

# Rural Times

*Building Economic Development in Rural Oklahoma*  
A service of the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry's  
Market Development Services Division

Winter 2005 • Vol. 1, No. 1



A little horse sense can teach valuable life lessons to youth. That's the goal of Joe Don Dunham, owner of Dunham's Recreational Farm, Davidson. His life skills clinics use basic equine psychology and physiology as a metaphor for life's process and issues.

He said kids respond well to horses. Working with a horse in a small pen, he teaches students how his actions determine what the horse does. The relationship between he and the horse teaches children that building trust, respecting people and learning how to solve problems are essential in life.

When a problem develops, you have to look within yourself to see if this is where the problem started, Dunham said. The program teaches youngsters to develop the capacity to take personal responsibility for their own actions while developing life characteristics such as self control, self awareness, self esteem and discipline.

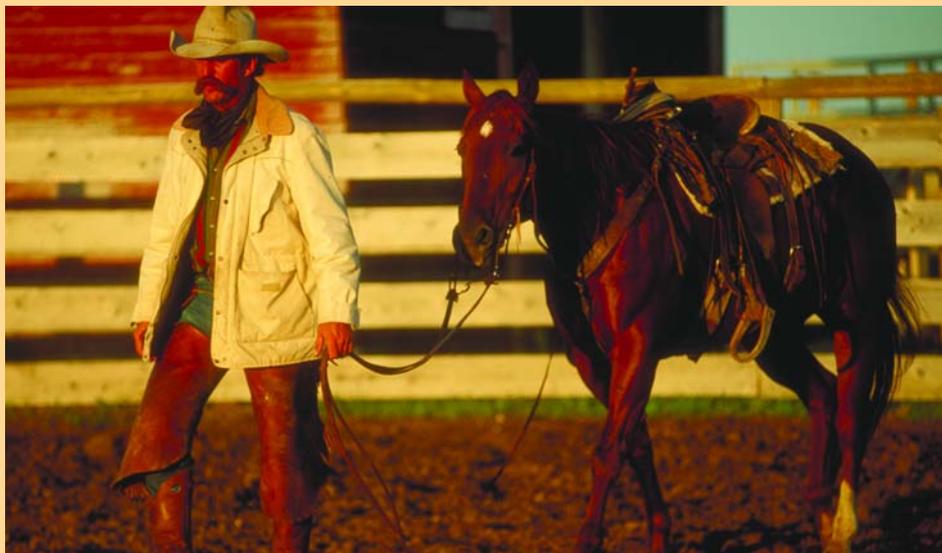
The program's success was made possible in part through the Oklahoma Agriculture Enhancement and Diversification Program. This state legislated program was designed to develop or improve uses for agriculture products, expand the state's production of value-added products and to encourage diversified farming. The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry oversees the program.

Dunham received a Farm Diversification Grant to develop a recreational farm using horses to teach youth the value of hard work, development of character, leadership skills and teamwork skills. The grant allowed Dunham to use his skills and understanding of horses to teach youth valuable life skills while also bringing needed income to his farm.

As a result of the OAED grant, Dunham has produced 18 clinics concerning topics such as trust, respect and problem solving skills, success in life,

endurance and courage. Approximately 300 youth have attended the life altering clinics.

OAED program funds must be used to produce alternative ag products or to process and/or market Oklahoma



**The Life Skills Clinics teach youth life skills through the relationship of a man and his horse. The program has been made possible in part through the Oklahoma Agriculture Enhancement and Diversification Program.**

"The Agriculture Enhancement and Diversification Grant has been very helpful in creating additional income for our outreach program," Dunham said. "Our program has been able to teach valuable life skills in various groups such as churches, correctional facilities and youth at-risk programs.

"The grant has helped us to exceed the level of sales by 34%," Dunham continued. "By helping with the upkeep and feed for these animals, as well as providing money for fuel and advertising expenses, it has allowed us to help touch the lives of youth in a positive non-threatening way. The program has helped touch and create a positive influence on young lives which is very hard to place a dollar value on today. Most of the kids we have had in our clinics have been from low income families or have been wards of the state of Oklahoma and Texas. If this program can help just one of these kids stay out of our judicial system, have much have we saved?"

agriculture products. Resulting activities must create rural economic development, jobs and the probability of success.

