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CONTACT: Julie Koochagian
julie@ashca.org

Agriculture industry group announces safety leaders

Awards to be presented at North American Agricultural Safety Summit

The Agricultural Safety and Health Council of America (ASHCA) has announced eight individuals and organizations to be honored for leadership in agricultural safety as demonstrated through safety training, collaboration, promotion, education or research.

The awards will be presented on the first day of the [North American Agricultural Safety Summit](#), March 19-20, at Bally's of Las Vegas. The summit, hosted by ASHCA, will feature top safety experts, mentoring opportunities and a unique agricultural safety learning lab.

“We established these safety awards to highlight effective and efficient practices that enhance worker safety within agriculture,” said Jess McCluer, board chair of ASHCA, and vice president of safety and regulatory affairs at the National Grain and Feed Association. “Not only is safety important for individual employees, but it also is one of the key business excellence areas that determine long-term sustainability.”

Life time achievement award: William Nelson, retired from CHS Foundation; consultant. Nelson was the first and longest-serving chair of the ASHCA Board of Directors. As the director of the CHS Foundation he facilitated a major initiative by CHS to dedicate \$3 million to national efforts to improve agricultural safety and health through several organizations and regional grants.

Policymaker/legislator: Sen. James Seward, New York. Seward has served in the New York State Legislature for more than three decades with tireless service to the farm community, including being a champion for the New York Rollover Protection Structure (ROPS) Rebate Program.

Agribusiness Leader: Janice Klodowski, Agri-Services Agency. Klodowski is VP of Agri-Services Agency, a leader of the workers compensation captive and a constant supporter and advocate for safety in agriculture, beyond her “day job” at ASA. She served on the ASHCA Board of Directors for eight years.

Agricultural Organization:

1. **Washington State Dairy Association – Scott Dilley:** The oldest dairy trade association in the U.S. has been prioritizing the health and safety of dairy workers in Washington state for the past six years. They have integrated safety content into their annual meetings, consulting services and with academic partners to improve training and practice.

2. **Farmworker Association of Florida -- Jeannie Economos and Dr. Antonio Tovar:** a stateside grassroots organization of 10,000-plus members that works in vegetable, citrus, mushroom, sod, fern and foliage industries. Through many different partnerships they have gathered data on workplace hazards and acceptable safety solutions, then provide outreach to facilitate protections for agricultural employees, including training more the 5,000 farm workers in safety.

Educator: Robert Aherin, retired, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Aherin has a 38-year career in agricultural safety and health research and outreach, with numerous examples of leadership and commitment to the farming community. He established and grew the UIUC bachelor's and master's level degrees and directly taught about 70,000 agricultural workers through training programs.

Health Care Provider: Charlotte Halverson, RN, AgriSafe Network. Halverson is the clinical director of AgriSafe, planning and providing agricultural health training for rural health care providers and others for nearly 20 years. She has launched several initiatives for AgriSafe including their new Nurse Scholar program.

WCF Insurance Research to Practice Collaboration Award: Idaho Dairymen's Association. Safety Director Ryan Dewitt and CEO Rick Naerebout successfully introduced the National Dairy Farm Safety Program to dairies throughout Idaho via consulting services, worker training with I-pads, onsite training and compliance assistance. They took a proactive approach by working with researchers Dave Douphrate and Robert Hagevoort, affiliated with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)-funded High Plains Intermountain Center for Ag Health and Safety to test, evaluate, refine and sustain a safety program that has now reached more than 2,000 hired workers in Idaho.

The summit, "Raising Safety 2020: Cultivating a Culture of Safety," will feature:

- A fast-paced program with plenary and break-out sessions.
- A pre-conference learning lab (March 18) with hands-on demonstrations of safety resources and training programs.
- Opportunities for networking during receptions, breaks and roundtables.
- Mentoring for first-time attendees and early career agricultural risk managers.
- Awards luncheon acknowledging safety achievements of individuals and companies.
- Research poster session with lightning talks.

For the full agenda, and to register as an attendee, sponsor or exhibitor, go to <http://ashca.org/2020-safety-summit/>. **Early bird registration deadline is Jan. 31**, with the regular registration period ending Feb. 28. Late registrations will be taken through the event.

Check out [the top 10 reasons](#) to attend at <https://youtu.be/ZDOwGXFGoDo>

ASHCA, a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization established in 2007, is a coalition of agricultural business leaders, producer associations, risk managers and others joining together with safety associations, federal and state agencies, educational institutions and safety professionals.

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