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2023 NASDA Honor Award Recipients Announced

CHEYENNE, Wyo. -- At the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture [2023 Annual Meeting](#) in Cheyenne, Wyoming, exemplary employees of state departments of agriculture will be honored for their service, communication and administration on behalf of their state.

“We are proud to recognize public servants in our state agriculture departments each year through the NASDA Honor Awards,” NASDA President Doug Miyamoto said. “Outstanding employees like our award recipients this year enable state agriculture departments to best serve our farmers, ranchers and communities across our states.”

This year, NASDA will also present the NASDA Public-Private Partnership Award in recognition of an organization that has positively impacted states. Congratulations to the 2023 NASDA Honor Award Recipients:

James A. Graham Award for Outstanding Service

Keith Rogers, chief of staff for Kentucky Agriculture Commissioner Dr. Ryan Quarles at the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, is the recipient of the James A. Graham Award for Outstanding Service. This award is given in recognition of remarkable work in providing service to farmers and ranchers. Rogers has served in his current position for more than seven years. He leads over 200 state staff and serves as the department’s point of contact for farmers, ranchers and agricultural organizations in Kentucky. His tireless efforts advancing well-made agricultural policies and ensuring the well-being of farmers have left a lasting mark on the industry.

Dougless-Irving Administration Award

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Arkansas Department of Agriculture Deputy Secretary Cynthia Edwards has been selected as this year's recipient of the Dougless-Irving Administration Award, which honors an individual whose contributions to their agency resulted in improved efficiency and impact.

Since joining the department in 2011, Edwards has shaped the department to provide better services to farmers and ranchers through reorganizing independent agencies and divisions into one department. Edwards continues to use her expertise and vast experience to advance the agriculture industry in Arkansas and maximize state resources.

Communications Award



Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Communications Director Jim Britt has been named the 2023 Communications Award recipient. This award recognizes outstanding work in media and public communications resulting in improved understanding of agriculture.

Britt has used multiple communications channels to effectively relay critical information on issues such as highly pathogenic avian influenza and share farmers' stories. Britt has led his department's social media



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pages to experience 100 percent growth while also forging connections with local and national media outlets. Britt's continued leadership and communications initiatives have helped advance the understanding and awareness of agriculture, both in Maine and on a national level.

Jim also serves as the 2022-2023 [Communication Officers of the State Departments of Agriculture](#) President, joining state agriculture department communications leaders from across the U.S. to better serve all of agriculture.

NASDA Public-Private Partnership Award: Fostering Collaborative Excellence



The NASDA Public-Private Partnership Award is presented to Merck Animal Health, a company that exemplifies the transformative potential of collaborations between public and private entities. Merck Animal Health has been a longstanding partner with NASDA and the NASDA Foundation, with continuous support of and engagement with NASDA Next Generation and Agricultural Policy Summit student programs. Their constant support of the next generation of agriculture along with their commitment to partnering with states continues to help advance the U.S. agricultural industry and secure the future of agriculture.

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NASDA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit association which represents the elected and appointed commissioners, secretaries and directors of the departments of agriculture in all 50 states and four U.S. territories. NASDA enhances American food and agricultural communities through policy, partnerships and public engagement. To learn more about NASDA, please visit www.nasda.org.



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