

Agricultural Marketing Resource Center

Quarterly Report – January – March 2017

As a condition of its USDA Rural Development grant, the cooperating universities comprising AgMRC were tasked to prepare four reports a year and submit them to USDA. These reports summarize the activities completed during each quarter, including website development and functions, value-added business and economic analysis tools and outreach activities (workshops, seminars, newsletters and WebMail inquiries).



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Goal 1. Maintain an electronic, web-based library.

This quarter, the average number of sessions per day to the AgMRC website was 2,459, up from 2,436 per day last quarter, while the average number of pageviews per day was 3,738, an increase from 3,684 per day last quarter.

Within the website, the top three topics visited during this quarter were:

1. Avocados
2. Industrial Hemp
3. Strawberries

Goal 2. Provide value-added business and economic analysis tools.

The Renewable Energy Monthly Report is produced as a partnership between the Agricultural Marketing Center, the Iowa Grain Quality Initiative, and is authored by Decision Innovation Solutions.

The newsletter contains pricing, profitability and supply/demand tools used for analysis of ethanol, biodiesel and distiller's grains and is sent out on a monthly basis.

During this quarter, three issue of the Renewable Energy Monthly Report were published and distributed. Some article topics included were, "Some Recent Perspectives on U.S. Corn Crush for Ethanol, Ethanol Co-Products, and Ethanol Yields", "U.S. Ethanol: January to November 2016 Exports Second Largest Since the 2011 Record", and "USDA Long Term Projections: U.S. Corn and Soybean Production and Expected

AgMRC



The mission of AgMRC is to continue to provide independent producers and processors with critical information needed to build successful value-added agricultural enterprises through the www.agmrc.org electronic resource information website.

AgMRC continues to serve a national value-added agriculture audience, with more than 2,000 unique visits per day.



Usage for Biofuels”. In addition to these articles, a featured chart of the month and balance sheets and profitability spreadsheets were updated monthly. The monthly report was distributed, on average, to 1,758 subscribers, an increase from an average of 1,718 subscribers from Quarter 1.

AgMRC was referenced in the Ethanol Producers Magazine in an article entitled, *Crushing Analysis Shows Increase in Corn Oil, DDGS Production*.

In this quarter, the inaugural Focus on Feasibility training was held in Atlanta, Georgia the last week of March as part of the southeast regional workshop under the direction of Ron Rainey, extension economist and co-director of the Southern Risk Management Education Center. There were 16 total participants for the day-and-a-half training. Overall workshop evaluations were exceptionally positive, and expressing the need for more trainings in this topic area.

Goal 3. Link producers with electronically available information and resources.

AgMRC staff researched and responded to 27 e-mailed questions pertaining to citing resources listed on AgMRC, aquaculture systems, various production questions on industrial hemp.

As of March, AgMRC staff reported having 22 toll-free phone inquiries from 10 different states.

AgMRC has expanded its public outreach by creating a page on Facebook. During this quarter, the AgMRC Facebook page had 8 posts, which were seen by more than 1,600 people.

Two radio spots were created during this quarter entitled, “Turning to Value Added Agriculture During Low Prices” and “Market Readiness Tool Helping Value-Added Agriculture”. These radio spots were utilized by 27 stations with multiple affiliates in multiple states.

AgMRC’s Value-Added Agricultural Commodities Curriculum (VAAC) professional development workshops took place in the spring of 2017 in partnership with the University of Kentucky, Louisiana State University, and the University of Arizona. Workshop participants were agricultural education current student teachers, extension intern educators, current high-school agricultural education teachers, and agricultural education undergraduates. The one-day workshops introduced the VAAC curriculum to the participants through formal and non-formal environments.

The subcontract with Riverside Research was established to expand the research of both MarketMaker and AgMRC respectively. MarketMaker is transitioning to a new contractor, and is undergoing some new updates. These include: migrations to a new operating system to support functionality and to be able to share functions and data with AgMRC, and widget creation for



registration, commodities, and farmers markets. These updates will allow data to be queried and shared between both sites.

During Quarter 1, AgMRC started an Accessibility Project to make AgMRC compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. These updates to the content and framework of our website, will ensure that users who use devices to interpret web-content, such as screen readers, will be able to get value added agriculture information they are seeking. This project, due to the size of AgMRC, will take a few months to complete.