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**MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY – MOUNTAIN GROVE
RECEIVES \$20,700 OF AMERICAN RECOVERY AND
REINVESTMENT ACT FUNDS**

On Wednesday, June 16, Mark Hultgren, Area Director for USDA Rural Development presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Missouri State University - Mountain Grove. The certificate was presented in recognition of the University's efforts to stimulate the economy by utilizing \$20,700 from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). These grant funds were used to purchase specialized equipment known as high tunnels, also known as hoop houses as well as a Drängen lay-down motorized work cart. A high tunnel is an irrigated greenhouse-like structure that modifies the climate to create favorable growing conditions for vegetables and other specialty crops grown directly in the soil beneath it. The Drängen is an ergonomically designed cart that allows you to lay down to plant, weed, and perform other field and high tunnel operations more efficiently with less stress on the body. This equipment will demonstrate how producers could control an extended growing season and potentially allow other benefits for producers and their consumers.



Dr. Anson Elliott, Head - Missouri State School of Agriculture and Director – State Fruit Experiment Station stated, “Season extension using high tunnels to produce horticultural specialty crops promises local farmers a longer season for income through the year. Some growers are already using this technology but many more are interested. We have already featured our high tunnel plans and the Drängen lay-down work cart at a recent Specialty Crops workshop held at the State Fruit Experiment Station at Mountain Grove and look forward to applying this technology to small fruit, vegetable and cut flower crops for grower advisement and student education.”

“This kind of assistance mirrors USDA Rural Development’s mission and President Obama’s initiative of being committed to the future of rural communities,” said Janie Dunning, Missouri State Director for USDA Rural Development. “Appreciation is extended to our federal elected officials for supporting USDA Rural Development. They have been strong proponents for the necessary funding for essential services for rural Missourians.”

The funds are part of the Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program, which provides grants to public bodies and non-profit entities to support the development of small and emerging business enterprises in rural areas and towns up to 50,000 in population. Anyone seeking more information about this or any other USDA Rural Development program may visit the homepage at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo/> or by contacting Ray Mowery, Area Specialist, at 6726 S. Hwy 63, Suite B, Houston, MO 65483, or by calling (417) 937-2028 extension 3 or by email to ray.mowery@mo.usda.gov.

“Committed to the future of rural communities.”

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Washington, D. C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).