

Oregon Farm Bureau Federation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gary Harris honored with Farm Bureau Distinguished Service Award

At the 2007 Oregon Farm Bureau 75th Anniversary State Convention in Pendleton, Dec. 4-6, OFB President Barry Bushue honored Gary Harris of Jefferson County Farm Bureau with the Distinguished Service Award for his years of invaluable service to the organization and to the agriculture industry as a whole.

Harris has been a Farm Bureau member since 1969, serving as county president for a good portion of that time and on the county Farm Bureau Board for the last 12 years. At the state Farm Bureau level, Harris has been a member of the OFB House of Delegates, the democratic body that votes upon Farm Bureau policy, and has worked on the OFB Tax Advisory Committee for 24 years, the last nine years of which he has acted as committee chairman.

Harris has been involved in a number of successful political campaigns, assisting in the election of various local, state, and national candidates. Those activities and his knowledge of land use issues earned him a nomination by Governor John Kitzhaber and ratification by the Oregon Senate to two four-year terms as the agriculture representative on Oregon's Land Conservation and Development Commission.

"Sometimes it is hard to tell which comes first, his civic activities or his farming," said OFB President Barry Bushue. "Gary farms about 700 acres of irrigated land in the Madras area, producing specialty seed crops including grass seed, onion seed, and carrot seed."

"When it is all said and done, Farm Bureau and all Oregonians have truly benefited from Gary's work in his two passions: tax issues and land use planning," said Bushue. "He has definitely earned this Distinguished Service Award, and we sincerely thank Gary for his exceptional efforts tackling complicated issues for the betterment of agriculture."

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Editors: Attached is a high-resolution digital photo of the award presentation. From left is OFB Distinguished Service Award Recipient Gary Harris, OFV Executive Vice President Dave Dillon, and OFB President Barry Bushue.

* Note: "Farm Bureau" is a registered trademark; please capitalize in all cases.

Other 2007 Farm Bureau members honored at the OFB state convention:

Paul Kovash of Benton County was inducted as the 18th member of the **OFB Hall of Fame** to recognize and thank him for his decades of volunteer leadership and efforts on behalf of Farm Bureau at the state and county level and for the betterment of the entire Oregon agriculture industry.

Daryl Hawes of Baker County was inducted as the 19th member of the **OFB Hall of Fame** to recognize and thank him for his decades of volunteer leadership and efforts on behalf of Farm Bureau at the state and county level and for the betterment of the entire Oregon agriculture industry.

Don Schellenberg, OFB Associate Director of Governmental Affairs, was honored with the **President's Award**, in recognition of his tireless service, leadership, dedication, and advocacy for Farm Bureau members and the Oregon agriculture industry.

Paul Thorp of Polk County received a **Top Hand Award** for his efforts in Farm Bureau and for promoting agriculture education and safety at the county and state level.

Bernie Faber of Marion County received a **Service to Agriculture Award** for his passionate commitment to advancing the agriculture industry and furthering the interests of Oregon's farming and ranching families.

Mickey Killingsworth of Jefferson County was honored with the **Outstanding County Farm Bureau Secretary Award** for her volunteer work and commitment to the Jefferson County Farm Bureau.

Bill Austin of Douglas County was honored with a **Memorial Award** for having made a significant difference to the Farm Bureau organization and agriculture industry during his lifetime. The award was accepted by friend and former Douglas County Farm Bureau President Rick Epp.

Press releases and photos of all honorees are available.

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Oregon Farm Bureau celebrated its 75th Anniversary at its 2007 State Convention, which took place Dec. 4-6, at the Pendleton Convention Center in Pendleton. In 1932, the organization was founded by a group of agricultural producers during a meeting at a farmhouse in nearby Pilot Rock. Farm Bureau's first state office was established soon afterward in Pendleton.

Today, Farm Bureau is organized in all 36 Oregon counties and has more than 8,000 member families that are professionally engaged in agriculture. Barry Bushue, an east Multnomah County berry and nursery stock producer, is OFB's 15th president. Bushue was elected to a fifth two-year term as president at the 2007 State Convention.

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