



STATE OF ALABAMA
FARMERS MARKET AUTHORITY



Don Wambles
Director

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Contact: Brooke Thorington
(334) 242-2618
brooke.thorington@fma.alabama.gov

**ALABAMA FARMERS MARKET AUTHORITY PROMOTES
CREATION OF AGRI-TOURISM ASSOCIATION**

Montgomery, Ala. — The Alabama Farmers Market Authority is joining other state agencies and the Alabama Farmers Federation in promoting the agri-tourism industry across the state. Agriculture, the backbone of Alabama's economy, contributed more than \$9 billion to the state's economy and tourism accounted for approximately \$9 billion in income last year.

Agri-tourism is a commercial effort at any agricultural venture including horticulture and agribusiness operations for the enjoyment of visitors that produces additional tourist income for the operation. The agri-tourism venture could involve farmers markets, roadside stands, U-pick operations, farm tours and stays, on-farm sales, festivals and fairs, guided crop tours, petting zoos, hay rides, wildlife viewing, hunting dog training and competition, trap and skeet shooting, fee fishing and hunting, barn dances, corn and hay mazes, garden and nursery tours, historical agricultural exhibits, exotic animal farms and other activities.

A series of meetings are scheduled for the month of March seeking input and interest in creating the Agri-Tourism Association. The meetings are sponsored by the Farmers Market Authority, Alabama Department of Tourism, Alabama Department of Agriculture, Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Alabama Department of Transportation and the Alabama Farmers Federation.

The development of the Agri-Tourism Association allows industry members to network and create joint promotional campaigns. The association will also have input with Alabama's Agri-Tourism Trail program, a project that will develop signage along Alabama's highways directing tourist to member attractions.

March 2, 2009 10:00 a.m.
Hartselle
Morgan County Extension Office

March 2, 2009 3 p.m.
Birmingham
Young & Vann Building
1st Avenue North and 18th Street

March 3, 2009 10 a.m.
Selma
Alabama Farmers Cooperative

March 4, 2009 10 a.m.
Fairhope
Holiday Inn Express

March 9, 2009, 10 a.m.
Dothan
Landmark Park

For more information contact Tom Chesnutt at (334) 844-3517 or jchesnut@aces.edu.

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