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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**UTAH FARMER, FARM BUREAU LEADER SELECTED
AS 2020 AGRICULTURE ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR**

The National Agriculture in the Classroom Organization (NAITCO) and National Grange have selected Utah farmer and Utah Farm Bureau Women's Committee District Chair Sara Harward as the winner of its Agriculture Advocate Award for 2020.

Harward won the award for her personal and professional educational literacy outreach efforts involving teachers and students. As a Utah Farm Bureau Women's Committee District chair, she helps organize classroom agricultural literacy efforts by pairing an American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture's 'Book of the Year' with a related Utah Agriculture in the Classroom lesson, and coalescing volunteers to present both to teachers and students across the state. As a sweet corn and pumpkin farmer, she and her husband host thousands of teachers and students at her farm each year for fall farm field days and summer farm camps for youth.

"Talking with Sara is a truly enjoyable experience as she shares stories about the work she conducts to promote agricultural literacy and the people from whom she draws inspiration," wrote Utah Agriculture in the Classroom Director Denise Stewardson in her letter of support. Harward's "contributions are exemplary. For example, her work in organizing the county farm field days and hosting nearly 3,800 people at her farm annually is work that is used by other county Extension agents and Farm Bureau members as they organize their respective events."

"The Grange Foundation is proud to present this award each year, and winners like Sara Harward keep amazing us with their passion, creativity and impact on both the children and educators they serve," said Betsy Huber, Grange Foundation president.

"National Agriculture in the Classroom and state Agriculture in the Classroom programs depend on volunteers like Sara Harward to deliver agricultural literacy outreach to schools in their communities," NAITCO President Will Fett said. "Agriculture in the Classroom's strength lies in its grassroots network of volunteers like Ms. Harward who are passionate about spreading agricultural literacy in schools."

Harward has promoted agricultural literacy in Utah for more than a decade. As the Women's Chair for Utah County Farm Bureau for five years, she was instrumental in organizing efforts to teach students and teachers about the importance of agriculture in their daily lives through the county Farm Bureau's agricultural literacy program. For the past four years, her role has become even more important—and impactful—as the State Farm Bureau Women's Committee District 4 chair.

As farmers, Harward and her husband promote agricultural literacy by offering their farm for the county's fall farm field days, hosting two, week-long farm camps for youth, and creating a fall agritourism experience. For the past decade, Harward Farms has been the location for a daylong agricultural education experience for local schoolchildren and teachers. For four consecutive days, the Harwards transform their farm and host approximately 3,800 teachers and students. Harward helps the county Extension agent organize 14 educational stations and their respective volunteers including Utah Farm Bureau, FFA chapters, Utah Wool Growers, Utah Pork Producers, Utah mink growers, Utah Tart Cherry Commission, the local water conservation district, and other commodity groups.

In 2013, Harward created an on-site summer farm camp during which she offers two, one-week sessions for children ages 4-11, and the 60 slots per week fill up immediately. She hires local FFA students, teachers, and community members to serve as instructors and helpers so that children can learn in small groups. Although she is busy managing all of the camp's activities, she takes on the role of teacher for the nutrition and safety lessons.

Harward will be presented with the award at breakfast Friday June 26 at the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference 'Agriculture Elevated' at the Little America Hotel in Salt Lake City, UT.

The National Grange is a family, community organization with its roots in agriculture. Founded in 1867, the Grange was formed as a national organization with a local focus. Its members are given the opportunity to learn and grow to their full potential as citizens and leaders.

NAITCO is a non-profit organization representing state Agriculture in the Classroom programs in most of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. It provides web-based pre-kindergarten-12th grade lesson plans and companion resources, a national conference, national awards programs and professional development opportunities for state Agriculture in the Classroom programs. Its mission is to increase agricultural literacy through Pre-K-12 education.

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