



Greetings and Happy New Year to you all!

A glance back marks another year of achievement and success for ARS employees, with many notable contributions to solving problems for the public. The coming year brings exciting challenges and initiatives for ARS employees. Last June, **USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack** announced his plans “to transform the culture at USDA by creating a diverse, inclusive, and high-performing organization.” In efforts to remain a strong organization, to continue delivering vital scientific information to our customers and stakeholders, and to further support the Department’s goals, ARS has embarked on its own Cultural Transformation Initiative. ARS’ “Review, Refresh, and Reform” effort has its roots in our “Your Two Cents” (Y2C) program, which was launched on May 1, 2010. Since its launch, you have posted more than 750 questions, comments, and good ideas, and have shared best practices with your colleagues. Y2C is just the beginning of a cultural shift in our workplace, workforce, and our daily business practices. We know that a diverse organization hears its employees, and adapts as necessary to promote inclusion of all of its employees—we’re listening and taking action.

The ARS cultural transformation effort focuses on key initiatives and improvements that will be unveiled during the coming year. These efforts are aimed at improving the quality of your work life, with the ultimate aim of strengthening ARS’ delivery of science to our customers in an efficient, effective, and responsive manner. A few initiatives Agency leaders are currently addressing include business process improvement; the telework program; performance award consistency; leadership development; improved communication across the Agency; and recruitment, retention, and training of our talented staff. Future issues of *ARS & You* will feature progress, updates, or highlights of some of these ongoing initiatives. Soon you will receive an invitation to an Agencywide Webcast on ARS cultural transformation on February 10 hosted by the ARS Administrator’s Council (the AC is comprised of senior program and line managers in ARS). We will take your questions and discuss ARS cultural transformation in real time.

I am looking forward to a productive New Year. Thank you for your continued effort as we deliver excellent science to our customers and stakeholders.

A handwritten signature in cursive script.

Ed Knipling

“Around ARS”



www.ars.usda.gov/yourtwocents

We are excited to announce the new and improved “Your Two Cents” Web site, launching the week of January 17! Be sure to check out our added features, fun new graphics, and opinion poll. We look forward to “Your Two Cents”!



Looking for a way to get over the post-holiday blues? You might want to consider donating to the Capital Area Combined Federal Campaign

(CFC). What better way to bolster your self-esteem than by helping out a homeless shelter, food pantry, children’s charity, or any of the many other eligible groups that perform vital services in the neighborhoods where we all live and work.

The ARS Capital Area CFC campaign has raised almost \$175,000, an amount that wouldn’t be possible without the generosity of hundreds of ARS employees who either contributed directly or participated in the many CFC-sponsored bake sales, brown-bag lunches, walks, and other fundraising events held over the past few months.

Meanwhile, the CFC campaign at the [ARS Southern Regional Research Center](#) (SRRC) in New Orleans, LA, has raised about \$44,000 this year. SRRC Director **Ed Cleveland** noted that this amount is 126% of their goal, thanks to SRRC’s high employee participation rate (85%)—indicating the exceptional generosity of SRRC staff. SRRC has always been one of the top performing Federal organizations in the New Orleans area, and the CFC in the Greater New Orleans Area is getting closer to its goal of raising \$1,500,000 for this year’s campaign.

This season’s CFC campaign ended on January 17, but not before some innovative efforts designed to

encourage donations. In the campaign’s waning days, Capital Area CFC organizers were still hard at work on a re-gifting auction that allowed participants to sell unwanted holiday gifts, and on a vegetable recipe contest that gave ARS employees a chance to show off their culinary skills.

While January 17 was the end of the official annual campaign, keep in mind that you can contribute until at least February 1. It isn’t too late. If you are contemplating a donation, remember contributions are tax deductible. The charities are listed and searchable in the online catalog (www.CFCNCA.org).

On Monday, December 20, 2010, the ARS National Agricultural Library’s Food and Nutrition Information Center’s (FNIC) Web and Reference Team, in partnership with sponsors from USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), opened the newly launched [FDPIR Sharing Gallery](#) to contributions. The Sharing Gallery showcases Native American nutrition education materials submitted by Indian Tribal Organizations, FDPIR State agencies, or Federal FDPIR staff.

