



In Memoriam

January 5, 2023



Bob Conger

Bob Conger

CSSA and ASA Fellow Bob Conger, 84, passed away on 31 Oct. 2022, in Knoxville, TN. He was born on 2 July 1938 in Greeley, CO and grew up on his family's farm in Pierce, CO. He attended Colorado State University in Fort Collins, CO, where he received a B.S. degree with distinction in Agronomy in 1963. He subsequently obtained a Ph.D. in Plant Genetics from Washington State University in Pullman, WA, in 1967.

In 1968, he began his career at the Comparative Animal Research Lab in Oak Ridge, TN (operated by the University of Tennessee) where he lived for 48 years until 2016. Until

1976, he conducted research and experiments on plants before transferring to the University of Tennessee (UT) in Knoxville where he conducted research on orchardgrass and taught plant genetics and statistics. He had 11 students who completed their master of science degree and five who completed their Ph.D. degree under his direction. He also had numerous visiting scholars from various U.S. universities, Bulgaria, Poland, Ukraine, and many other countries. Dr. Conger retired in 2003.

Conger earned Full Professorship at UT in 1978 and was awarded the "Austin Distinguished Professor" in 1986. In 1986, he was granted a one-year sabbatical with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in their laboratory near Vienna, Austria, to conduct tissue culture work. He received numerous honors for his research throughout his career, including a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Society for In Vitro Biology (SIVB). His proudest accomplishments were having his orchardgrass system twice selected by NASA for experiments on Space Shuttle Discovery in 1994 and 1998 and developing a new orchardgrass cultivar for farmers in 2002. The cultivar is named 'Persist' and is grown by Smith Seed Services who sell it throughout the world.

Bob enjoyed spending time with family and friends, traveling, reading, and golfing. He is survived by his loving wife of 62 years, Donna, of Farragut, TN; sons, Gregory Conger (Barbara) of Oak Ridge, TN, Stephen Conger (Julie) of Switzerland, FL, and Michael Conger (Renee) of Knoxville, TN; daughter, Rhonda Birch (Matthew) of Raleigh, NC; and eight grandchildren, three sisters, a sister-in-law, and a cousin.

Roy Creech



Roy Glynn Creech

CSSA Fellow and former president (1979) Dr. Roy Glynn Creech of Starkville, MS passed away on 26. Nov. 2022. He was 87. Creech was born on 24 Jan. 24 1935 in Shelby County, Texas. He graduated from Stephen F. Austin University in 1956 and received a master's degree and Ph.D. from Purdue University in 1958 and 1960, respectively.

From 1960–1972, he worked in the Horticulture Department at Pennsylvania State University at State College, PA, first as an assistant professor and then a full professor. He was on sabbatical at the University of Illinois from 1968–1969. From 1972–1990, he served Mississippi State University (MSU) as a professor and head of the Agronomy Department. From 1991–2004, he was a research professor in MSU's Department of Plant and Soil Sciences until he retired due to illness. In 2005, the Mississippi College Board named Creech "Professor and Department Head Emeritus."

Over the years, his interests included serving his local congregation, Bible study and Sunday school teaching, family and genealogy, hunting, fishing, flying as a private pilot, and golfing. He was a member of the Starkville Church of Christ, Kiwanis International, and Rotary International. He was a past president of the National Sweet Corn Breeders Association.

Dr. Creech is survived by his children, Valinda Creech Smith (Ed) of Grenada, MS; Colonel (retired) John Bruce Creech, Ph.D., of Tampa, FL; Glynn Edward Creech (Pat) of Murfreesboro, TN; as well as one sister, Marcelle Lee Creech Geudner (Paul) of Windsor, CO; and one brother, Jerry Lynn Creech (Elaine) of Port Arthur, TX; grandchildren, great grandchildren, and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and other family members and their spouses.

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