

Allan Romander Selected International Crop Adviser of the Year

Steve Beckley, S. Beckley & Associates

Allan Romander, Chairman of the California Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) Board, has been selected to receive the International Certified Crop Adviser (ICCA) of the Year Award by the American Society of Agronomy (ASA). The ICCA of the Year Award recognizes a CCA who delivers exceptional customer service, has shown that they are a leader in their field, and contributed substantially to the exchange of ideas and the transfer of agronomic knowledge within the industry.

He was nominated for the award by the California CCA Board. The award will be presented to Allan at the ASA Annual Meeting in Houston, Texas being held in October. He will receive hotel and travel expenses for two to the meeting, \$500 cash, a commemorative plaque and a one-year membership in ASA.

A 1968 graduate of Cal Poly Pomona, Allan resides in Modesto with his wife, Mary. He has 4 children and 6 grandchildren.

Allan is a Pest Control Adviser (PCA) and CCA with Western Farm Service in Vernalis, California. He officially retired from Western in 2007 after 20 years of service with the firm, but continues working with them as an irrigation consultant and assisting in field personnel training. He has over 40 years of crop advising experience. He began his career with H. J. Heinz Company in California and Michigan and upon returning from Michigan, where he worked in developing management practices for mechanical harvesting of pickling cucumbers, he began his service to California agriculture as a crop adviser in 1979 earning his PCA license. He worked for Schmied Soil Service in Manteca from 1979 to 1987.

Fred Strauss, Manager of the Vernalis Western Farm Service's branch said, "I hired Allan 21 years ago for his honesty and ethical principles. His number one goal is to make growers successful." Western Farm Service has been a strong supporter of the CCA program from the beginning, requiring their crop consultants to be CCAs. According to Strauss, "Western provides in-house training several times year for CCAs."

Allan has been on the forefront of water management issues in Western Stanislaus County, where the Vernalis branch is located, working with growers on reducing sediment loss during irrigation and helping them increase water efficiency using soil moisture technology for improved irrigation management. Allan has developed irrigation scheduling techniques for tree, row and vine crops using Neutron Probes. Allan says, "I learned the value of irrigation management while working with tomato growers during my employment with H. J. Heinz."

As a member of CAPCA for the last 21 years, Allan has a keen interest in helping people understand the positive contributions of agriculture. He was active in the Plant Doctor program, making numerous presentations to young students throughout central California to help them appreciate where food comes from and the role of the crop advisers in producing healthy, safe food.

Allan became a CCA in 1994 and joined the California Board in 2004. He was selected as the Chair of the Marketing Committee in 2005 and then became Vice-Chair of the Board in 2007. In 2008, he was elected to be Chairman of the State CCA Board and the California representative on the ICCA Board.

Since he became Chair of the Marketing Committee, and later Chairman of the Board, the California CCA program has experienced a remarkable resurgence. Allan has provided a vision of an active, growing, and relevant CCA organization. He has worked tirelessly to improve the relevance and importance of the CCA program by making presentations throughout the state at meetings and to professional organizations that serve the agricultural production industry. He has taken the CCA exhibit to many meetings to pitch the program and answer questions.

A quote from the ICCA of the Year application form prepared by Dr. Rob Mikkelsen, Western Director of the International Plant Nutrition Institute, best sums up Romander by saying, "Allan's experience with the 'Plant Doctor' program reflects his approach to many activities. He

first finds programs that he believes in, learns the ropes, and then dives in with effective leadership to bring excellence to his activities. This is true when introducing new technology to his clients, overseeing complex production and environmental issues, or providing outstanding leadership to a renewed CCA program in California. His grasp of complicated multi-disciplinary production issues has earned the high respect of his peers.”

Congratulation to Allan for winning this prestigious award and fellow crop consultants are encouraged to stop by the CCA exhibit at the CAPCA Conference to say hello to him. He is truly worthy of this recognition as a result of many years of dedicated service to his clients, employers, and profession.