

Extension Award

This award was established in 1988 by the APS Council in recognition of excellence in extension plant pathology. The award is presented to those involved in formal plant pathology extension with recognized superior contributions in developing or implementing leadership roles in local, regional, or national honor societies or professional organizations.

José M. Amador



José M. Amador was born in Matanzas, Cuba, on March 3, 1938. He received his undergraduate and graduate education at Louisiana State University where he was awarded the B.Sc. degree in 1960 and the M.Sc. degree in 1962. In 1965, he received a Ph.D. degree for his work on the physiology of host-parasite relations. Upon his arrival in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV) of Texas in 1965, he found that the reniform nematode had just been described there on various crops. He trained producers

on the recognition of symptoms, initiated a soil sampling program, and formulated strategies for control of the nematode. As a result of his program, damage from this pathogen has been restricted and severe economic loss averted.

This approach to extension work has been characteristic of the 25 years of involvement of Dr. Amador with the LRGV agricultural community. He was able to alert producers of problems as they appeared and to teach them simple but effective solutions. He has done this for diseases such as downy mildew of sorghum and corn, St. Augustine decline, powdery mildew of carrots, lethal yellowing problem of date palms, and others. As is typical of Dr. Amador, in every case he identified the resource person in the scientific community with the information necessary to solve the problem. Next, he established cooperative work with the expert and translated scientific information to the growers in terms and with methodology that they could understand and use. He was the driving force behind the establishment of sugarcane culture in the LRGV. In the words of U.S. representa-

tive K. de la Garza, "from his effort grew a multimillion dollar industry." His ability to communicate effectively with people reflects his commitment to the betterment of the community through science. Again, in de la Garza's words, "Dr. Amador has acted as a catalyst between the scientific community and the public—performing an array of tasks and demonstrating an amazing ability to analyze the most complicated subject and then express that topic in understandable terms to the public."

From the beginning of his career, Dr. Amador translated news releases from English to Spanish, to serve the Spanish-speaking public of Texas as well as to reach all producers. He is in great demand to present pesticide safety programs to Spanish-speaking farm workers and to deliver information on the Right-to-Know Act concerning proper pesticide use.

Dr. Amador has always been willing to use the latest techniques to serve the people of the LRGV. He placed leaf wetness equipment strategically throughout the valley to get daily reports that could be used to advise growers when to spray for certain foliar diseases. This, accompanied by his daily radio talks, newsletters and other communications to the producers, provide the LRGV community with one of the most sophisticated disease advisory services in the nation.

Dr. Amador has received several awards in recognition of his endeavors. He was recipient of the Texas Superior Service Award in 1980, and Texas A&M University's Faculty Distinguished Service Award in 1985. He has shown a strong commitment to the service of the profession. He is the current councilor for the Caribbean Division, having been elected for a second term to this office. Dr. Amador is well recognized in Latin America for his knowledge and ability to solve complex problems with sophisticated but practical solutions. He has traveled at the request of USDA-AID to evaluate disease management programs in Central America. Dr. Amador has produced numerous publications on vegetable disease control, pesticide use, and instrumentation for pest management.