

Man of the Year Recipients Named During Recent AgriLife Extension Agent Fete

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ODESSA – The Texas County Agricultural Agents Association recognized seven individuals with “Man of the Year” awards during a July 18 banquet in their honor at the association’s annual meeting in Odessa.

The honorees and respective Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service districts that nominated them were: Dr. Steve Kennedy, District 2; Don Smith, District 4; Bill Wight and Allan Fuchs, District 6; Adele Matula Uptmore, District 8; Brian McCoy, District 10, and Andy Scott, District 12.

Kennedy is co-owner of Muleshoe Animal Clinic and Vet Supply.

“Dr. Kennedy of Muleshoe is very well known throughout the cattle industry and is one of the most respected veterinarians in the country,” his nomination states. “Upon his graduation from West Texas A&M University, he became the assistant AgriLife Extension agent in Deaf Smith County. After completing two years in this position, he decided to return home to Olton and started a stocker cattle and swine operation.

“While starting his new business, Kennedy became active in the livestock show industry. He then made the decision to return to school and attended the Texas A&M School of Veterinary Medicine in College Station. After obtaining his degree, he moved back to Muleshoe and began his practice as a veterinarian.”

Kennedy has raised show cattle for over 25 years, producing many champions, the nomination said. He has been a supporter of AgriLife Extension and livestock show programs for many years, having judged numerous county, regional and state livestock shows. He has been a prominent and sought-after speaker at numerous show clinics, livestock health programs and beef cattle programs in Texas and across the country.

Smith is a beef, dairy and hay producer in Hopkins County. He graduated from Texas Tech University in 1967 with a bachelor’s degree in agriculture. His nomination states his involvement with beef and dairy organizations as well as community organizations has spanned decades.

“Smith has served as president of the Texas Farm Bureau and Hopkins/Rains County Farm Bureau, on committees for the Texas Beef Council, the Task Force on Agricultural Development and the Texas A&M Congressional Internship Selection Committee,” the nomination said. “He is a past director of the Texas Association of Dairymen and served as president for three years, in addition to serving as a director of the Southwest Dairy Museum.

“Along with all of these roles, Don always finds time for grassroots efforts in Hopkins and surrounding counties, and has been instrumental in the planning and developing of educational agricultural awareness programs in the community. Smith and the Hopkins-Rains Farm Bureau in cooperation with AgriLife Extension conduct the Hopkins, Delta, Franklin and Rains County Ag in the

Classroom educational event, with more than 1,000 fourth-grade students exposed to agricultural education annually.”

Smith is currently a member of the Hopkins County Extension Leadership Advisory Board. He was a key beef producer in the creation of the Northeast Texas Beef Improvement Organization and is an active contributor to the multiple preconditioning cattle sales held each year.

Wight is a fourth-generation rancher whose family has roots in the Permian Basin going back to the late 1800s. He has a commercial cow-calf and stocker operation headquartered in Odessa that operates in several surrounding counties. He also partners in the family’s YT Ranch.

Wight is a lifelong supporter and advocate for the ranching industry and for conservation, said his nomination. He serves on the Texas Beef Council and the Beef Promotion Research Council of Texas and represents the council on the U.S. Meat Export Federation.

He is chairman of the Sandhills Soil and Water Conservation District, which conducts an annual Ranch Field Day for local middle school science students at the YT Ranch. Wight also represents Ector County on the local Farm Service Agency county committee.

“Wight has supported the Odessa Kids, Kows and More program since it started,” his nomination said. “He is active in both the Texas Farm Bureau and the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association. He serves as president of the Midland County Farm Bureau and is on the TSCRA wildlife committee. He has helped with the Sandhills Stock Show and Rodeo for many years, serving as steer show chairman, treasurer and president.”

Fuchs is a native of St. Lawrence and Glasscock County, a 4-H alumnus and lifelong supporter and cooperator of AgriLife Extension, wrote his nominators.

After graduating from Garden City High School, Fuchs earned a degree from Texas A&M University in agriculture systems management, noted the nomination. After graduation he returned home and promptly began raising cotton.

“Fuchs has always been involved with AgriLife Extension from his early days of 4-H entomology - during which he was a state finalist at State 4-H Roundup - to the present where he has served the past 11 years on the Integrated Pest Management Steering Committee in Glasscock, Reagan and Upton counties.”

He also serves as a board member on the Glasscock County Junior Livestock Association and the St. Lawrence Cotton Growers Association.

According to her nomination, Uptmore and her family have operated the West Auction Barn in West since 1980.

“The Uptmore’s have been involved in the Blackland Income Growth Conference since its inception 54 years ago,” said the nomination. “Adele continues to be actively involved as a committee member of the B.I.G. Beef Committee where she has served as chairman multiple times. She has served on the Heart of Texas Fair Board over 40 years. She has been a member of the McLennan County Extension Executive Board/Leadership Advisory Board for 30 years, along with serving on the McLennan County Extension Beef and Forage Committee for 35 years.”

The Uptmores have hosted over 80 educational beef cattle programs at West Auction, including the annual AgriLife Extension Stocker Cattle Program in July, according to the nomination.

Uptmore has been recognized for her volunteerism and leadership many times over the years and recently was recognized as an Outstanding Extension Volunteer in Agriculture by her peer volunteers of McLennan County in 2016.

McCoy is president and CEO of McCoy's Building Supply. Born in Galveston, he graduated from Ball High School in 1972 and from Texas Tech University in 1975 with a degree in finance.

McCoy is a partner in McCoy Remme Ranches, a cow-calf operation with land holdings in Far West Texas, said the nomination. He serves as president of the board of directors of the Emmett and Miriam McCoy College of Business Administration Development Foundation at Texas State University in San Marcos. He also serves as past president of the board of the Lumbermen's Association of Texas.

His other accomplishments include being selected for the Samaritan Center's Ethics in Business Award in Austin, and being chosen as the San Marcos Chamber of Commerce's Business Person of the Year. He has also been honored as a distinguished alumnus of both the Rawls College of Business Administration and Texas Tech University.

Scott was involved in FFA and 4-H programs as a youth and won numerous honors, including 4-H state winner in dog care and training, his nomination states.

After graduating from Texas A&M University with honors in 1970 with a bachelor's in horticulture, he served for two years as graduate research assistant to Dr. Leonard Pike of the "1015" onion fame, working with onions, carrots and cucumbers.

"Andy joined Rio Farms Inc. in 1972 as a research staff horticulturist, where in less than two years he would be promoted to director of research, a position he holds and enjoys today," said the nomination. "In 1977, he earned a master's in horticulture from Texas A&M and has since worked tirelessly for the agriculture industry of the Rio Grande Valley.

"His accomplishments include the release of several cotton, soybean, pea and sugarcane varieties that are grown in the region successfully today. His contribution to agriculture goes way beyond the tried and true as much of his work has been directed toward the development of new crops for the area. Among these are kenaf, tropically adapted soybeans, tropical legumes, blackberries and even grapes."

Scott has served as past president of the Texas Vegetable Association, the Rio Grande Valley Horticultural Society and the All Valley Winter Vegetable Show.

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