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## Ferree Earns Pomological Society Wilder Medal



Emeritus Professor Dr. David Ferree earned the American Pomological Society's 2006 Wilder Medal for his vast contributions to pomological science.

Ohio State University Professor Emeritus **Dr. David C. Ferree** was recently awarded the American Pomological Society's (APS) 2006 Wilder Medal for his vast contributions to the advancement of pomological science as a researcher, educator, and mentor. Established in 1873 in honor of [Marshall Pinckney Wilder](#), the illustrious founder and first President of the APS, the [Wilder Medal](#) is awarded to individuals or organizations for distinguished service and contributions to the advancement of pomological science and for the development of outstanding fruit varieties.

A pomologist who investigated management systems for orchards and performed extensive rootstock evaluation, Dr. Ferree's research on the cultural aspects of tree fruit and wine grapes is world renown and his research productivity was prolific. Educated at Penn State University (BS 1965) and the University of Maryland (MS 1968, PhD 1969), Dr. Ferree joined The Ohio State University, Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center, Department of Horticulture faculty as an Assistant Professor in 1971. Professor Ferree served the Department of Horticulture & Crop Science with distinction for 33 years, before retiring in 2004.



"My research focused on management systems for intensive orchards with rootstock evaluation as a continuing emphasis. Other areas that support this general thrust have been: spring cooling to delay bloom, summer pruning and root pruning. The influence of each of these practices on tree physiology have been evaluated as well as their practical implications. Since pruning and training mainly modify canopy light

distribution, numerous studies evaluating light penetration have been conducted on various types of canopies. Another research interest is the influence of bending on tree physiology and how this practice can best be used by growers to modify tree growth and fruiting," explains Ferree.

Ferree's program expanded into grape research during the 1990's. "In the last stage of my career, I assumed the responsibility for viticulture research. The influence of training systems, light exposure and rootstocks on berry and wine quality were evaluated, as well as various treatments to improve replacement trunk hardiness, in response to the severe winter damage."

OARDC Colleague **Joe Scheerens** applauds Ferree for his career-long commitment to the evaluation of tree fruit and grape cultivars, rootstocks and cultivar-rootstock combinations for superior horticultural characteristics and commercial viability. "Dr. Ferree's contributions to the art and science of pomology are perhaps, innumerable. He clarified our scientific understanding of fruit crop physiology as it is affected by culture and that has substantively impacted grower practices and the fruit industry," explained Scheerens. "The fruit producers of Ohio and surrounding states recognized him as an extremely valuable resource and frequently sought his advice on matters of production."



The Wilder Medal (shown at left) award announcement was made at the annual business meeting of the [APS](#), on Saturday July 29, 2006. This meeting was held in conjunction with the 103rd Annual Meeting of the [American Society for Horticultural Science](#) (ASHS) held in New Orleans, Louisiana July 27-30, 2006. A longtime member of ASHS, Ferree was elected Fellow in 1982 and was elected Research Division Vice President in 1988. Ferree also earned the ASHS Outstanding Graduate Educator Award in 2001.

"Dr. Ferree was also a consummate educator in the classical sense," notes Scheerens. "As a mentor, he was very adept at determining the delicate balance between the appropriate levels of supervision and independence while students progressed through their research program. Aside from his primary roles as researcher and educator, Dr. Ferree enthusiastically served his organization as chairperson or member of 38 Department, College or University committees, most with multiple year appointments."

Dr. Ferree is the author of large numbers of technical research reports, book chapters, scientific papers and posters delivered at professional meetings, and many, including 12 award-winning, referred journal papers. Over 50 journal papers focused on aspects of clonal evaluation of tree fruit and grape cultivars, rootstocks, and cultivar-rootstock combinations. He also conducted extensive research on the effects of root pruning on apple tree growth and performance. One of his 2 co-edited books

([Apples: Botany, Production and Uses](#)) is the current definitive reference book on this major fruit crop. Dr. Ferree was also a pioneer in interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary agricultural research and participated in many regional committees.

David Ferree discusses his career in a Video Biography interview recorded during the 2003 ASHS Annual Conference in Providence. ASHS members can access the full video or audio interview via the [ASHS Video Biographies](#) website. This ASHS web resource features interviews with over 80 notable horticulturists. Non-members are able to view a 3 minute preview of the interviews.

Story and web publishing by [Victor van Buchem](#). Edited by Joe Scheerens and Julie Hering. Field photo by Ken Chamberlain. Interview photo by Lori Inkrot.

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