

# Harold B. Sweet

*November 15, 1913 — December 1, 2008*

Harold B. Sweet, Professor Emeritus and lifelong learner and teacher spent most of his career in the Cornell University Cooperative Extension System. He was born on a small farm near Smyrna, New York on November 15, 1913. Harold joined the 4-H Club program, the youth development program of the Cornell Cooperative Extension System, when he was age ten. He participated in garden and swine programs and was a member of the 4-H county band that performed at the World's Fair in Chicago. During his high school years, Harold participated in a 4-H mechanics program taught by professors in the Agricultural Engineering Department at Cornell University. This early participation in the programs of the land-grant university, inspired Harold to choose Cornell Cooperative Extension, 4-H as a profession.

Harold applied to and was accepted at Cornell University where he attended 1931-35 and earned his degree. He was a member of the Alpha Zeta honor fraternity and played trumpet in the Cornell Big Red band as well as participating in the Cornell University Collegiate 4-H Club. To earn extra money, Harold corrected papers from the 4-H mechanics program, he waited tables three times a day for meals at the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority, and was employed to visit 4-H agricultural projects carried by youth in Chenango County during summer vacations.

After graduation, Harold started his career in education as a teacher of Agriculture at the Harrisville High School, Harrisville, New York in the foothills of the Adirondacks. During his second year of teaching, an offer to work as an Agent-at-Large came from Cornell Cooperative Extension to work in the Agricultural Program. From this start, Harold then became a 4-H Agent in Lewis County Cooperative Extension. Harold's work consisted of enrolling youth in the 4-H program, recruiting, training and recognizing volunteer leaders, providing interesting supportive county wide programs based in the research of Cornell University, enlisting private and government support, and conducting a public information program. He served as a 4-H Agent in Lewis, Wyoming, and Broome counties from 1938-56. During World War II, the 4-H program supported the Victory Garden program that was widely adapted across New York State. 4-H was also instrumental in bond programs to support troops and even collecting milkweed pods for flotation devices for the troops.

The next phase of Harold's career was at Cornell University as a State 4-H Program Leader. He was liaison with 4-H faculty specialists in the College of Agriculture at Cornell and provided leadership for programs and activities at the state and national level. Harold was a Cornell Cooperative Extension Director's representative with Cornell

Cooperative Extension Association Boards of Directors. He served in these roles at Cornell University from 1956-75.

Harold did not stop his 4-H career when he retired from Cornell Cooperative Extension. He accepted an assignment with the National 4-H Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland, the fund development and program support arm of the nation wide Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development program. He served in this leadership role from 1976-87. Travel related to his long career in 4-H took Harold to Europe, Africa, the Caribbean, the Philippines, Japan, Canada and all but four states of the United States.

In addition to his fulfilling career, Harold enjoyed playing bridge, traveling and spending time with his friends and family. Harold was supported in his career by the love of his wife Elizabeth (Betty) Lawlor Sweet, and their children, daughters Charlotte and Margaret, and sons Charles and Robert. The Sweet family was a source of pride with their services to others including community development in a variety of nations, law, insurance and help to those most needing help in our society.

Harold contributed to the mission of Cornell, the state Land Grant University System. He exemplified the access to formal education, existing degree programs and the constant integration of new knowledge in to every day activities. His loyalty, commitment and dedication to helping people make informed and considered decisions is a great and lasting contribution to society.

*Glenn J. Applebee, Chairperson; Lucinda A. Noble, William Worth*