INTRODUCTION

Small farmers often make management decisions without full consideration of such components as cost of production, financing, market demand, associated farm risk and profitability. Access to fair and open markets for small-scale producers is perhaps the single most influential factor in determining the future structure of the farm production sector.

Florida A&M University Cooperative Extension Programs continues efforts to provide educational and outreach opportunities for small-scale farmers to enhance their competitiveness through improved marketing and farm business management strategies.

Program delivery involves educational and outreach opportunities through demonstration training and group activities in areas such as alternative market development, enterprise development, alternative productive systems, value-added production, farm business management and youth agricultural entrepreneurship. Program activities have also focused on the evaluation of alternative market opportunities including institutions (schools), wholesale and retail markets (independent grocery stores and the development of local community markets suitable for small-scale farm operations.

The Program has established collaborative relationships with local county extension personnel (1862 and 1890 programs), community-based organizations and other public and private entities. Additionally, the Program has established a longtime collaborative relationship with the New North Florida Cooperative to assist with training and demonstration activities in order to provide hands-on, real world experiences in the areas of market development, value-added processing, and transportation and distribution logistics.

The Program has identified several alternative market opportunities for demonstration and training purposes, including:

- INSTITUTIONAL MARKETS
- RETAIL MARKETS
- LOCAL COMMUNITY OUTLETS (direct sale to consumer opportunities) including engaging local churches in rural/suburban communities, and “rolling store” (mobile markets).

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Program has established collaborative relationships with local churches in order to develop community marketing opportunities (farmers markets, farmer recruitment and training); churches can serve as community sites for market venues and farmer training and outreach.

The Program has initiated efforts to evaluate feasibility of mobile EBT for local community market outlets.

The Program has established relationships with food/produce distribution companies to evaluate potential opportunities for specialty crop producers to supply products including food safety, liability and production requirements.

The Program has conducted on-farm and on-site training demonstration projects with small-scale farmers and youth entrepreneurs. Program activities also are designed to provide hands-on training in:

- Production Management
- Marketing
- Business Management
- Harvesting and Post-Harvest Handling
- Value-Added Processing
- Food Safety
- Distribution

WWW.FAMU.EDU/MARKETING

This program is funded through FAMU Cooperative Extension and a 2009 grant from FDACS Specialty Crop Block Grant Program