Interest-free loans and grants are available in four categories: Cooperative Marketing Loan, Marketing and Utilization Loan, Basic and Applied Research Loan/Grant and Farm Diversification Grant.

Loans may not be used to purchase land, buildings or equipment. They may be used for feasibility studies, business plans, legal expenses, consultant fees, product development and marketing.

Applications are evaluated quarterly. The next deadline for the OAED program is Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2006. Applications are available from the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry at [www.oda.state.ok.us](http://www.oda.state.ok.us) by clicking on the "Loans" link. For more information, contact Jason Harvey at (405) 522-5563 or [jason.harvey@oda.state.ok.us](mailto:jason.harvey@oda.state.ok.us) or Gary Bledsoe at (405) 830-1341 or [gary.bledsoe@oda.state.ok.us](mailto:gary.bledsoe@oda.state.ok.us).

# A CLOSER LOOK:

## Oklahoma Agriculture Enhancement & Diversification Program

### COOPERATIVE MARKETING LOAN

- This loan may be used by a group to organize a cooperative to market a product. The loan also may be used to formulate or implement a marketing plan if the cooperative is already in place.
- Applicants should provide an outlet for products that normally have been marketed through an existing marketing cooperative.
- Applicants should provide an outlet for products that normally have not been marketed through an existing marketing cooperative. A sound marketing plan for the product should be included.
- Principles should be individuals rather than a previously existing corporation. Those individuals must have some type of cooperative agreement between themselves that will ensure proper accountability for the proposed plan.
- The agreement may be formal or informal, but proof of an agreement must exist.
- Individuals are encouraged to seek marketing partners within the state of Oklahoma.

### BASIC AND APPLIED RESEARCH LOAN/GRANT

- Applicants should focus research on use and processing of agricultural products and by-products.
- Applicants should develop the expanded use of technology for processing and agricultural products and by-products in Oklahoma.
- Application must be aimed at business expansion or creation without regard to agricultural products use, must not include research that cannot reasonably be expected to result in a marketable product or cannot already have been duplicated by other research.
- Applications should exhibit thoughtful planning, expansion of jobs in rural areas and a reasonable opportunity for commercialization.

### MARKETING AND UTILIZATION LOAN

- Loan must be used for product development and/or implementation of a sound marketing plan for Oklahoma agricultural products and by-products.
- Applicants are encouraged to use the funds to seek new markets and new marketing ideas to promote their products.
- The new products should be new to the particular area targeted for the marketing promotion or should expand the use of existing products.
- Proposals should encourage the creation of jobs and industry within the Oklahoma agricultural economy. The proposal should expand jobs in the agricultural economy where the project will take place.
- Applicants are encouraged to research potential markets for their products, estimate the financial possibilities of markets and present an action plan.
- A realistic timeline for success must be presented.

### FARM DIVERSIFICATION GRANT

- Projects should deal with the diversification of a family farm to non-traditional crops or on-farm value-added processing of agricultural commodities.
- The project will be judged on traditional/non-traditional guidelines, but doesn't necessarily have to be a new crop, livestock or value-added processing venture. The proposed project must have the potential to create additional income for the farm unit.
- Proposals must demonstrate a well-prepared action plan, and markets must have been researched and possible income must be projected.
- New and innovative plans for marketing and products must be evident.
- A sound business plan must show potential profits from diversifying.
- Grants will not exceed \$5,000 per application.

### OAED 2006 APPLICATION DEADLINES

Tuesday, January 3

Monday, April 3

Monday, July 3

Monday, October 2

Visit [www.oda.state.ok.us](http://www.oda.state.ok.us)  
for more information.



The Oklahoma Agriculture Enhancement & Diversification Program is overseen by the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry. For more information and applications, contact:

Oklahoma Department of  
Agriculture Food and Forestry  
Market Development Services  
P.O. Box 528804  
Oklahoma City, OK 73152  
(405) 522-5509  
[www.oda.state.ok.us](http://www.oda.state.ok.us)

### OAED BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Myron Bradt, Alva, chairman
- Don Muegge, Lamont, vice chairman
- Dr. Rodney Holcomb, Oklahoma State University
- Ted Fariss, Elk City
- John Grunewald, Weatherford
- Rick Weathers, Bison
- Sam McClure, Calvin
- Betty Baker, Prague
- Rick Maloney, Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry
- Martin Roberts, Oklahoma Department of Commerce