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FRANK JOHNS RECEIVES FFVA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

MAITLAND, Fla. (Sept. 25, 2008) – The Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association honored Frank Johns, Jr., a leader in the state’s agriculture industry, with its Distinguished Service Award Sept. 23.

“For 35 years Frank has worked in the agriculture industry and epitomizes the term ‘gentleman farmer,’” said FFVA Chairman Jay Taylor. “He has shared his experience and wisdom broadly in the industry through his service in many leadership positions. This man truly leads with character and integrity – in his profession and in his community.”

A fourth-generation farmer, Johns briefly worked at his family’s operation after attending the University of Florida. Soon thereafter he joined Tri-County Produce, growing potatoes and cabbage. In 1976 he and his wife, Polly, founded Tater Farms in the Hastings area. Formerly one of the larger producers of fresh cabbage and chipping potatoes in the area, Tater Farms shifted its focus to chipping potatoes and sod about four years ago.

Organizations benefitting from Johns’ service include the Hastings Drainage District, where he served for 14 years including a stint as chairman; the National Potato Promotion Board, on which he served for six years; the Community Bible Church of St. Augustine, as a deacon and now chair of deacons; and of course, FFVA, as a member of the board of directors for 14 years and the executive committee for 11 of those years. He served with distinction as FFVA chairman from 2002-2004.

The award was announced at FFVA’s 65th Annual Convention in Naples.

“I have a great deal of respect and regard for Frank,” said former FFVA Chairman Hugh English. “He’s a modest man of extraordinary talent who uses it unselfishly for others. He is most deserving of this award.”

Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association is an agricultural trade organization representing Florida’s producers of fruits, vegetables and other crops.