Accomplishments recognized

Drs. Terry Heiman, RIBUS Inc., Mom’s Originals and Brian Sowers received high honors during the Governor’s Conference.

Heiman received Missouri’s Agricultural Educator of the Year award. The honor recognizing his career, which has spanned more than five decades and impacted hundreds of thousands of lives.

RIBUS Inc. of Clayton was honored with Missouri’s 2011 Agricultural Exporter of the Year award. The company, whose name serves as an acronym for Rice Business United States, produces rice-based food ingredients. Company founder and President Steve Peirce accepted the award Saturday evening.

Mom’s Originals was named the 2011 AgriMissouri Member of the Year. The company founder Taran Hensley accepted the award for her business’s achievements as a role model for Missouri-based businesses.

Missouri’s 2011 Farm Broadcaster of the Year, Brian Sowers of KMNO radio in Marshall, was recognized for his outstanding coverage of agricultural issues, as well as for his community involvement and engagement within Missouri’s agriculture industry.

Ag directors meet with EPA

DIRECTORS of state agriculture departments from Iowa, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming took time away from the Governor’s Conference to meet with officials from U.S. EPA regions 7 and 8. The meeting provided a forum for dialogue on EPA programs and regulations as well as specific issues, interests and concerns of the agricultural sector.

“Agricultural producers deserve credit for taking significant steps to protect the environment while finding innovative ways to feed millions,” said Karl Brooks, EPA Region 7 administrator. “American farmers and ranchers have such broad impacts on everything, from daily food prices to widespread environmental impacts to emerging renewable fuel technologies, that EPA needs to hear the views of state agriculture directors as part of our decision-making process.”

Specific topics discussed included air-quality standards for particulate matter, renewable fuels, nutrient management, water quality and concentrated animal feeding operations, or CAFOs.

Dust standard doesn’t change

IT’S not true the Environmental Protection Agency is out to regulate farmers’ dust,” noted Josh Svaty (left), senior adviser, U.S. EPA Region 7. “Farmers thought we were talking about regulating their dust. The Clean Air Act requires the EPA to review standards every five years to make sure they are correct. That’s what we have been doing — what Congress wants us to do. No matter what administration is in place, EPA will review the standards every five years.

“We get accused of wanting to shut down agriculture. All this is a series of best management practices. Our decisions are rooted in science and common sense.”

Great exportations tell tale of many countries

DURING the 2012 Missouri Governor’s Conference on Agriculture, the panel discussion “Impact and Intricacies of International Marketing,” pertaining to livestock, was held. The panel included Dr. John Clifford, deputy administrator and chief veterinary officer of the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; Dr. Robert E. Williams, director of breed improvement and foreign marketing programs for the American-International Charolais Association; and Everett Forkner, president of the National Pork Board. The panel was moderated by Tony Clayton of Clayton Agri-Marketing, who is also president of the Livestock Exporters Association of the USA, or LEA.

Clayton noted livestock is a very important and growing sector of agricultural exports. “You can actually throw a dart at the map and hit some sort of interest in livestock,” he said. It could be “beef cattle, dairy cattle, swine, horses, sheep or goats, as the world turns toward a more protein-based diet.”

A tremendous market for U.S. livestock will be Russia. That country’s next farm bill, which is slated to run from 2013 to 2020, has a provision in it that says if you own land, you must have livestock on it. Clayton says already LEA is seeing large numbers of dairy cattle, as well as traditional breeds of Angus, Hereford and Charolais, moving to Russia.

From Russia to Ukraine and Belarus, Clayton says he expects that whole area to grow as an export market for the U.S.

“Kazakhstan is an example,” Clayton said. “There were probably 12,747 [jets] of beef cattle flown out of the United States in the last 60 days. And they are a country that says they are going to import 75,000 head of cattle over the next five years — and we see that as a major market for U.S. genetics.”

Clayton said even though Russia is kind of like the “last frontier,” there will still be other markets for livestock emerging.

“You’ve seen countries like Egypt that have had turmoil, you’ve seen Libya have turmoil and government regime changes,” Clayton said. “This past week we had our first call from Libya of people trying to develop a dairy industry there after they’ve had a regime turnover. People have to eat; that’s the one thing we have in common with people around the world, and I just think you’re going to see the interest in animal genetics from this country grow and grow.”

Auction benefits 4-H, FFA, others

THE Missouri Governor’s Conference on Agriculture benefit auction raised more than $12,000. Proceeds benefit programs for youth and young professionals in agriculture, including 4-H, FFA, Agriculture Future of America, or AFA, and the Agriculture Leaders of Tomorrow, or ALOT.

Popular items included a Taurus Judge revolver and a guided duck hunt for two in northwest Missouri. The revolver, which featured a National Rifle Association engraving, was donated by the Missouri Pork Producers Association to benefit FFA. The hunt was donated by Rob Bolin of Bolin Auto and Truck Parts in St. Joseph to benefit AFA.

The top-selling ham was purchased by Orschelen Farm and Home for $2,000 and benefited 4-H. The ham was donated by Murphy Brothers Exposition, Ditzfield Transfer, and Kathy and Tony Ross.

NETWORKING: Brady James (left), Missouri state FFA president, and Evan Grysenmeyer, first vice president, helped out during the conference and auction.

Great exportations tell tale of many countries