

Oregon Farm Bureau Federation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **ODA's Jim Johnson honored with a Farm Bureau Distinguished Service Award**

At the 2006 Oregon Farm Bureau State Convention in Bend, Dec. 4-8, OFB President Barry Bushue honored Jim Johnson, Land Use and Water Planning Coordinator for the Oregon Department of Agriculture, with a Distinguished Service Award.

"The Distinguished Service Award was established to recognize outstanding efforts in the interest of agriculture, and few are more deserving of this honor than Jim," said Bushue.

As the Water and Land Use Specialist for the Oregon Department of Agriculture, Johnson is often called upon to give an expert's explanation of Right-to-Farm laws and other agriculture issues in the courts, to the state legislature, and at county commissioner hearings on land use.

"Jim is a regular attendee at Farm Bureau's policy planning meetings, always ready to explain some land use technicality that helps us fashion effective policy," added Bushue. "He says he loves to come to Farm Bureau gatherings because that is where he gets to hear what real farmers think about the issues."

Johnson is also an invaluable resource for many OFB Advisory Committees and has served for several years on the committee that oversees the Century Farm and Ranch Program.

Johnson has a Masters degree in geography from the University of Nebraska-Omaha and a Bachelors degree from Western Oregon University. His land use-planning career spans local, state, and regional perspectives and has included positions with Klickitat County in Washington, Wasco County in Oregon, the Columbia River Gorge Commission, and the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development. In 1980, he was the instructor of geography in the Social Science Dept. at Oregon College of Education.

"Because of his extensive work in land use planning, Jim is unequalled in his knowledge of its laws and rules," said Bushue. "He is as aggressive at helping a farmer or rancher work through the land use laws to further their operation, as he is in protecting the agriculture industry from non-farm uses."

*Editors: More high-resolution digital photos of the award presentation and honorees are available. Contact Anne Marie Moss, OFB Communication Director, [annemarie@oregonfb.org](mailto:annemarie@oregonfb.org), (503) 399-1701, ext. 313.*

*Note: In all instances, "Farm Bureau" must be capitalized.*

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**Other 2006 Farm Bureau members honored at the OFB state convention:**

**Katy Coba, Director of the Oregon Department of Agriculture**, was honored with the **President's Award**, in recognition of her outstanding advocacy and leadership toward the betterment of the Oregon agriculture industry.

**Paul Kovash of Benton County** was honored with a **Top Hand Award** for his innovation, passion, and energy in Farm Bureau activities, particularly in ag education and health and safety projects.

**Arlene Kovash of Benton County** received a **Distinguished Service Award** for her decades of representing Oregon agriculture in the political arena and her volunteer service in Farm Bureau.

**Anne Rigor of Benton County** was honored with the **Outstanding County Farm Bureau Secretary Award** for her volunteer work and commitment to the Benton County Farm Bureau.

**Dalton Straus of Jackson County** received a **Top Hand Award** for his decades of work promoting the Oregon ag industry around the state, nation, and world.

**Clifford Horning of Benton County** was honored with a **Memorial Award** for having made a significant difference to the Farm Bureau organization and agriculture during his lifetime. The award was accepted by his brother Eric Horning.

*Press releases on and photos of all honorees are available.*

**About Oregon Farm Bureau**

Oregon Farm Bureau traces its roots to 1919 when the Umatilla County Farm Bureau was established in the heart of the state's wheat country. Oregon Farm Bureau was formally incorporated in 1932. In 2007, OFB will celebrate its 75th anniversary. The state headquarters remained in Pendleton until 1949, when it moved to Salem.

Farm Bureau is organized in all 36 Oregon counties. Today, OFB has over 53,000 total member families, making it the largest general agricultural organization in the state. About 8,800 member families are professionally engaged in agriculture. Barry Bushue, an east Multnomah County berry and nursery producer, is OFB's 15th president.

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