

Outstanding Young Farmer



The Outstanding Young Farmer (OYF) program is sponsored by Deere & Company, supported by the Outstanding Farmers of America (OFA) Fraternity and the National Association of County Agriculture Agents (NACAA), and administered by The United States Junior Chamber.

The roots of the Outstanding Young Farmer (OYF) program date back to the founding of The U.S. Junior Chamber.

In 1920, in his first speech as National President, founder Henry Giessenbier stated that one of two national concerns on which the Junior Chamber should focus its attention was the improvement of conditions for the farmer and better urban-rural relations through a keener understanding of agricultural problems.

In 1951, Jaycee Dale Spears, of Shenandoah, Iowa, put Giessenbier's challenge into action in designing a program to honor Shenandoah's Outstanding Young Farmers. It was soon conducted as a statewide program by the Iowa Junior Chamber and, in 1954, was adopted by The U.S. Junior Chamber as a national priority program.

Today's farmer is an entrepreneur in a complex agribusiness. He or she must understand all aspects of farming, including technology, farm implements, and other equipment used in today's operations. He or she must also comprehend the complexities of fertilizer and insecticide to raise the high volume and quality crops demanded by consumers worldwide, while not running afoul of expanding environmental regulations.

As the farmer's business has changed, so has his or her involvement in the community. Today's farmer has become an active citizen, participating in everything from local and state government to civic groups and charitable organizations. It is not only fitting that farmers be honored for their contributions and achievements - it is essential.

The purpose of the Outstanding Young Farmer program is to bring about a greater interest in the farmer, to foster better urban-rural relations through the understanding of the farmers' problems, to develop an appreciation of their contributions and achievements, and to inform the agribusiness community of the growing urban awareness of farmers' importance and impact on the American economy.

Sponsors

John Deere is the national sponsor for the Outstanding Young Farmer program. This partnership began in 1976, and as a result the program has been able to continue with its purpose. Perhaps some of the most valuable resources in conducting a successful OYF program are the supporters of the national OYF program. Supporting this program are members of the Outstanding Farmers of America (OFA) fraternity, which is comprised of former state OYF winners who are interested in the continuance of this program. Also, supporting the program are members of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA). The United States Junior Chamber (Jaycees) administers the program throughout the year and culminating with the presentation of the national awards in the early spring.

[Downloadable Materials may be found here](#)