

# AWARDS

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of the ASSBT

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### SAVITSKY MEMORIAL AWARD

The Savitsky Memorial Award is among the most prestigious awards in the sugar industry. It memorializes the contributions of Viacheslav and Helen Savitsky for their discovery and development of the monogerm gene in sugarbeets. This discovery has provided for the near-elimination of hand-labor for thinning sugarbeets throughout most if not all sugarbeet growing countries. There are no specific criteria for this award and it is given at the discretion of the ASSBT Board of Directors to individuals who have had a significant impact on the national and international beet sugar community. The recipient of the Savitsky Award can be from any nation and does not have to be a member of the ASSBT. Nominations are submitted by members of the ASSBT to the Savitsky Award Committee. After review by the committee, the nomination is submitted to the ASSBT Board of Directors where it requires unanimous approval by the Board. The Savitsky Award is not necessarily awarded at each biennial meeting.



**Alvin W. Erichsen**

Dr. Alvin W. Erichsen graduated from South Dakota State University, in Brookings, with a Bachelor of Science and later returned to the same institution to earn a Doctorate Degree. In 1962 and 1963, he was a Research Associate at the University of Illinois, specializing in genetic and cytogenetic studies in sorghum and soybeans.

Dr. Erichsen began his career in the sugar industry as a Plant Breeder with the Great Western Sugar Company's agricultural research center in Longmont, Colorado. During this period, he assisted in varietal sugar beet seed improvement through plant breeding at the center.

In 1975, Dr. Erichsen joined Holly Hybrids as a Planter Breeder at the company's agricultural research facility in Tracy, California. His chief responsibility was to develop sugar beet seed varieties compatible with the varied growing conditions in California. He was later responsible for developing hybrids for all sugar beet growing regions of the United States. Varieties like MonoHyD2 and HH37 were two notable contributions among many varieties he worked on. In 1984, he was named Director of Beet Seed Research and Development and was

relocated to Holly Hybrids in Sheridan, Wyoming, where he worked until his retirement in January 1993.

These achievements are all significant, but for Dr. Erichsen's most noteworthy contribution to our industry, it is appropriate to note comments from a few of the nomination letters he received for this award:

*"Surely, the most important achievement of Dr. Erichsen, that had a significant impact world-wide, is the discovery of the gene that confers resistance to Rhizomania, known everywhere as the "Holly" gene. Because of its outstanding characteristics, the Holly gene became by far, the major source of Rhizomania resistance for virtually all commercial varieties around the world, keeping the sugar industry alive in many areas otherwise doomed by the disease."*

And,

*"It is the discovery of the Holly gene for resistance to Rhizomania though, that may have had the greatest immediate and lasting impact and will always be connected with his name. The resistance from this gene essentially saved much of the U.S. and world sugar beet industry. In terms of use, the Holly gene has probably been the most widely deployed single gene in sugar beet since the monogerm gene discovered by the Savitsky's."*



**Robert T. Lewellen**

Dr. Robert T. Lewellen graduated from Oregon State University, in 1962, with a major in farm crops. He earned a Doctorate Degree from Montana State University, in 1966, specializing in genetics with an emphasis on plant breeding and plant pathology.

Dr. Lewellen began his professional career with a brief posting at Montana State University as an Assistant Agronomist. From there, he moved to Salinas, California where he began a long term association with the sugar beet industry as a Research Geneticist with the USDA. His entire career, from 1966 to 2008, was spent at this location with the USDA.

Many researchers are recognized for specific accomplishments in their careers and, while this scientist had many significant individual accomplishments, he is likely more recognized for the sheer volume of contributions he has made to the sugar beet industry.

Dr. Lewellen has 118 publications and over 120 presentations at

scientific meetings, research conferences and production meetings. He has officially released over 240 breeding, germplasm and parental lines and commercial hybrids of sugar beet. He has recognized critical problems that affect sugar beet production and has made major modifications in existing theory and methodology to obtain new knowledge, selection and evaluation techniques and breeding materials. Most seed company programs now emulate his ideas and methods.

