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Nominations accepted for Kentucky Agricultural Leadership Program

LEXINGTON, Ky., (May 4, 2015) – The Kentucky Agricultural Leadership Program is accepting nominations for Class XI.

KALP, housed in the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, is an intensive two-year program designed for young agricultural producers and agribusiness individuals from Kentucky and Tennessee.

“Anyone who wants to be on the cutting edge of decisions that affect agriculture, rural communities and society in the 21st century will benefit greatly from going through this program,” said Will Snell, KALP co-director. “Graduates of the program have gone on to become active leaders in legislative bodies, farm and commodity organizations, agribusinesses and their local communities, which is vital for the future of agriculture in today’s challenging marketplace and policy arena.”

Applicants must be U.S. citizens, residents of Kentucky or Tennessee, be involved in some phase of agriculture, and be willing and able to commit around 50 days over the two-year period to participate in this premier leadership program. The program dates back to the mid-1980s and was originally called the Philip Morris Agricultural Leadership Program, though it was never commodity specific. Philip Morris fully funded the first seven classes. Now more than 150 financial supporters provide funding, including the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board, Kentucky agribusinesses, farm organizations, program alumni and participant fees. Participants will be responsible for tuition of \$2,500 payable in two installments to help offset the \$15,000 individual program costs.

The program consists of 10 domestic seminars devoted to important agricultural issues. Sessions also focus on improving participants’ communication, leadership and management skills. Class members will visit a variety of Kentucky agribusinesses, Frankfort and Washington D.C., and will travel to other states and nations to explore agriculture in different settings. The previous 10 classes have yielded 267 graduates, many who subsequently have taken on leadership positions in agriculture.

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“This program is about more than farming,” KALP co-director Steve Isaacs said. “Participants will polish essential leadership skills, identify common rural and urban concerns, understand current public policy issues and establish a basis for lifelong learning and development.”

Interest is expected to run high for the 22 seats available in Class XI. Snell and Isaacs, both from the UK Department of Agricultural Economics, said they generally receive around 100 nominations for each class. Candidates may self-nominate or be nominated by county extension agents, farm organizations, trade associations, alumni of previous leadership programs or other interested individuals. The nomination form link and additional details can be found at the Kentucky Agricultural Leadership Program website, <http://www.uky.edu/Ag/KALP>. Nominations are due June 15. All nominees will receive information about the program and procedures for submitting the required application, which will be due July 15. Interviews to select class members will be in mid-August, with the first seminar scheduled for Nov. 4-6.

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