

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Paul Thorp honored with Farm Bureau Top Hand Award

At the 2007 Oregon Farm Bureau 75th Anniversary State Convention in Pendleton, Dec. 4-6, OFB President Barry Bushue honored Paul Thorp of Polk County Farm Bureau with the Top Hand Award for his years of invaluable service.

“The Top Hand Award is presented to a person whose activities have made Oregon Farm Bureau the successful grassroots organization that it is today,” said Bushue. “Paul has volunteered at both the state and county level and has dependably accomplished any task set before him.”

Thorp is the current president of the Polk County Farm Bureau and has served on the Polk County Farm Bureau Board of Directors since 1992.

He is a member of the OFB Livestock and Resource Committee, OFB Goose Depredation Committee, and OFB Agriculture Education Committee. As the chair of the OFB Health & Safety Committee, Thorp helped with the creation of a highly successful Rural Road Safety campaign and brochure to educate both farmers and the public on the importance of sharing the roads safely and the proper use of Slow-Moving Vehicle signs.

“Paul is also noted for single-handedly organizing and conducting the only Farm Bureau-sponsored Tractor Driving Safety courses in Oregon,” said Bushue. (Employees under the age of 18 must pass this course before they can operate a piece of power-driven equipment on the farm.) The class offered by the Polk County Farm Bureau is customarily held in the spring at the county fairgrounds.

“I am proud to give this year’s Top Hand Award to someone who is a mild-mannered but very effective volunteer leader, dedicated to making a difference in agriculture and the community at large,” said Bushue.

Thorp raises a variety of vegetables in Polk County.

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Editors: Attached is a high-resolution digital photo of the award presentation. From left is OFB Top Hand Award Recipient Paul Thorp, OFB President Barry Bushue, and OFB Executive Vice President Dave Dillon.

* 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.

Gary Harris of Jefferson County was given a **Distinguished Service Award** for his years of excellent work, particularly in tax and land use issues, on behalf of Oregon agriculture.

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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