

updates

Luthe Earns Outstanding MAFES Worker Award

By Ned Browning

The Outstanding MAFES Worker for 2001, Dawn Luthe, professor of biochemistry and microbiology, was recognized at the MAFES/Extension annual conference on Nov. 16.

One nominator cited Luthe's "ability to see the 'big picture' while pursuing a more immediate goal — successfully bridging the gap between basic science and field application."

Vance Watson, MAFES director, said, "Dr. Luthe's educating the public about bioscience developments, which often are misunderstood by consumers, is a fitting commitment to be recognized by the Mississippi Chemical Corporation award."

Luthe was a leader in efforts to establish the Life Sciences and Biotechnology Institute at Mississippi State University.

Several nominators lauded her ability to gain widespread consensus from disparate groups as part of the Hearin Biotechnology Steering Committee and Implementation Team. This first university-wide effort included and built on MSU's strengths in engineering, biological sciences, chemistry, education, business and veterinary medicine.

Luthe's 22-year MAFES career has centered on understanding how plants respond to stresses. Highlighted among her scientific pursuits are investigations into corn insect and aflatoxin resistance, heat tolerance in creeping bentgrass and flowering genes in flowering cottonwood.

She is the author of 26 refereed journal articles and four book chapters. She has also given numerous presentations to scientific groups. Her recent paper in the journal *Plant Cell* resulted in several invitations for international speaking engagements.

As party to a patent for a DNA molecule to provide insect resistance in maize, Luthe is bringing scientific and financial benefit to Mississippi State.

Professionally, she has served on the American Society of Plant Biologists' Public Affairs Committee and several USDA and National Science Foundation peer-review panels. She is a 1998 graduate of the National Experiment Station Committee on Policy Leadership Development program.

Luthe has been honored with the MSU Gamma Sigma Delta Research Award and the National Association of Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture Outstanding Teaching Award at the university.



Interim MSU President J. Charles Lee, right, congratulates MAFES biochemist Dawn Luthe on receiving Mississippi Chemical Corporation's Year 2001 Outstanding MAFES Worker Award.



MAFES Director Vance Watson, right, recognizes the year 2001 MAFES award winners, left to right: Outstanding Scientific Publication — Peter Ryan, MAFES animal scientist; Publication with Most Relevance and Potential Impact to Mississippi Agriculture — Darren Hudson, MAFES agricultural economist; Grantsmanship Award — Keith Coble, MAFES agricultural economist; and Special Service Award — David Laughlin, MAFES agricultural economist.

Watson Named Interim Vice President, Dean

By Tom Knecht

Vance H. Watson, director of the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station, has been named interim vice president of the Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine (DAFVM) and interim dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs) at Mississippi State University. He assumed his duties Jan. 1.

Watson will carry out responsibilities of the vice president and dean during the period that J. Charles Lee, former DAFVM vice president and CALs dean, serves as the university's interim president. In addition, Watson will continue his current responsibilities as MAFES director, with full authority for decision making, resource allocation and general management of the unit.

In making the appointment, Lee said, "Dr. Watson has a broad understanding of the issues and opportunities facing the division, the state and federal legislative processes, and the role of the division in serving the needs of our state. I am confident that he can provide the leadership needed during this interim period."

Watson, a Missouri native, has spent his entire career serving the people of Mississippi. He graduated from Southeast Missouri State University in 1964 with a degree in general agriculture and earned a master of science degree in agronomy at the University of Missouri in 1966. He completed a doctorate in agronomy with a minor in botany at MSU in 1969.

Starting his career as assistant agronomist with MAFES in 1966, Watson was appointed assistant professor of agronomy in 1969. He advanced to the rank of professor of agronomy and was appointed agronomist in 1977. He was chosen to serve as assistant to the MAFES director in 1982 with responsibility for coordination of forage programs.

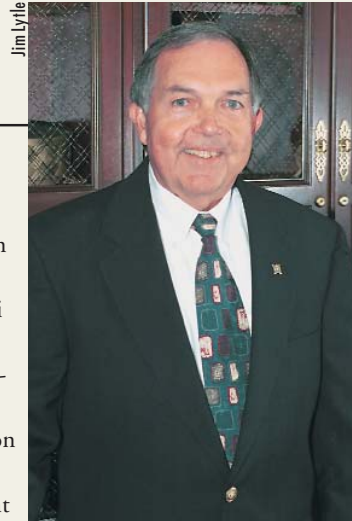
In 1987 he assumed additional duties as head of the MAFES auxiliary units responsible for foundation seed stocks and variety evaluations. In 1990 he was appointed head of the MAFES main station, and in 1992 he became head of MAFES research support units. In 1995 he was appointed MAFES assistant director for research support and since 1996 has served as MAFES director.

Watson is the author of more than 300 publications, including six textbook chapters. He has traveled in more than 50 countries on a variety of agricultural missions. Leadership positions in addition to his university appointments include five years as executive vice president of the Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies, an international organization for genetic standards and certification of 3,500 varieties of crops produced in nine countries.

He was a member of the official United States delegation for setting world policy on seed certification. He served as team leader for review of Peace Corps agricultural programs in Thailand for the U.S. State Department.

Watson's honors include selection as a Fellow of the American Society of Agronomy and the Crop Science Society of America. He has received the First Mississippi Corporation Award for outstanding MAFES worker and the MSU Alumni Award for excellence in research. He has been named professor of the year by two different student organizations and has received numerous other awards and honors.

Watson will serve as interim vice president and interim dean until a permanent replacement for former MSU President Malcolm Portera has been appointed.



