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## Farming heritage project receives \$11 million check

By Jack Brammer  
jbrammer@herald-leader.com

FRANKFORT — Gov. Steve Beshear presented an \$11 million check Wednesday for the building of the Kentucky Agriculture Heritage Center in Mercer County.

The center is a grass-roots project to preserve and promote Kentucky's agricultural heritage. It will showcase technology, provide workspaces and resources for farm organizations and interest groups, and contain educational resources, recreational activities and entertainment.

The state's agricultural history will be displayed through hands-on activities such as a walking farm tour, demonstrations, expositions and virtual agricultural experiences.

The center will be built on 50 acres of farmland at Anderson Circle Farm in Mercer County.

"The Kentucky Agriculture Heritage Center will benefit all Kentuckians by educating rural and urban consumers on the importance of our rich agriculture history and our growing economy," Beshear said.

"This will insure Kentucky's farming and rural heritage is not lost by the changing landscape of our agricultural interests."

The Kentucky Agricultural Development Board, chaired by Beshear, approved \$1 million for the center in state funds for the market development study as well as the architectural design, development, marketing and promotion.

The center received \$10 million in the 2009-2010 executive budget in the form of a bond that will be paid off over the next 20 years.

The first year of debt service will be paid with proceeds from the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund.

The state invests 50 percent of the state's master settlement agreement with tobacco companies into the fund since its inception in January 2001.

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Reach Jack Brammer in the Frankfort bureau at (859) 231-1302 or 1-800-950-6397, Ext. 1302.

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