2011 National Ag Advocate Winner Announced

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. – For Belva Parr, the 2011 National Ag Advocate winner, agriculture advocacy comes naturally.

She became involved with her county’s Farm Bureau Agriculture in the Classroom program in Utah nine years ago when she saw an article in the local newspaper.

Parr said she felt drawn to helping out in part because in the early 1970s, Parr’s mother helped start the first Utah Farm Bureau Field Day in Salt Lake County.

“I figure the desire to teach about agriculture is in my blood,” Parr said. “I had to be a part.”

The first year, Parr helped by giving volunteers water and helping serve lunch, but that wasn’t enough for her.

Today, Parr coordinates Farm Bureau Field Day and helps nearly 7,000 students go through 16 different agriculture stations during the event that is held 4 days in the spring and 4 days in the fall. Parr also helps other counties organize their first field days.

Parr has served on the dairy cattle judging team at Utah State University for 3 years and as editor of the USU Dairy Magazine. Recognizing her dedication to agriculture, the Utah Dairy Commission presented Parr with the “Service to the Industry” award in 2011.

Parr will receive the Ag Advocate Award at the 2011 National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference, an organization that she loves. The conference, the theme of which is “Discover Education’s Hidden: Treasure: Agriculture,” is scheduled for June 22-25 at the Harbor Beach Marriott in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

“I wanted to work with Agriculture in the Classroom so badly because I know this program is the future of agriculture in our state,” she said.
Parr is the second recipient of the Ag Advocate Award, which is sponsored by the National Grange, the nation's oldest national agricultural organization with grassroots units established in 3,600 local communities in 37 states. Its more than 200,000 members provide service to agriculture and rural areas on a wide variety of issues, including economic development, education, family endeavors, and legislation designed to assure a strong and viable Rural America.

For more information contact Utah Agriculture in the Classroom State Contact Debra Spielmaker at (435) 213-5562 or at www.agclassroom.org/ut

For more information on the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference, visit: www.conference.ifas.ufl.edu/aitc/index.html