

## Speaker Biographies

**Ted and JoAnn Dawson** are eager to share their years of business and horse experience with up-and-coming agritourism and equine entrepreneurs.

Raised on a dairy and livestock farm with numerous top honors in **FFA and 4-H**, followed by a degree in **Animal Science and a Masters in Ag Education**, JoAnn decided to leave the farm life behind and move to New York City to pursue her dream of acting. She worked as a **petite model**, appeared in several **national magazine ads**, and traveled across the country as a **Magician's Assistant** before deciding to return home and marry Ted, her college sweetheart.

She continued to work in TV and film, earning her **Screen Actors Guild** card (SAG name – Jodi) and winning principal roles in commercials and several major motion pictures, including **The Sixth Sense** and **12 Monkeys**. In addition, she and Ted work as **animal wranglers** for multi-media productions.

JoAnn is the author of the award - winning **Lucky Foot Stable series** for ages 8-12 and frequently travels to elementary schools for “author talks” with her pony Butterscotch. She also delivers an inspirational speech, **Success In Twenty Words or Less**, to high school students.

JoAnn is a **columnist** for **Cecil Soil Magazine** and **The Leader** and teaches **Equine Science and Acting for Video Production** at **Cecil College in North East, Maryland**. She is a board member of the North East Chamber of Commerce, the Cecil County Tourism Committee, and a fellow in the LEAD Maryland program.

Ted, a suburban boy, earned a bachelor's degree in **Business Administration** and **Finance** before falling for the farmer's daughter. He began working on the dairy farm to impress her father and loved it so much that he left behind the world of high finance for a life of milking cows and baling hay. When JoAnn took off for the big city, he traveled across the country exploring fish farming before returning to tie the knot. Ted is a **Farm Bureau** board member and teaches **Equine Business, Facilities Management, and Pasture Management** at **Cecil College**. Through the **Neighborhood Youth Panel**, the Dawsons also work with disadvantaged youth on the farm.

Together now for 28 years with two grown sons, the Dawsons own and operate **Fairwinds Farm & Stables, Inc.**, voted **Cecil County Outstanding Farm Operation 2009**. Known for its diversity, it is a “destination” farm and B&B, featured in a variety of **national magazines** and on **Good Morning America**.

In their PowerPoint presentation, “**Thinking Outside the Box Stall – Top Ten Ways to Avoid Getting a Real Job**,” the Dawsons share their expertise with hilarious stories of their experiences on and off the farm.