



Toombs County Receives "Certified Work Ready Community" Status

The Governor's Office of Workforce Development recently recognized Toombs County as a "Certified Work Ready Community". The designation demonstrates that the county has the skilled workforce needed to meet business demands and drive economic growth, as well as the educational foundation to build a pipeline of workers to create ongoing success. In order to receive the designation, Toombs County completed 1,373 Work Ready certificates (292% of goal) and achieved an increase in the public high school graduation rate of 3.5% in the past year.

A \$7,000 grant will be awarded to the county to continue Work Ready efforts. The county will also receive road signs and a seal denoting the year it achieved certification. The local Work Ready Community team will receive a two-year membership to the Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce.



***Pictured Above:**
Johnny Jones, Chair of the Toombs-Montgomery Agribusiness Committee, addresses 2011 Fall Ag Tour participants during lunch at the Toombs County Agri-Center.*

2011 Fall Ag Tour

The Toombs-Montgomery Agribusiness Committee hosted the 2011 Fall Ag Tour on November 18, 2011. The purpose of the tour is to create awareness of the economic impact of the agriculture industry in the two counties. Tour stops included R&K Greenhouse, Vidalia Valley, Vidalia Onion & Vegetable Research Center, Toombs County Agri-Center, the Vidalia Onion Museum and J&S Produce.

Event sponsors included the Toombs County Development Authority, the Montgomery County Development Authority, the Vidalia Area Convention & Visitors Bureau and Toombs County FFA Alumni. Toombs County Farm Bureau provided lunch for participants.



***Pictured Above (L-R):**
Ryan Waldrep, Project Manager, Georgia Department of Economic Development; Buddy West, Chair, Board of Commissioners of Toombs County; Willis NeSmith, Member, Lyons City Council; Rick Hartley, City Manager, City of Lyons; Governor Nathan Deal; Bill Perez, Manager, US Pet Nutrition; Bill Mitchell, Executive Director, Toombs County Development Authority; and B.J. Davis, Chair, Toombs County Development Authority.*

Toombs County Development Authority Receives OneGeorgia EDGE Award

Governor Nathan Deal publicly acknowledged the award of \$500,000 OneGeorgia EDGE Grant funds to the Toombs County Development Authority for the US Pet Nutrition project during the "Celebrating Rural Georgia" event in Tifton on October 12, 2011.

The Authority received the funds to assist with the construction of a wastewater treatment facility that will serve US Pet Nutrition, a producer of high-end pet food. The site is located in the Toombs Corporate Center, US Highway 1, North of Lyons. The Toombs County facility will employ 150 persons with a \$25 million investment.



Celebrating Economic Development in Toombs County

The Toombs County Development Authority recently hosted Gretchen Corbin, Deputy Commissioner for Global Commerce, Georgia Department of Economic Development; Ryan Waldrep, Regional Project Manager, Georgia Department of Economic Development; the 2011-2012 Leadership Toombs-Montgomery Class; local elected officials; local existing industry representatives; and other local community leadership for a luncheon to celebrate economic development in Toombs County. It was a wonderful opportunity for community leadership to celebrate recent successes and discuss future opportunities.

Ms. Corbin was the keynote speaker. She noted that there are as many as 57,000 new jobs with investments totaling over \$15 billion in the pipeline for the State of Georgia.

***Pictured Above (L-R):
First Row - Warren Sowell, Leadership Toombs-Montgomery (LTM) Program Co-Chair; Haley Fountain, LTM Class; Kathryn Smith, LTM Class; Rachel Crumpler, LTM Class; Jodi Conner, LTM Class; Tiffany Underwood, LTM Class; Ginger Morris, LTM Class; Gretchen Corbin, Deputy Commissioner for Global Commerce, Georgia Department of Economic Development; Chris Vinson, LTM Class; and Amanda White, LTM Class.
Second Row - Gray Meredith, LTM Class; Brian Noonan, LTM Class; Jon Dorminey, LTM Class; Sharon Brantley, LTM Class; Tracey Leaver-Williams, LTM Class; and Wayne Williams, LTM Program Co-Chair.***

Community + Commerce + Connectivity

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