer questions about marketing and regulations, and representatives from Kansas State Research and Extension who will share helpful information for farmers and ranchers.

All types of livestock and livestock products will be represented at the workshop, including cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, turkeys, and chickens, and meat, eggs, cheese, and milk. A broad spectrum of animal husbandry philosophies, including grass-fed, organic, humanely-raised, pasture-raised, and heritage breeds, will also be represented.

An afternoon tour of Lazy S Farms will provide a close-up look at how one farm has incorporated direct and niche marketing into their operation. Larry and Madonna Sorell breed and raise six varieties of heritage livestock on their farm outside of Glasco, KS, including Red Wattle pigs, Standard Bronze turkeys, Katahdin sheep, Jacob sheep, Scottish Highland cattle, and Large Black hogs.

The Sorells have been featured in Time magazine, the New York Times, and the Kansas City Star, and their Red Wattle pork is featured in some of the finest restaurants in the world. The Sorells sell their products through a variety of outlets including Heritage Foods USA, directly from the farm, the

Salina Farmers Market, Prairie Land natural grocery store in Salina, and Local Burger restaurant in Lawrence. The Sorells also run a bed and breakfast on the farm, and are working with a number of young farmers in their area to bring a new generation of farmers into raising heritage breeds.

The cost of the workshop and farm tour is \$35, and includes a BBQ lunch provided by Heavy's BBQ, a morning snack, and an old-fashioned ice cream social at the end of the farm tour to cap-off the day. Workshop attendees will also receive a free copy of KRC's, hot-off-the-press, Finding Your Niche: A Direct Marketing Guide for Kansas Farmers. The 150+ page guide is chock-full of information guaranteed to help farmers and ranchers get successfully established in direct marketing.

To register, or for more information, please visit the Kansas Rural Center website, www.kansasruralcenter.org/, or call 785-873-3431. Registration deadline is Friday, September 14.

The workshop is funded by a USDA Risk Management Grant to the Kansas Rural Center, and co-sponsored by the Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops.