



**For Immediate Release:** October 8, 2019

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## **Commissioner Nikki Fried Announces 2020 Florida Agricultural Hall of Fame Honorees**

**Tallahassee, Fla.** – Today, **Agriculture Commissioner Nicole “Nikki” Fried** and the **Florida Agricultural Hall of Fame Foundation** announced the [Florida Agricultural Hall of Fame](#) inductees for 2020. The induction ceremony will be held at the Florida State Fair’s Agricultural Hall of Fame Banquet on Feb. 11, 2020.

“Agriculture touches the lives of every Floridian and plays a monumental role in our economy and culture. The efforts of our Agriculture Hall of Fame inductees educate the public on the importance of agriculture, and inspire our future ranchers and farmers,” said **Commissioner Fried**. “It’s an honor to recognize the outstanding leadership and contributions of those hard at work improving Florida’s second largest industry. Their undeniable commitment exemplifies the excellence of Florida agriculture.”

The 2020 honorees are:

**Hugh Fred Dietrich III** has been actively engaged in Florida’s agricultural industry in a variety of capacities throughout his life: a lifelong cattle rancher, an agricultural educator and an auctioneer. The family-owned Flying D Ranch is known for its champion cattle, herd management, and land stewardship. Thirty years as a Vocational Agriculture/Animal Science instructor in Orange County, FL has provided a multitude of opportunities to influence multiple generations and to help students achieve significant milestones of their own. Mr. Dietrich also served as an auctioneer/ring man at thousands of auctions, including youth livestock events.

Mr. Dietrich has previously been inducted into the Santa Gertrudis Breeders International Hall of Fame, the Florida 4-H Hall of Fame, the Florida FFA Hall of Fame and the Florida Auctioneer Hall of Fame. He has also received the National Agricultural Education Association’s Outstanding Educator Award as well as its Lifetime Achievement Award.

**John L. Jackson's** professional career spanned more than five decades serving Florida's agricultural industry, including 38 years as a county extension agent for the University of Florida's Institute of Food & Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) in Central Florida. He founded two weather alert systems to inform producers of the latest forecasts and assist them with protection efforts during freeze and other weather events, Weather Watch and the Florida Automated Weather Network (FAWN). He was also instrumental in encouraging citrus producers to use reclaimed water for irrigation and establishing the Mid Florida Citrus Foundation as the research arm of the effort.

Mr. Jackson's other noteworthy accomplishments include the establishment of an annual equipment operator's school, now known as Farm Safety Day; the Central Florida 4-H Citrus Project, which over a 20-year period engaged more than two thousand middle and high school students in agriculture; successful revitalization of the Florida Citrus Hall of Fame; and other innovations such as the initiation of grower meetings for citrus producers and the promotion of integrating technology into agricultural operations.

**Robert "Robbie" Roberson** has owned and managed successful nursery operations for the ornamental plant industry for more than 40 years. He was a founding member of the Florida Foliage Association and later an active leader with the Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association (FNGLA). He played a pivotal role in the creation of the UF/IFAS Mid-Florida Research and Education Center, including leading efforts to secure more than \$14 million in funding for the consolidation of research centers throughout the region into one state of the art facility.

Mr. Roberson is a previous inductee into the FNGLA Hall of Fame. He was a founding chair of the Apopka Foliage Festival and is engaged in several other community efforts. He is also well known for his advocacy work for the agricultural industry on the local, state and national levels and has served in leadership roles in the Florida Farm Bureau Federation as well as Farm Credit of Central Florida.

The Florida Agricultural Hall of Fame honors men and women who have made lasting contributions to agriculture in this state and to mentoring of our youth, who represent the future of agriculture in Florida.

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