For IMMEDIATE Release

Perry Resident to be Honored at ABAC on March 2

TIFTON—Dr. Argene Claxton from Perry will be presented with the 2013 J. Lamar Branch Award on March 2 at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College during the annual ABAC Alumni Association awards ceremony.

Advance tickets for the 11 a.m. brunch awards ceremony are $25 each. No tickets will be available on the day of the event. The ceremony at the Georgia Museum of Agriculture and Historic Village at ABAC recognizes ABAC alumni who impacted the college and their communities in significant ways.

The event is a part of the Celebrate ABAC Alumni Weekend. For more information or to purchase tickets, interested persons can call the College Advancement office at (229) 391-4895 or visit the web site at www.abac.edu/celebrate.

The J. Lamar Branch Award was established as the Outstanding Agricultural Leader Award in 1987 to recognize alumni who have distinguished themselves in the various non-farming areas of agriculture, including education, extension, research and business. In 1989 the Alumni Board of Directors voted to name this award in memory of J. Lamar Branch, an alumnus
who was himself an outstanding agricultural leader in the area of agricultural education. It is based on professional achievement, community service and support of ABAC.

Claxton attended ABAC from 1976-78. Focusing on education and agriculture, he received his bachelor’s degree in 1980, his master’s degree in 1982, and his specialist degree in 1984 from the University of Georgia. In 2005, he also received a doctorate of educational leadership from Argosy University. He began teaching at Perry High School in 1980. Thirty-three years later, he teaches agricultural education and has developed a top quality FFA program at the school, advising seven FFA national award-winning teams.

He was inducted into the Georgia Agriculture Education Hall of Fame in 2007. He is the youngest member to be inducted, the only member still teaching, and is part of the only father and son inductees. Claxton’s father, B. H. Claxton, was a charter member. He has also received Teacher of the Year at Perry High School twice, received the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Alumni Award of Excellence in 2006, and won The Big Owl Award four times from the Georgia Vocational Agricultural Teachers Association (GVATA).

His professional memberships include the GVATA, serving as state president in 1997-98. He was a member of the Professional Representative Committee for agriculture teachers for 15 years.

In his community, Claxton beautifies his hometown by doing landscape projects. His most recent landscaping accomplishments include the new Georgia Farm Bureau and the Westmoreland Animal Hospital. He is currently working with the Houston Medical Perry Hospital to prepare a garden to help raise food for the hospital’s use. He is a member of Cross Point Baptist Church and is working with some of the youth to prepare a spring garden that will
provide food to local outreach programs Grace Village and ABBA House. He and his wife, Sandy, have two children, Katie and Tyler. Katie, an ABAC graduate, is attending UGA, and Tyler is a senior at Perry High School.

###