

### *Third Butler/Cunningham Conference on Agriculture and the Environment*

## **The Ag Census – How Can Alabama Agriculture Survive?**

#### Sponsor

Butler/Cunningham Endowment to the  
College of Agriculture, Auburn University

The Butler/Cunningham conference series explores issues in agriculture and forestry, the environment, and rural life in Alabama. A generous endowment by Eugene Butler and Emory Cunningham to the Auburn University College of Agriculture funds this series.

### **Purpose of the Third Conference**

Agriculture in Alabama and in America is changing rapidly. An increasing proportion of production comes from a declining number of farms, and there is growing competition with imported food and fiber products. Government programs to stimulate and support the agricultural economy are now essential to most farmers. There is increasing pressure to make agriculture more responsive to environmental concerns.

Most Americans now live in cities and suburbs, no longer have ties to agriculture and rural life, and do not fully understand them. Modern citizens are increasingly concerned about the rising cost of agricultural support programs, environment effects of agriculture, and food safety. The agricultural industry needs to respond to changing times proactively. This conference will discuss what recent statistics and experiences show about agriculture and, in light of these data, consider how to improve agriculture and rural life in Alabama.

### **Conference Program**

#### Monday, November 8, 2004

8:00-9:00 Continental breakfast

9:00-12:00 **The Ag Census – Alabama and the US**

Data from the agriculture census taken every ten years have just been released, confirming many of the changes

described in the conference purpose. This session explains the implications at regional, national and international levels, including the effects of trade. Speakers include Herb Vanderberry (NASS Alabama), and Linda Hutton, Jim Johnson and Carol Goodloe (all USDA, Washington).

12:00-1:00 Lunch

1:00-3:00 **Agricultural Policy**

The South continues to influence US agricultural policy, including the most recent farm bill. The recent changes in rural America will be reflected in future farm bills. The speakers address how policy is made and carried out, and the relations between the free market, agriculture, and policy. Speakers include Barry Flinchbaugh (Kansas State University), Congressman Everett, and Daryll Ray (University of Tennessee).

3:00-3:30 Break

3:30-5:30 **Environmental Responsibility**

Agriculture has to know what the environment needs before it can become more responsive, and supporters of the environment need to know what agriculture can realistically do. Speakers include Rebecca Goldburg (Environmental Defense Fund, Washington), an Alabama representative of environmental interests, and a representative of ADEM. A panel follows.

#### Tuesday, November 9, 2004

8:00-8:30 Continental breakfast

8:30-10:00 **Responses of Support Organizations**

Support organizations have adeptly offered what farmers need when they can, but must adjust to changing needs. Speakers include Wayne Shell (AU), Jack Odle (Progressive Farmer), and news figures Russ Regan and Lee McCoy. A panel follows, including members of A&I, ACES, AAES, NRCS, Alabama A&M, Tuskegee University, and Forestry Commission

10:00-10:30 Break

10:30-12:30 **Alabama Farms – What Do They Need to Compete in Today's Agriculture?**

A session to be arranged by Mike Kilgore of ALFA to focus on innovations in Alabama agriculture and on the input needed from support organizations to sustain innovations.

12:30-2:00 **Lunch with Barry Flinchbaugh** speaking on What Consumers Expect of Agriculture

2:00-3:00 **Possible Open Discussion**

### **Lodging**

A block of rooms will be held until October 8, 2004 at the Montgomery Embassy Suites at a discount rate of \$109. Information on making room reservations will be provided in the final conference brochure to be available in May 2004.

### **Registration**

The registration fee of \$95 (\$50 students) includes two breakfast receptions, two luncheons, and refreshments during breaks.

### **Additional Information**

For final brochure and registration information, see our website: [www.ag.auburn.edu/BC](http://www.ag.auburn.edu/BC) or complete the form below and send to:

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For specific questions about the conference, contact:

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