

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEWS ARTICLE

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EXTENSION AGENT, DAIRY

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Public Notice: SHEEP AND GOAT PRODUCERS FUNDING STILL AVAILABLE

Virginia Cooperative Extension agents in Henry, Franklin, Bland, Carroll, Patrick, Floyd, Wythe, and Grayson Counties are still accepting applications for the Greater Appalachian Sheep and Goat Improvement Initiative Cost-share grant funded this year by the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission's Agribusiness program. The 2016 cost-share program was funded to help new and existing sheep and goat producers in the eight counties with improvements on the farm to help strengthen and improve the herd and increase producers' bottom dollar. The funding helps purchase fencing, barns, handling equipment and much more. Youth ages 16 to 18 are eligible to apply and purchase animals with the funding with the help of a parent or guardian co-signer. The cost-share program works by helping to reimburse the producer for a portion of the cost on purchases made after the application has been approved. Each producer once approved can receive up to \$3000 back on purchases. Each county has been approved for \$30,000 in cost-share money to help producers. Applications are now being accepted on a rolling application first-come-first-served process for all completed applications.

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Incomplete applications will not be accepted until all necessary information and paperwork is present. Individuals looking to take part in the program must have a minimum of 5 acres of land, have a completed business plan, attend an approved educational class, and work to expand herd size. Virginia Cooperative Extension agents are available to help in assisting in written business plans and will host educational programs geared towards the needs of small ruminants.

If you have any questions about what the program offers or your eligibility, please contact your local Agricultural Extension Agent in your county listed. Once all funds in a county have been allocated, a waiting list will be implemented. For more information in Franklin and Henry County, call the Franklin County office of Virginia Cooperative Extension at 540-483-5161.