On January 11, industry leaders from the [National Pork Board](#), led by Paul Sundberg, Vice President of Technology; and Audrey Adamson, Assistant Vice President of Public Policy, National Pork Producer Council, visited Beltsville, MD, and met with National Program Leaders from both ARS and NIFA. **Eileen Thacker**, ARS National Program Leader for Animal Health, coordinated the meeting so that the groups could come together to discuss research priorities and provide updates on their research programs to National Pork Board members.

Wojciech Janisiewicz, Plant Pathologist, ARS Appalachian Fruit Research Station, Kearneysville, WV, has been invited to be a plenary speaker at the 47th Congress of the Southern African Society for Plant Pathology in Pretoria, South Africa, on January 24–27. Janisiewicz will give a talk on the “Biological Control of Postharvest Diseases of Fruits: from Wound to Latent Infections.” Under the Fulbright Specialist Program, he will give presentations to the faculty and students at the Department of Microbiology and Plant Pathology at the University of Preto-

ria, and he will meet with students to advise them on research trends, approaches, and methodology in biological control of postharvest diseases. Janisiewicz is known for his research efforts in controlling postharvest decays on apples and pears. One of the bacterium his team discovered was developed for commercial use in Bio-Save®, which is used for controlling postharvest decays on fruits and vegetables. Approximately 4 to 8 million cartons of pears and apples, approximately 8 million lugs of cherries, 1 million cartons of citrus, and 3 million sacks of potatoes are treated with Bio-Save® annually. Bio-Save® can be used in organic production. JET Harvest Solutions Co., Longwood, FL, currently markets Bio-Save®.



Photo Corner

Potential future ARS scientists visit the ARS Administrator’s Office with their parents...



Pictured from left to right: ARS Associate Administrator Caird Rexroad; Rebecca Derner; Rachel Derner; Research Leader Justin D. Derner, ARS High Plains Grasslands Research Station; and Tansie Derner.

Winter blues? Check out these uniquely cool snowflake images... and while you’re at it, view more obscure and intriguing images on the Beltsville Area’s [Electron and Confocal Microscope Unit](#) Web site, and also the unit’s “[Snow Page](#).”



Photo credits: Eric Erbe, retired ARS electron microscope expert.

“Notable Awards”



Research Animal Scientist **Michael L. Looper**, ARS Dale Bumpers Small Farms Research Center, Booneville, AR, received the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE), the highest honor bestowed by the United States Government on science

and engineering professionals in the early stages of their research careers. He is being honored for pioneering research that improves production efficiency, product quality, and food safety for the American cattle industry.

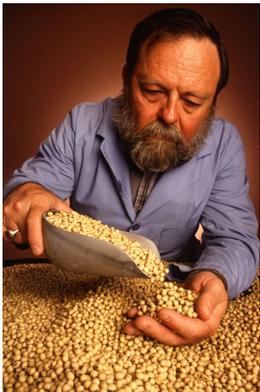
Looper, along with other award recipients (85 total), was honored in a ceremony held on December 13, 2010, in Washington, DC. PECASE recipients met **President Obama** and took a group photo with him.

The awards, established by President Clinton in 1996, are coordinated by the [Office of Science and Technology Policy](#) within the Executive Office of the President. Awardees are selected for their pursuit of innovative research at the frontiers of science and technology and their commitment to community service as demonstrated through scientific leadership, public education, or community outreach. Winning scientists and engineers have received research grants for up to 5 years to further their studies in support of critical government missions.



President Barack Obama poses for a group photo with the 2009 Recipients for the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers in the South Court Auditorium of the White House on December 13, 2010. (Official White House Photo by Chuck Kennedy) Looper is in the last row, second from the right.

Research Entomologist **Wayne Hunter**, ARS U.S. Horticultural Research Laboratory, Fort Pierce, FL, won the [Entomological Society of America's](#) Recognition Award in Entomology for the Southeastern Branch (SEB). He will be honored at the SEB's annual meeting in San Juan, PR, being held on March 19–22, 2011.