Dr. Lewellen is visited frequently by domestic and foreign breeders. He maintains the most extensive working collection of primary and secondary Beta germplasm in the Western Hemisphere and is highly respected at all levels of the sugar beet industry. He is recognized nationally and internationally as an authority on sugar beet improvement and genetics and for the development of germplasm and breeding methods.

### **HONORARY MEMBERSHIP**

The ASSBT awards Honorary Membership to individuals who have rendered outstanding service to the beet sugar industry or have by virtue of scientific accomplishment acquired the admiration and respect of the Society.

This year the Society awarded three Honorary Memberships:

#### **E. JOE DAHMER**

Dr. Dahmer has served as President of Betaseed, Inc. for the past 19 years. Through his leadership, Betaseed has grown to become a major supplier of sugarbeet seeds to North American sugarbeet growers. Dr. Dahmer has continuously encouraged research and development, and helped the sugarbeet seed industry to realize strong gains in tolerances to sugarbeet diseases such as Aphanomyces, Fusarium, Rhizomania, Root aphid and Cyst nematode. He strongly promoted research and registration of seed applied pesticides such as TACHIGAREN® for early season Aphanomyces, and both GAUCHO® and now PONCHO-BETA® for insect control.

Dr. Dahmer was a major leader during the development and market introduction of ROUNDUP READY® sugarbeets. Joe worked with industry groups, the Beet Sugar Development Foundation, the

American Sugarbeet Growers Association and government scientists to facilitate deregulation and promote acceptance of the ROUNDUP READY® trait. He worked tirelessly to minimize concerns with sugar processors. To demonstrate the value of ROUNDUP READY® sugarbeets, he promoted large-scale demonstration plots of ROUNDUP READY® sugarbeets.

Dr. Dahmer has been a member of the Beet Sugar Development Foundation for 19 years, and currently serves on its Board of Directors.

### **ROBERT L. HETZLER**

Mr. Hetzler is a graduate of the University of Michigan Law School and was Corporate Attorney for Monitor Sugar Company while he was an officer and equity owner in the law firm of Smith & Brooker, P.C. in Bay City, Michigan.

Mr. Hetzler was appointed President and Chief Executive Officer of Monitor Sugar Company in 1984 and he held that position until he retired in October of 2004. During his tenure as President and CEO of Monitor Sugar Company, he was a Trustee and Vice-President of the U.S. Beet Sugar Association; a Director and Chairman of The Sugar Association and a Director of the Michigan Food Processors Association. Mr. Hetzler was a member of the American Society of Sugar Beet Technologist and Past President of this Society.

Mr. Hetzler was very involved in the Civic Arena where he lived in Bay City. He was active in the local United Way Chapter and served as its' General Campaign Chairman. He sat on numerous boards and served as an outside Director to various bank boards. Mr. Hetzler served on the Michigan International Trade Authority for the State of Michigan as an appointee by the Governor of Michigan.

In 1993, he received the Michigan Manufacturer of the Year Award presented by the Michigan Manufacturers Association and the Impression Five Science Museum in East Lansing, Michigan. He has also been inducted into the Bay Area Chamber of Commerce Business Hall of Fame.

Education has been – and always will be his favored area for corporate support. He always felt that educating future employees was critical to the success of any company and he used the American Society of Sugar Beet Technologists as one of his key associations to future the knowledge of industry personnel.

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**JOHN A RICHMOND**

Mr. Richmond, a veteran of nearly 35 years in the beet sugar industry, joined Southern Minnesota Beet Sugar Cooperative as President and CEO in 2001. Prior to joining Southern Minnesota Beet Sugar Cooperative, Mr. Richmond was the Managing Director for Beet Sugar Operations for Imperial Sugar Company, and Senior Vice President & General Manager of Holly Sugar Corporation, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Imperial Sugar Company. His responsibility included overseeing the performance of the twelve beet sugar factories and two molasses desugarization facilities located in Michigan, California, Wyoming, Montana and Texas. His sugar career was all spent with Holly Sugar and later Imperial Sugar, starting as a management trainee in 1973 and progressing through various assignments at the beet sugar factory, sugar refinery and corporate offices until accepting the offer to join Southern Minnesota Beet Sugar Cooperative during the summer of 2001.

