

**PLANNING THE FUTURE****Tobacco replacement grants awarded**

The Kentucky General Assembly in 2000 passed landmark legislation earmarking 50 percent of Kentucky's tobacco settlement money to agriculture and forming an Agricultural Development Board to administer most of those funds.

Later in the year, the board organized and got about the business of receiving applications for funding. Since then, the board has awarded millions of dollars in grants for farmland preservation, beef cattle genetics improvement, and many other programs.

Agriculture Commissioner Billy Ray Smith serves as vice chairman of the board.

"This is the first time in modern history that agriculture has been taken seriously as a part of Kentucky's economy," Commissioner Smith said at the July 2000 news conference that introduced the original board members. "We appreciate the funding from the master tobacco settlement that will give Kentucky agriculture this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and we are grateful to the Kentucky General Assembly and Gov. Paul Patton for the legislation that put this process in motion."

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The law that created the board appropriated \$40 million to supplement Phase II payments to Kentucky farmers. Of the remainder, 65 percent was to be appropriated by the board in the form of grants for agriculture-related projects. The rest was divided between councils in 118 Kentucky counties with the amounts determined by each county's tobacco production.

The state board, by law, is chaired by the governor and includes, in addition to Commissioner Smith, the secretary of the Economic Development Cabinet; the director of the Cooperative Extension Service; representatives of Kentucky Farm Bureau and the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce; an agricultural lender; an attorney with agricultural experience; and seven active farmers.

**BSE, WEST NILE, FOOT-AND-MOUTH, MRLS...WHATEVER THREATENS NEXT...****KDA Emergency Plan coordinates response**

In the wake of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and foot-and-mouth disease ravaging Europe, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Kentucky Division of Emergency Management led the way in the development of the state's first-ever comprehensive plan to address the

**The plan sets out sequential steps for evaluating and responding to any agricultural disaster, and outlines clearly which agencies have authority, to avoid possible duplication of efforts.**



AGRICULTURE OFFICIALS meeting in Elizabethtown shared their emergency plan for coordinated response to any livestock illness or emergency. Copies are available online at [www.kyagr.com](http://www.kyagr.com).

possibility of agricultural disasters.

Unveiled May 22, 2001, in Elizabethtown, the plan will enable the Commonwealth to react to a crisis situation quickly and in an organized manner. The Elizabethtown meeting was but the first of many efforts to educate farmers, state and local officials, and others about how a potential disaster is to be handled and which organizations have authority in an emergency situation.

The plan may be downloaded from the KDA Web site.