

Virginia Agribusiness Council

We Represent Virginia Agribusiness with a Unified Voice

MEDIA RELEASE

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VIRGINIA GOVERNOR BOB MCDONNELL NAMED DISTINGUISHED FRIEND OF VIRGINIA AGRIBUSINESS

Governor Honored For His Support of Agriculture and Forestry Industries Throughout State Government Career

(Richmond, Va.) Virginia Governor Robert F. “Bob” McDonnell has been named the Distinguished Friend of Virginia Agribusiness for 2013 by the Virginia Agribusiness Council.

The award was presented to Virginia’s Chief Executive on January 10th at the Agribusiness Council’s 42nd Annual Legislative Appreciation Banquet held in the historic Old Dominion Building at the Richmond Raceway Complex in Henrico County.

In presenting the award, Bill Hayter of Abingdon, president and CEO of First Bank & Trust Company and chairman of the Virginia Agribusiness Council’s board of directors, praised Governor McDonnell as a “true advocate and solid supporter of Virginia agribusiness even though he was raised in a Northern Virginia suburb.” Hayter noted that as Member of the Virginia House of Delegates, McDonnell patroned and supported “important legislation including the creation of the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry and the Center for Rural Virginia” and during his term as Virginia’s Attorney General, he continued to “focus on issues of importance to farmers and foresters such as safeguarding the rights of property owners, abolishing the death tax and reducing burdensome regulations.”

“As Virginia’s Governor, he has used the power of his office to boost and support Virginia agribusiness throughout the Commonwealth, the Nation and the world,” Hayter added, citing the Governor’s leadership in hosting his annual Conference on Agricultural Trade and promotion of Virginia products on his overseas trade missions in Asia, Europe, India and Latin America, which have all resulted in record annual increases in agricultural exports.

“It is truly an honor to recognize Governor McDonnell as the 2013 Distinguished Friend of Virginia Agribusiness,” said Katie K. Frazier, President of the Virginia Agribusiness Council. “He has time after time shown that he understands and appreciates that agribusiness is the Commonwealth’s largest industry. His initiatives, such as the Governor’s Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund, have helped to ensure that our state economy and all of our citizens benefit from the continuing growth and success of the agribusiness industry.”

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Since its inception in 1978, the Distinguished Friend of Virginia Agribusiness Award has been presented thirty-one times to a Virginian who is a Member of the United States Congress, a State Legislator, Governor or other influential government official who has shown “exceptional support of Virginia’s agribusiness industry for a period of years.” As only the fourth Governor to receive the award, Governor McDonnell joins former Governors Holton, Dalton, and Warner as the thirty-second honoree.

Before receiving the award, the Governor addressed over 850 persons in attendance, highlighting his administration’s most recent effort to promote the Commonwealth’s largest industry. He was joined by members of Virginia’s congressional delegation, members of the Virginia Senate and House of Delegates, members of the Governor’s cabinet, Agribusiness Council members, and representatives of industry and educational institutions at the event. Each year, the Council hosts their annual legislative appreciation banquet as the General Assembly convenes. Attendees dined on a buffet of “Virginia’s Finest” foods and beverages.

About The Virginia Agribusiness Council

The Virginia Agribusiness Council is a non-profit organization committed to representing the interests of the agriculture and forestry industries in the Commonwealth through effective governmental relations efforts and initiatives. Its membership includes farmers, foresters, and other agricultural producers; industry suppliers; marketers and processors; and commodity and industry associations. It is headquartered in Richmond. For more information, please visit www.va-agribusiness.org.



Photo: (L to R): Katie K. Frazier – President, Virginia Agribusiness Council; Speaker William Howell; Governor McDonnell; William H. Hayter – Chairman of the Board of Directors, Virginia Agribusiness Council; First Lady Maureen McDonnell

Photo courtesy of Michael White, Office of Governor Bob McDonnell

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