

USDA scientist is honored

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Animal parasitologist K. Darwin Murrell has been named 'Scientist of the Year' for the Northeast Region of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Research Service, according to agency administrator, Terry B. Kinney Jr.

"Dr. Murrell has made out-

standing contributions to the branch of science known as immunoparasitology in which scientists approach control of animal parasites by studying their effects on animal immune systems," Kinney said.

Murrell recently showed that an animal's immune response to

nematodes, or parasitic worms, can be linked to certain proteins secreted by the worms, Kinney said. The work may result in vaccines against worms that cause millions of dollars in livestock losses each year, he said.

Since taking over as chief of the research agency's Helminthic (parasitic worm) Disease

Laboratory in 1978, Murrell has stressed modern biotechnology in research, Kinney said, resulting in key advances for maintenance of the Nation's livestock herds.

Murrell's laboratory, for example, recently produced a blood test that detects trichinosis in pigs. The disease is extremely costly to the pork industry.

The laboratory's scientists also identified, in livestock, chemical 'messengers' of white blood cells that help cattle, sheep and swine resist some parasites, Kinney said.

Also under Murrell's direction, scientists recently found key biological substances, secreted by parasitic worms grown in culture flasks, that may lead to other livestock vaccines.

Murrell's knowledge of immunoparasitology, said Kinney, is recognized worldwide. He frequently represents USDA abroad as a consultant, technical expert or cooperating scientist. Murrell has been a speaker or contributor to over 35 national and

international meetings and has authored or coauthored 94 papers in prestigious journals of human and veterinary parasitology, Kinney said.

Prior to joining USDA, Murrell worked for the U.S. Naval Medical Research Institute, Bethesda, Maryland, where he was first to isolate proteins from schistosomes (blood flukes) that stimulate an immune response in the human body. Schistosomiasis is a major human parasitic disease in the tropics. Murrell continues to serve as a consultant for schistosomiasis control programs in Egypt.

At recent ceremonies, Kinney presented Murrell with a \$2500 bonus and an award plaque for his Scientist of the Year honor. Also, Kinney announced that an additional \$25,000 in Federal funds have been earmarked for Murrell's research. The Helminthic Diseases Laboratory is part of the Animal Parasitology Institute at USDA's research center in Beltsville, Md.

Essay winners reported

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Heidi Wederquist, Longmont, Colorado, has won first prize in the 1984 "Salute to Agriculture" essay contest sponsored by Hesston Corp., Hesston, Kan.

A 16-year-old junior at Niwot High School, Heidi is a member of St. Vrain Valley FFA Chapter in Longmont. She was presented a plaque, a \$500 check and a Hesston National Finals Rodeo commemorative belt buckle during ceremonies Nov. 8 at the 57th National FFA Convention held in Kansas City. The presentation was made by Nelson Galle, Hesston's vice president - administration.

Heidi's salute will be aired as part of a public service television message Dec. 9 during the Hesston-sponsored telecast of the National Finals Rodeo from Oklahoma City.

Two second place awards of \$250 and five third place prizes of \$100 will be made to other top finishers. Hesston also awarded commemorative belt buckles to the top 100 entrants in this year's contest.

More than 3,500 FFA members submitted messages paying tribute to farmers and ranchers for their part in improving the standard of living and the economy. The essay contest is part of a

continuing effort by Hesston Corporation to emphasize the importance of the agriculture industry.

Heidi's winning salute reads:

"Abundance in agriculture - it's only a dream in other countries, but it's a reality here in America. American farmers and ranchers are producing! Not 'Just enough,' but more than enough! People in many countries cannot imagine our abundance; yet the quality, quantity and variety of food produced by our farmers and ranchers is taken for granted by the American people. Why?

Because American farmers have been such consistent providers! They are truly America's most valuable resource!"

Second place winners this year, receiving \$250 checks are Brad Boisen of LeSueur, Minnesota; and Monte McCoy, Warsaw, Ohio.

The five third place awards of \$100 go to Joe Elleman, Liberty, Indiana; Deanna Kempton, Albion, Idaho; Daniel M. Sievert, Bonduel, Wisconsin; David Sorenson, Bondurant, Iowa; and Serena Wadsworth, Pearce, Arizona.

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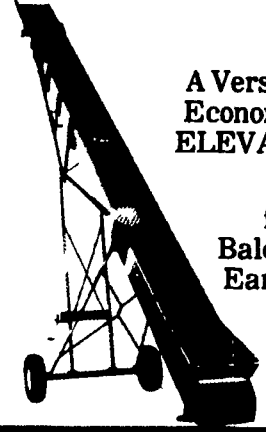
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