

For the past 29 years Tim Maye has had the reins of the Central High School agriculture program, effectively dedicating his professional career to teaching students.

On May 12, the Chesterfield Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) recognized Maye as their 2014 Conservation Farmer of the Year.

USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service District Conservationist Charles Babb praised Maye for his dedication. “Tim has a unique connection with his students,” explained Babb. “He doesn’t just lecture, he lets them *experience* agriculture.”

Maye is a jack-of-all trades, and teaches students in a variety of topics ranging from welding to machinery mechanics to greenhouse horticulture.

Over the years, Maye has taken a portion of the 125 acre campus located in Pageland, SC and turned it into a hands-on, ag-classroom. Maye uses the woods, pond, wildlife food plots, greenhouse and crop fields to show his students what agriculture is all about.

Maye doesn’t limit his teaching to Central students. Each year, Maye and his students host eight Young Farmer and Agribusiness Association meetings. On average, 60 landowners will attend a program and enjoy a meal prepared by Maye and his students.

Maye also puts his knowledge to work at home. He and his wife Kathy have a 200 acre farm which spans the Chesterfield-Anson County line. They raise 40 commercial brood cows and 30 head of sheep.

At home, the Mayes use best management practices such as rotational grazing and have eliminated livestock access to creeks and ponds. In addition, the sheep are grazed behind the cattle as a biological weed control, which translates into reduced herbicide use.

Tim has selflessly dedicated himself to being the best agri-educator, farmer, role model and teacher he can be, and as SWCD Chairman Roger Smith explained, “our entire county has been impacted by Tim’s foresight, teaching and planning”.