

Sunbelt Ag Expo

Southeastern Farmer of the Year

News Release
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For Immediate Release

GLENN DYE NAMED 2026 VIRGINIA FARMER OF THE YEAR

At 13 years old after his grandfather passed away, Glenn Dye realized someone had to pick up the slack on the family farm. As a teenager he started helping his father more with daily tasks. Before his grandfather passed, Dye promised him he would attend college. Upon graduation at Virginia Tech, he was presented with an opportunity to rent 41 acres and begin his own first-generation farming operation. While he farmed with his father on the family farm, he started his own grain operation on the side, and it has grown tremendously throughout the past two decades. Today, Dye farms 1,600 acres of corn and soybeans, sells Channel Seed, and is a dealer for Ag Leader Technology and Harvest International Planters.

When Dye started his own grain farming operation in 2007, it was important for him to not borrow from family. He wanted to pave his own path. He rented 41 acres and added more land as it became available. With the pressure of development in his area he knew he needed to purchase land rather than rely on renting if he planned to have a future in farming. He purchased a farm that became available and now owns over 900 acres and rents close to 600 acres. He grows 800 acres of soybeans and 800 acres of corn.

Dye values environmental stewardship, and from the beginning of his operation has utilized 100% no-till practices. More recently, he's been investing in regenerative agriculture. A few practices he implements include intense cover crop management with multiple species, planting green after roller crimping, and no burn down herbicides.

Dye is a member of Sustainable Chesapeake's Virginia Innovation Roundtable, which meets regularly to discuss ways to produce more sustainably. Since 2013, he has applied variable rate fertilizer and lime. Before the corn crops go in the ground, organic fertilizer in the form of litter is applied to the soil. Multiple waterways have been established on the farm to slow water movement and prevent soil erosion.

Dye has always had a keen interest in agricultural technology. He understands the benefits of using technology and stays up to date on new developments. Last year he purchased a tractor that uses low engine RPM technology to operate fuel more efficiently than competitive tractors. All equipment on the farm is operated using AutoSteer and AutoSwath technology which ensures each piece of equipment is accurately steered to the exact width of the implement and each product is turned off and on automatically based on coverage.

As his operation continues to grow, Dye has a unique perspective on what growth looks like. His ultimate goal is to produce a high-yielding, high-quality grain as profitably and sustainably as possible. He has worked extensively to diversify his cover crop program to support this objective. By planting a seed mix of hairy vetch with cereal rye before the corn crop, he's able to use the vetch to organically fix nitrogen. Soil and biomass samples have shown

nutrient cycling from deeper in the soil profile back to the root zone for the cash crop. This has allowed him to cut his fertilizer applications and avoid commercial nitrogen at top dress.

With the blend of vetch and rye a new tool came to the farm, the roller crimper. He uses this to eliminate a burn down herbicide pass and create a mat of residue that provides multiple benefits including shading out weeds, keeping the soil cooler, and reducing water evaporation.

“It aligns with one of my main goals of leaving my farm in better shape for the future generation than it was when I started caring for it,” said Dye. “That’s the way God intended it to be. I’ve always believed in doing a better job with the acres I have rather than trying to cover more acres.”

Dye is also interested in continuing to integrate autonomy into the operation. His grain dryer is a mixed flow dryer. Unlike other dryers on the market, this one is engineered to be more efficient by using a vacuum cooling design. In return this uses less propane and doesn’t reduce the test weight of the grain. Going forward, he’s interested in integrating autonomy practices into field work.

Aside from his grain operation, Dye also sells agriculture products as a dealer. Dye has been selling Channel Seed for years now, which has allowed him to have better control of the seed he plants and get compensated to give seed advice to other farmers. As someone who enjoys the technology side of agriculture, Dye also sells Ag Leader Technology as a grower dealer. This has increased his efficiency in many ways, allowed him to stay cutting edge on his personal operation, and help other growers out as needed. He is also a grower dealer for Harvest International Planter, a product he thinks very highly of. As the only manufacturer that he’s found that offers the bar and row unit without anything on it, he’s able to easily integrate his Ag Leader product line.

Dye and his wife, Amanda, are raising their three children, Landon (12), Graham (9), and Grace (7), on the farm. Growing up, Dye’s father gave him the freedom to figure out what he liked and what he didn’t like. Having that freedom led him to love farming even more. While his children are still young, he’s practicing this same model with his family so his kids can find and develop their passion for the farm on their own.

On the local level Dye has been involved in a variety of agricultural activities. He currently serves as the Appomattox County Farm Bureau President, actively supports the local FFA chapter, and serves on the Appomattox County Public Schools CTE Advisory Committee. He’s an involved member of the Virginia Farm Bureau where he’s served on various committees throughout the years. In 2017, Dye served as the Virginia Soybean Association President. Nationally, he’s taken part in the FFA Alumni New Century Farmer Program and American Soybean Association Young Leaders Program, expanding his networking and knowledge in the production agriculture sector.

Dye was nominated for the 2026 Virginia Farmer of the Year Award by Bruce Jones, Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent in Appomattox County.

“Glenn is a farmer who leads by example,” said Jones. “He is an early adopter of new technologies, strongly believes that soil health is the foundation for production improvement, always willing to speak at agricultural field days, and a strong proponent of Virginia Cooperative Extension.”

A distinguished panel of judges will visit each finalist in August, and the winner will be announced during the 2026 Sunbelt Ag Expo Southeastern Farmer of the Year Luncheon.

Returning program sponsors in 2026 are Harper Family Holdings, the Alabama Farmers Federation, Arkansas Farm Bureau, Florida Farm Bureau, Georgia Farm Bureau, North Carolina

Farm Bureau, South Carolina Farm Bureau, Virginia Farm Bureau, the Georgia Association of Conservation Districts, Ag Georgia Farm Credit, Ag South Farm Credit, and SW Georgia Farm Credit and Arkansas Farm Credit. New sponsors for 2026 include Phoebe Putney Health Systems.

As the state winner of the Sunbelt Expo award, they will receive a \$2,500 cash award and an expense-paid trip to the Sunbelt Expo from the sponsors. A vest from the sponsors will be given to each state winner and nominator. The Moultrie Colquitt Co. Chamber of Commerce will give each state winner a local keepsake.

The state winners are now eligible for the \$15,000 cash prize awarded to the overall winner by the sponsors. Massey Ferguson North America will provide each state winner with a gift package and the overall winner with the use of a Massey Ferguson tractor for a year or 250 hours (whichever comes first). A jacket from the sponsors will be given to the overall winner. Hays LTI will award the overall winner with a HAYS Smoker/Grill. In addition, the overall winner will receive a Henry Repeating Arms American Farmer Tribute Edition rifle from Reinke Irrigation and a diesel prize package from Howes.