



Fast Facts

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KEVIN MORGAN NAMED FFB EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Kevin Morgan has been appointed executive director of Florida Farm Bureau. In his new capacity he will oversee and coordinate the activities of the Agricultural Policy, Field Services and Public Relations divisions. Morgan joined Farm Bureau in 1984 as coordinator of Young Farmer and Women's programs. In 1992 he moved to the Agricultural Policy Division as assistant director. He was named associate director in 1997 and director of the division in 2004.

BIDDERS GOBBLING UP CHANCES TO HUNT WITH BRONSON

Florida Farm Bureau's Young Farmer and Rancher program is auctioning off a weekend turkey hunt with Commissioner of Agriculture Charles H. Bronson. The high bidder will purchase a two-person, guided turkey hunt at Evans Farm in North Florida. The hunt will take place the weekend of March 21 or March 29, 2009, based on Bronson's schedule. Hunters will arrive on Friday afternoon and depart after the Sunday morning hunt. The hunt will include full accommodations and guide service. Bids will be accepted until midnight, Eastern Time, on Friday, Jan. 30, 2009. The auction is being conducted entirely on-line at the Florida Farm Bureau Federation's Web site, <http://FloridaFarmBureau.org>. Click on the photo of the turkey on the left side of the home page. At press time, bidding stood at \$550.

TWO FARM BUREAU STAFFERS WIN ELECTIONS

FFB Director of Government and Community Affairs Mary Ann Gosa and FFB Assistant Director of Field Services Todd Martin were both successful in their races for seats on the Alachua County Soil and Water Conservation District board. Gosa won her election with 52.6 percent of the votes cast while Martin was even more impressive in garnering 61.3 percent of the vote. Congratulations to them both.

FARM-CITY WEEK AROUND THE CORNER

FFB Manager of Public Relations Programs Kathy Richardson is asking the counties to inform her of any Farm-City Week activities so they can be posted on the Florida Farm Bureau Web site. She is also asking that counties send her copies of signed proclamations, printed agendas from dinners or meetings, and news articles and pictures so she can include them in State Recognition applications. Contact **Chris Miller** at (352) 374-1535 or Richardson at (352) 374-1533 with questions.

AG HALL OF FAME TO GET NEW MEMBERS

Four new members will be inducted into the Florida Agricultural Hall of Fame during the 31st annual awards celebration Feb. 10, 2009, during the Florida State Fair in Tampa. They are: **Dr. James Griffiths** (deceased) of Winter Haven; **Richard Kelly** of Tallahassee; **Kay Richardson** of Evinston; and **Mason Smoak** (deceased) of Lake Placid. Tickets to the event will be available in early 2009.

CARING FARMERS HONORED IN SANTA FE RIVER BASIN

Florida Farm Bureau recognized 17 Santa Fe River Basin farmers and ranchers on Oct. 30 for their outstanding management of natural resources. Each agriculturist was honored during an awards dinner at DeChamplain's Heaven's Gate Farm near Trenton. Those honored include **Jerry Wright, Michael Wilkerson, Thomas Brookins, Trevor Bass, Jeff Beach, Jerry Mills, Lamar Moseley, Wayne Oden, Randall Roberts, Andy Robinson, James Swilley, St. John Alliance Dairy, Don Bennick, Scott Tucker, David Sumrall, David Mikell and Mike Tice.**

SOD KICK-OFF EVENT SCHEDULED

After nearly four years of work, the "Best Management Practices for Florida Sod" program will officially debut with a "Florida Sod BMP Kick-Off" event Dec. 3 at Kirkland Sod Farm in New Smyrna Beach. For more information, contact **Joshua Craft** at (352) 378-8100, ext. 1091.

NEWS FROM FFB DISTRICT SIX

FFB Assistant Director of Field Services Andy Neuhofer reports that the Highlands County Ag-Venture took place on Oct. 28 - 30. More than 1000 third grade students learned about various facets of Florida agriculture. Tributes were paid to **Mason Smoak** and **Jerry Hueter** who died within a few days

of each other. Both men played integral roles in the annual event. • • • The District 6 Women will be meeting on Nov. 15 to participate in a press release workshop and tour a local niche market farm. Anyone interested can contact Neuhofer at (941) 628-3515.

