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## **Director Harry Bell Retires after 44 Years of Service**

**STATESBORO, GA [NOVEMBER 3, 2011]:** AgSouth Farm Credit Chairman of the Board, A. Harvey Lemmon, announced that Harry S. Bell retired from the Board of AgSouth Farm Credit as of October 31, 2011. Bell served as a Farm Credit Director since 1967 and exhibited a lifelong dedication and leadership to agriculture. Bell, from Saluda County, SC was the former chairman of the Palmetto Farm Credit Board of Directors. On January 1, 2004 he assumed chairmanship of AgSouth's new board with the January merger of the AgSouth and Palmetto Farm Credit Associations. He is a previous board member of Ridge Mutual Ginnery, Southeastern Cotton Ginners Association, National Cotton Council, Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina and was chairman of the Cotton Board for a number of years. Bell served on the Board of Visitors of Clemson University and Presbyterian College and was the first Chairman of the South Carolina Water Resources Commission. He currently serves as president of Ridge Farmers Mutual Coop.

Mr. Bell's experience in banking and agriculture has served AgSouth for many years and he has made many contributions to agriculture. With over 44 years of service, Mr. Bell has shown unrelenting dedication.

Mr. Bell is past President of South Carolina Farm Bureau Federation and its affiliated companies for over 26 years. Bell was also Chairman of the Board of Southern Farm Bureau Life Insurance Co. In 1978 Bell was elected Vice President of the American Farm Bureau, serving eight years where he was influential on both the national and international agricultural scene. Upon retiring he received the organizations highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award and the Order of the Palmetto from Governor Mark Sanford.

In 2000, Mr. Bell was selected by the State of South Carolina as one of three outstanding men in Agriculture of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, for his work in the eradication of the boll weevil.

Mr. Bell is retired military having served in World War II and the Korean War. A reservist of 24 years retiring with the rank of Lt. Colonel, he attended Gordon Military College, Clemson University and graduated from the University of South Carolina. He is a row crop farmer, has a cattle operation and timber grower. Along with his son William, they are the 4<sup>th</sup> generation to operate Bell Farms.

Bell is married to the former Jean A. Hall. They have three sons: William, James, Harry Jr. and a deceased daughter, Harriett, as well as three grandchildren. Mr. and Mrs. Bell are members of the Johnston Presbyterian Church.

**About AgSouth:**

AgSouth Farm Credit is one of the largest agricultural lending cooperatives in the Southeast. As of September 30, 2011, AgSouth had more than 7,420 members, \$1.65 billion in assets and \$254 million in capital and allocated accounts.

AgSouth provides loans for real estate, homes and agriculture and also offers leasing and crop and life insurance.

For more information regarding the elections or AgSouth's services, call AgSouth's CFO Alisa D. Gunter at 864-585-6234 x 6737 or toll-free at 800-310-4805 x 6737.

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