

January 2, 2001

KENTUCKY: December 2000 was the coldest December since 1989, the 4th coldest on record. Temperatures were 4 to 5 degrees below normal the first half of the month, 19 to 22 degrees below normal the last half of December. Precipitation was below normal all month except for one major storm at mid month that provided 2 to 4 inches of rain. Sub-freezing temperatures with long periods of light snow, ice kept farmers busy caring for livestock. Supplemental feeding of cattle at moderate to high levels was necessary due to the extreme cold temperatures especially for the last half of the month. Farmers had to spend considerable time breaking ice to provide water to cattle as temperatures remained below freezing. Snow cover provided winter wheat some protection from the late month arctic cold in some eastern, central areas but provided minimal benefit in the West. Burley tobacco curing, stripping was hampered by the cold temperatures, lower humidity the last half of the month. KY Gross burley auction sales volume through 12/14 was 114.1 million lbs. at \$197.07. An additional 57.8 million lbs. of contract sales was sold Belt wide at \$198.12 per hundredweight. The Burley cooperatives received 7.7% of gross sales compared with 34.1% last season. Auctions recessed for Christmas break, will resume on Monday, January 8, 2001.