



Gertrude D. Armbruster

November 29, 1925 – November 3, 2012

Gertrude Dorothy Amanda Armbruster was born in Stony Plain, Alberta, Canada, on November 29, 1925. She received her early education in Alberta and carried a love for her Northwest upbringing throughout her life. She earned a B.S. in Home Economics from the University of Alberta in 1947 and completed a dietetic internship at the Toronto General Hospital. After earning a M.S. in Nutrition in 1950 from Washington State University, she worked with Extension programs in Pierce County, Washington.

Professor Armbruster's 41 year affiliation with Cornell began in 1952 when she was appointed as assistant professor of food and nutrition in the New York State College of Home Economics. She provided educational resources and training for Extension educators and volunteer leaders throughout New York State who worked with youth through 4-H food and nutrition programs. She took a leave from Cornell to pursue doctoral studies in food science at the University of Washington where she received the Ph.D. in 1965.

Dr. Armbruster returned to Cornell as associate professor in foods and nutrition at a time of great organizational change. In 1969, the college was renamed as the New York State College of Human Ecology to emphasize the interdisciplinary study of the human experience. The Division of Nutritional Sciences was formed in 1974 by combining the Department of Human Nutrition and Food with the Graduate School of Nutrition.

During this time Professor Armbruster taught intermediate and advanced courses in the physico-chemical and nutritional properties of foods as well as experimental food laboratories. Undergraduate students viewed Professor Armbruster as a caring teacher, advisor, and mentor who was very interested in their academic and professional development. She was a role model and inspiration to women students, many of whom credit her for changing their lives as she opened their eyes to opportunities and created contacts for them in the sciences and professional world.

Professor Armbruster was a member of two graduate fields, Nutritional Sciences and Food Science and Technology. She advised more than 50 graduate students and mentored them closely. Many students' projects examined how cultivar, field conditions, postharvest conditions, and/or processing methods affected the nutritional, structural, and sensory properties of fruits and vegetables. Professor Armbruster enjoyed taking students on excursions to the fields to harvest strawberries, squash, or tomatoes for their research materials and then teaching them the histological methods for examining cell structures.

As microwave heating became available, Professor Armbruster became a leader in research to understand the effects of microwaves on food quality parameters including nutritional, microbiological, and sensory characteristics. She demonstrated how heating patterns could be managed to improve meat quality and the positive effects of microwaves on the nutritional content of foods especially fruits and vegetables. She was invited to speak about her work on other campuses in the U.S. and abroad.

Professor Armbruster frequently collaborated with faculty members in food science and animal science to understand how different cooking methods affected the sensory properties, nutritional composition, and the residues of environmental contaminants in products such as meats and fish. This research was reported in the *Journal of Food Science*, *Journal of Food Safety*, and *Journal of Animal Science*. A member of many professional societies, Professor Armbruster was particularly active in the International Microwave Power Institute and the Society of the Plastics Industry. She served on the advisory board to the *Journal of Microwave Energy* and on the editorial board of the *Journal of Microwave Power*.

Later in her Cornell career, Professor Armbruster taught the introductory level foods laboratory course. She served as Director of Cornell's Didactic Program in Dietetics and was the first Director of Cornell's Graduate Dietetic Internship Program. She developed the proposal for the internship, gained its approval from the American Dietetic Association, and was an active member of this organization. With Karla Longrée, Professor Armbruster co-authored *Quantity Food Sanitation* with its fifth edition published in 1996. This book has been widely used as a text for dietetic students and by health departments around the world in the training of sanitation inspectors.

In recognition of Professor Armbruster's many accomplishments, she received the Honorable Fellow Award from the Microwave Power Institute, an outstanding research award from the Major Appliance Consumer Action Panel, and a Human Development Award from the Sears Foundation. She received the Outstanding Alumnus Award from Washington State University and a Distinguished Alumnus award from Concordia University College, where she completed her high school education.

Following her retirement, Gertrude was an active board member with Foodnet of Ithaca and enjoyed life with her husband, Carlton Edwards. Born in New York's Onondaga County, he graduated from Cornell and was a faculty member in Cornell's Agricultural Engineering Department before taking a faculty position at Michigan State University. Gertrude and Carlton were married for 18 years living in Ithaca and then Kalamazoo, Michigan, before Carlton's death in 2010. Professor Armbruster passed away peacefully on November 3, 2012 in Kalamazoo.

Written by Carole Bisogni, Chairperson; Christine Olson, Robert Parker