



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONTACT:

Kiana L. Johnson
O'Brien County Economic Development Corporation
Ph.: 712.957.1313
Fax: 712.957.3015
ocedc@tcaexpress.net
www.obriencounty.com

O'Brien County Fair Sets the Stage for the 2025 Value Added Ag Hall of Fame Awards

Sanborn, Iowa, July 24, 2025 – The O'Brien County Value Added Ag (VAA) Steering Committee has recognized an outstanding citizen annually with their Value Added Ag Hall of Fame Award since 2001. In 2016, a business category was added, making this the tenth year that both an individual and a business have been recognized with this award.

The O'Brien County VAA Steering Committee presented their 2025 Ag Hall of Fame awards on Monday evening, July 21st, at the O'Brien County Fair. **Mr. Roger Vander Veen** of rural Hartley was honored as the individual recipient of the Value Added Ag Hall of Fame Award and **Mr. Dennis Gorter** of Sheldon and recently retired from Citizen State Bank, was recognized as the business partner recipient of the Value Added Ag Hall of Fame Award.

According to the Ag Steering Committee, the successful candidate for this award must have demonstrated leadership, stewardship, community service and service to the agricultural industry. They must also be an O'Brien County resident or someone who engages in agricultural activity in the county.

Roger Vander Veen, a graduate of HMS and Iowa State University, has demonstrated a life-long commitment to making progress in agriculture. In 1998, Roger was only seven years out of high school when he participated in a meeting that established the O'Brien County Value Added Ag Steering Committee and created the mission statement that still stands today. Mr. Vander Veen started a seed business almost 26 years ago, that has grown and thrived as he goes above and beyond for his growers. Roger also participates in the agricultural industry by farming and feeding cattle. He has been a mentor to many of his employees, known for giving sound and direct advice. The O'Brien County Value Added Ag Steering Committee is honored to present this year's individual VAA Hall of Fame award to Roger Vander Veen.

Dennis Gorter, another northwest Iowa native, was a Central Lyon graduate who went on to receive his Ag Finance degree from Iowa State University in 1983. In his early career, Dennis worked for the USDA and in the banking industry in several Iowa communities until he was offered the Vice President position at Citizen State Bank in Sheldon in 1993. Mr. Gorter took over as president in 2016 and held that office until his retirement last year. Dennis worked with

P.O. Box 616
160 S. Hayes
Primghar, IA 51245
www.obriencounty.com

Phone: 712-957-1313
Fax: 712-957-3015
E-mail: ocedc@tcaexpress.net
Blog: ocedcfocus.blogspot.com

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

The logo features a green circle with a white stylized 'O' inside, which contains a white silhouette of a road or path leading towards a horizon.

O'BRIEN COUNTY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

many farmers and Ag business owners over the years, building relationships and becoming much more than a banker to many. He has been a part of the community, serving many local organizations such as the Revolving Loan Fund Committee for Sheldon Chamber & Development Corporation, the Sheldon United Methodist Men, the Sheldon Christian Retirement Home Foundation and Sheldon Lion's Club. The O'Brien County Value Added Ag Steering Committee is pleased to induct Dennis Gorter into their Ag Hall of Fame.

Also recognized was **Mr. Larry Peelen** of Sanborn. Mr. Peelen was a founding member of the Value Added Ag Steering Committee and has served on that committee since 1999, bringing his experience as a farmer, dairy farmer and Iowa Corn Promotion Board Member to the committee. This year marks Larry's retirement and the Value Added Ag Steering Committee honored him for his twenty-six plus years of service to the agricultural community in O'Brien County.

O'Brien County Agriculture Hall of Fame Nominations are accepted year round and those received are saved and considered the next year if that nominee does not win. For more information, contact Kiana Johnson, O'Brien County Economic Development at 712.930.1313 or e-mail ocedc@tcaexpress.net .

END –

P.O. Box 616
160 S. Hayes
Primghar, IA 51245
www.obriencounty.com

Phone: 712-957-1313
Fax: 712-957-3015
E-mail: ocedc@tcaexpress.net
Blog: ocedcfocus.blogspot.com

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.