

Regional Directors/Program Leaders Meeting  
October 8, 2007

Present:

Charles Goan, Clyde Chesney, Latif Lighari, Mike Gordon, Herb Lester, Connie Heiskell, Richard Powell, Jim Stewart, David Perrin, Gena Southall, Patsy Ezell, Linda Bower, Neal Smith, Martin Koon, Roy Bullock, Thelma Hunter-Sanders, Shirley Hastings, Tim Cross, Tim Fawver, Herb Byrd, Alice Ann Moore, Brenda Voiles, Randol Waters.

1. **Ag Census Materials**

Cross announced there were ag census posters for pickup in his office.

2. **Biofuels Update**

Cross gave an update on the biofuels initiative. Contracts are being established to produce switchgrass which will be turned into "grassoline." Contracts will be focused on 30-mile radius around Vonore, TN. Hopefully additional plants will be developed across the state. David Perrin is on initiative committee. See website: <http://www.utbioenergy.org/> Target date for pilot plant to start up is within 18-24 months. Fact sheets will be coming out.

3. **EPA Audit**

UT Knoxville signed on to an amnesty program for an EPA audit. Anything found will have a period of time to comply, and will not be fined. Two training sessions for environmental compliance are planned for 4-H managers and regional staff (1) October 31 in Crossville (will include Greeneville center) (2) another one will be scheduled in Milan (in coordination with Experiment Station). Actual audit will be conducted by safety staff in December. Process to be wrapped up by middle of February.

4. **Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)**

There is a university group working on an emergency management plan to describe how each department will operate during a major emergency. Extension plans to do training and then ask each county, regional office and 4-H Center to develop their own plan.

5. **Planning and Reporting Instructions**

Cross said that the instructions for planning and reporting will be coming out.

6. **West TN 4-H Center**

Goan and Dr. DiPietro met with Speaker Jimmy Naifeh and other West TN legislators to discuss the proposed 4-H Center in Haywood County. It was a good meeting, and the folks in Haywood County did a good job. Not sure where it will show up in the President's budget request.

7. **4-H Camp Participation**

Goan said that a couple of the 4-H Centers have recently required some subsidizing due to low participation at camps. Goan will be looking at the camp budgets on a quarterly basis,

and there is now a system in place to project where we will be at the end of the fiscal year. A meeting with camp managers was also held, and the managers will also be getting the quarterly reports.

Goan recently asked Moore to put together a report of camp participation by counties, and the report was handed out to regional directors and program leaders, and discussed. Goan said there will be no more subsidies to the camps. The group discussed the reasons for low camp participation – buses not being full, lack of county enthusiasm, parents don't trust people they don't know, etc. Moore is also concerned about all other 4-H participation - Roundup, Honor Club, etc.

Goan said that he wanted to make the regional staff aware of the dilemma and what the camp managers are facing. Goan asked regional directors and program leaders to help with the camp participation.

8. **New Worker Orientation Spring Dates**

Byrd and Waters discussed possible dates for the new worker orientation. The group decided on March 4-6, 2008. Will use vans to transport from hotel to campus.

9. **Other Items**

**TNCEP Program**

Hastings said we have a letter of intent to fund TNCEP program, with full funding and slight increase from last year. This is very positive.

**Liability Insurance Coverage**

Patsy Ezell said agents have asked about liability insurance coverage. We do have it, and information can be provided by Judy McGhee in Risk Management.