Chemist Gary List checks soybeans.

Retired ARS Chemist **Gary List**, formerly with the ARS National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research in Peoria, IL, will be awarded an honorary Doctor of Science degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The degree will be conferred upon him at their commencement ceremony on May 15, 2011. This degree is in recognition of his “long and distin-

guished career as a research scientist and numerous contributions in the field of edible oils.” Among his most significant ARS accomplishments was his research on oil processing, which aided the development of new technology to create trans free margarines and other oil spreads.

On January 11, the [American Association for the Advancement of Science](#) (AAAS) announced its 2010 AAAS Fellows. Among this distinguished group were Soil Scientist **William C. Koskinen**, ARS Soil and Water Management Research in St. Paul, MN, for distinguished contributions in developing new knowledge and approaches to characterize fate and behavior of pesticides and their metabolites and other agrichemicals in soil; Soil Scientist **Yakov Pachepsky**, ARS Environmental Microbial and Food Safety Lab in Beltsville, MD, for pioneering research and leadership in soil and agricultural hydrology to predict crop yields and assess soil and water quality; and Research Leader **Scott R. Yates**, ARS U.S. Salinity Lab, Contaminant Fate and Transport Unit, in Riverside, CA, for distinguished contributions and innovative research on the fate and transport of agricultural fumigants, and for the development of new technology to minimize soil emissions.

Research Soil Scientist **Donald L. Tanaka**, ARS Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory in Mandan, ND, received the 2010 [North Dakota Association of Soil Conservation Districts](#) Professional Award from the Morton County Soil Conservation District. He is being honored for excellence in conservation research, extensive public presentations of his research results, and significant contributions to soil and water conservation. He was recognized at the 72nd Annual Meeting of the North Dakota Association of Soil Conservation Districts recognition banquet on November 22, 2010, in Bismarck, ND.

“Did You Know?”

Rice is a food staple for more than half the world’s population. U.S. demand for rice is growing, with Americans consuming more than 26 pounds of rice per person annually, and with 20 billion pounds of rice produced each year. Researchers at the ARS Rice Research Unit in Beaumont, TX, and the ARS Dale Bumpers National Rice Research Center in Stuttgart, AR, have developed eight rice varieties that have resulted in new and improved rice products, and expansion of the organic rice industry.

Carolina Gold Select—being grown for specialty markets—“historically authentic” foods. This variety is grown organically and is marketed to about 3,000 chefs across the country by Anson Mills, Columbia, SC. Carolina Gold is credited with establishing the U.S. rice industry.

Neches—a waxy rice variety grown under organic production for use by the ingredients industry. Most waxy rice is imported from Thailand. This is the first waxy variety developed for southern U.S. production—giving U.S. growers an opportunity to capture a market that has been traditionally filled by imports.

Sierra—aromatic long-grain rice developed to compete with basmati-style rice, which is imported from India and Pakistan. It is being grown under both conventional and organic systems. It is being marketed by Doguet’s Rice Mill, Beaumont, TX, as both milled and brown rice to companies like Whole Foods Market.

Dixiebelle—long-grain rice that is suited for use by the parboiling and canning industries. It is currently being used by a major canned soup company, and is under contract production for this use.

Sabine—long-grain variety that is suited for use by the parboiling and canning industries. It is currently being used by a major parboiling company for producing quick-cooking rice.

Hidalgo—developed as part of a cooperative research agreement with a major food supplier. It is a long-grain variety that, when processed, produces a brown rice that can be cooked in just 10 minutes. This gives consumers the higher nutritional value of brown rice, with more convenient cooking times.

Presidio—long-grain rice with exceptional milling qualities and grain appearance. It produces a superior packaged product and commands a premium in the market for growers because of its high quality. It is being grown in Texas under both conventional and organic systems.

Rondo—long-grain rice that is being grown under conventional and organic production systems. It is being used for the rice flour and rice milk markets.

Written by Tara T. Weaver-Missick, ARS Information Staff.



Please submit story ideas and national award items to Tara T. Weaver-Missick, tara.weavermissick@ars.usda.gov or call 301-504-1663.