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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Farmer, exhibitor and volunteer serves as 2007 World Ag Expo Chairman

TULARE, Calif.—As a youngster, Bruce Shannon accompanied his father to what was then referred to as the Farm Show, never dreaming he would become the 2007 World Ag Expo chairman.

A native of Tulare, he was reared on a walnut ranch a few miles east of town – an operation that he is involved with today, along with his two sisters Kimberly Mello and Vicki Fritzler. But in the early 1970s, Shannon left his hometown and moved to Kansas where his uncle – a Shortline equipment dealer – introduced him to the farm equipment business.

Before returning to Central California to be near his family in 1999, he spent most of his career as an independent manufacturer’s representative, and during those years he lived in Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas.

“Even while I was in the Midwest and Southwest, I came back to visit the Expo every two or three years as an attendee. But it was a dream of mine to come back and be an exhibitor at my hometown show,” he recalled.

Shannon had an opportunity to fulfill his dream when he returned to California in 1999 with Orthman Manufacturing, a maker of row crop toolbar equipment – cultivators, listers, shapers and guidance systems. “My first duties for Orthman were to get ready for World Ag Expo. In January of that year, I was on the grounds getting ready for the show as an exhibitor for the first time,” said Shannon.

Interested in being involved in the Expo, Shannon was asked to join the exhibitor advisory committee. Shannon became chairman of that committee in 2000 and also worked out of North Office as a volunteer driving forklifts or doing anything else that needed doing at the time. He served in those capacities until the 2006 show when he was vice chairman of the overall World Ag Expo and this year is Expo chairman.

In 2004, he was employed by Andrew Cummings, owner of T.G. Schmeiser Co. and Nikkel Iron Works as regional sales manager. Both companies have a tradition as long-time exhibitors at Expo. Nikkel Iron Works and former owner Jack Nikkel have been exhibitors for all 40 years and T.G. Schmeiser for 39 years.

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“I thank Andrew and his mother, Shirley Cummings for their commitment to World Ag Expo by letting me take the time necessary to do this job. This would not be possible if I were not working for someone who was so in tune with the Expo,” Shannon said.

As a volunteer, exhibitor and farmer, Shannon brings a unique perspective to the Expo. He understands the effort volunteers put forth to make the Expo a success, as well as the time and investment exhibitors dedicate. And as a farmer, Shannon considers what can be gained technology wise that will improve his farming operation.

“It is an honor to be chairman of the 2007 Expo and celebrate the 40th anniversary. The event is world renown. We provide a place to see so much under ‘one roof.’ Farmers can come from anywhere in the world and see technology that applies to their operation in some form or fashion.”

The 40th annual World Ag Expo is Feb. 13 – 15, 2007. For more information call 800-999-9186 or 559-688-1751 or visit www.worlagexpo.com.

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