Screven Resident Will Receive Master Farmer Award at ABAC

TIFTON—Jonathan M. Harris from Screven will receive the 2016 Master Farmer Award on April 1 at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College during the annual ABAC Alumni Association awards ceremony. The ceremony will recognize ABAC alumni who have impacted the college and their communities in significant ways.

Tickets for the 6 p.m. dinner and awards ceremony in Gressette Gym are $30 each. The deadline to purchase tickets is March 21. There will be no tickets sold at the event. Tickets can be purchased from the ABAC College Advancement Office at (229) 391-4895. For more information on the 2016 Homecoming Week, interested persons can visit the web site at www.abac.edu/homecoming.

The ABAC Master Farmer Award is presented by the ABAC Alumni Association in recognition of alumni who have distinguished themselves as outstanding farmers. The award is based upon leadership in the home and community as well as the use of wise and unique ideas in farm management and operation. Service to the college is also taken into consideration. The
Master Farmer Award was first presented in 1955, making it the oldest of the awards presented by the Alumni Association.

A 1971 ABAC graduate with a degree in agriscience, Harris and his family manage Greenview Farms near Screven on 3,500 acres of land focusing on registered seedstock Hereford and Braford cattle, timber, annual forages, hay, haylage, cotton, corn, soybeans, peanuts and pecans. In 1860 his ancestors bought land in what is now Wayne County, and one family member from each generation has continued to farm the land. Greenview Farms is the oldest, continuously active Polled Hereford breeder in Georgia.

Harris has hosted ABAC student groups on his farm, provided consulting assistance to ABAC staff members, provided industry networking assistance for the placement of ABAC students in internships and jobs, and donated the use of bulls to the ABAC beef teaching unit. A fifth generation farmer, Harris and his wife, Toni, have three children, Jon, Paul, and Kacee. Jon graduated from ABAC in 1997, Paul attended ABAC, and Harris’ oldest grandson is presently at the college.

Harris has received a number of awards for forage and hay quality and has been featured in various agriculture publications. In 2007, he was awarded the Georgia Governor’s Environmental Stewardship Award. A year later he was honored as the Georgia Cattlemen’s Association Purebred Cattleman of the Year and in 2009 he received the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association Environmental Stewardship Region II Award. He also received the 2014 Wayne County Chamber of Commerce Excellence in Agriculture award.

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