

# Oregonians Are Farm Family Of The Year

The James R. Ottoman family of Malin, Ore., is the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) National Farm Family of the Year, Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz announced last week.

"Mr. and Mrs. Ottoman were city people who returned to the land and made outstanding progress as farmers. They also have become leaders in their community," Butz said.

James R. Ottoman and his wife Patricia live on a farm about two and a half miles northeast of Malin, Ore. where they raise potatoes, hay, and small grain. They have three children, daughters Kristi, 26, and Dana, 20, and son Jim, 24.

The Ottomans were selected after a year-long competition conducted by FmHA, the rural credit service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Beginning with thousands of farm families from all across the country, competition was narrowed to state winners, then to five national contestants, and finally to the Ottoman family of Oregon.

The other four national finalists were (in alphabetical order of states):

The James D. Porter family, alfalfa and barley farmers, of Cortez, Colo.

The Herman Riley family, beef cattle ranchers, of Mountainair, N.M.

The Charles C. Tann family, general crops and swine production, of Rich Square, N.C.

The Bernard Sihsmann family, dairy farmers, of Exeland, Wis.

"The Farm Family of the Year contest is conducted each year to recognize and honor the family that has improved its own situation and contributed to its community through its own resources and with assistance from FmHA," the Secretary said.

Although they both were raised in the city of Klamath Falls, James and Patricia did well at farming 80 acres of government leased land. After two years they bought their own farm - a 40 acre clover field with no improvements, many ditches, a high water table, but with excellent sandy loam soil.

Through diligent and persistent efforts, they transformed the open field into a productive farm, and over the years they gradually improved and increased their farm-land holdings. In 1955 they purchased another tract of 72 acres and in 1967 an additional 55 acres, giving them a total of 167 acres. They also rent and farm 90 acres.

Over the years they have installed a good irrigation system, laid drain tiles, and applied gypsum to reduce the alkali content caused by the high water table. Mr. Ottoman has carefully and correctly applied fertilizer to the land whenever necessary and rotated his crops for the best yields and the best treatment of the land.

Jim and Pat first turned to the Farmers Home Administration for financial assistance in 1958 when they received a farm ownership loan. They received another farm ownership loan in 1967 to purchase their last section of farm-land. In addition they got a home loan from FmHA in 1961 to enlarge and improve their home.

One of the guiding tenets of the Ottoman family is the firm belief that the land is not to be exploited, but improved for future generations. As Jim and Pat plan each year's operating budget, funds are put aside for buildings and water and soil improvements.

Good farm practices, along with soil and water improvements, have increased the productivity of their farm. The Ottoman's largest crop is potatoes, with 115 acres yielding 380 sacks per acre. They also raise 18 acres of alfalfa averaging 5 tons per acre and 56 acres of barley averaging 2-1/2 tons per acre.

Both Pat and Jim strongly feel the necessity to develop a strong community. Jim is a director of the Klamath Basin Water Users Association, the Klamath Experiment Farm Advisory Board, the Oregon Water Resources Association and a member of the Oregon Potato Commission Advertising Committee and the Klamath County School Budget Committee. In the past he has served as president of the Malin Chamber of Commerce, Klamath Basin Potato Growers Association, the Klamath Basin Water Users, and commander of the Malin Post American Legion. He also belongs to several social and agricultural organizations and is a Malin volunteer fire fighter.

Mrs. Ottoman has been president of the Malin P.T.A., member of the Order of Rainbow Girls, Girl Scout Leader, 4-H club leader and American Legion Auxiliary

President. She regularly volunteers for blood banks, cancer and heart fund drives and the United Givers Fund.

All three children have held class and student body offices, attended Boys or Girls State and received their 10 year pins in 4-H.

Of the other finalists: The James Porter family farmed rented land for five years, then bought a 160-acre farm in 1966, another 160 acres in 1971, and 110 acres in 1972. Along with good farming practices, Mr. Porter's jack-of-all-trades ability has enabled him to meet the demands of modern farming with innovative approaches.

The Herman Riley family started in 1960 with \$25 in cash and an old pick-up truck. Today they own 1,105 acres, 112 head of beef cattle, a modern farm house, and a complete line of farm equipment. Mr. Riley developed spinal arthritis in 1961 which becomes more crippling each year. The efforts of the entire Riley family have enabled them to become successful family farmers.

The Charles Tann family has overcome fire losses, weather disasters, poor health, and lack of education to become successful farmers and respected members of their community. Starting practically from zero, they now farm 435 acres, including a swine operation of 75 brood sows. They have strongly emphasized education for all of their eight children.


The Bernard Sihsmann family immigrated from Poland and worked in New York City before starting as farmers. Although both lacked farming experience, and Mr. Sihsmann was partially disabled because of the loss of one eye, their hard work, shrewd management and dedication to farming have made them highly successful dairy farmers.

A panel of seven nationally prominent judges made the final selection of the Farm Family of the Year. The judges were: Kenneth N. Probasco of Worthington, Ohio, chairman of the Federal Farm Credit Board; Bill Mason of Chicago, Ill., president of the National Association of Farm Broadcasters; Dr. Camille Bell of Lubbock, Texas, president of the National

the Agricultural Bankers Division of the American Bankers Association.

State winning farm families receive a plaque, and the national winner and expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. from the farm equipment manufacturer, Sperry New Holland of New Holland, Pa.

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