

updates

MSU Researcher Honored for Weed Science Research

A Mississippi State University weed scientist was named Fellow of the Weed Science Society of America (WSSA), one of the highest distinctions a member of the Kansas-based organization can achieve.

David Shaw, MAFES weed scientist, received the honor during the society's recent annual awards program in Reno, Nev. He was cited for his research accomplishments in the areas of remote sensing applications in agriculture, weed control and weed management, as well as his leadership in the field of weed science.

WSSA was founded in 1956 and has 2,500 members located around the country. The professional organization promotes the development of weed science and technology and provides support for weed science research, education, extension and regulatory efforts.

"To be inducted as a Fellow into your professional society is an honor and indicates that your peers respect and

acknowledge your superior contribution to your field," said Frank Matta, MSU's interim head of plant and soil sciences. "Dr. David Shaw has made significant contributions to weed science research and to the Weed Science Society of America. It is fitting that he is recognized for his outstanding accomplishments."

Shaw, a Mississippi native who grew up in Oklahoma, received his bachelor's degree from Cameron University and his master's degree and doctorate from Oklahoma State University.

He joined the MSU faculty in 1985 and has served as director of the Remote Sensing Technologies Center since its creation on the MSU campus in 1999. Shaw is a William L. Giles Distinguished Professor.



David Shaw

Got Questions about American Poultry History? See MSU Prof

By Sammy McDavid, University Relations

A Mississippi State poultry scientist is the new president of the American Poultry Historical Society.

Yvonne Vizzier Thaxton, a professor in the university's poultry science department, is leading a national organization of nearly 300 members.

An independent body founded in 1952, APHS works to collect and preserve industry records, photographs, materials and objects for archiving at the National

Agricultural Library near Washington, D.C. It also selects individuals for the National Poultry Hall of Fame.

Thaxton is a former Huntsville, Ala., resident who holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Mississippi University for Women and a doctorate from Auburn University. She joined the MSU faculty in 1999 after three decades in the poultry industry.

While the United States is the world's largest producer and exporter of poultry meat, Thaxton said chickens are not native to this country. "They first appeared in early America as 'left over' provisions on ships from Europe," she added.

Thaxton said the U.S. industry came into being during the mid-20th century with the selling of birds that had passed their peak in egg production. "It was after World War II that the shift took place from backyard egg production to today's sophisticated operations," she explained. "The modern poultry industry uses birds that were developed by selective breeding to produce either meat or eggs for market."

She said federal statistics show nearly 35 billion pounds of broiler meat were produced last year, of which turkey meat made up more than 610 million pounds. In addition, about 70 billion eggs rolled out for worldwide sale.



Yvonne Vizzier Thaxton



Linda Brenzenle

MAFES Director Vance Watson, left, receives the Southern Regional Informational Exchange Group's outstanding service award from Clarence Watson, MAFES associate director. Vance Watson was recognized for his service in crop variety testing.

MAFES Names New Associate Director

Clarence E. Watson, Jr., former interim head of the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences at Mississippi State University, has been named associate director of the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station effective Feb. 19.

As associate director, Watson will be responsible for planning and managing the Experiment Station's research efforts. He joins Marty Fuller, MAFES associate director for external affairs, and Vance Watson, MAFES director, in leading the research organization.

"Dr. Clarence Watson brings a unique mix of training and experience to this position," said Vance Watson, who is also interim MSU vice president for agriculture, forestry and veterinary medicine. "I'm confident that he will provide excellent leadership as part of the MAFES management team."

MAFES was established through provisions in the Hatch Act of 1887, which provided federal funds for research and experiment stations at land-grant universities, and subsequent state legislation enacted in 1888. The Experiment Station serves Mississippi through research programs in agriculture, forestry and related sciences.

Clarence Watson will provide oversight to MAFES grants and contracts, research enhancement and federal data reporting and analysis. In addition, he will serve as a mentor to new MAFES faculty.

Watson holds bachelor's and master's degrees in agronomy from New Mexico State University. He earned his doctorate in crop science from Oregon State University.

Watson joined the MSU faculty in 1976. He has conducted research to improve forage, row and food crops. His work has led to more than 200 publications, including four book chapters.

Since 1992, Watson has served as head of the MAFES Experimental Statistics Unit. He has also served as an administrative adviser to the MSU Extension Service Priority Program Group for corn, soybean, horticulture and the green industry. In addition to his service at MSU, Watson has served as a consultant to the Midamerica International Agriculture Consortium, an organization that supports the development of agriculture and natural resources programs in Mexico and Kenya.



Clarence E. Watson

Pounders is New Research Horticulturist

Cecil Pounders is a new research horticulturist at the Coastal Research and Extension Center. He is conducting research to develop new cultivars of plants for the ornamental and green industries.



Cecil Pounders

Pounders comes to MAFES following 14 years as manager of a private nursery. During this time, Pounders also served as a research consultant to Alabama A&M University's horticulture program and collaborated with Flowerwood Nursery to develop new clones of perennial and woody ornamentals with increased market potential and value.

Pounders has a bachelor's degree in ornamental horticulture from Auburn University, a master's degree in horticulture from the University of Minnesota and a doctoral degree in plant science from Alabama A&M University.

Matta Named Interim Plant and Soil Sciences Head

Frank Matta has been named interim head of the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences at Mississippi State. His appointment was announced Feb. 19.

Matta, a research horticulturist and 17-year MSU faculty member, succeeds Clarence E. Watson, Jr., who was named associate director for the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Experiment Station. Matta will serve in this role until a permanent head has been appointed.

"Dr. Matta has long service and experience with the plant and soil sciences department," said Vance Watson, interim vice president for agriculture, forestry and veterinary medicine. "I'm confident that he'll provide excellent leadership with his understanding of the department's goals and mission."

Matta earned his bachelor's degree in biology and master's degree in horticulture from New Mexico State University. He holds a doctorate in horticulture from Texas A&M University.

Matta began his career at MSU in 1986. He has conducted research on peaches, pecans and small fruits, and he is responsible for statewide fruit research at three Experiment Station locations.

Before coming to MSU, Matta served as resident director of the Agricultural Science Center at New Mexico State University Agricultural Experiment Station.



Frank Matta