

January 3, 2000

KENTUCKY: December began warm and dry. Above normal temperatures through mid-month limited livestock stress and benefited fall seeded small grain growth. Rainfall increased the second and third week bringing much needed moisture to the State. The increased moisture allowed farmers to strip tobacco and helped improve soil moisture going into winter. Supplemental feeding of livestock remained heavy across the Commonwealth with hay supplies generally adequate but tight in all areas. Colder temperatures prevailed the last two weeks of December bringing the first two snowfalls of winter to portions of the State. Many areas of the State enjoyed snow just in time for Christmas. Burley tobacco stripping made good progress with the return of rain and increased humidity. KY Gross Burley sales volume through 12/16 was 243.2 million lbs. with an average price of \$190.41 per cwt. High loan receipts continued to be the main focus at burley tobacco auctions before the holiday recess. The Burley Cooperatives received 33.5 percent of the gross sales, compared with 4.5 percent at the same point last year. Burley sales are scheduled to resume January 10, 2000.