



S.C. Advocates for Agriculture presented awards to Rep. Davey Hiott, left, and Jim Roquemore, right. At center is organization president and Branchville native Ronnie Summers.

COLUMBIA -- The South Carolina Advocates for Agriculture held its 10th annual Advocates of the Year Recognition Reception on Aug. 3 to honor two individuals who have shown outstanding commitment to supporting and promoting the state's agriculture industry.

Rep. Davey Hiott and Jim Roquemore each received the 2017 Advocate of the Year award.

The public service recipient, Rep. Davey Hiott from Pickens, serves as the chairman of the Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee in the House of Representatives. Hiott has served the people of Dacusville, Liberty and Pickens in the House since 2005 and has been a great friend to agriculture. He has sponsored legislation that allowed the S.C. Department of Agriculture to be the regulatory authority for the new Produce Safety Rule and has worked tirelessly to pass legislation to update regulations in the poultry industry.

Jim Roquemore, CEO and chairman of the board of Patten Seed Co., also known by trade name Super-Sod, received the private sector award. His business dates back to 1894 and has grown from a small-town general store in Lakeland, Georgia, to a cooperation having a number of sod and seed farms located throughout South Carolina, North Carolina and Georgia.

Among numerous other roles, Roquemore currently serves as chairman of the S.C. Conservation Bank and has been a past chairman of Palmetto Agribusiness Council, as well as served on the board of visitors and advisory council of Clemson University. Jim and his wife Karen give their time and energy to many worthwhile community causes.

Branchville native Ronnie Summers, the S.C. Advocates for Agriculture President said, “These two state leaders have consistently been advocates for our state’s agribusiness interest, and this special recognition is well deserved.”

Summers is AgSouth Farm Credit’s South Carolina regional president.

South Carolina Advocates for Agriculture was created in 2005 to assist in marketing and promotion of the state’s agriculture products and the overall agriculture industry. For more information regarding S.C. Advocates for Agriculture, visit scadvocates4ag.org.