



## Media Release

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# 2009 Agriculturalist of the Year

**DO NOT RELEASE BEFORE 7:00 P.M., JULY 23, 2009**

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The San Luis Obispo County Farm Bureau Board of Directors is proud to announce the 2009 Agriculturalist of the Year, The White Family.

For over one hundred years, the White family has continued farming dry land barley and raising cattle. The history of the White Family in Shandon starts in 1888 when George H. White immigrated from New Brunswick, Canada with his family. His son George A. White was 12 years old. His first land purchase amounted to 320 acres. He farmed this and gradually acquired more land, building the family property up to 1,200 acres. The acreage farmed by the White Ranch Company has expanded considerably.

George A. White's sons, Richard, George and Marion, got involved in agriculture the routine way of daily chores beside their father. In 1939 the boys were basically handed the ranch and told to go to it. The boys had their dad in the background, but they made the decisions concerning the operation of the ranch. Richard sold his interest and moved to Oregon in the early 60's. In a December, 1964 article, George and Marion attributed the progress of the ranch to the great advance in technology, especially in the form of machinery made available to the farmer and rancher.

The next generation, Jerold and Kenneth White, sons of Marion White, and Ron White, son of George White, found themselves agriculturalists the same way; working side by side with their family. Ron retired in the late 90's.

Jerold (Jerry) earned a Bachelor's Degree at Cal Poly and has been active in the San Luis Obispo Cattlemen's Association for over 35 years. He served on the Cattlemen's Board of Directors and was President in 1991 and 1992. Jerry was named Cattleman of the Year in 1998. He has been very active in the Agriculture Advisory Committee, USDA Farm Service Committee and the San Luis Obispo Farm Bureau. He, and the entire White Ranch Company, have supported the Mid-State Fair's Junior Livestock Auction as well as the Shandon Support Club and the Grain Improvement Association. Jerry has also been a member of the Rancho Vistadores for many years. He has spent several early Mays on the trail in Southern California. He still resides on the White Ranch in [George A. and Emily (Gates) White] "Gramp and Nana's," house.

Kenneth (Kenny) White, also attended Cal Poly University. He married his high school sweetheart, Cyndra (Klugh), in 1970 and they took up residence on the ranch and raised two boys, Clayton and Clinton. Kenneth White passed away in March of 2007. Kenny was very involved in the community of Shandon and government of California. He served on the Board of Directors for the County and State Agricultural Soil and Conservation Service committees. Kenny also served on the Shandon Advisory Committee. While running the ranch with his brother Jerry, Kenny coached many youth sports in Shandon. He was involved in the California High School Rodeo Association for seven years. He and Cyndra influenced the lives of many young people through this service. Kenny was a committed member of his church, serving on the Board of Directors for years. Continuing in the White tradition of embracing technology, he and his sons worked across the United States, and in Canada, Australia and Argentina with John Deere Harvester Works, assisting in the research and development of John Deere combines. The White Ranch has also participated with UC Davis and the Cooperative Extension program growing test plots for research on disease drought resistance.

The White family has spent their lives surrounded by the barley covered hills maintaining the tradition of agricultural development and excellence. Clay and Melanie (Martin) White and Clint White provide the youth and future of the White Ranch Company. Clay currently serves as president of the Grain Improvement Association. Clint has begun joining his uncle Jerry on the Rancho Vistadores trail rides. These young men are carrying on the White family legacy of working hard and using knowledgeable experience to uphold the agricultural integrity of this country.

“We appreciate the acknowledgement the *Agriculturalist of the Year Award* gives the White Family. To be held in regard with the past recipients is an honor. Thank you for selecting us for this distinction.” *The White Family*

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Mission Statement:

“To lead San Luis Obispo County in the protection, promotion and advocacy for the benefit of our members and community”