

Cornell University Horticulturist Made Fellow in ASHS

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by Peter Seem

GENEVA, NY: Cornell University professor of horticultural sciences, Alan Lakso, was chosen a 2001 Fellow by the American Society for Horticultural Science (ASHS).

Photo coming

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Lakso seeks to understand the environmental and physiological limitations of the biological and economic productivity of apples and grapes, with a focus on growth and development, stress physiology and the effects of cultural practices. The information is used to establish economically feasible, efficient and environmentally sound cultural practices to obtain high yields of the highest quality fruit.

Many scientists use a reductionist approach, seeking to isolate one variable while keeping all other factors constant. "But it doesn't work that way in the field," said Lakso, which is why his program concentrates on integrating different factors and looking at their interaction. "We combine and look at the interactions between the basic growth and development of the crop, the environment and the cultural practices."

"Professionally, it's a very meaningful award," said Hugh Price, chairman of the horticultural sciences department at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, NY, where Lakso works. "Alan's program is very innovative and creative and greatly expands our understanding of the growth and development of tree fruit and grapes."

Although the department has had other fellows in the past, including the late grape breeder Nelson Shaulis and former chair Walt Kender, Lakso is the only fellow in ASHS currently working at the Experiment Station.

ASHS is a professional society with 4,000 members composed of plant scientists, teachers, administrators, extension agents, government workers and growers whose mission is to promote and encourage scientific research and education in horticulture within the United States and throughout the world. A member is elected to be a fellow by the selection committee in recognition of contributions both to horticultural science and to the society.

Lakso has been a member of ASHS since the mid-'70's. He has served on and/or chaired many of the society's working groups, committees and task forces. He has conducted peer reviews for papers and manuscripts submitted to the *Journal of American Society For Horticultural Science* and to *HortScience*, two of the society's three serial publications.

Lakso received his B.S. in 1970 and his Ph.D. in 1973, both from the University of California-Davis. He was appointed assistant professor at Cornell in 1973, became associate professor in 1979, and full professor in 1986.

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