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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, September 18, 2015

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MABA Recognizes ZFS' Clifford Meeuwsen with 2015 'Leaders & Legends' Award

MACKINAC ISLAND – The **Michigan Agri-Business Association** this week recognized the significant contributions of **Clifford Meeuwsen**, president of **Zeeland Farm Services**, to Michigan agriculture with its 2015 Leaders and Legends Award. Meeuwsen was presented with the honor at the 2015 MABA Fall Outlook Conference.

“Cliff Meeuwsen has exemplified innovation and tremendous optimism during the course of his career,” said **Ron Brown**, board chairman of the **Michigan Agri-Business Association**. “His work has boosted Michigan’s agricultural economy and resulted in solutions to our unique infrastructure challenges. His determination when facing challenges is an example we all can benefit from.”

Meeuwsen is credited with growing and diversifying **ZFS**’ businesses, creating new uses for Michigan-grown soybeans and establishing the company as a national leader in grain handling, food products, ingredients, biofuels and more. The company was founded by Cliff’s father Robert, as Meeuwsen Produce and Grain in 1950, and later rebranded as ZFS in 1977. In 1992, Cliff and his brothers, Arlen and Robb, purchased the company from their father.

Under **Meeuwsen**’s leadership, **ZFS** opened the largest soybean processing plant in Michigan, a move that gave Michigan growers a local soybean processing option.

In recent decades, the company created new uses for their processing plant, including food-grade cooking oils and biobased industrial products made from soybeans, and seized unique marketing opportunities for these products around the world.

The company also expanded into ethanol and biodiesel production in Nebraska and Pennsylvania.

Meeuwsen was also recognized for his commitment to creating an environmentally sustainable company. In addition to building LEED-certified administration facilities, ZFS uses landfill gas to power their facilities, and sells the excess energy to **Consumers Energy** to power homes and businesses in West Michigan. The company is also involved in farmland preservation efforts in West Michigan.

Along with the Leaders and Legends Award, **Meeuwsen** was honored with a tribute from the Michigan legislature and Congressional recognition from **U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow, Congressman Bill Huizenga and Congressman John Moolenaar**.

“Cliff has the unique ability to see an opportunity, seize that moment and pursue new opportunities in agriculture to continue growing his business for the future,” said **Jim Byrum**, president of **MABA**. “His work to expand and grow ZFS has set a benchmark for innovation in Michigan agriculture and grown the economy across our state. All of us in agribusiness respect Cliff, and admire his perseverance, vision and his contributions to our industry.”

MABA presented its first [Leaders and Legends Award](#) in January 2013. The program honors individuals who have provided the entrepreneurial spark and taken risks to lead the growth of Michigan’s agricultural industry.

Photo Attached: Clifford Meeuwsen (Left) receives the Leaders and Legends Award from Ron Brown, board chairman of the Michigan Agri-Business Association.

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