

October 22, 2007

Service to Society and Environment award Goes to Crop Sciences' Mueller

Dr. J. Paul Mueller, crop science professor in North Carolina State University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, has received the second Joint CNR-CALS Campus-wide Award for Service to Society and the Environment.

The award was presented Oct. 22 after the second annual Borlaug lecture at McKimmon Center on NC State's campus, on behalf of the lecture's co-sponsoring colleges: Agriculture and Life Sciences, and Forestry and Environmental Resources.

Dr. Michelle Schroeder-Moreno, agroecologist and assistant professor in the CALS Crop Science Department, accepted the award on behalf of Mueller, who was attending the internment ceremony of his father, a decorated World War II veteran, in Arlington National Cemetery.

Schroeder-Moreno delivered the following remarks on Mueller's behalf:

"I am sorry that I can't be with you today. This morning I buried my Dad in Arlington National Cemetery. He was a decorated World War II veteran and my inspiration and role model until he left us in his 95th year.

This award means a lot to me. I accept it gratefully and with humility because I know there are many deserving faculty members and that must have made the job of the selection committee very difficult. Nevertheless, I want to make clear that whatever successes or positive impacts that have been associated with my career have not been the result of individual efforts. Rather, they represent the collegial efforts of faculty, staff, students and farmers working together. Thus, for me, the award reflects the success of these collaborative relationships.

This lecture series is important to our colleges and to the University. It represents the kind of intellectual stimulation that feeds creative thought and challenges us to dig deeper into the science that is the source for our technology and the guide for the critical decisions facing our society.

I am sure that Dr. Lovejoy's presentation has provided the stimulus necessary for our faculties to dig a little deeper to find the right questions to ask; questions that could provide answers needed to improve the prospects for nature and for our society.

In closing I want to again express my heartfelt gratitude for this honor and for the many people who have helped me along the way, and especially to my father who has been the guiding light of my life."

Mueller juggles many chores, including interim directorship of the College's International Programs Office and coordinator of CALS' sustainable agriculture programs and its Center for Environmental Farming Systems' farming research unit. He also is involved in international projects in several countries. A member of the graduate teaching faculty, he has been an NC State professor since 1985.

Mueller currently is a co-principal investigator on an interdepartmental project to build a partnership between the College and two Uruguayan agroecological institutions: the Batoví Instituto Orgánico Internacional and Universidad de la Empresa. He and an interdepartmental College team also are currently involved in Vera Cruz, Mexico, developing case study information for a graduate course in sustainable agriculture.

He has collaborated with scientists in New Zealand, where he studied grassland ecology and intensive grazing management and has worked on other collaborative projects in Latin America (Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Cuba, Colombia and Mexico). In 2001 he spent four months with the Land and Water Division of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome.

Mueller also traveled to Africa and Central America and developed three international case studies in sustainable agriculture for use in university courses.

He has been involved with applied grassland farming research with ruminant animals including silvopastoral agroforestry and other agricultural systems that integrate crops and livestock.

With Dr. Mike Linker, Mueller developed an agroecology course that evolved into a crop science minor now led by Schroeder-Moreno. In 2004 he designed and taught a new graduate course, "Topics in Sustainable Agriculture."

Mueller's Cooperative Extension work includes training, technology transfer and educational programs designed for county agents, farmers and agribusiness personnel striving to improve pasture and grassland management. His current research emphasis focuses on cropping systems that integrate grazing ruminants and potential forage/browse systems for meat goats.

An associate professor of crop science from 1980 to 1985 and assistant professor from 1975 to 1980, Mueller holds a 1975 doctorate in grassland agronomy from The Pennsylvania State University, and a 1968 master's degree in agronomy and a 1966 Bachelor of Science degree in agricultural science from the University of Delaware.

Web sites with information on Mueller and projects in which he is involved are here:

http://www.cropsci.ncsu.edu/personnel/mueller_paul/Default.asp?fmtinfo=1,450,150

<http://www.cefs.ncsu.edu/Uruguaydescription.htm>