

Mark Vail to Lead National Association of Farm Broadcasting

The National Association of Farm Broadcasting has named **Mark Vail** as its new executive director. Vail will begin on March 1, 2010.

Vail brings with him 34 years of experience in the broadcast arena, encompassing a variety of positions including farm broadcaster, general manager and director of operations.



"I'm very excited to have Mark on board as our executive director," said **Greg Akagi**, NAFB president. "Mark has truly done it all for NAFB, and his knowledge and experience will give the organization a strong voice for many years to come."

For the past 19 years Vail has worked for Eagle Communications, Hays, Kan., in various capacities, during which he was executive producer and co-creator of the national ag show AgriTalk. Since 1998, he has served as vice president of radio for the employee-owned company.

"It is an honor to be selected as the executive director of NAFB. I look forward to working with the board and the many dedicated industry leaders as we build on a strong foundation established by generations of legacy farm broadcasters and innovative agricultural and rural partners," Vail said. "The association has a solid strategic plan in place, and I am confident the membership will continue to use the plan as a guide for continued growth in a very dynamic media environment."

Vail got his start in radio in 1974, as a market reader/reporter on a subscriber service network reporting grain and livestock markets to agricultural entities. In 1976, he joined KOLM, Rochester, Minn., as farm director. From 1979 to 1983 he served as farm director at KROC Radio, and for two years hosted "NewsWatch at Noon" on KTTC-TV. In 1983, he joined the Kansas Agriculture Network and continued when the network was purchased by Stauffer Communications-WIBW and the Kansas Radio Networks, eventually becoming general manager of the stations and networks. In 1991, he began his extensive tenure with Eagle Communications.

What he finds most rewarding about broadcasting, he said, is hearing from listeners and viewers that something the radio/TV stations have done has helped them.

"Nothing is more rewarding than having a listener tell you that something you said or read on the air helped them," he said. "You know that you have been of service, and what higher calling is there than to be of service in your job."

Vail has been a member of NAFB since 1976 and his span of service is vast. He took the reins as national vice president in 1988 and as president in 1989. During his years as a national officer, he was actively involved with the ad hoc group called "Ambassadors." This volunteer group actively marketed the farm broadcast industry to agencies and clients and served as an extension of the association's marketing and promotions efforts. During the 1990s, Vail worked as a consultant/contractor to the association and helped monetize the NAFB News Service. As a member of the NAFB Bylaws Audit Committee in 2007, he helped coordinate the rewrite of the association's bylaws and development of NAFB policies. He served on the NAFB Board of Directors from 1987-1990, and most recently was serving his fourth term as a Management & Sales Council Director on the Board.

In 2008, NAFB honored him with the coveted Dix Harper Meritorious Service Award for his years of service and dedication to the association.

Vail is active in his community as well. He is a member of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Kansas City, Mo., and a 25-year member of the ARAB Shrine, Topeka, Kan.

He and his wife, Lisa, have been married for 26 years, and have two daughters. They reside in Parkville, Mo.

Founded in 1944, the National Association of Farm Broadcasting works to lead, promote and support growth in agricultural and rural lifestyle broadcasting for the benefit of its members, audience and industry.