

## **NAAIC 2004 Awards Committee**

JoAnn F. S. Lamb, Chair

Committee members in 2004 were John Caddel, Oklahoma State University; Bill Knipe, Forage Genetics International; Real Michaud, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada; Mike Peterson, W-L Research Inc.; Craig Sheaffer, University of Minnesota, and JoAnn Lamb, USDA-ARS (Chairperson).

The committee solicited nominations from the North American Alfalfa Improvement Conference membership for both the Honorary Membership and the Richard R. Hill, Jr. Achievement Awards. We received two nominations for Honorary Membership and one for the Hill Award.

### **2004 NAAIC Honorary Membership Award**

The “Honorary Membership Award” is awarded to recipients at each biennial meeting for “outstanding contributions to alfalfa improvement and/or utilization”. This award recognizes alfalfa specialists, who are active or retired, and who have made significant contributions during their careers to the improvement and use of alfalfa.

William “Bill” P. Ford

Bill Ford had a significant impact on the production and utilization of alfalfa during his 35-year career. Bill was a county and area agronomist for the Washington State University (WSU) Cooperative Extension Service. Throughout his career, he promoted both the alfalfa hay and alfalfa seed industries, among his other diverse duties which included cereal crops, field corn, dry beans, peas, asparagus, pesticide education and 4-H and adult horse projects. Bill was the author or co-author of 104 publications, including 12 international bulletins. He was active in nine professional associations, and in 1990, he was on the host organizing committee for the NAAIC meetings in Pasco, WA. In the last half of his career, Bill participated in eight educational missions in Africa, the Middle East, Korea, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand, and the promotion of hay exports to the Pacific Rim. Currently Bill is semi-retired and he is consulting internationally.

Warren C. Thompson

Warren Thompson, known around the world as “Mr. Alfalfa”, is an enthusiastic, effective, and efficient alfalfa educator and promoter. From his earlier years as a County Agent in Western Kentucky to the modern day national promotion of grazing tolerant and wheel traffic tolerant varieties with ABI Alfalfa, Warren’s passion for alfalfa has been unmatched. He has been a mentor for many of the alfalfa extension leaders in the United States. Warren has conducted thousands of alfalfa demonstrations and applied research trials over his sixty-two year professional association with alfalfa. He has spoken about alfalfa at more fields days, county, state, national, and international meetings than anyone. Warren’s contributions to alfalfa in Kentucky were recognized in 2000 by the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council when they initiated an award in his honor which is presented annually as the Warren C. Thompson Alfalfa Industry Award. His sixty-two years of “tried and true” experiences with alfalfa, and his track record will probably never be matched again in our lifetime. He has truly earned the title MR. ALFALFA.

## 2004 NAAIC Richard R. Hill, Jr. Achievement Award

The Richard R. Hill, Jr. Achievement Award was created as a tribute to Dr. Hill, who died in the spring of 1990. Dr. Hill was a prominent researcher in genetics and plant breeding, but his interest in alfalfa was broad and extended into many areas of alfalfa production. This award was created to recognize a worthy contributor for some recent, specific, and outstanding achievement in any area of alfalfa science or production.

Dan Undersander

Dr. Dan Undersander is the Forage Specialist at the University of Wisconsin and has been a leader in education on alfalfa culture and use. He is a co-founder and present coordinator of the National Alfalfa Intensive Training Seminar along with many other state and national educational programs. He has provided leadership in state and national alfalfa variety testing, grazing trials, Roundup-Ready trials, wheel traffic tests and demonstrations. He was the leader in developing several important publications including the “Alfalfa Management Guide”, the nationally used publication that provides practical advise on the culture and use of alfalfa. Dr. Undersander, in collaboration with animal scientists, conceived and developed Relative Feed Quality (RFQ) as a means of more efficiently and effectively measuring alfalfa quality. Developing the concept, mathematical formulas, chemistry to support and feeding trials to document the advantage of RFQ over Relative Feed Value (RFV) has been an important contribution to our understanding and application of alfalfa quality.



Warren Thompson and Dan Undersander

## Past NAAIC Awardees Present at the 2004 Conference



Back Row: Jim Moutray (Honorary, 2002), Dan Undersander (Hill Award, 2004), Mark McCaslin (Hill Award, 1998), Warren Thompson (Honorary, 2004). Front Row: Garry Lacefield (Honorary, 2002), John Baylor (Honorary, 1992), Ken Leath (Honorary, 1994), Joe Bouton (Hill Award, 1994).

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