

### **Note to AWMA Common Shareholders**

As you may know, AWMA is owned by its Common Shareholders (all growers utilizing AWMA services) and by the holder of Preferred Shares, Burley Tobacco Growers Co-Operative Association ("Co-Op"). You, the Common Shareholders, collectively have a 51% voting interest and the Preferred Shares hold a 49% voting interest. The Preferred Shares do have certain limited approval rights and the Preferred Shares have certain distribution rights.

The AWMA Board of Directors has unanimously voted to make an offer to the Burley Tobacco Growers Co-Op to redeem the Preferred Shares for \$120,000. This offer is scheduled to be brought before the Co-Op Board at its meeting scheduled for March 4, 2020 (in Lexington, Ky).

The Co-Op is a defendant in a law suit filed on January 27, 2020, seeking, among other things, to force the dissolution of the Co-Op. Although only filed on January 27<sup>th</sup>, the plaintiffs have already amended the complaint in the litigation on 2 separate occasions. The litigation is compounded by an active membership drive to force the complete dissolution of the Co-Op. As a final matter, the Co-Op Board is proposing to scale back its operations and distribute all but \$3.5 million to the Co-Op members.

While AWMA takes no position in the efforts related to the Co-Op, we do want to both keep you up to date on the actions related to a significant holder of an economic interest in AWMA, and to advise you of the efforts of the AWMA Board to represent your Common Shareholder interests and to protect AWMA for entanglement in the current actions.

In order to provide a return to the Co-Op of its investment and to help prevent the forced sale of the Preferred Shares to a disinterested, or worse yet adverse, party, the AWMA Board has approved the offer to redeem the Preferred Shares.

As always, if you have any questions about this action, please contact the AWMA staff at 859-233-7845 or any of the AMWA Board Members. They are as follow:

Steven Hinton	(270) 668-1713	Robert Gray	(270) 881-0327
Eric Blandford	(270) 699-6087	James Dale Seay	(270) 887-4530
Kevin Rawlings	(816) 591-5295		

### **Program Updates**

There has been only (2) two changes to the H-2A program this year. (1) We are no longer required to do newspaper advertising. All H-2A employers information is loaded on a website that the Department of Labor developed. You are still required to respond to U.S. Referrals when contacted. (2) January 2, 2020, the Adverse Effect Wage Rate changes were effective. **Please Note: The staggered start date using the 120 day rule has not been approved.**

### **Document Change**

Homeland Security has updated the H-2A application that we submit for you. If we haven't already, we will be sending you two pages that we need signed and returned to AWMA. Please turn those around as quickly as possible.

«city», «state» «zip»  
«address»  
«First» «Last»

**Important  
Shareholder Information**



### **Each Employer Will Receive A Packet After Each Group of Workers Cross the Border**

1. Partially Completed I-9's - You and your worker must complete and sign their I-9. You must maintain these signed I-9's in your records.
2. Reimbursement for Worker's Expenses - You must reimburse your workers for the expenses they incurred when they arrive on the farm. We will enclose a minimum recommended reimbursement for each worker.
3. Work Contract, which includes the work rules in English & Spanish - Please give a copy to each worker. There is a form provided for the workers to sign once you have given them a copy of the work contract.
4. Weekly Wage Statement - You must give each employee, under contract, a wage statement at the end of each pay period.
5. Post the Migrant and Seasonal Agriculture Worker Protection Act Poster and the Employee Rights Under the H-2A Program Posters (English & Spanish) in a conspicuous place where all workers can see it. If you have U.S. workers employed, you must also post the Fair Labor Standards Act Poster.
6. The packet will include the following forms:
  - Employee Abandonment, Voluntary Resignation, Temporary Leave, & Contract Completion

### **H-2A Application Deadlines**

***We need your application & payment, 75 days prior to your date of need.***

- If you need workers by May 15, we need your application no later than March 1.
- If you need workers by June 1, we need your application no later than March 15.
- If you need workers by June 15, we need your application no later than April 1.
- If you need workers by July 1, we need your application no later than April 15.
- If you need workers by July 15, we need your application no later than May 1.
- If you need workers by August 1, we need your application no later than May 15.

**We can not accept faxed, emailed, or two-sided applications.  
We must have original documents signed in ink!  
Please include your payment with the documents.**