

News from University of Missouri Extension – Adair County

Harold Eckler to receive the 2013 Missouri Livestock Symposium Agriculture Educators Lifetime Achievement Award



For over 30 years, Harold Eckler has been a constant in agriculture education in Shelby County and across the country. As an advisor, Harold challenges his students to do their best in the classroom and outside of school. He has helped many students reach their full potential whether it be participating in a speaking contest, on a contest team or completing one's record book and award applications.

Mr. Eckler will receive the Agriculture Educators Lifetime Achievement Award on Friday evening, December 6th at the Missouri Livestock Symposium in Kirksville, MO. The award recognizes and honors a person who has contributed greatly to the agriculture industry through his or her role in agriculture education.

Harold began his Agriculture Education career at North Shelby High School where he taught and served as the FFA Advisor for 28 years. He then became the High School principal, but after 4 years decided to jump back into the classroom. While still serving as the high school Principal, Harold also teaches an Ag. class daily and fulfills FFA Advisor responsibilities in North Shelby's two teacher program.

Because of his drive and his ability to connect with students, Harold has stood on stage next to numerous winning contest teams at both the Missouri State FFA Convention and the National FFA Convention. He has also helped countless students earn their Chapter, State, and American FFA Degrees.

While helping his own high school students at North Shelby, Harold also took on the role of helping college students majoring in Agriculture Education. He has served as a cooperating teacher for the University of Missouri for over 15 years and during that time he has mentored 12 student teachers, 6 of which are still teaching today.

Harold also made the time to promote agriculture education on other levels by being involved and holding offices in several organizations on the local, state and even national level. At the local level Harold has been active in the Shelby County Fair Board and served as President of the Youth Fair Board for over 10 years. On the state level he has served as the President of the Missouri Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association. At the National level, he has served on the Board of the National Council for Agriculture Education and as chairman of the National Task Force for Teacher Recruitment. Harold also served as President of the National

University of Missouri, Lincoln University, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Local Extension Councils Cooperating

Association of Agricultural Educators where he had the responsibility of being the official spokesperson for the 7,600 member organization.

Harold has received numerous awards for his dedication to promoting Agriculture Education and helping inspire those around him. Some of those awards include the Missouri Vocational Agriculture Teachers Service (MVATA) Distinguished Service Award, MVATA Teacher of Teachers Award, University of Missouri Outstanding Teacher Award and the Honorary State and American FFA Degree.

Although Harold stays plenty busy with his numerous other commitments and responsibilities he still finds time to promote and teach agriculture on the farm where perhaps his most determined students yet are proving to be his own children and grandchildren.

Harold and his wife Mari live on a 100 acre farm outside of Shelbyville where they raise and manage over 100 head of sheep. They along with their children Jessi, Gina and Kyle, their spouses and their 7 young grandchildren enjoy showing their Registered Southdown Flock and club lambs during the summer.

The Missouri Livestock Symposium congratulates Harold Eckler on being selected for the 2013 Agriculture Educators Lifetime Achievement Award and thanks him and his family for the significant contributions made to agriculture in northeast Missouri and beyond.

Mr. Eckler will receive the award at the Friday evening, December 6 ceremony at approximately 7 p.m., following the Livestock Symposium's free beef dinner at 6 p.m. Hours for the Missouri Livestock Symposium are 4 to 10 p.m. on Friday, December 7 and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, December 8.

There is no cost to attend the Symposium and no pre-registration is required. The Livestock Symposium features an ag-related trade show, nationally known speakers on all species of livestock (beef cattle, sheep, meat goats, horses), stock dogs, forages and more! The program is held at the William Matthew Middle School in Kirksville, MO. More details can be found at www.missourilivestock.com or by calling the Adair County Extension Center at 660-665-9866.

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