#### Agricultural News

By: Warden Alexander, FSA Director

Tobacco Leasing Quotas for the 2000 crop year will

Quotas for the 2000 crop year will be mailed on April 7, 2000. Leasing for the crop year 2000 will be April 10th through July 18.

Tobacco Loss Assistance Program Funds Governor Paul Patton has requested that the United States Department of Agriculture release \$121,645,774 to the Chase Manhattan Bank for distribution to Kentucky tobacco quota holders and growers. The money is Kentucky's share of the Tobacco Loss Assistance Program, funded by the Agricultural Appropriations bill passes by the U.S. Congress. It will be shared by tobacco quota holders and growers using the same formula that was used

bacco quota holders and growers using the same formula that was used to distribute Phase II payments late last year. The Kentucky Tobacco Settlement Trust Corporation, the state entity handling Phase II payments, is also serving as the point for the distribu-tion of the federal funds. Corporation staff indicated that growers would probably see their payments within the next is 'to eight weeks. Growers and quota holders who applied for Phase II funds will not have to reap-ply.

ply. Oilseed Program Signup

In order to be eligible, a producer must have planted or shared in the production of an eligible oilseed in 1999. Prevented planted oilseed acre-1999. Prevented planted oilseed acre-age cannot be used to determine 1999 OP eligibility nor can it be used for history or actual yield purposes, 1990 OP payments may be available to producers who planted or shared in the production of the following oilseeds in 1999: soybeans, canola, crambe, flaxseed; mustard seed, rape-



seed, saflower seed, sunflower seed (oil and confectionery).

OP applications shall be submitted to the country that confrols payment limitation for dip producer.

KCMO determined the "control country for each producer in December 1999. Sign plas been extended but a deadlifte date has not been set. Small Grainer.

PRP Signup

Eligible farmers whose pastures were damaged by drought in 1999 can receive payments to help them to be a second of the second o

oi eligible land who normally grazes investock on such land; as owner or operator, be responsible for restoring and maintaining the forage crop on the affected land for the 2-year lifespan of the contract; not have grossed annual income in excess of \$2.5 million, certify that the pasture land was so damaged or destroyed by drought in 1999 that seeding is required to reestablish the forage crop. There will be two practice types, re-seeding with seedbed preparation. The Rockcastle County payment rate of \$4.00 face was determined by the Fearm Sey Cake Geory State cognitive for the cost of seed, seeding and perilibrare, not to exceed \$2.500 per person. Signon for the proparation of the cost of seed, seeding and perilibrare, not to exceed \$2.500 per person.

and fertilizer, not to exceed \$2500 per ferson.
Signup for the program will begin March 20 and last until April 14, 2000. The deadline to complete the re-seeding after sign-up is Septem 579, 2000. Re-seeding conducted before filling an application for PRP assistance will not be eligible for PRP payment.

# Governor and tobacco farmers speak out

In an effort to protect the small tobacco farmers, Governor Paul E. Patton spoke in favor of Senate Bill 49 with the Tobacco Farmers Protec-49 with the Tobacco Farmers Protec-tion Act at a press conference today in the Capitol Rotunda, Joining him in support was ROd Kuegel, presi-dent of the Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative Association. "Kentucky tobacco Farmers have the skill and the talent to produce a high quality product which will al-ways have a market," said Guovenno Patton.

Pation.
The Governor went on to explain his endorsement of the Tobscco Farmers Protection Act, current legislation that would level the playing field in contracting between the tobacco companies and the farmers.
"Most farmers can't hire a lawyer are newritate a fair contract," said the

"Most farmers can't hirr a lawyer to negotiate fair contrart," said the Governor. This will guide them a little bit, give the farmers a standard contract to go by."

"Any large complany would like to have free reign, but not in Kentucky," he added.

That is why the Governor and legislators are supporting the Tobacco Tarmers Protection Act. Representative Royce Adams, of Dry Ridge, amended-Seane Bill 49 with scommittee substitute last Wednesshape and the substitute last Wednesshap and the substitute last Wednesshap affection in the House Agriculture and Small Business committee meeting. St. 49 exempts tobacco meeting. SB 49 exempts tobacco farmers from taxes on the Phase II tobacco settlement money. Adams realized the need for legislation con-cerning contracting and amended the bill to carry legislation that would set

bill to carry legislation that would set guidelines for contracting.
"All we're trying to do is take care of the small farmer," said Adams.
The House committee substitute of Senate Bill 49, knopn as the Tobacco Farmers Protection Act, would set up a farmer-based Commission that would develop a model contract that tobacco companies would be

encouraged to use and offer to farmers. The committee substitute confirms Kentucky Scommittee to the trace. The Compost Program as the confirm of the Compost Program is the confirmed to the Compost Program is a confirmation of the Compost Program in the Compost Program is a confirmation of contracts among all producers who desire to contract, regardless of the size of their tobacco base. "This amendment will not stop contracting," said Roaf Knegel, present of the Burley Tobacco Growers denote the Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative, "It will set up guide."

lines for contracting and disallow discrimination of contracting oppor-tunities to farmers' whether he has 2,000 or 20,000 pounds." The Tobacco Farmers Protection Act protects the farmers from the grim end result. Here's what it does: Reallirms the Tobacco Price Support Programs who best and invest

Realitims the Tobacco Price Support Program as the best and most efficient means of preserving the economic health of thousands of small tobacco farms;
Ensures that any contracts or contracting practices protect the public interest in the continued efficient operation of the tobacco price support program:

symptot program:

Establishes a commission to oversee the contracting practices in Kentucky whose mission will be to ensure farmess and equality to all participating farmers;

Establishes a Model Contact.

 Allows for fair and equal distri-bution of contracts among all producers who desire to contract, re gardless of the size of their tobacco

gardless of the size of their tobacco base.

Since the introduction of contract-ing on February 1, 2000 by Phillip Morris USA, many concerns and questions have been raised about contracting, forturating in tobacco has the potential to climinate thou-sands of small tobacco farmers. In agriculture, 30 percent of the com-

larger producers are offered the con-tract. Smaller farmers have limited or mace, smanter transers have limited or no markets. They are forced out of business allowing the large to be-come larger and the corporations to take over farm production. Without regulation, tobacco will become the

of the University of Kentucky Col-lege of Agriculture, without a price support program, if growers increase to as little as 10 acres under a con-tracting system, over 75 percent of Kentucky's tobacco growers will go

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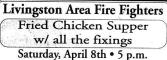
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