

Charles E. Ostrander

October 30, 1916 — April 15, 1994

Charlie Ostrander will long be remembered by the poultry industry of New York State and of the United States. He was an outstanding poultry extension person and excelled in the field of poultry management, bird behavior, poultry house ventilation, poultry lighting and poultry wastes. If a poultry producer was in trouble, Charlie was quickly on the scene to find a solution to the problem.

Professor Ostrander was born October 30, 1916 in Jamestown, New York. He graduated from Ellington High School in 1934 where he earned letters in three sports. All during high school and for three years while he worked following high school he dreamed of studying agriculture at Cornell University. His dream came true and he entered Cornell the fall term of 1937. Charlie graduated from Cornell's College of Agriculture in 1941 where he earned a B.S. degree with majors in rural education and poultry science. During college he was a member of the Poultry Science Club, the Round-Up Club, F.F.A., and Ho-Nun-De-Kah, the senior agricultural honorary society.

Following graduation, he taught vocational agriculture for five years at Portville and Clymer in New York and in Washington, New Jersey. Ostrander then joined the New York State Agricultural Extension Service where he served as Assistant County Agent in Allegheny County and later as Associate County Agent in Onondaga County. While in Onondaga County, he was responsible for both the poultry and fruit programs where much of his time was devoted to improving the poultry industry and developing marketing programs. He was responsible for an egg marketing program in Central New York that operated successfully for many years.

In 1951, Ostrander was invited to join the Cornell Poultry Department as Extension Poultryman. This was the first time an extension field person had been employed by the Poultry Department. After serving in this capacity for two years, he accepted a managerial sales position with a leading hatchery in New York State with responsibility for the breeding program. Charles Ostrander served in this capacity for four years and returned to Cornell as an Extension Poultry Specialist and Project Leader in Poultry Extension. His primary responsibility was in production, management and waste management. He was one of the first to work in the waste management field and saw it grow from one of little importance to one of major concern and effort. He was a member of the original planning committee for the first National Symposium on Poultry Waste Management in 1963. He participated in every national conference and many regional conferences.

Professor Ostrander received the M.S. degree in Poultry Management from Michigan State University in 1960 with major emphasis on controlled lighting for poultry. He spent considerable effort researching and developing lighting programs for poultry. He also researched and promoted the use of less intensive light for laying hens. This has aided in preventing cannibalism, resulting in less hysteria in flocks and has saved the industry many dollars. He conducted research on density requirements in cages and promoted precision debeaking, which has also been helpful to the industry. He realized the importance of environmental control in poultry housing with proper insulation and ventilation and was a strong advocate for this for many years.

Charles Ostrander was promoted to Associate Professor in 1962 and to Professor in 1973. He served on the Governor's Commission for the Preservation of Agricultural Land in New York State, was a member of the Council of Agricultural Advisors to the Department of Environmental Conservation, chairman of the Interdepartmental Poultry Industry Committee and served as a member of the College Committee on Environmental Studies and the College Energy Committee. He was also a consultant to the Canadian Department of Agriculture on poultry matters. He served on many national and statewide poultry committees and organizations. He was a member of the National Poultry Science Association and was a member of the World's Poultry Science Association.

In 1962, Ostrander was invited to spend a sabbatical leave at the University of California studying their poultry waste disposal problem. Since 1959, he had devoted a considerable amount of his time studying and working with this problem both in research and extension activities. Ostrander was invited to spend a sabbatical leave at the University of Reading, Reading, England in 1970 to work with them on waste management problems. He also worked with the Ministry of Agriculture on this problem while in England. He also looked at the waste problems in Scotland and the Netherlands. He was again invited to spend a sabbatical leave in England in 1980 at the Institute of Agricultural Engineering at Silsoe working with problems in ventilation and the formation and elimination of ammonia problems in poultry houses. In 1980, Professor Ostrander was the recipient of the Pfizer National Poultry Extension Award from the Poultry Science Association in recognition of his outstanding work in Poultry Extension.

Following his retirement in 1981, Charlie devoted much of his time volunteering for various organizations including the Senior Citizens Council of Tompkins County and drove regularly for Gadabout. He liked helping others and if someone was in need, Charlie was always there; he was a faithful and loyal friend.

Professor Charles Ostrander is survived by his wife, Gracia; two daughters, Linda Schoffel and Marcia Humphrey; and four granddaughters. Professor Charles Ostrander is and will be sorely missed.

R.C. Baker, A. vanTienhoven, R.J. Young