Mr. Richmond has broad experience in technical factory control, environmental, budgeting, and engineering disciplines as well as general management. He has served as President of the ASSBT (American Society of Sugar Beet Technologists), the U.S. ICUMSA (United States Committee – International Commission for Uniform Methods of Sugar Analysis), SPRI (Sugar Processing Research Incorporated) and served as Chairman of the Sugar Association Technical Advisory Committee during the USDA “Generally Recognized as Safe” reaffirmation process.

Mr. Richmond was an instructor at the McGinnis Institute of Beet Sugar Technology in Fort Collins, Colorado. He was Vice President of the American Society of Beet Sugar Technologists (1995-97), President (1997-99) and Immediate Past President (1999-2001). He also led the American Society of Sugar Beet Technologists (ASSBT) Group on the 1997 meeting of the International Institute for Beet Research (IIRB), where the sugar industry met with IIRB in Cambridge and then toured the Scandinavian Beet Industry. He has also served on many committees of the ASSBT. Mr. Richmond encouraged his people to present papers at ASSBT meetings. Although he was never on the Board of Directors of the Beet Sugar Development Foundation (BSDF), he was always very supportive of the efforts of the BSDF. John was instrumental in establishing the Corsberg, Grinde, Shemilt Memorial Fund, which invited speakers to the ASSBT meetings.

### **MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD**

The ASSBT awards Meritorious Service Awards to members who have been outstanding in promoting the objectives of the Society or have made significant contributions to the beet sugar industry.

This year the ASSBT awarded three Meritorious Service Awards:

#### **DENNIS D. COSTESSO**

Mr. Costesso began his career with The Amalgamated Sugar Company LLC 37 years ago, in 1971, as a Research Technician at the Ogden Factory in Ogden, Utah. He was promoted to Senior Research Technician, in 1972, and Research Chemist, in 1976, while remaining at the Ogden Factory. In 1978, he transferred to the Operating Department and was promoted to Technical Assistant to the Factory Superintendent at the Nyssa factory in Nyssa, Oregon. After only five years, in 1983, Mr. Costesso became the Factory Superintendent at the Mini-Cassia Factory in Paul, Idaho. He returned to the Research Department, in 1986, as Manager of Research and Technical Services and was transferred to the Corporate Office, which at the time was located in Ogden, Utah. In 1992, he became an officer of the company as Vice President of Research and Quality Assurance, a position he holds to this day. When Amalgamated Research Inc. (ARi) was incorporated in 1995, Dennis was elected to also serve as its' Vice President.

Mr. Costesso graduated, in 1971, from Weber State College (University), Ogden, Utah with a degree in Chemistry and minors in Mathematics and Physics. Additionally, he completed both the beet and sugar end courses with the McGinnis Institute of Beet Sugar Technology and completed chemical engineering classes through international correspondence schools.

Mr. Costesso's many accomplishments, both for Amalgamated and the sugar industry, include taking the lead on a variety of process research and development projects; managing the implementation of simulated moving bed technology for the recovery of sugar from molasses; directing and supervising research personnel in many areas of Amalgamated's operations including beet quality studies, sugar quality and storage, juice purification, integration of separation systems into factory operations and efforts to increase the usefulness and value of sugarbeet by-products. He wrote and authored many technical reports, some of which have been published in the journals of the American Society of Sugar Beet Technologists and La Sucrerie Belge.



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During his long and distinguished career, Mr. Costesso has served in a leadership role with several sugar industry affiliated organizations: Sugar Processing Research Institute (SPRI) as Vice President from 1998 to 2000 and President from July, 2000 to June, 2002.