Vance H. Watson

updates

Beaulieu Honored by Rural Sociological Society

By Allison Matthews, SRDC

The Rural Sociological Society honored Lionel J. “Bo” Beaulieu with its 2001 Excellence in Extension and Public Service Award on Aug. 16 in Albuquerque, N.M., at the society’s 2001 annual meeting.

Since 1997, Beaulieu has been director of the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) at Mississippi State University, where he is also a professor of rural sociology. He was cited for his work in focusing land-grant university research, education, and extension activities to benefit communities and families in the South. He has spearheaded e-commerce, entrepreneurial development and business retention; secured external funding for programs to empower rural citizens in the Delta; and built partnerships that

leverage the land-grant system’s contributions through regional development strategies across the country.

Beaulieu has made SRDC an important resource for historically black colleges. He launched the Community Development Institute, Southern Rural Health Institute, the Millennium Series of applied research reports on emerging issues in the South and competitive grants programs to link research to rural development needs.

SRDC is jointly administered by MAFES and the MSU Extension Service.



Lionel J. Beaulieu

Poultry Scientist Earns Professional Distinction

A Mississippi State University poultry scientist was recognized for his research accomplishments by the Poultry Science Association (PSA).

Michael Kidd, MAFES poultry scientist, was presented with the 2001 Hyline International Research Award at the society’s 90th annual meeting in Indianapolis, Ind.

PSA is a professional organization with 3,500 members composed of poultry scientists, educators, extension specialists, administrators and producers. Founded in 1908

and based in Soboy, Ill., PSA promotes the poultry industry through support of research and education programs in the field of poultry science. Each year, the society honors “a young scientist who has made an outstanding research contribution in any discipline within poultry science.”



Michael Kidd

“That Dr. Kidd has won this prestigious, international award speaks well of his ability as a scientist and to the quality of his research program,” said Wallace Morgan, MSU’s poultry science department head. “His research to date has greatly expanded our understanding of poultry nutritional requirements and is applicable to other species, including humans.”

Kidd joined the MSU faculty in 2000, following five years as a nutritional researcher for Nutri-Quest, a manufacturer of poultry diet supplements. He holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of Arkansas and a doctoral degree from North Carolina State University.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb. 21, 2002

Central Miss. R&E Center Advisory Meeting, Raymond

Feb. 28, 2002

North Miss. R&E Center Advisory Meeting, Verona

April 9-11, 2002

School Days on the Farm, Miss. Horse Park, Agricenter and Fairgrounds, Starkville

April 30, 2002

Miss. Biomass Conference MSU (proposed)

May 23, 2002

Dairy Field Day, location to be announced

Sept. 28, 2002

North Miss. Garden Expo, North Miss. R&E Center, Verona

Oct. 18-19, 2002

Fall Flower & Garden Festival, Truck Crops Branch, Crystal Springs

Thaxton Named New Executive Editor of Poultry Magazine

By Bill McDowell, Marketing & Technology Group

Yvonne Vizzier Thaxton, MAFES poultry scientist and a 30-year veteran of the poultry processing industry, was named executive editor of *Poultry* magazine in August 2001.

In this role, Thaxton will advise on editorial content and direction, review contributed articles, write expert commentaries and represent the magazine at industry events.

Prior to joining the faculty at Mississippi State in 1999, Thaxton's career included a 23-year tenure at Marshall Durbin Companies, where she oversaw operations and regulatory affairs as vice president of science & quality assurance. Her expertise and training as a microbiologist led to three presidential appointments to the USDA Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection during the 1980s.

During her career, Dr. Thaxton has held leadership roles in several industry groups, including the National Chicken Council, U.S. Poultry Association, Poultry Science Association and Southern Poultry Science Association.

Thaxton was chosen for the editor's position, in part, based on "her blend of hands-on industry experience and scientific research."

Poultry magazine is published on a bimonthly basis by Marketing & Technology Group, an integrated media company serving multiple channels of the meat and poultry processing industries. The company also owns the magazines *Meat Marketing & Technology* and *CarneTec* (serving the Latin American meat processors).



**Yvonne
Vizzier Thaxton**

Dairy Scientist Nationally Recognized

By Linda Breazeale

John W. Fuquay, professor emeritus of dairy sciences at Mississippi State University, recently received recognition for his work from the American Dairy Science Association (ADSA).

Fuquay was named a 2001 Fellow by the ADSA at their national meeting in July in Indianapolis. The award honors members who have provided distinguished service to the dairy industry for more than 20 years and is one of the highest distinctions an ADSA member can achieve.

Fuquay has contributed to the dairy science profession for more than 35 years. He has worked significantly with the *Journal of Dairy Science* and is currently the editor-in-chief of the journal. His physiology of reproduction class was extremely popular among undergraduate students. He wrote *Applied Animal Reproduction* in cooperation with Joe Bearden in 1980. Now in its fifth edition, this text has been widely adopted for undergraduate instruction in the United States and has been translated into Spanish.

Fuquay influenced the reproductive performance of dairy cows through his heat stress research and estrus synchronization programs. He also determined the importance of nighttime cooling for maintaining milk production in heat-stressed cows.

Fuquay currently serves as editor for the dairy production volumes of a major four-volume reference work, *Encyclopedia of Dairy Sciences*, to be published in 2002. The target audiences will be researchers, educators, students, agricultural advisors and government policy groups throughout the world.

Fuquay received his bachelor's and master's of science degrees from North Carolina State University and his doctorate from Pennsylvania State University. He came to MSU in 1969 and retired in 1999.



John W. Fuquay



Experiment Station

Mississippi Agricultural and
Forestry Experiment Station

Box 9625

Mississippi State, MS 39762-9625

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Jim Lytle