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NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Jeremy Brady

Maryville Area Specialist

Telephone 660-582-7421 (extension #4)

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDS PRECISION AGRICULTURE PROJECT AT HUNDLEY-WHALEY RESEARCH CENTER

Janie Dunning, Missouri State Director for USDA Rural Development, presented \$30,000 to the University of Missouri in a Mock Check Ceremony on October 29, 2009.

The \$30,000 grant and the contribution from the University of Missouri of more than \$10,000 were used to purchase and install precision agriculture equipment at the University of Missouri Hundley-Whaley Research Center in Albany.

The equipment includes Real Time Kinematic (RTK) auto guidance steering systems which can be used to guide tractors. The equipment can be used to limit wheel compaction on the ground by monitoring where the tractor has driven and therefore avoiding these areas to reduce compaction. The equipment allows for very precise trafficking of farm ground which allows for very precise year to year repeatable operations including strip tillage, fertilizer zone placement, and limited tractor wheel compaction.

Agriculture, in the form of crop and livestock production, still remains the primary form of economic development and income in the rural areas of Northwest Missouri. Through the research conducted at the Hundley-Whaley facility, many agricultural related jobs are either created or preserved in Northwest Missouri

The \$30,000 grant was made through USDA Rural Development's Rural Business Enterprise Grant program. This program is available to finance and help foster development of business enterprises in rural areas.



Pictured from left to right (Front Row): Josh Hurlburt, Field Representative for Congressman Sam Graves, Brook Balentine, Field Representative for US Senator Claire McCaskill, Janie Dunning, Missouri State Director for Rural Development, and Bruce Burdick, Superintendent of the Hundley-Whaley Research Center. (Back Row) Neal Miller, Area Director for Rural Development, Carl Messner representing the University of Missouri Hundley-Whaley Research Center, David Cooper representing the University of Missouri Hundley-Whaley Research Center, and Jeremy Brady, Area Specialist for Rural Development.

U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill said, "I am pleased to announce these federal funds will allow the University of Missouri Hundley-Whaley Research Farm to purchase precision agricultural guidance and monitoring equipment for crop production and research. These tools will allow our students and professors to stay on the cutting edge of crop production research."

"This grant will help advance the knowledge of agricultural science from the classroom to the field. Agriculture is the backbone of our economy and this research will only help our producers be more productive," said U.S. Congressman Sam Graves.

"Financing essential equipment is consistent with Rural Development's mission and President Obama's commitment to the future of rural communities," said Dunning. "Appreciation is extended to our federal elected officials for supporting USDA Rural Development. They have been strong proponents for the necessary funding for essential services for rural Missourians."

Anyone interested in obtaining information regarding assistance available through USDA Rural Development may visit the homepage at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo/> or contact Jeremy Brady at the Maryville office of USDA Rural Development at 502 W. South Hills Drive, Suite 103, Maryville, Missouri 64468 or by calling 660-582-7421 (extension 4).

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