

SHELBY

COUNTY FARMERS FEDERATION



**DeLoach Farms Wins
Top Award**

DeLoach Farms Wins Top Award

Dedication and innovation yielded rewards for John and Kate DeLoach when their Shelby County farm was named Alabama's 2018 Farm of Distinction at the Alabama Farm-City Awards Luncheon in Birmingham April 5.

The couple received over \$20,000 in cash and prizes and will represent Alabama in the Swisher Sweets/Sunbelt Ag Expo Southeastern Farmer of the Year contest during the Sunbelt Ag Expo Oct. 16-18 in Moultrie, Georgia.

Their 1,325-acre DeLoach Farms has been in the family since 1820 and includes 375 acres of cotton, 250 acres of soybeans, 200 acres of wheat and 150 acres of hay.

Transforming the farm wasn't easy, John said.

"I was 13 when my grandfather passed away," he said. "Grandma talked about selling the farm, but I told her I'd come every day after school to help. At 16, when I graduated high school, I pretty much took over running the farm."

Twenty-six years later, their land management plan includes 20 acres of improved wetlands where John regulates water levels to provide food and habitat for waterfowl. With the help of their son, Jess, they plan to add honeybees, a vineyard and agritourism.

"We feel it is an honor to have the opportunity to take care of this land for a lifetime," John said.

As the Farm of Distinction, the DeLoaches received a John Deere Gator from AgPro, TriGreen and SunSouth dealers; a 40-by-60' pole barn from Register Barns; a \$1,000 gift certificate from Alabama Farmers Cooperative; an engraved farm sign from Alfa Insurance; and \$2,500 as Alabama's Southeastern Farmer of the Year representative.



Chelsea Park Elementary School students pose for a photo after enjoying an educational program led by members of the Shelby County Young Farmers.

Farmers Focused On Community Service

The Shelby County Farmers Federation is a membership organization, built by farmers as an advocate for agriculture, family values and good government to improve life for all residents of Shelby County.

The Federation supports Shelby County's \$1.1 billion agriculture and forestry industries through youth programs, education, and promotion of commodities grown in the county.

The efforts of the Shelby County Farmers Federation strengthen the county's farm community and provide healthy, locally grown food for Shelby County families.

Members enjoy access to great benefits including savings at many major retail stores and excellent rates on home, auto and life insurance.

The Young Farmers program offers exciting statewide events and opportunities to travel and network with other young agriculturists across Alabama.

Anyone age 17 to 35 interested in agriculture can be involved with Young Farmers.

Shelby County Young Farmers support local FFA chapters through activities that include farm days and a field trip to the Sunbelt Ag Expo in Moultrie, Georgia. Those interested in learning more about the Shelby County Young Farmers program may contact

county Young Farmers Chair Jesse Touchstone.

The Shelby County Women's Leadership Committee helps stimulate the interest and enthusiasm of Farmers Federation women in the organization. The group works with family and consumer science teachers at local high schools to encourage cooking competitions among students. In addition to financial support, the committee helps organize and judge.

Shelby County Farmers Federation provides locally grown fruits and vegetables to girls at King's Home. The Women's Leadership Division builds the girls' self esteem by providing a spa day for girls who earn merit points monthly. This program is called G.R.A.C.E. (Girls Restored And Choosing Excellence).



Josh and Amanda Slaughter of Shelby County were named the Beef Division winner during the state Outstanding Young Farm Family contest. Alabama Farmers Federation President Jimmy Parnell presented the award.

Shelby County Farmers Federation



Shelby County Farmers Federation board members met with elected officials Dec. 19 at Bernie's on Main in Columbiana to discuss agricultural issues. Front row, from left are State Rep. Arnold Mooney, Alabama Farmers Federation (AFF) External Affairs Department Director Matthew Durdin, Shelby County and AFF board member Phillip Hunter and Shelby County board member Robert Byrd. Back row, from left are retired AFF Area Organization Director David Farnsworth, Supreme Court Justice Will Sellers, State Rep. Matt Fridy, State Rep. Corley Ellis, Shelby County board member John DeLoach and Shelby County Farmers Federation President Jimmy Bice.

