

NSI DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD FOR 1978

Carroll Plager
Austin, Minnesota

Carroll Plager pioneered the application of performance testing and carcass evaluation to practical swine production of a superior product. He led the swine industry in the development of the modern meat-type hog, the certified meat program, the National Barrow Show and the on-foot carcass evaluation shows.

Mr. Plager is a native of Grundy Center, Iowa where he was an outstanding 4-H member during his youth. He received his Bachelor's degree in Animal Science from Iowa State University in 1931 where he participated in the dairy, livestock and meats judging teams. He joined the hog buying department at the Geo. A. Hormel & Co. plant at Austin, Minnesota in 1931 and was named their Manager of Livestock Extension in 1945. Mr. Plager became the first Superintendent of the National Barrow Show in 1946. During his tenure as Superintendent, this show became the "World Series of Swine Shows."

Mr. Plager retired in 1972 after four decades of leadership to the swine industry and the livestock industry in general. Under his capable leadership, swine testing became an integral part of the swine industry in the United States. In 1957, he was instrumental in the Geo. A. Hormel & Co. donating their swine research facility north of Austin to the Minnesota Pork Producers Association to be used as a public central test station. The Minnesota testing program was further expanded as a result of his leadership efforts in 1958 when the New Ulm Test Station was built. Mr. Plager's contributions also include developing the Hormel Computing Slide that is widely used for determining judging scores. He authored numerous articles pertaining to carcass merit and grade and yield buying of swine. The ham-loin index that was widely used as the basis for measuring meatiness was developed by Mr. Plager.

During his distinguished career, Mr. Plager received many significant awards. He was one of the first recipients to receive the National Hog Farmer Service Award. He is also an Honorary Member of the Minnesota Pork Producers Association and an Honorary Iowa Master of Swine Producers. The University of Minnesota honored him for his contributions to the livestock industry by naming him to their Livestock Hall of Fame and he is listed in Who's Who in the Midwest. Other honors include the American Agricultural Editors Distinguished Service to Agriculture Award and the American Meat Institute Animal Agriculture Award.

Mr. Plager is a member of the First Congregational Church at Austin, Minnesota, the Austin Kiwanis Club and the Austin Chamber of Commerce. He and his wife, Jannette, have four married daughters.

Mr. Plager's long and distinguished service in the area of performance testing and his leadership to the swine industry at both the state and national levels make him truly an outstanding recipient of the 1978 Distinguished Service Award.