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For Immediate Release

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National Watermelon Association Honors Industry Leaders at Annual Convention in Austin, Texas

Austin, TX – The National Watermelon Association (NWA) proudly recognized three outstanding individuals for their dedication and contributions to the watermelon industry during its annual National Convention in Austin, Texas.

Raymon Land was inducted into the prestigious **Watermelon Hall of Fame**, celebrating his decades of commitment to farming and his dedicated service to both the National Watermelon Association and the Florida Watermelon Association. His leadership and passion have left a lasting impact on the industry.

Jesse James Wiggins received the esteemed **Outstanding Service Award** in recognition of his tireless work behind the scenes in support of NWA. From assisting with the annual auction to supporting the Queen Program and serving on volunteer committees, Wiggins has consistently demonstrated his deep commitment to the success of the Association.

Chad Chastain was honored with the **Future Watermelon Farm Leader Award**, acknowledging his hard work, dedication, and commitment to carrying on a legacy of eight generations of watermelon farming. Chastain represents the future of the industry, bringing innovation and passion to the next generation of growers. This year, the award was dedicated to the memory of the late Dan Thomas, an NWA executive committee member who passed last year.

“We are incredibly proud to recognize Raymon, Jesse James, and Chad for their unwavering dedication to the watermelon industry,” said George Szczepanski, Executive Director of the NWA. “Each of these individuals has made a significant impact in their own way—whether through leadership, service, or innovation. Their commitment ensures a bright future for our industry, and we are grateful for all they have done and continue to do.”

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About NWA: Since 1914, the National Watermelon Association (NWA) has been the voice of the watermelon industry in the U.S. NWA's hundreds of members represent the watermelon industry, including growers, shippers, and key suppliers. With a strong presence in over 30 states, Canada, and Mexico, and bolstered by regional chapters across the United States, NWA's purpose is to advocate for the watermelon industry's holistic well-being, from production to consumption. Learn more at www.watermelon.ag.



Photo: Chad Chastain receives NWA's Future Watermelon Farm Leader Award from NWA Chairman F. Hamilton Dicks IV and NWA Executive Director George Szczepanski.



Photo: Mr. Raymon Land receives his NWA Watermelon Hall of Fame honors from Courtney Davis of Syngenta.



Photo: Mr. Jesse James Wiggins receives the NWA Outstanding Service Award from NWA Executive Director, George Szczepanski.