



## IN MEMORIAM

Bert Lear  
Professor of Plant Pathology, Emeritus  
UC Davis  
1917 — 2005

Dr. Bert Lear, Professor Emeritus of Plant Pathology and Plant Pathologist, Emeritus, in the Experiment Station at the University of California, Davis, died suddenly at Stanford University Medical Center on November 8, 2005.

An internationally recognized expert in the management of nematode pests of plants through chemical and cultural control practices, Bert Lear was born in 1917 in Logan, Utah. He received his B.S. degree from Utah State University in 1941, following which he was appointed as a U.S.D.A. agent at Utah State University.

Supported by a fellowship from the Dow Chemical Company, Dr. Lear received his Ph.D. degree in Plant Pathology at Cornell University in 1947 under the direction of Dr. A.G. Newhall. His thesis was entitled "The Use of Methyl Bromide and other Volatile Chemicals for Soil Fumigation."

Dr. Lear was appointed Assistant Professor of Plant Pathology at Cornell University in 1943. At Cornell, he pioneered the use of soil fumigants for nematode and disease control. Among his accomplishments was the development of methods for using liquid formulations of methyl bromide in greenhouse culture of vegetables and ornamental crops. At the Long Island Golden Nematode Laboratory, he worked on the development of split applications of soil fumigants and the use of methyl bromide as a space fumigant for the elimination of nematodes from reusable equipment.

In 1953, Dr. Lear was appointed Assistant Nematologist in the Department of Nematology, University of California, Davis. By 1963, he had been promoted to Professor and Nematologist. He transferred to the UC Davis Department of Plant Pathology in 1974.

At UC Davis, Dr. Lear continued the development of methods for soil treatment with methyl bromide. He also developed analytical methods for measuring the presence and concentrations of methyl bromide and other chemicals in soil, water and plant tissues, and established the database required for E.P.A. registration of methyl bromide for use on several crops, including onion, asparagus, and lettuce, as well as ornamental crops under the IR-4 program. In addition to his pesticide work, he developed non-chemical methods that included hot-water treatments for controlling nematodes in garlic, grape cuttings, rose rootstocks, and begonia.

Dr. Lear taught courses on the Principles of Nematode Control and on Nematode Pathogenicity to Plants. He directed the research of 13 Ph.D. and M.S. degree students.

Dr. Lear was the author of numerous publications and was a member of the American Phytopathological Society, the Society of Nematologists, the Helminthological Society of Washington, the Organization of

Tropical American Nematologists, and the New York Academy of Sciences. Over the years, Dr. Lear served on committees in his areas of expertise, of the Society of Nematologists and the American Phytopathological Society.

Upon retirement from the University of California, Davis in 1985, Bert and his wife, Anita, moved to Montecito, California, where he continued to travel internationally and to enjoy golf, tennis, gardening and photography. He is survived by his wife, Anita, and his daughter, Betsy, both of Menlo Park, California, as well as a sister and numerous nieces and nephews.

Howard Ferris  
Harry K. Kaya  
Dewey Raski