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Contacts: Shanna Boyett, sboyett@okstate.edu
Norm Elliott, norman.elliott@ars.usda.gov
(405) 624-4141

Scientist's Widow Receives "Burton" barley

Former Agricultural Research Service scientist Robert L. Burton was honored Tuesday with a presentation to his family by ARS Administrator Edward B. Knipling.

Burton's widow, Sylvia, and two sons, Robert Jr. and Brian, were each presented with an official registration certificate for "Burton" barley, a feed barley resistant to Russian wheat aphid attack.

The family had much to say about the agency's gesture and the late Robert L. Burton.

"This is the best Valentine's Day I have ever had," said Sylvia Burton. "I'm going to plant some of that barley in my back yard."

Burton authored and co-authored numerous publications during his time with ARS. In addition, he presented more than 100 scientific presentations during his 28 years of service to the agency. Burton was recognized as an authority worldwide for his work in the areas of insect diets and laboratory production of insects. Burton worked at the Stillwater lab from 1970 until his death in 1993.

"My dad really wanted to make a difference," said Robert Burton Jr. "I know he'd be proud."

The presentation took place at the ARS lab in Stillwater during the joint annual meeting of Oklahoma Wheat and Peanut commissions. In addition to the Burton family's recognition, Knipling received a certificate of appreciation from the Oklahoma Peanut Commission board.

"This meeting provides an opportunity for Oklahoma wheat and peanut commissioners to share updates on important production issues and learn about exciting new developments coming out of ARS and OSU research efforts at Stillwater," said Dave Porter, ARS research leader.

After the "Burton" barley presentation, Knipling conducted a brief question-and-answer session about many agricultural research issues. Among these issues were budget cuts and reallocation of agency funds. Knipling also addressed questions related to biofuels.

"Bioenergy will be a growth area within our agency," Knipling said.

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