

**\*Note: Of local interest to Norton County and Northwest Kansas communities.**

**For Immediate Release:**

Contact Information:

Leah Bond

Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom

1100 Mid-Campus Drive

124 Bluemont Hall

Manhattan, KS 66506

(785)532-7946 or *ksfac@ksu.edu*

**Norton teacher honored with 2008 Teacher of the Year Award**

**TOPEKA, Kan.** – Teresa Schulze, a fifth and sixth grade teacher at Eisenhower Elementary in Norton was recently honored as the 2008 Janet Sims Memorial Teacher of the Year by the Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom (KFAC).

The KFAC Janet Sims Memorial Teacher of the Year award recognizes teachers who go the extra mile to instill a passion for learning about agriculture within their students. The Foundation honors one teacher annually who has successfully integrated agricultural education into his or her pre-existing curricula.

Schulze, who teaches social studies and science, says that she uses interactive, hands-on activities to integrate various agriculture concepts into her science class. “With living in a rural area, agriculture is the primary industry in our community,” she said explaining why she thinks incorporating agriculture into her classroom is so important. “If it were not for agriculture, our town and community would be nonexistent.”

One in five Kansas students will grow-up to have a career in an agricultural-related field. Agriculture and education are both contributors to the well-being of Kansans. Agriculture is not only important to the economy, providing thousands of jobs within the state, but it also provides people with necessary food and clothing. The educational system, experienced by every Kansas child, is a logical place to introduce information about the importance of agriculture to the state, said Cathy Musick, KFAC executive director.

To assist teachers in achieving this goal, KFAC offers a variety of educational resources for teachers and students including teacher guides and lesson plans, student magazines and school assembly programs, Musick said, all designed with state curriculum standards in mind.

Schulze, who is also a 2007 KFAC Summer Graduate Course attendee, was honored with the award at the Kansas State Agriculture Day celebration on March 20 at the State Capitol Building in Topeka, Kan. She will also have the opportunity to attend the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference in Costa Mesa, Calif., held in June. The trip is sponsored by High Plains Journal.

The Janet Sims Memorial Teacher of the Year award was renamed this year in honor of Janet Sims, who passed away in June 2007 from Lou Gehrig’s Disease. Sims had served on the KFAC board from November 2005 until her death.

Several of Sims' family members were in attendance at the ceremony to watch Schulze receive the award. "I cannot begin to list my mother's extensive accomplishments and awards in this small space, however, I truly feel that this KFAC scholarship would have been one of her most cherished," said Shera Sims, daughter of Janet Sims. "I know my mother would have been humbled by this distinction and would have loved to sit down and discuss with the recipients their plans for teaching agriculture in their classrooms."

For more information about KFAC's Teacher of the Year Award or other programs, contact the KFAC office at 785-532-7946 or [ksfac@webmail.ksu.edu](mailto:ksfac@webmail.ksu.edu).