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Agriculture workshop for military veterans to be held

'Battleground to Breaking Ground' will be May 18 in Dallas, June 1 in Belton

By: Paul Schattenberg, 210-467-6575, paschattenberg@a.tamu.edu

Contact: Dr. Cheryl Grenwelge, 979-845-3727, chgrenwelge@ag.tamu.edu

DALLAS – The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, in cooperation with the Texas AgrAbility Project and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, will present an agriculture workshop designed especially for military veterans during May and June in two northeast Texas locations.

The workshop will be from 8 a.m.- 2 p.m. at both locations. The first will be May 18 at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center, 17360 Coit Road in Dallas. The second will take place June 1 at the Bell County Expo Center, 301 W. Loop 121 in Belton.

The workshop, called "From Battleground to Breaking Ground: A Transformational Journey," gives military veterans interested in farming or ranching the opportunity to get information on aspects of starting, developing and funding an agriculture-based business.

"The workshop also addresses the possibilities for ranching or farming for veterans with disabilities," said Dr. Cheryl Grenwelge, AgriLife Extension specialist in disability transition with the Texas AgrAbility Project. "We're hoping military veterans will take advantage of this program which has been designed with input from AgriLife Extension, AgrAbility, the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the National Farmer Veteran Coalition, Farm Service Agency, Texas Department of Agriculture and ATTRA -National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service."

The cost is \$10 and program registration is payable at the door. However, due to space considerations, attendees must RSVP in advance at <http://txagrability.tamu.edu/> or download the registration form from the website and send to: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Attn: Dr. Cheryl Grenwelge, 2147 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-2251.

The program begins with registration and a continental breakfast from 8-9 a.m., followed by a short welcome. Presentations start at 9:15 a.m., and include a presentation by a veteran currently involved in production agriculture. Morning presentations will address resource networking and the Texas AgrAbility Program of the Texas A&M University System. Afternoon presentations include a panel discussion on resources available for funding options, business plan development and resource networking.

“The Texas AgrAbility Program’s focus is on connecting, assisting and empowering agricultural producers, their family members and employees with disabilities and chronic health conditions to stay engaged in production agriculture,” Grenwelge said. “About 45 percent of returning veterans are from rural areas and we want to enable veterans with or without disabilities to return to the area of production agriculture if they choose.”

For more information, contact Grenwelge at 979-845-3727 or chgrenwelge@aq.tamu.edu

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