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Adams moves on as agent to work on farm full time

By ANDREW HARP THE NEWS-ENTERPRISE

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Matthew Adams, Hardin County Cooperative Extension Service agent for agriculture and natural resources, is stepping down from the position May 3. He will be transitioning to working on his farm in Upton full time.

ANDREW HARP/The News-Enterprise

For almost a decade and a half, Matthew Adams has worked at the Hardin County Cooperative Extension Service as an extension agent for agriculture and natural resources.

Now, he's resigning from his position to focus on his dream of farming full time. His last day at the Extension service is May 3.

"This always was my dream growing up was to be a full time farmer," he said.

Originally from and still living in Upton, he graduated from Central Hardin High School. At CHHS, he was involved in Future Farmers of America, 4-H and the Kentucky Cattleman's Association.

Adams worked as an agent for 13 years. He found his way into the position after first earning a program assistant position in 2010, shortly after graduating from Western Kentucky University. He then applied for and earned the agent position within months.

Adams worked with now retired agent Doug Shepherd. He said Shepherd took him under his wing when he started there at 22 years old, and had actually told him about the open assistant position.

Alongside his responsibilities as an agent, he also wrote a weekly column for *The News-Enterprise*, and was the co-host, along with fellow Extension agent Daniel Carpenter, of the Dirt to Dollars podcast.

Ultimately, Adams said working with those in the community and in the office is the thing he'll miss most about the job.

"The biggest thing is just the people. That's been why I stayed in this position," he said.

The largest change that has happened in the past decade in agriculture in the county is the use of technology in farming and being able to make operations more efficient. He said crop yields have continued to increase because of this.

Last year was "one of the worst droughts that we've ever had," he said, but yields still were decent even though it wasn't perfect.

Adams said the most challenging part of the position was not knowing necessarily what was going to happen when he woke up in the morning, and that tasks and challenges in the job would be unpredictable.

"We've got a lot of great farmers and a lot of great people in agriculture in Hardin County," he said.

In the future, Adams said he's hoping that county leaders will continue to preserve agriculture in the county for future generations alongside the growth and development that is happening.

"(Growth and development) can coexist with agriculture, we just have to be mindful about how we plan and what we do," he said.

Adams said he realized if he didn't make the change now to farm full time, then it probably wouldn't happen.

He'll be growing corn, soybeans, winter wheat, alfalfa, hay and will have a cow herd for beef on the 800-acre farm.

"I like to tell people ... don't give up on your dreams," he said. "I'm 13 years working on this dream, and finally blessed with the opportunity to be able to take the plunge."

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