



News Release
For Immediate Release

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Colorado FFA Foundation Announces Four Hall of Fame Inductees for 2025

Greeley, Colo. -- The Colorado FFA Foundation is pleased to announce four inductees representing excellence in farming, public service, ranching, and agriculture construction, into the Colorado Agriculture Hall of Fame. Dr. Michael Bartolo (Rocky Ford), Don Brown (Yuma), Terry Fankhauser (posthumously), and Wayne Schmeeckle (Ft. Morgan) will all be formally honored and inducted into the Colorado Agriculture Hall of Fame on February 20, 2025 at the annual Colorado Agriculture Hall of Fame Banquet. The Colorado Agriculture Hall of Fame is presented by the Farm Credit Associations of Colorado.

“These inductees have established lasting legacies in Colorado agriculture. They each exemplify the innovative, resilient, and hard-working spirit of Colorado’s agriculture community,” said Stephanie Foote, chair of the Colorado FFA Foundation. “We are honored to publicly thank them by inducting them into the Hall of Fame for all they have done and continue to do for agriculture.”

Dr. Michael Bartolo has dedicated his life to helping not only the farming community in Colorado but also the betterment of farming across the nation. After obtaining his PhD in Plant Physiology from the University of Minnesota, he moved back to Colorado and served as the Vegetable Crops Specialist with CSU at the Arkansas Valley Research Center in Rocky Ford. His outreach and research have supported commercial crop production and growers. Dr. Bartolo focused his research on different aspects of crop production, including irrigation efficiency, soil fertility, and pest management. Most notably, through his breeding program, he developed several pepper varieties adapted to Southern Colorado, specifically the “Pueblo Chile.”

Mr. Don Brown is no stranger to Colorado agriculture. A Yuma farmer, Brown has always been an advocate for agriculture and rural Colorado. From State FFA President in 1973-74 to Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture from 2015-2019, Don has always tirelessly worked both in front of issues and behind the scenes to make sure good policy and discussions were always a part of the process that would affect agriculture. His service on the Republican River Water Conservation Board dealing with compact issues with Nebraska and Kansas has been critical to Colorado. Don continues to be a leader on several other boards and panels to advocate for agriculture.

Mr. Terry Fankhauser served as the Executive Vice President of the nation’s oldest cattlemen’s association, Colorado Cattlemen’s Association (CCA), from 2001-2022. From his ranching roots in Kansas to his tenure at CCA, Terry always committed to advancing the legacy of beef production. Terry worked closely with state and national legislators, agencies, media and consumers to protect the beef industry and speak out on behalf of members and the broader Colorado ag industry. He played a critical role in



protecting the industry from many challenges, oftentimes before these challengers had the chance to act, as he was constantly strategizing to be two steps ahead. Before his passing in January of 2024, he retired and moved back to his family's ranch in Kansas with his wife and three children in 2022.

Mr. Wayne Schmeckle, of Fort Morgan owns and operates Schmeckle Bros. Construction Company. In 1985, he founded his company and quickly established himself as an industry leader in agriculture construction, primarily in Behlen buildings and grain facilities. It was after his association with the Monfort operations that he became industry-known for his expertise in building beef processing facilities. Working with Temple Grandin, his concepts for design and groundbreaking contributions have set industry standards. He prides his company on staying current on the latest food safety interventions and state-of-the-art techniques and equipment.

The honorees will join 107 other outstanding Colorado agriculturists who have been similarly honored since 1989. All Agriculture Hall of Fame members' portraits are displayed in the Colorado Agriculture Hall of Fame (presented by Farm Credit Associations of Colorado) in the CoBank Center for Agricultural Education at Colorado State University.

Hosted by the Colorado FFA Foundation, the induction ceremony is held yearly to induct members into the Agriculture Hall of Fame who have significantly contributed to Colorado's second largest industry. A unique, multimedia presentation will highlight the life of each new inductee during the ceremony.

More information about the Colorado Agriculture Hall of Fame, presented by the Farm Credit Associations of Colorado is available here: <http://coloradoffafoundation.org/farm-credit-colorado-agriculture-hall-of-fame/>.

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The Colorado FFA Foundation is a non-profit organization that raises funds to support the more than 9,000 FFA members in Colorado's 135 chapters. FFA is a national organization of over 1 million members preparing for leadership and careers in the science, business and technology of agriculture.

Photos Attached: Bartolo.jpg, Brown-small.jpg, Fankhauser.jpg, Schmeckle.jpg, CO FFA Fdn.jpg