

For Immediate Release

S.C. ADVOCATES FOR AGRICULTURE RECOGNIZES ADVOCATES OF THE YEAR

ORANGEBURG, S.C. (August 23, 2011): Representative Harry L. Ott, Jr., of St. Matthews, S.C., and Mr. John W. Parris of Columbia, S.C., were recently honored as Advocates of the Year by the S.C. Advocates for Agriculture. The awards were presented by Ronnie Summers, president of the S.C. Advocates for Agriculture and S.C. divisional president of AgSouth Farm Credit, and State Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers. The ceremony took place at the S.C. Advocates for Agriculture’s Annual Meeting held at the Phillips Market Center in the new State Farmers Market in West Columbia.

Representative Ott is the Minority Leader for the South Carolina House of Representatives. As the only full-time farmer in the South Carolina Legislature, he grows cotton, corn and peanuts. He is a 1974 graduate of Clemson University, and has served as the president of the Calhoun County Farm Bureau. In his public and political life, Representative Ott has been a consistent voice for economic development, agricultural growth and government reform. He was chosen to receive the Advocates award for his work and personal involvement in agriculture and his understanding of the struggles of agribusinesses and farmers to make a living in the current economic environment.

Mr. Parris is in his 54th year of distinguished service as a nationally recognized agriculturalist and natural resource

conservation leader. An agricultural educator before heading up the S.C. Land Resources Commission, Parris retired after 36 years of state government service in 1994, where he successfully led a campaign to transfer the administration of agricultural education from the State Department of Education to Clemson University. For the past 15 years he has served as the “Voice of Agricultural Education” and editor of *AGRI BIZ* magazine.

In presenting the awards, Summers said, “Mr. Parris has made a monumental impact on agricultural science and technology education by promoting its significance as a viable twenty-first century curriculum offering in the public schools of this state.” As for Representative Ott, Summers reiterated that, “As a farmer himself, Mr. Ott clearly understands and supports the state’s largest industry - agribusiness.”

The Advocates are grateful for these leaders’ contributions to South Carolina agriculture. For more information, visit www.scadvocates4ag.org.



Left to Right: Commissioner Hugh Weathers and Representative Harry Ott



Left to Right: Commissioner Hugh Weathers and John Parris

About S.C. Advocates for Agriculture

The S.C. Advocates for Agriculture is a non-profit organization that assists in marketing and promoting South Carolina agricultural products and the overall industry of agriculture within the state. Among our board members are Commissioner Hugh Weathers, Ronnie Summers, S.C. divisional president of AgSouth Farm Credit, Reggie Hall of the S.C. Farm Bureau, Dr. Christopher Mathis, Jr., of S.C. State, and many other individuals prominent in the field of agriculture.

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