



National



# Outstanding Young Farmers 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 producing the high volume and quality crops or livestock demanded by consumers worldwide, while not running afoul of expanding environmental regulations.

The purpose of the Outstanding Young Farmers 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.

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. This award has been established to recognize outstanding achievements in agriculture as well as community involvement.

Sponsored by  
**John Deere**

Supported by the Outstanding Farmers of America (OFA) Fraternity and the  
National Association of County Agriculture Agents (NACAA)

Administered by  
**The United States Junior Chamber**



## The National Sponsor: John Deere

In 1837, John Deere founded the company that would come to bear his name. Incorporated as Deere & Company in 1868, it has grown from a one-man blacksmith shop into a worldwide corporation that today does business in more than 160 countries and employs approximately 46,000 people worldwide. It is one of the oldest industrial companies in the United States.

John Deere is the national sponsor for the Outstanding Young Farmers program. This partnership began in 1976, and as a result the program has been able to continue with its purpose.

## The National Administrator: The U.S. Junior Chamber

Made up of more than 46,000 members nationwide, The United States Junior Chamber (Jaycees) gives young people between the ages of 18 and 40 the tools they need to build bridges of success for themselves in the areas of business development, management skills, individual training, community service, and international connections.

Established in 1920 to provide opportunities for young people to develop personal and leadership skills through service to others, the Jaycees focus on volunteerism and service to others. With chapters in more than 1,500 communities from the



smallest towns to the largest cities, the Jaycees are enlarging areas of opportunity for young people.

## Supporting Organizations: Outstanding Farmers of America

The Outstanding Farmers of America (OFA) Fraternity is made up of past nominees of the Outstanding Young Farmer Program. The Fraternity is designed to facilitate an exchange of ideas and friendship that encourages excellence and involvement in agriculture and the local, state, and national community. At the National Awards Congress in 1992, the OFA voted to accept an official support role in the OYF program. Since 1993, OFA members have been allowed to submit nominations of deserving young farmers to local, state, and national competitions.

There are approximately 1,500 members of the Fraternity across the nation who utilize their connections with each other in a strong networking format to assist farmers and promote the importance of America's farming community.

## National Association of County Agricultural Agents

The National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA) was formed in 1916. NACAA leadership promotes a nationwide effort to facilitate excellence in Extension programming through high standards of professional performance.

The NACAA joined as a supporter of the program in 2001. Since then, local county agricultural agents have submitted candidates for the national competition and been active in their assistance in promoting the program.

## The National Outstanding Young Farmers Awards Congress

The roots of the Outstanding Young Farmers (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 agri-

cultural problems.

In 1951, Jaycee Dale Spears, of Shenandoah, Iowa, put Giessenbier's challenge into action by 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.

Accordingly, the National Outstanding Young Farmers (NOYF) Awards Congress has been held nearly every year since then, selecting four National Winners from that year's group of nominees.

Both supporting organizations of Outstanding Young Farmers, the OFA and the NACAA, are superb resources for locating and judging nominees at the local, state, and national levels of the program.

Nominations for the National Outstanding Young Farmers competition can be submitted by local or state Jaycee organizations as well as from individuals that know a deserving young farmer. The nominees must complete a two-page nomination form. All nominees, through an extensive independent judging process, are narrowed down to twenty-five Semi-Finalists, with no more than two from any one state. The Semi-Finalists are then asked to fill out a more extensive nomination form for an additional independent judging process, which will then narrow the field down to 10 Finalists. These Finalists are asked to provide high-resolution photos, either on disc or as prints, which will be used in the NOYF Awards Congress Program Book and for the video presentations at the NOYF Awards Banquet. A panel of judges at the Awards Congress will then interview the Finalists, and the four National Winners will be chosen.

All nominees are invited to attend The U.S. Junior Chamber National Outstanding Young Farmers Awards Congress sponsored by John Deere and . The ten Finalists, along with their husband or wife, will receive an all-inclusive trip to the NOYF Awards Congress. Once the finalists have been selected and notified, they will receive a packet of information which will include: instructions for contacting a designated travel agent to make travel arrangements; meeting agenda; and a questionnaire to be completed. The Awards

Congress is planned to make the time spent away from your operation educational, informative, and fun. Although we recognize the importance of the farm family, this event is not suitable for small children.

The Awards Congress begins on Wednesday with the arrival of the Finalists and an informal dinner with the OFA officers, John Deere representatives, and The U.S. Junior Chamber staff. Finalists will draw for their interview times, as well.

On Thursday, the Finalists will go through the interview process, all other attendees arrive, and the evening will conclude with the Meet the Class Banquet. Friday consists of educational tours of agricultural sites and dinner for all attendees.

The NACAA breakfast, an OFA forum and presentation, along with the John Deere luncheon, take place on Saturday, and the NOYF Awards Banquet is held in the evening, at which the four National Outstanding Young Farmers are announced. Sunday morning you'll have breakfast with all your new friends, as you exchange phone numbers, say your goodbyes, and promise to see each other next year.

Held in a different location each year in February, the NOYF Congress is a premier meeting for farmers, acknowledging all that agriculture means to America, as well as recognizing young farmers for their outstanding achievements.



National winners are determined based on personal contributions in the following categories:

- 1. Progress in agricultural career (50%)**
- 2. Extent of soil and water conservation practices (25%)**
- 3. Contributions to the well-being of the community, state, and nation (25%)**





**PO Box 7  
Tulsa, OK 74102-0007**



## The National Competition

The National Outstanding Young Farmers Awards Congress is the culmination of the intense independent judging process. Nominees from across the United States are eligible and may be submitted by anyone. Multiple nominations from any one state are permitted; however, following the judging process to determine the semi-finalists, no more than two from any given state will be chosen. The following criteria must be met during the nomination process:

- A. All nominees must be submitted on the official Outstanding Young Farmer Nomination Form, postmarked before August 1st.
- B. All information on the nomination form must be completed. (Financial information will be kept in strict confidence)
- C. Nomination forms may not be handwritten. The form may be photocopied. To qualify:
  - 1. Nominees must be aged 21 through 40, not becoming 41 prior to January 1st before the National OYF Awards Congress.
  - 2. Nominees must be actual farm operators, deriving a minimum of two-thirds of their income from farming.
- D. Mail the completed nomination form to the address below. Additional nomination forms and information about the National Outstanding Young Farmers Awards Congress and program can be obtained by contacting:

**The United States Junior Chamber OYF National Program Manager**  
**PO Box 7 • Tulsa, OK 74102-0007 • 918.584.2481 • fax 918.584.2487 • e-mail [oyf@usjaycees.org](mailto:oyf@usjaycees.org)**