Memorial Resolution of the Faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Madison
On the Death of Professor Emeritus Dwayne A. Rohweder

Dwayne A. Rohweder, professor emeritus of Agronomy, passed away on December 8, 2017 at the age of 91. Professor Rohweder was internationally and nationally recognized and respected as an expert on management and utilization of forage crops, especially alfalfa, as feed for livestock. He was remarkably effective in his role as University of Wisconsin Extension Agronomist - Forages, cultivating close relationships with farmers, agribusiness, and extension and research colleagues to ensure that relevant new technologies were understood and employed on Wisconsin farms to improve profitability and environmental stewardship.

Dwayne was born on August 12, 1926 and grew up on his family’s farm near Green Mountain, IA. Dwayne received his B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees from Iowa State University in Agronomy (1948), Soil Fertility (1956), and Crop Production and Soil Management (1963), respectively.

Dr. Rohweder began his professional career with the Iowa State University Cooperative Extension Service as a County Extension Director in 1948. He secured his graduate degrees while concurrently serving as Area Extension Agronomist in southeast Iowa. In 1963, he joined the UW Department of Agronomy as Extension Agronomist – Forages, a position he held until his retirement in 1988. For 2½ years (1967 – 1969) he served as Agronomist and Chief of Party for the UW-USAID Development Contract Team at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul in Porto Alegre, Brazil, guiding establishment of a graduate program in agronomy and research programs in related fields of agriculture. Here on campus he served as vice-chairman of the UW Extension University Committee and also chaired the UW Faculty Council that merged the tenure systems of the UW and the State University System institutions.

Forage legumes and grasses, including corn silage, are the foundation upon which the Wisconsin dairy industry is built, and Dwayne focused his career on improving forage yield and nutritive value and ultimately milk production through promoting enlightened farm management decisions. Dwayne was instrumental in the development and presentation of extension education programs related to forage production practices to County Extension faculty and Wisconsin’s agricultural community. The scientific information for most of these programs was based on his individual research effort. He was instrumental in organizing the Wisconsin Forage Council, a valuable conduit for sharing information, that rapidly became the largest commodity group in the state.

Passage of the Plant Variety Protection Act in 1970 contributed to an explosion in the number of new alfalfa varieties released and available to farmers. Dwayne recognized the need to provide unbiased data on variety performance and established a replicated state-wide variety testing program to aide farmers in variety selection decisions. Dwayne led the development, with collaborators in Dairy Science, of the "relative feed value" index, widely known as RFV, providing farmers with a convenient means to assess nutritive value of various lots of alfalfa and the impact that management practices have on nutritive value. When near infrared reflectance spectroscopy (NIRS) was calibrated to quickly assess nutritive value of forages, Dwayne installed an NIRS instrument into a van allowing instant on-farm assessment of forage nutritive value. The travelling NIRS lab supported "quality tested hay auctions" that benefited both cash-crop hay producers and livestock producers in the state.
Dwayne's contributions were recognized by his peers by election to “Fellow” in both the American Society of Agronomy and the Crop Science Society of America. He received the “Merit Award” from the American Forage and Grassland Council and was named "Honorary Member" of the National Alfalfa Improvement Conference. Locally, he received the “Distinguished Service Award” for UW Extension and the “Second Mile Award” from the Wisconsin County Agents Association. In retirement, he was the driving force and editor for “The First 100 Years”, a compilation detailing the history of the UW Department of Agronomy. The Dwayne and Wilma Rohweder Forage Extension Award continues to encourage and recognize graduate students who have excelled academically and have particular interest in extension careers.

Dwayne Rohweder was a big man with a big voice, big laugh and big heart. He was a giant presence in CALS and in the Wisconsin agricultural community--he was a leader in the forage-livestock industries within the state, the nation and internationally. He was outgoing and engaging, he loved his work and showed it, and will be missed by all who knew him.

Memorial Committee
Ronald E. Doersch
Kenneth A. Albrecht