

GREENSBORO ECHO

Voice of Rural America

September 2007 Edition

WCSHC/ASU's Commitment in Rural America-by Frank Taylor



Winston County Self Help Cooperative continued its valor effort of helping save rural America by corroborating with Alcorn State University's Incubator Farm in Preston, Ms. Preston is located 41 miles from the Alabama State Line in eastern Mississippi with a population of less than 100 citizens. However, WCSHC members and supporters inundated ASU's Incubator Farm with more than 60 participants for an afternoon of touring and networking to highlight opportunities in the natural resources. Incubator Manager Phil Luke stated, "This is a fantastic moment for ASU's Incubator Staff to connect with farmers from adjacent counties and raise our visibility in eastern Mississippi". This facility is located on 62 acres of rich farmland; furthermore, "we are making an indelible impact on families' livelihoods with an economic opportunity of raising fresh vegetables to help sustain rural communities". Presently, there are several families growing vegetables for personal use and selling excess produce. "We provide technical support as a risk management tool to

help minimize lost in crop production and dispense relevant information to structure a profitable farm operation".

WCSHC members convened at 5:15pm for a brief monthly meeting to discuss hot button issues. Members agreed to participate in a strategic planning session schedule for October and move next business meeting to Tuesday September 4, 3:55pm. Elizabeth Myles, ASU's Marketing Specialist updated members on concurrent market prices and thanked members for participating in NSI's Workshop. Rockeill Woods, ASU's Agro-Business Specialist said, "He would assist members with processing farm and home loan applications". Additionally, DR. Dickey Selmon gave a brief narrative on Southern Echo role's in providing resources to small community-based organizations. "We are assisting with organizing and providing technical support to help create formidable organizations; and spur on economic development in underserved communities".

The tour started approximately at 5:45pm with a temperature of 100 degrees and stifling humidity. Phil Luke gave an overview of ASU's Incubator Farm operation. Members and supporters

visited multiple greenhouse settings, which initiated revelation on how to grow transplants; therefore, several members are contemplating growing feeder plants. The final stop provided an exciting opportunity for WCSHC youth to hold small baby chicks and learn evolving information on managing pasture poultry.

WCSHC and Alcorn State University's Incubator Staff are working collaboratively to create economic opportunities in low wealth communities. We are targeting communities with a strategic plan to diagnose the causes of lack of employment and social ills; and prescribe viable options to change economic conditions affecting rural families. We are working fervor to sustain farms, families and communities according to coop member Hubert Nicholson. "We will continue to develop relationships with other non-profit organizations and strengthen ties in rural America".

Winston County Self Help Co-op extends thanks to Alcorn State University's Incubator Staff for allowing members and supporters to tour this immaculate facility. You can contact the incubator farm at 662-773-7128.

"Saving Rural America"

For More Information, please contact Frank Taylor 601-291-2704 or fltaylor@bellsouth.net

Elizabeth Myles-Point Of View

On August 6, 2007, I participated in Winston County Self Help Co-op monthly meeting and toured ASU's Incubator Farm. My role as Mississippi Small Farm Development Center Marketing Specialist is to provide training on marketing strategies; offer farmers and cooperatives valuable information on markets

tools to enhance sales and maximize profit. Before a producer plants crops or invests in a livestock operation, he/she should learn about the strength of demand for the product. Strong demand usually means higher prices, and more profit for the farm family.



Announcements

*Winston County Self Help Co-op will meet on Tuesday September 4, 3:55pm at the extension office in Louisville, Ms. For further details, contact Dorothy Harper 662-773-8264.

*WCSHC will sponsor a fire safety workshop on Monday September 27, 4:55pm at the extension office in Louisville, Ms. for further information contact Hubert Nicholson 662-773-3336.

*WCSHC Fall Field Day-Monday October 8, 4:55pm in Louisville, Ms.

Rockiell Woods-Experience with WCSHC

My experience with the WCSHC was a great experience. It was a good experience to work with a highly organized co-op with eager members and youth. I was very impressed to see the large turn out of youth in the cooperatives. The youth were very mannerable and I was impressed with

questions asked which showed a high level of interest. The producers gave an enormous amount of feedback by asking questions and commenting on the material presented. I look forward to working more with the WCSHC in the future in help save rural America.



Southern Echo's Role in Rural America-by DR. Dickey Selmon



Southern Echo has undertaken a program of intermediate support called the Sustainable Rural Communities Environmental and Land Development Initiative (SRCELDI). The essence of the SRCELDI is to abate, prevent, and reserve land owned by African Americans; and achieve community sustainability with economic development and the use of land being parts of commu-

nity sustainability. SRCELDI's concept of sustainability involves meeting the needs of African Americans and other people of low wealth in the present with out compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It also involves accounting for the long-term value of natural resources (renewable and non-renewable) and giving individual incentives to protect or promote environmental values.

The Winston County Self-Help Cooperative (WCSHC) was one of 14 groups funded through the SRCELDI and attempts to save rural America by helping family farmers and its members to im-

prove the sustainability of their operations. Dr. Dickey Selmon of Southern Echo talked with members of the WCSHC about empowering and inspiring other farmers, individuals, and communities in the rural South to create an agricultural system that is ecologically sound, economically valuable, socially just, and humane. "Sustainable solutions depend on the involvement of the entire community and creating community food projects such as community gardens and farmers markets" Dr. Selmon said. With the funding, the WCSHC has some advantages in utilizing sustainable solutions and building the capacity to save rural America.



**Scenes from ASU Field Day—
August 6, 2007**