JIMMY CHEEK HEADING TO ROCKY TOP

Dr. Jimmy G. Cheek, the University of Florida's senior vice president for agriculture and natural resources, has been named the next chancellor at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. He will begin in that role Feb. 1. Cheek, part of UF's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences for 33 years, said he's enthusiastic about the move, but will miss the institution where he's served for so long. Cheek came to UF in 1975 as a faculty member in agricultural education and communication. He was assistant dean of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences from 1992-1999 and was its dean from 1999 until 2004, when he was tapped to lead IFAS. **We'll miss you, Jimmy. Congratulations.**

NEW BOOK, "AMERICAN FARMER," NOW AVAILABLE

FFB Director of Public Relations Rod Hemphill reports that a new book, "American Farmer," which presents a visual showcase of U.S. farmers and ranchers, is now available. The publication features a collection of images by **Paul Mobley**, an independent professional photographer. Florida Farm Bureau members may purchase the book at a 10 percent discount. To order, go to <http://welcomebooks.com> and click on "discount coupons" at the bottom of the page. Then type in the code "AMFB" to receive your discount. The retail price of the book is \$50.

MORE DODGE VEHICLES ELIGIBLE FOR REBATE

Florida Farm Bureau members can receive \$500 cash savings on the retail purchase or lease of new 2008 and 2009 Dodge Avenger, Charger and Caliber automobiles. Those models have been added to the list of eligible vehicles that also includes Ram 1500/2500/3500, Dakota, Durango, Neon, Stratus Coupe/Sedan, Caravan/Caravan CV, Grand Caravan/Grand Caravan CV, Magnum and Nitro. Individuals who have been members of the Florida Farm Bureau for at least 30 days can obtain a bonus certificate from their county Farm Bureau entitling them to the \$500 rebate. The rebate, which can be combined with any national consumer incentives, is available only to Florida Farm Bureau members in Florida. The incentive cannot be combined with the Dodge ON THE JOB Commercial Incentive Program, Chrysler Employee Advantage, Dealership Employee Purchase, Friends Program, College Graduate Program or certain other printed certificate programs.

ANNUAL MEETING WRAP-UP

Last month's Florida Farm Bureau Annual Meeting saw the emergence of strong candidates for the national Young Farmer and Rancher (YF&R) competitions. **Larry and Jenny Black**, a Polk County couple, drove away with a new Dodge Ram Quad Cab truck, courtesy of Southern Farm Bureau Casualty Insurance Company. The Blacks won this special prize after having been selected as the winners of Florida Farm Bureau's YF&R Achievement Award competition. They will also receive an all-expense paid trip to San Antonio, Texas in January to represent the Sunshine State in the national competition at the American Farm Bureau Federation's Annual Meeting. **Scott and Sarah Joe Thomas**, a Marion County couple, were chosen as the winners of the Excellence in Agriculture competition. The honor is bestowed upon farmers and ranchers who are under the age of 35 and do not derive the majority of their income from an owned farm operation. They, too, will have the opportunity to represent Florida in San Antonio. Finally, **Keith Shiver** of Lafayette County won the YF&R Discussion Meet. The discussion meet is a forum that allows young farmers and ranchers between the ages of 18 and 35 to demonstrate their ability to express ideas and opinions on major agricultural issues. He will represent Florida in the national YF&R Discussion Meet. • • • Florida Farm Bureau recognized **Sens. Carey Baker and Larcenia Bullard** and **Reps. Mary Brandenburg and Will Kendrick** as Legislators of the Year for 2008 for their leadership, vision and support of Florida's agriculture industry. • • • **Donna Gehrke-White**, editor of the Neighbors edition for *The Miami Herald*, has been named the "2008 Newsperson of the Year" in the daily newspaper category. In the community newspaper category, **Don and Susan Lincoln** were honored for their weekly newspapers, *Taco Times* and the *Perry News-Herald*, which cover Taylor County. **Karen Berry** of *In The Field Magazine* was named Ag Journalist of the Year. This honor recognizes those members of the ag trade media who cover agriculture. • • • Florida Farm Bureau honored Orange County cattle producer **Bobby Beagles** and the late **George Poucher**, a Suwannee County farmer, with its highest honor, the Distinguished Service to Agriculture Award. • • • **James Snively**, a certified crop advisor for Southern Gardens Citrus, Inc. in Clewiston, was the 2008 winner of the Florida Excellence in Crop Advising Award. • • • **Charisty Lee** of Sumter County was the winner and **Mary-Thomas Hart**, Lafayette County, was the runner-up in the state Youth Speech Contest. • • • And last, but not least, **John L. Hoblick** of DeLeon Springs was re-elected president, **Rick Roth** of Wellington was re-elected vice president, **Mark Byrd** of Apopka was re-elected secretary and **Jon W. Deas** of Jennings was re-elected treasurer of the FFB state board. **Michelle Williamson** will again chair the FFBF State Women's Leadership Committee and **Virginia "Ginny" Paarlberg** will serve as vice chair.