



USDA United States Department of Agriculture  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture NIFA



## FUNDING AGENCIES

**Small Farms Research Center**  
Alabama A&M University  
College of Agricultural, Life and Natural Sciences  
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## FARM FIELD DAY: VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURE PRODUCTS

Bill's Honey Farm  
8714 Moores Mill Rd  
Meridianville, AL 35759

**December 4, 2014**

## FIRST TUESDAY GROUP MEETING – FARM FIELD DAY

**December 4, 2014**

**09:00-09:10a.m.**

### **WELCOME/GREETING**

**Greetings/Welcome:** JaMarkus Crowell, Program Assistant, Small Farms Research Center, College of Agricultural, Life and Natural Sciences, Alabama A&M University, Normal, Alabama

**09:10-10:30a.m.**

### **Introduction to Bill's Honey Farm**

Bill Mullins, Owner of Bill's Honey Farm

**More about Bill Mullins and his honey farm.....** *"A Little Honey Goes a Long Way"*



There is a year-round buzz at Bill's Honey Farm. Harvesting honey, molding beeswax into 90 different configurations of decorative candles and educating children on field trips, makes Bill Mullins a "busy bee." In the summer, he offers great blueberries and blackberries for you to pick-your-own. There is no down-time for this man.

Harvesting honey begins Memorial Day. This 3-week process places the extracted honey into two 325 gallon stainless steel tanks which are food-grade containers. Not only does he produce 12,000 pounds of honey each year, but he raises queen bees and represents his industry statewide as chairman of the Alabama Farmers Federation's Bee and Honey Committee.

As a 35-year veteran of the beekeeping business, Mullins learned his craft from his grandfather. Today, he and his son, Todd, run the honey business together. In addition, he and his business partner Harold Green sell about 300 queen bees each year through their company, Flint River Queens. *According to Mullins, "The interest in beekeeping – and honey sales – have just gone through the roof in the last few years. It seems like everybody is buying*

*honey now.....going back the basics."*

Bill's beeswax candles have distinct advantages over traditional paraffin candles. "Beeswax is not petroleum based, so it doesn't produce as much smoke. And, beeswax candles burn longer and have a naturally sweet aroma." Mullins said, His candle-making process begins when he harvest the honey. The frames containing the honeycomb are placed in a device that slices the top layer from each hexagonal honey cell. The frames are then placed in a centrifuge that extracts the honey, which is latter bottled in pints, half-pints and quarts. The waxy caps are collected, melted and filtered several times to produce bricks of pure beeswax. When Mullins is ready to make candles, the bricks are melted, and the wax is poured into molds. He also sells blocks of beeswax to customers who use it on everything from saw blades to quilting thread.

Bill's Honey Farm now distributes to Madison County Coop, Earth Fare Super Market, Ayer's Farmers Market, Ruth's Nutrition, Warden's Barber Shop and Dr. Richards office on Jordan Lane, all located in Huntsville. The big hit during this season are the collegiate labels.

Witt, Connie. "A Little Honey Goes a Long Way." Tennessee Valley Agriculture Magazine. September 2009.

**10:30-10:35a.m. BREAK**

**10:35a.m.1:30p.m. WORKING LUNCHEON**

**Business Planning & Marketing Education for Urban Youth and Community Gardeners**

**Bobby Wilson**, CEO, Metro Atlanta Urban Farm, College Park, Atlanta, Georgia.

The Metro Atlanta Urban Farm (MAUF) is a 3.75 acre property located at 3271 Main Street, College Park, GA 30337 through the Federation of Southern Cooperatives' first inner-city, urban farming initiative. MAUF is committed to the improvement of food taste and nutritional quality and its availability in inner city communities that lack access, education and the promotion of healthy living. We are committed to providing consistent, uniform information and fun training models to youth and backyard gardeners interested in growing organic fruits, herbs, and vegetables that specifically address social and health-related issues in their communities.

## FIRST TUESDAY GROUP MEETING – FARM FIELD DAY

The Small Farms Research Center has established the **First Tuesday Group Meetings** as a viable tool for new and beginning farmers, ranchers, landowners and entrepreneurs. These meetings will impact producers in the agriculture community in Madison and surrounding counties through the discussion of essential topics that can help sustain their farm operation(s). As a result of these discussions, farmers will be educated through farm tours and demonstrations, local meetings, and hands-on activities. Our goal is to sustain this generation of new and beginning farmers through accessing federal programs and services administered by the USDA, improve farm production, management, and marketing of producers within Alabama.

These meetings, farm tours and demonstrations will draw awareness of the center and its primary programs and services, educates and trains in a wide range of key areas. The center will strategically plan meetings that target the high demands topical areas from the Small Farms Questionnaire. All producers that have not taken advantage to voice your needs and interest through this questionnaire should contact the center at (256)-372-4970. We encourage all producers, farmers and landowners to attend these meetings that are geared to increasing the sustainability within your farm operation(s).