



# MEDIA RELEASE

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
MARKET DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **TIME AND FUNDING RUNNING OUT FOR ORGANIC FARMER AND BUSINESS CERTIFICATION**

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** - The Tennessee Department of Agriculture wants the state's organic food producers, processors and handlers to take advantage of cost share assistance to help pay for organic certification before federal funding ends on Sept. 29. Any organic producer or business based in Tennessee is eligible for help with their 2007, 2008 and 2009 certification.

"There's never a really great time, in the busy world of being a farmer or a small business, to sit down and do paperwork," says organics marketing specialist Jon Frady, Tennessee Department of Agriculture, "but with these funds disappearing after Sept. 29, it's come down to being the only time."

Tennessee producers, processors, or handlers of organic agricultural products can be reimbursed for 75 percent of the cost of certification up to a maximum of \$750, each in the last two federal fiscal years. Participants could actually get reimbursed up to \$1,500 total for the past few years of certification costs. The National Organic Certification Cost Share Program was made possible by funding from the federal 2008 Farm Bill and has been in effect since last September.

Until Sept. 29, funds remain available for the farmers, processors and handlers who have already achieved or renewed their certification. "All they have left to do is apply to be reimbursed for part of the cost of that certification," says Frady. "This is the easy part."

The USDA includes as "organic" any grain, fruit, and vegetables production without use of artificial chemical pesticides or commercial fertilizers. For animal production, no artificial antibiotics or artificial hormones are administered, and animals' feed must meet organic standards.

"Tennessee's certified organic producers just need to get off their tractors, or set their boxes down, and business managers need to spend an extra 10 minutes at the office to fill out the application, and get reimbursed," says Frady. "Let us help you take advantage of this cost share money before Sept. 29."

**- MORE -**

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“Then you can concentrate on getting the organic products to your customers .”

To apply for the organics cost share reimbursement, to participate in the organic certification program, or for more information, contact Jon Frady at 615-837-5344 or e-mail to [Jon.Frady@TN.gov](mailto:Jon.Frady@TN.gov). Information and the program application are also available at [www.picktnproducts.org/food/organics.html](http://www.picktnproducts.org/food/organics.html).

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