



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 23, 2024

CONTACT: [tnffaoundation@tnffa.org](mailto:tnffaoundation@tnffa.org)

## **COUNTRY HAM SELLS FOR \$25,000 AT THE TENNESSEE STATE FAIR FFA HAM BREAKFAST HEADLINED BY COUNTRY MUSIC STAR TRACE ADKINS**

LEBANON, TN – Grocery prices are high, but \$847 per pound for ham? That is what the 29.5 pound Tennessee Grand Champion Country Ham fetched during a live auction at the Wilson County-Tennessee State Fair to benefit the Tennessee Future Farmers of America (FFA) Foundation. The Country Ham sold for \$25,000, while the slightly smaller Packer Style Ham (17 pounds) sold for \$18,500 or \$1,088 per pound.

The winning bidders for the Country Ham were farm equipment dealer H&R Agri-Power, seed company Beck's Hybrids, and Catesa Farms, owned by 2024 Tennessee Farmer of the Year George McDonald of Riddleton, TN. Tennessee Farm Bureau, the Tennessee Farmers Cooperative, CPC Commodities, and ProTritition teamed up to buy the Packer Style Ham.

Both hams have already been donated back to the FFA to be sold during a private event later this year.

The auction was part of the sold out Ninth Annual Tennessee State Fair FFA Ham Breakfast presented by Farm Credit Mid-America. The breakfast was attended by more than 1,200 people and raised \$221,100 for the youth organization. The Tennessee FFA Foundation is a nonprofit that supports Tennessee students enrolled in agricultural education.

A well-known star to Tennesseans and country music fans everywhere, Trace Adkins was the keynote speaker. Adkins was president of his FFA chapter in Sarepta, LA. When his house tragically burned more than a decade ago, his treasured blue corduroy FFA jacket burned with it.

"When my house burned, after I saw that my wife and kids were safe, I was sad to lose a signed photo of me and Dolly Parton, and devastated to have lost my FFA jacket," said Adkins during the event. With the help of the FFA and the work of his wife, the country music star received a replacement jacket, which he wore during the FFA Ham Breakfast.

The event was packed to capacity with business leaders, government officials, farmers, and FFA members. In addition to Trace Adkins, others who spoke at the event included U.S. Senators Marsha Blackburn (TN) and Bill Hagerty (TN), U.S. Representative Mark Green (TN-5), and U.S. Representative John Rose (TN-6). Rep. Rose represents the area of Wilson County where the fair is held.

“The future of Tennessee is in good hands with the next generation of FFA members at the helm,” said Rep. Rose. “These students are learning leadership and teamwork skills through agricultural education that will lead them to become positive contributors to society. I could not be more proud to support the organization.”

The FFA program is one component of agricultural education, which is a course offered in some 240 middle and high schools across Tennessee. The administration of the FFA program is a joint effort between the Tennessee Departments of Agriculture and Education. Both Agriculture Commissioner Charlie Hatcher and Education Commissioner Lizzette Gonzalez Reynolds were in attendance.

Supporters of the event included agricultural household names such as the Farm Bureau and Co-op. Other non-agricultural supporters were as varied as Amazon, Meta, and a number of banks, charitable foundations, prominent Tennesseans, universities, utility companies, and more.

With the ham auction being the hallmark of the annual event, the exhibitors of the hams were recognized with great fanfare. The two winning entries came from Tommy Jones (Country Ham) and Gannon Sanders (Packer Style Ham), both are from Wilson County.

Following the sale of the hams, a cowboy hat signed by Trace Adkins was a surprise third auction item that eventually sold for \$2,500 to United Communications of Chapel Hill, TN. The auction is a fun way for supporters to give back to FFA while making for a lively event.

The Tennessee State Fair continues through Saturday, August 24. For more information about the fair, visit [www.wilsoncountytntatefair.org](http://www.wilsoncountytntatefair.org). To learn more about Tennessee FFA, visit [www.tnffa.org](http://www.tnffa.org).

###

Photo gallery available at: [tnffa.org/gallery](http://tnffa.org/gallery)



Photo Caption: The Ninth Annual Tennessee State Fair FFA Ham Breakfast boasted more than 1,200 guests Monday, including country music star Trace Adkins and many dignitaries and business leaders.



Photo Caption: The winning bidders on the Wilson County-Tennessee Fair Grand Champion Country Ham pose with the Tennessee Future Farmers of America State Officer team at the Ninth Annual Tennessee State Fair FFA Ham Breakfast in Lebanon. The ham sold for \$25,000 to benefit the FFA program in Tennessee.





Photo Caption: The winning bidders on the Wilson County-Tennessee Fair Grand Champion Packer Style Ham pose with the Tennessee Future Farmers of America State Officer team at the Ninth Annual Tennessee State Fair FFA Ham Breakfast in Lebanon. The ham sold for \$18,500 to benefit the FFA program in Tennessee.



Photo Caption: Country music star and FFA alum Trace Adkins was the Keynote Speaker at the Ninth Annual Tennessee State Fair FFA Ham Breakfast.