

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Commercial Kitchen Ribbon Cutting at Agricenter

MEMPHIS, TN --- Agricenter International celebrated the opening of their commercial kitchen last Friday with a luncheon and ribbon cutting. In partnership with UT-TSU Shelby County Extension, the kitchen was built to provide hands-on food-preparation training to area youth and adults and was made possible by a grant from agricultural lender Farm Credit Mid-America.

John Butler, President of Agricenter International, said, "Seeing this kitchen in operation with our first Jr. Chef Camp this past summer really speaks to the mission of the organization. I look forward to seeing this kitchen incorporated into more education opportunities for youth and adults."

The guests at the luncheon heard from various partners and participants who have used this kitchen before the grand opening. **Karen Bernard, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent with UT-TSU Shelby County Extension**, stated "When Agricenter discussed applying for the grant from Farm Credit Mid-America, we talked about the possibilities for adult and youth education and camps, now it is a dream come true!" **Jim Todd, Shelby County Director of UT Extension**, echoed those remarks, adding, "The sky is the limit for what kind of programs we can develop around this commercial kitchen in teaching children and adults."



Ben Jackson, a 10-year-old participant in the first Jr. Chef Camp this past summer, was also a guest speaker at the ribbon cutting. He said, "The teachers explained all the kitchen rules and made sure we stayed safe. My favorite part was tasting the food. My mom has been so impressed with my cooking skills she lets me cook at home once a week."

Tim Williams, Sr. Vice President Ag Lending at Farm Credit Mid-America, said "We have heard today about the impact that the investment of this kitchen is already making. I am so pleased we were able to partner with Agricenter to put forth this vision. Because of this kitchen, there will be youth and adults who will learn more about how to prepare foods coming out of local farms and how to eat healthy. We are thankful to be partners in this and know it will pay dividends for generations to come."

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