

Arson Suspected in Kentucky Tobacco Barn Fires; Linked to Federal Investigation of Several Macon Tobacco

Written by Debbie Gregory
Tuesday, November 20, 2012



Arson caused a fire that destroyed barns, harvested crops and farm equipment belonging to Al Pedigo, at his Figure Eight Road residence in Allen County, Ky.

Fire broke out in the early morning hours of November 5, 2012 and the South Allen County fire department received the 10/72 call at 7:45 a.m.

According to Chief Eddie Ausbrooks, the fire was set sometime during the night. When the firefighters arrived at the scene one barn was completely down, another was standing but structurally unstable, and a combine was destroyed.

The estimated loss exceeds \$125,000. The Kentucky State Police and Fire Marshall were called to investigate.

According to Robert Montgomery, who is spearheading the Citizens For Justice Coalition in Allen County, (independent of his role as Allen County USDA Farm Service Agent), the small farming community near Rough Hill Missionary Baptist Church remains in shock after individuals committed this heinous act of arson. He says that many residents have voiced concern that additional acts such as this may continue unless those responsible are found, arrested and convicted. Many in the community are living in fear that they could be next unless swift justice is served!

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The coalition was formed by concerned citizens of Allen County, who are implementing a campaign targeted toward the immediate and successful apprehension and prosecution of those responsible for the November 5, arson.

Monetary pledges are being solicited to be used to establish a reward for anyone providing information that leads to the arrest and conviction of these individuals. At this time the reward is up to \$12,000. The campaign will remain active until a conviction is obtained.

Pledge forms have been prepared and anyone submitting a pledge will have the option to remain anonymous or to authorize their name to be used as supporting this campaign.

You can e-mail: citizensforjustice@mail.com for more information or to make a pledge. Call in confidence to 270-781-CLUE.

The Macon County Chronicle has received numerous tips regarding the federal investigation by the USDA into tobacco insurance fraud in Macon County. This arson fire in the southern tip of Kentucky is believed to be linked to this investigation regarding several local tobacco producers.