Hunter Elected To State Board Of Directors

Shelby County's Phillip Hunter, a nursery owner, was elected District 6 director for the Alabama Farmers Federation during the group's 96th annual meeting in Montgomery Dec. 4.

Hunter's district includes Calhoun, Clay, Cleburne, Randolph, Shelby, St. Clair and Talladega counties. He will serve a three-year term and may serve up to nine years consecutively.

Elections were held during the Federation's business session where 463 farmer delegates from all 67 counties cast votes for the state's largest farm organization. Three other district directors were elected, along with three officers who serve two-year terms.

The State Women's Leadership Committee chairman and State Young Farmers chairman were also elected

during the meeting and serve one-year ex-officio terms on the board.

Phillip and his brother, Will, own Hunter Trees LLC in Alpine, the 2014 Farm of Distinction.

They grow over 100 varieties of shade, ornamental and evergreen trees.

Phillip lives in Chelsea with wife of 19 years Robin and their children, Carolyn and Patton.

Phillip also serves on the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries board of directors.



Hunter

Students Earn College Scholarships

The Shelby County Farmers Federation recently awarded two \$1,000 scholarships to local students.

Lauren Hoagland of Harpersville attends North Central Texas College where she's majoring in biology with an emphasis on equine chiropractic and human chiropractic. She's a 2017 graduate of the homeschool program through James Madison High School.



Hoagland

Jackson Dummier graduated in 2018 from Briarwood Christian School and attends Mississippi State University, majoring in environmental science in agriculture systems.

Shelby County Farmers Federation President Jimmy Bice said the program supports students pursuing agriculture- and forestry-related majors.



Dummier

Shelby County Farmers Federation Officers and Directors

Jimmy Bice, President
John DeLoach Vice President
Phillip Hunter, Secretary/Treasurer
Rachael Wood, Women's Leadership Chair
Jesse Touchstone, Young Farmers Chair

Randy Bearden
Robert Byrd
William Crawford
Bryan Hoagland
Pat Nelson

Brooks Wall
Joan White
Steve Wisdom
Terry Wyatt

For information, contact county secretary Rachael Wood at (205) 473-3477 or shelbyco.farmersfederation@gmail.com.

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Ralph Cochran
1211 1st St. N.
Alabaster, AL 35007
(205) 663-0745
rcochran@alfains.com



Bobby Collum
2691 Pelham Pkwy., Ste. G & H
Pelham, AL 35124
(205) 663-7161
bcollum@alfains.com



Brian Crocker
2691 Pelham Pkwy., Ste. G & H
Pelham, AL 35124
(205) 663-7161
bscrocker@alfains.com



Brent Doriety
16712 Highway 280, Ste. A
Chelsea, AL 35043
(205) 678-2532
bdoriety@alfains.com



Ryan Grace
16712 Highway 280, Ste. A
Chelsea, AL 35043
(205) 678-2532
jgrace2@alfains.com



Andy Jones
71 Limestone Pkwy., Ste. A
Calera, AL 35040
(205) 668-6928
ajones@alfains.com



Kenneth Mobley
71 Limestone Pkwy., Ste. A
Calera, AL 35040
(205) 668-6928
kmobley@alfains.com



Scott Morris
256 S. Main St.
Columbiana, AL 35051
(205) 669-3166
scmorris@alfains.com



Shawn Payne
740 Main St.
Montevallo, AL 35115
(205) 665-2323
spayne@alfains.com



Sean Sims
1211 1st St. N.
Alabaster, AL 35007
(205) 663-0745
ssims@alfains.com



Tragg Tew
2691 Pelham Pkwy., Ste. G & H
Pelham, AL 35124
(205) 663-7161
ttew@alfains.com



Brad Vail
5291 Valleydale Rd., Ste. 109
Birmingham, AL 35242
(205) 995-8650
bvail@alfains.com



Jacob Vail
5291 Valleydale Rd., Ste. 109
Birmingham, AL 35242
(205) 995-8650
jvail@alfains.com



Steve Vann
740 Main St.
Montevallo, AL 35115
(205) 665-2323
svann@alfains.com

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