

Subject: Weak Farm Economy Aids Urban Sprawl

Story Summary: A weak farm economy and strong housing market are pushing development farther out into rural counties. This puts more pressure on farmers and could change the rural character of these counties. We look at one example near Memphis.

TRT: 1:41

Suggested Lead: A weak farm economy and strong housing market are likely to add to urban sprawl in many parts of the U.S. Stewart Truelsen reports from a county near Memphis that is worried about losing its rural character.

Suggested Supers:

Willie German
Tennessee Farmer
@ :11

Will Gresham
Somerville Livestock Sales
@ 1:04

Dolores Gresham
Somerville Livestock Sales
@ 1:09

Harris Armour
Tennessee Farmer
@ 1:23

Stewart Truelsen
Reporting
@ 1:32

Weak Farm Economy Aids Urban Sprawl
Stewart Truelsen Reporting
November 20, 2001

<p>Fayette county sign with highway traffic/ Cotton harvest/ housing development/</p>	<p>VO/ FAYETTE COUNTY, TENNESSEE IS STRUGGLING WITH ITS FUTURE. COTTON PRICES ARE AT DEPRESSION ERA LEVELS, BUT THE HOUSING MARKET IS STRONG.</p>
<p>Willie German Cotton Farmer</p> <p>Memphis riverfront/ Somerville water tower and town/</p>	<p>SOT/ WE USED TO NOT THINK ABOUT MEMPHIS BEING 50-60 MILES AWAY THAT WAS REALLY GOOD. YOU COULD GET INTO THE CITY PRETTY EASY, COME BACK HOME AND YOU ARE OUT IN YOUR LOCAL TOWN, AND YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT MEMPHIS MUCH.</p>
<p>Oaklands development sign/ Houses/ Cattle and tractor/ Willie German in cotton field/ fluffing out cotton/</p>	<p>VO/ A USDA REPORT SHOWS POPULATION GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT PICKING UP THE PACE IN RURAL COUNTIES LIKE THIS ONE. FARMERS SAY A WEAK FARM ECONOMY IS ADDING TO URBAN SPRAWL.</p>
<p>Willie German soundbite Cover with cotton harvest scenes</p>	<p>SOT/ IT'S REALLY PUT A STRAIN ON THE FARMERS TO BE ABLE TO PRODUCE A \$200 AN ACRE CROP VERSUS COULD SELL THE LAND FOR 8 OR 10-THOUSAND DOLLARS. I THINK THE AG ECONOMY IS REALLY HURTING US NOW CAUSE THERE IS A LOT OF FOLKS THAT WOULDN'T HAVE SOLD THEIR LAND IF THEY COULD HAVE MADE A LIVING OFF THE FARM.</p>
<p>Semi-circle of people at Farm Bureau meeting. Willie German presiding.</p> <p>Livestock auction/</p>	<p>VO/ THE FAYETTE COUNTY FARM BUREAU IS WORKING TO RETAIN THE RURAL CHARACTER OF THE COUNTY IN A 20-YEAR GROWTH PLAN MANDATED BY THE STATE. THEY'VE EVEN HAD SUPPORT</p>

	FROM NEWCOMERS.
Will Gresham Somerville Livestock Sales	SOT/ EVERYONE HAS A LOT IN COMMON IN WHAT THEIR DESIRES ARE. THEY COME FOR THE SCENIC VISTA AND WE MAKE THE SCENIC VISTA FOR THEM.
Dolores Gresham Somerville Livestock Sales	SOT/ THEY VALUE THIS KIND OF LIFESTYLE OR THEY WOULDN'T HAVE COME HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE.
Wider shot of auction ring/ Buyer shakes head no/ Harris Armour with horses/	VO/ BUT THE FARM ECONOMY IS WORKING AGAINST THEM. THE RECORD FARMERS WANT TO LEAVE ON THE LAND FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS IS IN JEOPARDY.
Harris Armour Tennessee Farmer Wide shot of cattle pasture/ Cotton harvester/	SOT/ I JUST FEEL IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE LEAVE A RECORD THAT'S WORTH READING TO THESE FUTURE GENERATIONS. WE NEED SOME OPEN LAND AND WE NEED PRODUCTION AGRICULTURE.
FB building/ Meeting/ Bull in ring/ Auctioneer/	VO/ THE FARM BUREAU ALSO SEEKS A NEW FARM BILL BEFORE YEAR'S END TO IMPROVE THE FARM ECONOMY. IN FAYETTE COUNTY, TENNESSEE, I'M STEWART TRUELSEN.