

John Kasper (Jack) Loosli

May 16, 1909 — June 30, 2002

John Kasper (Jack) Loosli, Professor of Animal Nutrition, Emeritus, renowned researcher and former Head of the Department of Animal Science, died in Gainesville, Florida on June 30, 2002 at the age of 93.

Born in Clarkston, Utah, Jack graduated with a B.S. degree from Utah State College in 1931. He continued his studies at Colorado A and M College, receiving the M.S. degree in 1932. After a three-year stint as an Instructor at the College of Southern Utah, he came to Cornell to study animal nutrition under Professor L.A. Maynard, earning his Ph.D. degree in 1938. He spent a year with the Bureau of Biological Survey. His distinguished 35-year career on the faculty at Cornell began with his appointment as an Assistant Professor of Animal Nutrition in the Department of Animal Husbandry in 1939. In 1945, he succeeded Maynard as leader of the department's Animal Nutrition Laboratory, which was housed in Stocking Hall before Morrison Hall was built, a responsibility he held until 1963 when he became head of the department.

A modest, unassuming, tactful and very patient man with an extremely high sense of duty, Jack was respected by students, faculty and colleagues worldwide. A prolific researcher and writer with over 400 scientific and popular publications, he trained some 50 graduate students, many of whom assumed important positions in various parts of the world. His research interests and activities were diverse and often involved fundamental questions related to nutrition and metabolism. He was not satisfied that research had been completed until the results of experiments were published in reputable journals, and was especially happy when they were applied in the animal industries to improve the efficiency of livestock production. Examples of contributions by Loosli and his team include development of clear experimental evidence that rumen bacteria synthesize all of the essential amino acids; establishment of the relationships of selenium and tocopherol to nutritional muscular dystrophy in animals; determination of amino acid requirements for growth of swine; assessment of the value of antibiotics as growth stimulants in dairy calves; demonstration of the importance of fat in the diets of lactating cows; and determination of the value of urea in ruminant feeds.

He was honored by both the American Society of Animal Science and the American Dairy Science Association with their most prestigious research awards, and later served as president of both professional organizations. He also served as Editor of the *Journal of Animal Science*, and Associate Editor of the *Journal of Nutrition*. Other professional societies of which he was a member include the American Institute of Nutrition, the American Chemical

Society, the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine, the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the British Society of Animal Production. As a widely recognized authority, he played an active role as a member and chairman of subcommittees of the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences charged with preparation of bulletins on the nutrient requirements of animals. In 1956, he joined L.A. Maynard as co-author of the then widely used text *Animal Nutrition*, a relationship that continued through several subsequent editions. For many years, he taught an upper class and graduate level course in fundamentals of animal nutrition.

Jack Loosli was a master at training and developing graduate and postdoctoral students. Some of his methods of encouraging careful observation and independent thought are legendary, and among his former students stories of individual encounters and lessons learned abound.

Jack's modus operandi while serving as head of the department reflected his philosophy of hiring faculty with outstanding potential and giving them the freedom to pursue their own research interests. His expectations were high but except in unusual circumstances, he did not attempt to direct even the newest members of the faculty in anything but the broadest sense. He was, however, keenly aware of the importance of getting new faculty off to a good start, and some of us benefited from his generosity in steering our way graduate students who had been attracted to Cornell by his reputation. It was during Jack's administration that the name of the department was changed to Animal Science, acknowledging the fact that much of the ongoing research and other activities were more accurately described as science than as husbandry. He was also department head when fire destroyed the dairy barns behind Morrison Hall, triggering a move to purchase a large tract of land and develop off-campus dairy and livestock facilities at a new Teaching and Research Center south of Dryden.

Over the years Jack devoted a lot of time and personal concern to service activities at local, national and international levels. He was a Rotarian and an active member of his church. He and his wife, Reha, frequently entertained colleagues and guests, often including international scientists. Many of us as young faculty members met famous researchers from abroad in a social setting while dinner guests at the Loosli home. Jack was a Fulbright lecturer in Australia, a Visiting Professor at the University of the Philippines, the University of Ife and the University of Ibadan in Nigeria, as well as the IRI Research Institute in Brazil. He served on many committees, including the Secretary of Agriculture's Committee on Agricultural Science, and was a consultant to the Walter Reed Medical Center, and to USAID.

When he retired from Cornell in 1974 he moved to Gainesville, Florida, where for several years he was affiliated with the University of Florida in a number of capacities that utilized his administrative and editorial talents and

experience. During much of his life, even at retirement, his youthful appearance belied his chronological age.

Jack was preceded in death by his wife of 52 years, Reha Johnson Loosli. Survivors include his three children, Ellen Loosli Farnsworth of Murtaugh, Idaho; John A. Loosli of Gainesville, and Anna Loosli Langford of Gainesville; twenty-one grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

Harold F. Hintz, Douglas E. Hogue, J. Murray Elliot