

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CLARION, IOWA COMPANY THAT DEVELOPED THE FIRST SELF-PROPELLED SPRAYER
WINS IOWA FARM BUREAU'S RENEW RURAL IOWA AWARD**

WEST DES MOINES, IOWA – March 25, 2010 – Taller seed corn plants and a depleted workforce during World War II necessitated the innovation that transformed a small Iowa seed company into a worldwide leader in high-tech self-propelled agricultural sprayers. The company, Hagie Manufacturing in Clarion, Iowa, now employs over 300 workers – 65 percent of them live within 10 miles of the plant in Clarion – and is Iowa Farm Bureau's Renew Rural Iowa Entrepreneur of the Month.

During World War II, Ray Hagie developed the first high clearance tractor, a self-propelled detasseling machine, which lent itself well to other applications and an experimental spraying unit was developed. More than 60 years of innovation, closely cultivated relationships with customers and a firm commitment to the Clarion community have established Hagie as an industry leader and a respected corporate citizen, according to company vice president Alan Hagie.

“We pride ourselves in being very close to our customers,” says Hagie. “I’m the third [generation of Hagies] in this business. You look at how we turned out to be successful. We’re in rural Iowa, and we provide solutions to those customers. One of the secrets to our success is how closely we stay in touch with those customers.”

“Hagie Manufacturing is a family-owned company that has kept its customers and rural community first,” says Iowa Farm Bureau Economic Development Administrator Sandy Ehrig. “Being located in a community is not the same thing as being an active participant in that community. Hagie understands that distinction and has fostered its relationships with its customers and the local community to achieve success.”

“We’ve done a number of partnerships with Hagie,” says Derek Thompson of Iowa State

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University's Center for Industrial Research and Service (CIRAS). "They are innovative. They have a very strong desire to grow. They're very people-oriented, as far as their staff. They have a commitment to the community. That's what we're looking for; that's what Iowa State's about; and that's what the economy of Iowa is about."

Winners of the Renew Rural Iowa Entrepreneur of the Month award are rural businesses that are making a positive impact in their communities. Many past winners have participated in Farm Bureau's Renew Rural Iowa program, which helps new and existing businesses grow and develop to achieve their best financial success.

For more information about Iowa Farm Bureau's Renew Rural Iowa program or upcoming seminars call (800) 254-9670 or log on to www.renewruraliowa.com. To learn more about Hagie Manufacturing, visit <http://www.hagie.com/>.

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About Iowa Farm Bureau

The Iowa Farm Bureau Federation is a grassroots, statewide organization dedicated to enhancing the People, Progress and Pride of Iowa. More than 153,000 families in Iowa are Farm Bureau members, working together to achieve farm and rural prosperity. For more information about Farm Bureau and agriculture, visit the online media center at www.iowafarmbureau.com.