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Virginia Tech and Virginia Farm Bureau Federation announce international trade workshop

BLACKSBURG, VA., January 16, 2009 – The Virginia Farm Bureau Federation (VFBF) and Virginia Tech’s Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics will host a workshop on international trade of agricultural products at VFBF headquarters in Richmond, Va., on March 5-6, 2009.

The workshop is designed to provide a forum for producers, processors, industry officials, and policymakers to discuss export opportunities for U.S. and Virginia agriculture, federal and state programs to promote agricultural exports, and specific opportunities and obstacles to agricultural and food exports.

“The importance of exports to the growth and profitability of Virginia agriculture has never been greater and will only increase in the future. The timing of this workshop could not be more important,” said Wayne Pryor, president of VFBF. “We have an internationally recognized list of speakers on the program, including Bob Stallman, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation (invited); Robert Bloxom, Virginia Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry; Dr. Joe Glauber, Chief Economist of the U.S. Department of Agriculture; and Richard T. Crowder, former Chief Agriculture Negotiator for the U.S.”

“U.S. agriculture is losing hundreds of millions of dollars in market opportunities because of obstacles it faces in exporting products to countries around the world,” said Crowder, now a professor of agricultural and applied economics at Virginia Tech. “The importance of understanding and acting on trade issues and opportunities has never been greater.”

Kevin Boyle, professor and head of the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, said, “The workshop will provide participants not only a better understanding of trade opportunities

and obstacles, but also information that will be useful in making long-term production, marketing, and policy decisions. It will be a value-added event for all participants.”

The workshop is free, but registration is limited to 100 individuals on a first-come, first-serve basis. For information on registration or other matters, contact Shirley Baber, Virginia Tech, at (540) 231-6301 or Cindy Jones, VFBF, at (804) 290-1037.

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