

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Farm Bureau of Ventura County hires new CEO

Contact:

Scott Deardorff, (805) 732-9401

Rex Laird, (805) 289-0155

John Krist, (805) 650-8834

VENTURA (Dec. 18, 2007) — Veteran journalist, author and policy analyst John Krist has been named chief executive officer of the Farm Bureau of Ventura County, Board President Scott Deardorff announced today.

“I want to thank the many dedicated members of the Farm Bureau of Ventura County who helped make today’s exciting announcement possible. Their participation in the CEO selection process that started back in June with the announcement of Rex’s retirement was invaluable.” Deardorff said. “I’m confident that John will continue the honest leadership and community dialogue needed to keep agriculture sustainable and relevant in our county.”

Krist’s appointment takes effect Feb. 1. He succeeds Rex Laird, who is retiring May 30 after nearly three decades with the organization.

“Ventura County agriculture is at a crossroads on many fronts. John is well-equipped to help the Farm Bureau of Ventura County and the industry provide the necessary leadership to face the many issues that lie ahead,” Laird said.

Krist is a senior editor and Opinion-page columnist at the *Ventura County Star*, where he has worked since 1983. His weekly commentaries on land-use policy, natural resources and environmental issues are distributed by Scripps Howard News Service, and have been published in numerous magazines and newspapers, including the *Sacramento Bee*, *San Diego Union-Tribune*, *San Jose Mercury News*, *Rocky Mountain News* and *Seattle Times*. Mr. Krist also is a contributing editor for *California Planning & Development Report*, a statewide newsletter for land-use and public-policy experts, writing its monthly “Environment Watch” column.

“The coming decade will bring profound challenges to Ventura County agriculture,” Krist said. “As the Farm Bureau CEO, I look forward to working on behalf of Ventura County’s signature industry, helping policy makers and the general public understand why the sustainability of local farming matters to everyone.”

The winner of numerous writing awards and journalism fellowships, Krist has written or contributed to books about outdoor recreation, history, urban renewal and wildfire policy. His newest book is *Living Legacy: The Story of Ventura County Agriculture*, which is based on his yearlong “Farming on the Edge” series for the *Star*. He also has served as a conference organizer, panelist, discussion moderator and lecturer, on subjects ranging from American history to land use and water policy.

Krist, who grew up on a ranch in Northern California’s wine country, is a graduate of the University of California at Santa Barbara, with a bachelor’s degree in cultural anthropology. He lives in Ventura with his wife, Jean, a high school English teacher. They have two children: son Daniel, a biological sciences major at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, and daughter Allison, an environmental studies major at UCSB.

As CEO, Krist will be responsible for managing the Farm Bureau’s staff, daily operations and finances. He will recommend policy to the organization’s Board of Directors, implement board directives, and represent the interests of the membership at legislative and regulatory hearings. He also will serve as the organization’s liaison with the news media, as well as with numerous community organizations and groups.

Founded in 1914, the Farm Bureau of Ventura County is an independent, non-partisan organization that is not affiliated with any government body. It acts as an advocate for the county’s agricultural industry, promoting policies and fostering community action intended to preserve that industry’s sustainability and vitality.

The organization also provides information, research, insurance services and other benefits to its members. It publishes a monthly newsletter as well as the quarterly *Central Coast Farm & Ranch* magazine.

The Farm Bureau of Ventura County is a member of California Farm Bureau Federation, a statewide organization with chapters in 56 counties. California Farm Bureau Federation is a member of American Farm Bureau Federation, a national organization of farmers and ranchers with member state organizations in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.