

NEWS RELEASE from the Smith County Appraisal District, 245 SSE Loop 323, Tyler, TX. 903/510-8600. Michael Barnett, Chief Appraiser.

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For **IMMEDIATE** Release

PRODUCTIVITY APPRAISAL REDUCES PROPERTY TAXES ON FARMS AND RANCHES

“Farmers and ranchers can apply for a special, lower valuation of their land based on what the land will produce rather than what it would sell for in the open market,” said Mike Barnett, Chief Appraiser for Smith County Appraisal District.

Landowners must file applications for this special appraisal at the Smith County Appraisal District by April 30. If your land already receives agricultural or timber valuation, you do not need to reapply unless your qualifications change or the chief appraiser requests a new application. “If you purchased land in 2009 that is already qualified, you must reapply in your own name by April 30 to remain eligible,” Barnett said.

“If you file an application after the deadline and your application is approved, a late-application penalty will be applied,” Barnett noted.

While agriculture does not need to be the owner’s primary business, the land must be used for agriculture or growing timber with the intent to produce income. The land must have been devoted to agricultural and/or timber production for at least five of the past seven years at the level of intensity that is generally accepted in the area. Wildlife management is an agricultural use if the land was qualified for agriculture in the preceding year. Land under wildlife management must meet acreage size requirements and special use qualifications.

“Landowners should know,” Barnett said, “that the law provides specific penalties

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for taking qualified land out of agricultural or timber production.” The “rollback” tax is the difference between taxes paid under productivity valuation and the taxes that would have been paid if the land had been taxed at market value.

“An owner triggers a rollback by changing the land’s use to a non-agricultural use,” Barnett explained. The rollback taxes are based on the five tax years preceding the year of the change and include interest charges.

Additional information and application forms are available at the Smith County Appraisal District, 245 SSE Loop 323, Tyler, 903/510-8600.

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