



## Tennessee Corn Check-Off Program

### Issue:

Tennessee ranks 17<sup>th</sup> in corn production nationwide. Had there been a one cent per bushel check-off in 2016, \$1.25 million could have been available for Tennessee focused research and development, as well as in-state promotion of corn products. Tennessee is the only state in the major corn growing area of the country without a corn check-off. Farm Bureau policy supports a one cent per bushel state check-off for corn. For there to be a check-off, first there would have to be enabling legislation and then there would have to be a statewide grower referendum.

### Background:

There are two different options for funding a corn check-off. One option is a flat price per bushel and the other option is a percentage of the market price. Tennessee Farm Bureau Policy currently supports a one cent-per bushel corn check-off. With the exception of North Carolina at  $\frac{3}{4}$  cents per bushel and Kentucky with .0025% of the gross marketed price of corn, the remaining states surrounding Tennessee have a one cent per bushel check-off.

Whichever option for funding that is chosen, a board of producers appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture would be responsible for administering the funds. A corn check-off would follow the same models used in other commodities such as soybeans and beef. Most check-off programs in Tennessee are federally mandated check-off with the state's portion of funds administered within the state. The only state check-off that currently exists is a state beef check-off which also has a federal check-off.

### Questions:

1. Do you still believe a corn check-off program is needed in Tennessee?
2. What model of a corn check-off program would you prefer? Cent(s) per bushel or a percentage of price? Why?

### Farm Bureau Policy:

#### Commodity Promotion Program (Partial)

Check-off programs give farmers the ability to fund and control promotion, education and research for their benefit. However, state and federal governments should not cease funding research and promotion with the intent of allowing the check-off funded programs to cover these costs.

Corn is a primary commodity in Tennessee. However, there is not a national or state check-off program for corn. We believe Tennessee law should provide corn producers the opportunity to vote through referendum whether to establish a state check-off program for corn. We believe a corn check-off would provide economic benefits for producers just as check-off programs have for other commodities. Therefore, we support a one cent per bushel state check-off for corn.