When you support Extension, individuals add value to timber products and compare cost and risks while developing new businesses.

"The Wood Entrepreneur program is giving me the tools and support to pursue my lifelong dream of starting my own business that would otherwise be financially impossible. The program has sheltered me from the unforeseen pitfalls that would have sunk my business before even getting it off the ground."

JOHN MARCUM, Cherry Ridge Wood Products Inc.

Contact:
Bobby Ammerman
UK Department of Forestry
130 Robinson Rd
Jackson, KY 41339
Phone: 606-666-2438

The Entrepreneur Development in Wood Program has provided mentorship and guidance for seven entrepreneurs to develop product ideas from concept to reality.

UK Department of Forestry Extension provides training and assistance to wood based entrepreneurs in Kentucky
The Entrepreneur Development Program in Wood Products was created to assist individuals who aspire to pursue developing a wood product business. The Program developed by UK Forestry Extension combines expertise in the Department with equipment and staff located at the UK Wood Utilization Center at the Robinson Center for Appalachian Resource Sustainability (RCARS) in Jackson, Kentucky. The facilities and personnel are uniquely suited to this Program and provide the only option for this type of assistance in the region.

The Program helps aspiring entrepreneurs to produce prototypes that are used in design development and marketing as well as initial production runs to help determine costs. This assistance is critical in helping them to determine product demand, assess costs, and identify technical issues associated with production before making risky investments that accompany a normal business start-up.

Forests cover over 80 percent of the counties in eastern Kentucky and the Appalachian region as a whole. Wise, efficient, and effective local use of the forest resource is one key to providing long-term economic sustainability to the Region. The Entrepreneur Program provides a much needed resource for those seeking to locally maximize the economic potential associated with the region’s most visible and sustainable natural resource.

The UK Wood Utilization Center has continued to acquire the technology necessary for staying abreast of developments in the wood industry including computer controlled machines for template making and tooling/product design. Forestry Extension specialist have created an open line of communication with the industry and are able to make recommendations that significantly reduce error, waste, and setup time creating an advantage for Kentucky manufacturers.

The UK Wood Utilization Center at RCARS in combination with UK’s 15,000 acre Robinson Forest provides a significant educational resource for forest education and wood resource training. The combination of these assets is unique being the only combination of this type to exist in the U.S.

Participants of the Entrepreneur Development Program in Wood products have manufactured:

- Mountain Banjos
- The Original Pet Swing
- Interactive display units
- Customized laser cutting boards
- Reconstituted used bourbon barrel tops
- Reclaimed hardwood flooring for horse fencing
- Beehives
- Framed hymn plaques
- Memory boxes

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.