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Contact: Linda McCandless, llm3@cornell.edu, 607-254-5137

Hudson Valley Entomologist Retires After 35 Years At Cornell

by Joe Ogrodnick

HIGHLAND, NY: Richard W. Straub, Cornell University professor of entomology at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station's Hudson Valley Laboratory in Highland, NY, has retired after serving on the Cornell faculty for 35 years.

"Dick Straub has gained the respect of faculty, colleagues, staff and members of the fruit and vegetable industries throughout his career," said experiment station director Thomas J. Burr. "He has had great success as a field biologist and front-line entomologist who was called upon daily to address the critical needs of the Eastern New York growers. His care and knowledge will have lasting impacts on New York agriculture."

Straub's research programs focused on the biology, occurrence, and management of arthropods that affect fruit and vegetable crops grown in the Hudson Valley. The pest management strategies he developed revolved around pesticide-pest interactions that affect optimum control efficiency, plant virus-vector relationships, the effects of natural enemies on insect management, and the dynamics of soil inhabiting and foliar-feeding pests.

More recently, Straub's research emphasis was on specific arthropod biologies that relate to their damage potential on high-density apple cultivars grafted onto size-controlling rootstocks, the biology and ecology of the onion bulb mite, and the assessment of fruit and vegetable pest management strategies utilizing reduced-risk insecticides.

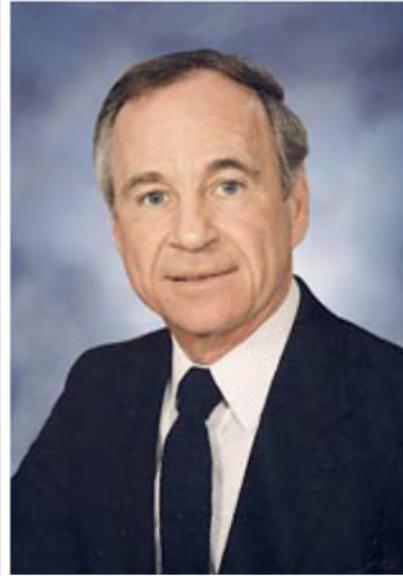
"Dick Straub has been a wonderful colleague and integral member of our department since 1971," said Wendell Roelofs, chairman of the entomology department in Geneva. "Some people might relax after reaching the professorial rank, but, shortly after reaching this rank, the fruit entomologist at the Hudson Valley Lab died and Dick was given responsibility for fruit in addition to vegetables."

Straub carried out dual responsibilities since 1991, collaborating with fruit and vegetable entomologists at Geneva to make sure that pest control programs on various commodities were applicable regardless of regional differences in the Hudson Valley.

The growers whom Straub interacted with over the years hold him in very high regard. "I consider myself very fortunate to have been one of the many growers that Dick Straub worked with in the Hudson Valley," said John Gill of Gill Farms. "Dick approached each issue by applying his vast knowledge and experience in dealing with various insect pests. If he did not have an answer right away, he would find one and get back to you. He will be missed by all of us."

Straub is the author or co-author of nearly 100 scientific papers and made numerous presentations at various

Pictures are linked to hi-res scans



Richard W. Straub

meetings and conferences. In 2000, he received the Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors Award for Excellence for "outstanding contributions to Northeast regional research." He was also a recipient of the 2001 Group Honor Award for Excellence- Regional Project NE-183, from USDA-CREES.

Subsequent to having served three-and-a-half years in the U.S. Army Infantry, Straub received his B.S. in Biology in 1966 from NW Missouri State, and both his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in entomology from the University of Missouri. He was hired as a research associate in 1971 by Cornell, was promoted to assistant professor in 1975, associate professor in 1981, and full professor in 1989. He is a member of the Entomology Society of America, the South Carolina Entomological Society, Gamma Sigma Delta, Who's Who of American Men and Women of Science, and the New York State Horticultural Society.

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New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, 630 West North Street, Geneva, New York 14456
Telephone: 315.787.2011



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