

MAFES personnel receive research awards



Evan Nebeker

By Bob Ratliff

Four MAFES employees are recipients of annual research awards presented by the MSU Office of the Vice President for Research.

MAFES forest entomologist T. Evan Nebeker is the 2003 Ralph E. Powe Research Excellence Award winner. His research areas include cottonwood leaf beetle prediction and monitoring, cottonwood leaf beetle remote sensing, and insect/plant interactions, among others.

Nebeker joined the MAFES staff in 1983. He earned a bachelor's in zoology-botany at Utah State College, a master's in entomology-forestry at Utah State University and a doctorate in entomology-ecology at Oregon State University.

The Ralph E. Powe Research Excellence Award honors the man who served as MSU's vice president for research from 1986 until his death in 1996. The award is reserved for outstanding, nationally recognized and competitive researchers.

Agricultural economist Keith H. Coble is the 2003 faculty research award winner for MAFES and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. His work includes a recent investigation of the fundamentals of risk management decision making, rainfall insurance and the implications of farm policy

changes on risk management. He currently codirects the \$3.6 million National Aquaculture Risk Management Feasibility Project.

Coble earned his bachelor's and master's in agricultural education at the University of Missouri. His doctorate is in agricultural economics from Texas A&M University.

Juliet D. Tang is the recipient of the 2003 Research Associate Award for MAFES and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. She works in the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology. Her duties include DNA fingerprinting to follow local population dynamics of hybrid-imported fire ants in recently logged areas.

Tang earned her bachelor's and master's in zoology and entomology, respectively, at the University of Massachusetts.

Sandra Woolfolk is the 2003 Graduate Student Research Award winner for MAFES and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. She is a graduate research assistant in the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology, conducting research on microorganisms associated with green lacewing, an important predator of insect pests in crops.

Woolfolk earned a bachelor's in agriculture at Gadjah Mada University in Indonesia and a master of entomology degree at North Carolina State University. She will receive a master's of science in entomology from MSU this summer.

International aquaculture society recognizes MSU professor



Lou D'Abramo

By Bob Ratliff

A MAFES aquaculturist has received the highest honor bestowed by the World Aquaculture Society (WAS), the largest professional aquaculture society in the world.

Louis R. D'Abramo recently was honored by the international non-profit organization headquartered in Baton Rouge, La. He was presented the Exemplary Service Award, one of only eight that have been awarded by WAS since its 1970 founding.

The society, which has more than 4,000 members in 94 countries, presented D'Abramo a three-ounce solid gold medalion honoring his outstanding research and service contributions to the development of aquaculture throughout the world.

A faculty member whose specialty is crustacean and fish aquaculture and ecology, D'Abramo also is a scientist in the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Experiment Station at MSU.

D'Abramo focuses primarily on the development of efficient and environmentally friendly management strategies for alternative species, including freshwater prawns, crayfish and hybrid striped bass. Several dietary regimens for shellfish and finfish that lower feed costs are among the outcomes of his work.

D'Abramo also has conducted breakthrough research in the use of formulated feeds to substitute for high-cost, labor-intensive live feeds in the culture of larval fish and shrimp. His work in this area is regarded by peers as a significant step in efforts to overcome a major limitation to the growth of a global aquaculture industry.

A much-in-demand speaker on sustainable aquaculture and feeding practices, D'Abramo is a John Grisham Master Teacher and a former two-term vice chair of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate. He holds bachelor's and master's degree from Assumption College in Worcester, Mass., and a doctorate from Yale University.



Fred Faulk

Robert Rogers

Cattlemen's Association honors MAFES animal scientist

By Bob Ratliff

Research resulting in positive changes in the meat industry has earned Robert W. Rogers a place in the Mississippi Cattlemen's Hall of Fame. The MAFES animal scientist was recently inducted as the 48th member of the hall of fame, established in 1981 to honor individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the cattle industry.

"This honor recognizes Dr. Rogers' lifetime of service," said Sammy Blossom, executive vice president of the Mississippi Cattlemen's Association. "What he has done extends beyond Mississippi and has had a positive impact on the meat industry at the national level."

During his almost 40-year tenure at Mississippi State, Rogers has been at the forefront of research that has greatly expanded the quality and variety of meat products available at the supermarket and food service outlets, including:

- Development of the technology for the first fat-free hot dogs, bologna and similar products.
- Pioneering work with sound waves to destroy bacteria on meat surfaces.
- The initial work on the technology for deli loaves and similar restructured and cured meat items.
- The first publication on a sensory scale for meat tenderness that is now the recommended standard throughout the world.

- A solution to the problem of a "warmed over" flavor in many precooked meat items.

Rogers noted that he has adapted his research to consumer-driven changes in the meat industry.

"Since the 1960s, the focus of the research effort has changed from primarily carcass evaluation to production of more value-added items, such as the new fat-free products," he said.

Rogers, a Kentucky native, holds a bachelor's in animal husbandry and a master's and a doctorate in meat science, all from the University of Kentucky. He also has been honored with the title of Diplomat of the American College of Animal Food Science and has served as the organization's president.

Founded in 1946, the Mississippi Cattlemen's Association represents more than 3,400 members statewide.



Mississippi Cattlemen's Association Executive Vice President Sammy Blossom, left, and President Larry Jefcoat congratulate Dr. Rogers on his induction into the association's Hall of Fame.