

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.

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