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### **KENTUCKY MESONET EXPANDING TO OWSLEY COUNTY**

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – The Kentucky Mesonet is expanding its weather and climate monitoring network to Owsley County.

“We are extremely pleased to have a new station operating in Owsley County as part of the Kentucky Mesonet,” said Dr. Stuart Foster, director of the Mesonet and the Kentucky Climate Center at Western Kentucky University. “This site will provide valuable data to assist National Weather Service meteorologists in producing forecasts and severe weather warnings, and will also provide benefits to a wide range of interests in the local area.”

More than 30 Mesonet sites are operational statewide collecting real-time weather and climate data on temperature, precipitation, humidity, solar radiation, wind speed and direction. Data is packaged into observations and transmitted to the Kentucky Climate Center at WKU every five minutes, 24 hours per day, throughout the year.

The data is available online at [www.kymesonet.org](http://www.kymesonet.org); the website includes a “Live Graphs” feature that allows users to visualize weather/climate data collected in a 24-hour period.

The Mesonet project’s goal is to develop a statewide automated environmental monitoring network of approximately 100 stations that will collect data and support a variety of needs across Kentucky in agriculture, education, emergency management, energy, engineering and construction, recreation, transportation, water supply management and weather forecasting.

Since the Mesonet's first station at the WKU farm in Warren County became operational in May 2007, 34 stations have been installed and plans for expanding the network are progressing. The Mesonet has partnered with universities, school districts, businesses, farmers and others for site locations. The National Weather Service and media outlets are utilizing the Mesonet data for weather forecasts and reports.

Stations are located in Adair, Allen, Barren, Breathitt, Bullitt, Caldwell, Calloway, Carroll, Casey, Christian, Crittenden, Cumberland, Fayette, Franklin, Grayson, Hardin, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Knox, Lincoln, Logan, Madison, Marshall, Mason, McLean, Mercer, Morgan, Ohio, Owen, Owsley, Rowan, Taylor, Union and Warren counties. Additional site installations are scheduled for Breckinridge, Clark, Fulton, Graves, Lewis, Metcalfe and Pike. Site negotiations are under way in Campbell, Henderson, Marion, McCreary, Muhlenberg, Nelson, Nicholas and Pendleton with active site searches in more than 20 other counties.

State Climatologist Stuart Foster is director of the Kentucky Mesonet and the Kentucky Climate Center. Dr. Rezaul Mahmood, associate professor of Geography and Geology, is associate director of the Kentucky Mesonet and the Kentucky Climate Center. The Kentucky Mesonet staff includes meteorologists and staff with expertise in instrumentation, information technology, quality assurance, and education outreach. The Kentucky Mesonet also provides opportunities for WKU student employees and interns to work side-by-side with professional staff.

Initial funding for the project was secured by U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell through a \$2.9 million federal appropriation for the Kentucky Climate Center, part of WKU's Applied Research and Technology Program in the Ogden College of Science and Engineering.

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