Beet Sugar Development Foundation (BSDF) as Vice President from 1992 to 1994 and President from 1994 to 1995 and the American Society of Sugar Beet Technologists (ASSBT) as Vice President from 1999 to 2001 and President from 2001 to 2003.

### **DR. BARRY J. JACOBSEN**

Dr. Jacobsen is originally from Wisconsin. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Plant Pathology/Chemistry, his Masters Degree in Plant Pathology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and his Ph.D. in Plant Pathology from the University of Minnesota. He served as a faculty member at the University of Illinois-Urbana before moving to Auburn University, in Alabama, where he served as head of the Department of Plant Pathology.

Dr. Jacobsen is a Professor in the Plant Sciences and Plant Pathology department at Montana State University, where his research focuses on potato and sugarbeet diseases, biological control of pathogens and noxious weeds, and development of integrated disease management programs.

He serves on the Board of Directors for the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Institute of North America and has been active in the promotion of integrated pest management techniques in agricultural systems. He is a Fellow of the American Phytopathological Society where he has been active in the biological control committee. He also has been active with the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST).

Dr. Jacobsen has received several awards for his work, including the Merck Foundation Award for storage mold management.

### **DR. HSING-YEH LIU**

Dr. Liu received his Ph.D. in Plant Pathology from University of California-Riverside in 1981. He immediately joined the USDA-ARS at Salinas, California. He has conducted research on biology, etiology, serology, epidemiology and control of sugarbeet, vegetable and ornamental virus diseases.

His primary focus has been on the fungal-borne benyviruses, whitefly-transmitted criniviruses, aphid-transmitted poleroviruses, and

soil-borne viruses. Dr. Liu identified and characterized 14 new virus diseases in the U.S. affecting sugarbeet and vegetables including Beet chlorosis virus, Beet soil-borne mosaic virus, Beet distortion mosaic virus, Beet pseudo-yellows virus, Lettuce infectious yellows virus, Lettuce chlorosis virus and Beet oak leaf virus (BOLV). He and his colleagues were the first to identify Beet necrotic yellow vein virus (BNYVV), the cause of rhizomania disease in sugarbeet in North America. Dr. Liu identified resistance-breaking isolates of rhizomania and characterized their molecular differences from normal strains. This knowledge is critical for development of new strategies to control rhizomania throughout the world. Most recently, he has shown that BOLV suppresses BNYVV in dually infected plants.

Dr. Liu has given many presentations at national and international meetings of scientific peers and industry groups. His publications include more than 82 papers and 76 abstracts. He may be the leading authority of virus diseases of sugarbeet in the world. He was invited by the editors to write a book chapter on Virus Diseases in the "Sugar Beet" (Blackwell Publishing, Ltd., Oxford, UK, 2006) and to write chapters on virus diseases of sugarbeet in the "Compendium of Beet Diseases," (American Phytopathological Society Press, St. Paul, MN 55121). His broad expertise in the area of plant virology and control of plant virus diseases is evidenced by his continued participation in, invitations to and contributions to national and international scientific and commodity oriented meetings, and through his involvement in committees and working groups on plant-virus research.

### **FORTY-YEAR VETERAN AWARD**

The ASSBT awards Forty-Year Veteran certificates to those individuals completing forty years of service to the beet sugar industry.

This year the ASSBT awarded 8 certificates:

Martin J. Gagnon, Sugar Specialist, Hydrite Chemical Company

Calvin K. Jones, President & CEO, Wyoming Sugar Company LLC

Dr. John Kern, Sugarbeet Variety Specialist, American Crystal Sugar Company

Wayne Nelson, Deep Freeze - AG Repairman, American Crystal Sugar Company

Edward Lynn Powers, Production Manager, Sidney Sugars Inc.

John E. Schaefer, Regional Manager, Hydrite Chemical Company

J. Dan Stallings, Research Agronomist, Betaseed, Inc.

John Steen, Retired, Southern Minnesota Beet Sugar Cooperative