



MEDIA RELEASE

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
MARKET DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JUNE 11, 2009

CONTACT: ROB BEETS
615-837-5517
Robert.Beets@TN.gov

GET HOMEGROWN PRODUCE FROM THE EXPERTS: LOCAL FARMERS

NASHVILLE - You may be a better nuclear physicist than Ted Smiley. You may be a better brain surgeon than Ted Smiley. You may even be a better auto mechanic than Ted Smiley – but he wants you to understand that you are not going to grow better vegetables, more dependably, and for less money than he can.

Ted Smiley, of Smiley's Produce near Nashville, has lived his entire life farming the same land his family staked a claim to in 1805. The family farm, Smiley Hollow, is a major source of fresh produce for Middle Tennessee and, by Smiley's calculations, the smartest choice for fresh, local and affordable produce. "We know what we're doing, and we're doing a lot of it," says Smiley.

"People say they want 'home grown,'" says Smiley. "This is home grown," he says, reaching down to pick a crooked yellow squash from a long row. "This is my home, and it's just down the road from your home."

Also, while many who garden only for themselves are currently in the "wait and watch" phase, hoping for produce by the end of June, the Smileys have been pulling truckloads of produce into Nashville since the middle of May. "Why do we already have so much produce? Because when everybody else was waiting for the rain to stop, we were out in it, putting all our plants on top of black mulch," says Smiley. "That generally speeds the crop by about 20 days."

"You don't have to wait for homegrown produce. It's all here, right now," says Smiley. "And don't feel like you'll spend more money than if you grow it yourself, because that depends on a lot of things. There are farmers like me all over Tennessee with all the fresh, local produce you'll need for the whole year, at a price you can feel smart about paying."

Tennessee's produce farmers are anxious to meet the demands of a public increasingly interested in food that can be tracked to the source. The current trend helps create positive personal and financial relationships with area farmers and deletes large carbon footprints. To find local farmers markets and pick-your-own farms in Tennessee, visit www.PickTNProducts.org.

###

ELLINGTON AGRICULTURAL CENTER
BOX 40627, NASHVILLE, TN 37204
PickTNProducts.org