

Food scientist leads international professional group



MAFES food scientist Douglas L. Marshall is the new chair of the Institute of Food Technologists' food microbiology division. He is responsible for developing programs that reflect the organization's interests and goals and articulating policies to national and international audiences.

With a worldwide membership of 28,000, IFT is the largest organization for professionals working in food science, food technology and related professions in industry, academia and government. The more than 1,400 members in its food microbiology division are focused on areas in which bacteria, fungi, viruses, protozoa and parasites play a role.

At Mississippi State, Marshall has concentrated his research in the areas of marine and aquaculture seafood. He has been working to develop methods for rapidly detecting food-borne pathogens in muscle foods.

Marshall has served on the executive board of the Journal of Food Protection for four consecutive years and is a contributing editor of the journal Food Microbiology. During his career, he has provided more than 170 contributions to scientific research literature.

He also has been a frequent consultant to such national agencies as the National Institutes of Health, U.S. departments of Agriculture and Commerce, National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization, and the World Health Organization, among others. Additionally, he serves as a food safety consultant to private industry.

While at MSU, Marshall has been honored with the 2002 Ralph E. Powe Research Excellence Award and 1999 MAFES/Mississippi Chemical Corp. Award of Excellence for Outstanding Work. He also has been recognized with the 2002 International Association for Food Protection Educator Award.

Reddy receives "Outstanding Scientist" award



The Association of Agricultural Scientists of Indian Origin has presented its 2004 Outstanding Scientist Award to MAFES plant physiologist Raja Reddy.

Reddy joined the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences in 1988. He currently is conducting basic research using naturally lit, controlled-environment plant growth

chambers to understand the interactions between plants and their environments, as well as how plants acquire resources and use those resources for growth in natural environments.

Reddy's research accomplishments include development of a new model for predicting the effects of PIX, a plant-growth regulator widely used in cotton production.

He also received the Southern Branch of the American Society of Agronomy's Career Award in Research at the professional organization's 2004 annual meeting.

Luthe serves on USDA panel



MAFES biochemist Dawn Luthe served on the 2004 Plants and Environmental Adaptation Panel of USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, Competitive Programs.

During a 3-day session in Washington, D.C., each panelist evaluated research proposals and

helped identify the most meritorious proposals in the area of plants and environmental adaptation for funding. Each panelist provided in-depth written evaluations on about 14 proposals and participated in the discussion on those and other proposals.

"The service of Dr. Luthe was extremely valuable in upholding the highest standards of scientific excellence required for a competitive peer review," said Brad Fenwick, chief science advisor for Competitive Programs.

MAFES administrator named ASA Fellow



MAFES Associate Director Clarence Watson has been named a Fellow of the American Society of Agronomy.

ASA Fellows are selected based on outstanding contributions in an agronomic area of specialization, whether in research, teaching, extension, service, or administration in either the public, commercial, or private sector.

Watson earned a bachelor's degree in agronomy from New Mexico State, a master's working on alfalfa breeding, also at New Mexico State, and a doctorate in crop science with

emphasis on forage grass breeding from Oregon State University.

He joined the faculty of Mississippi State in 1976 as an assistant professor of agronomy. Watson served as head of the Experimental Statistics Unit and as interim head of the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences before being named associate director of MAFES in 2002.

Watson's professional accomplishments include development and release of 'Marshall' and 'Jackson' ryegrass, assistance with the development of the COTMAP system for mapping and analyzing end-of-season fruiting patterns on the cotton plant, and release of more than 300 sorghum and millet germplasm lines for the humid tropics.

MSU-sponsored workshop features greenhouse mechanization

More than 30,000 individuals in the nursery industry attended the Aug. 11-13 Southern Nursery Association annual conference in Atlanta. Activities at the conference included a daylong greenhouse mechanization workshop sponsored by Mississippi State University and funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.

The workshop speakers included experts in various aspects of greenhouse mechanization and nursery operators who are using mechanization to help with labor-intensive jobs to increase safety, productivity and employee morale.

The nursery industry can learn from the auto industry, said Gene Giacomelli, director of the Controlled Environment Agriculture Center at the University of Arizona in Tucson. Examples he cited include creating hand tools for specific jobs

and using mechanization to bring products to where jobs are performed.

"There's no one answer to 'what is mechanization in greenhouses.' It depends on what you grow and other factors," he said. "You have to analyze your process. Mechanization may not mean less work, but it should be smarter work and improve productivity and crop quality."

Other workshop speakers included K.C. Ting, chair of the Department of Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering at Ohio State University; John Bartok, Jr., a consultant on greenhouse and nursery system design; Robert Grove, with Hines Nurseries in Texas; Neil Devaney, with Jaderloon Greenhouses; and Chris Rowe, with equipment supplier Bouldin and Lawson.

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Sharon Lankford-Rice, center, and Paulette Norvel-Lewis with the U.S. Department of Labor were among those attending the MAFES Greenhouse Mechanization Workshop at the 2004 Southern Nursery Association Conference. They also visited the Mississippi Nursery and Landscape Association exhibit with MAFES Associate Director Clarence Watson, left.

Bob Rantliff