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McLeod Farms earns statewide honor

ROBERT MONNIE
Staff Reporter

McLeod Farms of McBee was recognized by the Clemson University Extension Service as the 2011 South Carolina Farm of the Year (Large Category) in a ceremony at The National Bean Market's fifth annual S.C. Farmers Festival held in Lake City June 18.

Founded in 1916 by Hector McLeod, who moved to the McBee area from North Carolina, the multi-faceted family-owned agri-business is now under the helm of fourth-generation owner-operator Kemp McLeod.

Internationally known for its flag-

ship crop of peaches, harvested on 650 acres, McLeod Farms also produces 20 acres of strawberries, 20 acres of blackberries, 10 acres of grapes, nearly 200 acres of vegetables, and several thousand acres of row crops, including sweet corn, rye and soybeans.

In addition to growing a variety of top quality food crops, McLeod Farms has been on the leading edge of agri-tourism, exemplified by its strawberry, peach and fall festivals, as well as educational strawberry and pumpkin tours for young school children and other groups.

See McLEOD, 9A



Robert Monnie/Staff Photographer

Gaie McLeod of McLeod Farms, third from left, receives the 2011 South Carolina Farm of the Year (large category) at The National Bean Market's fifth annual S.C. Farmers Festival in Lake City. Also shown from left are Amanda McNulty of Clemson Extension Service, Jack Shuler President/CEO of ArborOne Farm Credit and Tony Melton of Clemson Extension Service.

McLEOD Continued from Front

Winning the 2011 S.C. Farm of the Year (Small Category) was Thompson Farm and Nursery, a fifth-generation family farm located in Horry County. The operation grows a variety of fruits and vegetables on 80 acres and also is heavily involved in agri-tourism and education.

Both McLeod Farms and Thompson Farm and Nursery received \$500 from ArborOne Farm Credit in Florence, which co-sponsored the competition.