

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact:

Donna Abernathy

dabernathy@tnpoultry.org

(615) 896-2372

Abernathy tapped for TEPA executive director post

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. (Sept. 2, 2008) - The board of directors of the Tennessee Egg & Poultry Association (TEPA) has selected Donna Abernathy as the organization's new executive director, announced Tim Peterson, board president. On Sept. 1, she succeeded Ann Cox Eastes who retired from the position she had filled since 1997.

Abernathy, a veteran agricultural communicator, is no stranger to TEPA, its mission and its members. She provided communications services to the organization throughout Eastes' tenure.

"Ann leaves big shoes to fill, but I am confident that my years of working alongside her to execute many TEPA projects and events have prepared me to take the lead," Abernathy said.

Under the direction of TEPA's board of directors, Abernathy will develop and maintain industry-building partnerships with poultry growers and processors, agri-business companies, educators and researchers, as well as the University of Tennessee and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. She will also apply her communications skills to provide membership services such as frequent updates on trends and legislation relevant to Tennessee's poultry industry.

The new executive director has a long history of working with commodity groups and rural organizations. After earning a degree from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville in communications with an emphasis in agriculture in 1984, she worked on the communications staff of Tennessee Farmers Cooperative. She founded her own company, DLF Communications Services, in 1990, specializing in providing communications, marketing and event management services to commodity associations, agricultural agencies and rural cooperatives throughout the nation.

She is an award-winning writer and the 2007 recipient of the H.E. Klinefelter Award, the highest career achievement honor bestowed by the international membership of the Cooperative Communicators Association.

Poultry, the fastest-growing sector of animal agriculture, is a major contributor to Tennessee's economy. The industry generated \$449 million in agricultural cash receipts in 2006, accounting for 17.5 percent of all Tennessee farm income and ranking second in all agricultural income.

TEPA members are breeders, growers, processors, educators, researchers and allied businesses



Donna Abernathy

involved in the production of chicken for retail consumption. The organization is headquartered in Murfreesboro, Tenn. To learn more about membership in TEPA, call the new office phone at (615) 896-2372 or send e-mail to dabernathy@tnpoultry.org.

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