DR. EDWIN JONES RECOGNIZED FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO VIRGINIA AGRICULTURE

Virginia Cooperative Extension Director Acknowledged for Leadership, Industry Involvement

(Blacksburg, VA) Dr. Edwin Jones, Director of Virginia Cooperative Extension and Associate Dean of the Virginia Tech College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, was recognized by the Virginia Agribusiness Council as a recipient of the Council’s 2015 Land-Grant University Award. Council Director of Government Affairs Brad Copenhaver presented the award at the 2015 Extension Leadership Conference in Blacksburg on March 4.

The Council presents awards annually to faculty, staff, and administrators of the Commonwealth’s land-grant universities, which include both Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, for meritorious or exemplary services to the industry of agribusiness during their careers.

Dr. Jones grew up in a farming community in Illinois and received his undergraduate degree from the University of Washington. He received masters and doctoral degrees from Virginia Tech in fisheries and wildlife sciences. He served as an Extension wildlife specialist at Mississippi State University before spending more than two decades at North Carolina State University, including as the Associate Director of Extension. Dr. Jones returned to Virginia in 2011 to serve as the Director of Virginia Cooperative Extension.

Agribusiness industry members attribute Dr. Jones’s success to his willingness to engage with producers throughout the Commonwealth. Jim Riddell, a former Extension agent and current member of the Council’s Board of Directors said, “I have known Ed Jones for many years. He is a man of tremendous integrity and equally high expectations for Cooperative Extension. Ed is a great listener and a Virginia leader who’s focused on what’s important, programs based on real needs, with real results. When you work with him, you quickly sense the pride and the passion he has for Virginia Cooperative Extension.”

Dr. Alan Grant, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, said, “Dr. Jones has devoted most of his career to land-grant universities, and we are so fortunate to benefit from his effective leadership for Virginia Cooperative Extension and at Virginia Tech. Dr. Jones has fostered an excellent rapport among university, industry, and government stakeholders and has become a highly respected leader for Virginia Cooperative Extension.”
Council President Katie Frazier said, “Ed’s leadership over the past four years has led to a thriving Extension program throughout Virginia. He has worked closely with the industry to anticipate its needs and to lead Extension to fill a variety of crucial roles. We look forward to continuing to work with Ed to build upon the good work Extension is doing to further the land-grant mission.”

Finally, in the award presentation, Council Director of Government Affairs Brad Copenhaver stated, “Folks in our industry hold the land-grant mission in a very high regard and place its well-being in the hands of our universities to protect and advance this cause. His decades of service to Extension and to land-grant ideals is nearly incomparable, and we have been extremely blessed to have Dr. Jones as such an active and dedicated example of this mission.”

About The Virginia Agribusiness Council

The Virginia Agribusiness Council is a non-profit organization committed to representing the interests of the agriculture and forestry industries in the Commonwealth through effective governmental relations efforts and initiatives. Its membership includes farmers, foresters, and other agricultural producers; industry suppliers; marketers and processors; and commodity and industry associations. It is headquartered in Richmond. For more information, please visit www.va-agribusiness.org.

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Attached Photo, left to right: Brad Copenhaver, Virginia Agribusiness Council Director of Government Affairs; and Dr. Ed Jones, Director of Virginia Cooperative Extension