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## **Cost Share Assistance Still Available For Agricultural Commodity Storage through Tobacco Commission Grant**

Livestock and grain producers in Seventeen Central/Southside Virginia Counties are still eligible to apply for matching grants under a program funded by the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification & Community Revitalization Commission. The Central Virginia Commodity Storage Phase II Initiative offers producers in a 17-county region an opportunity to apply for a cost share incentive of up to \$3,300 per producer for improvement practices in either hay/straw storage, feed/grain storage, or commodity feed storage structures. Cost share funds will be available to agricultural producers who meet all eligibility requirements.

The overall objective of the Central Virginia Commodity Storage Phase II Initiative is to continue to improve the feed and/or storage efficiency of commodities for livestock and grain producers in the identified tobacco dependent communities. Construction of on-farm structures will enhance farm profitability and therefore benefit the region's overall economy. Producers will have the opportunity to select between improvement practices in either hay/straw storage, feed/grain storage, or commodity feed storage structures. Participating livestock producers will increase production and profitability due to lower input costs. The initiative will enable grain producers to implement marketing strategies to capture higher prices than available on the cash market at harvest and potentially capture new market opportunity related to alternative fuel production.

During its January 11, 2011 meeting in Richmond, the Virginia Tobacco Commission approved \$400,000.00 in Agribusiness funding for the Central Virginia Commodity Storage Phase II

Initiative Project. This project includes the counties of Amelia, Appomattox, Bedford, Buckingham, Brunswick, Campbell, Charlotte, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Greensville, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Pittsylvania, Prince Edward, and Sussex.

“As a member of the Commission, I am pleased to support this grant that will aid local farmers throughout the tobacco footprint. These grants will help retain the agricultural character of our communities while allowing farmers to keep costs under control and remain competitive in the world marketplace.” Delegate Kathy Byron.

Producers interested in applying for funding must attend a minimum of one informational/educational session on best management practices for either livestock or grain production offered by Virginia Cooperative Extension prior to applying for funds.

Funding is limited and will be provided on a first-come-first-serve basis. Incentives will only be awarded on a one-time basis per producer and/or per farm. For more information on this program, please contact your local extension office (<http://www.ext.vt.edu/offices/>)

The Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission is a 31-member body created by the 1999 General Assembly to promote economic growth and development in tobacco-dependent communities, using proceeds of the national tobacco settlement. To date, the Commission has awarded 1,407 grants totaling more than \$793 million across the tobacco region of the Commonwealth, and has made available nearly \$298 million in indemnification payments to tobacco growers and quota holders. For information on the Commission’s history, mission, funding programs and recent grant awards, visit our website at [www.tic.virginia.gov](http://www.tic.virginia.gov) or call toll free 877-807-1086.

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