



# NEWS

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## **N.C. State Department Head Receives SAF's 2007 Alex Laurie Award for Research and Education at SAF Palm Springs 2007**

ALEXANDRIA, Va. – Sept. 27, 2007 – The Society of American Florists (SAF) presented the 2007 Alex Laurie Award for Research and Education to James W. Moyer, Ph.D., head of the North Carolina State University's Department of Plant Pathology, on Sept. 27 at the Industry Awards Dinner during SAF's 123rd Annual Convention in Palm Springs, Calif.

The Alex Laurie Award, established in 1948, is presented annually to an individual who has made significant contributions to research and education in the floriculture industry. The award is named for Alex Laurie who, throughout a career that spanned more than 60 years, laid the groundwork for research that revolutionized the floriculture industry and who left a lineage of students, teachers and researchers continuing to provide the information necessary to ensure the industry's future.

Active in both teaching and research on viruses affecting floral and vegetable crops, Moyer's expertise is recognized and relied upon worldwide. In the 1980s, Moyer

discovered the existence of a new virus, the impatiens necrotic tospovirus (INSV), which others had assumed to be merely a strain of the tomato spotted wilt virus (TSWV).

The INSV became extraordinarily important to the floriculture industry because it is spread by the difficult-to-manage Western flower thrips.

“Dr. Moyer has bettered our industry by developing critical knowledge of viruses and genetic engineering,” says Margery Daughtrey, senior extension associate with Cornell University’s Department of Plant Pathology. “Of equal importance, he has always been available to the flower industry, offering his considerable expertise and good counsel.”

Moyer’s work on the biology of INSV supplied research that was the basis for developing test kits industry members use to diagnose INSV. He has continued to investigate both INSV and TSWV, conducting research to help solve growers’ problems, and is currently investigating ways that viruses are able to adapt to new hosts and to overcome resistance in plants.

“Although it has been nearly 17 years since [our] first encounter, I remember our conversation clearly,” says Mary Hausbeck, Ph.D., Professor and Extension Specialist at Michigan State University’s Department of Plant Pathology. “Jim said that as researchers in agriculture, we must focus on solving problems rather than just working on them.”

Moyer has been published in many respected scientific journals, including the *Journal of General Virology*, the *Journal of the American Society of Horticultural Science*, *Phytopathology* and the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. He has been a featured speaker at conferences and symposia worldwide and has contributed to numerous books, including the *Encyclopedia of Virology*. In addition, he has written chapters for grower resource books such as *Ball Redbook*, *New Guinea Impatiens* and *A Ball Guide* and has lectured extensively both in the U.S. and abroad.

Moyer has received many honors throughout his career. In 1999, he participated in a Japanese Cultural Exchange Fellowship with Japan's Ministries of Agriculture and Education, and he was named a fellow of the American Phytopathological Society (APS) in 2001. He was honored with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's B.Y. Morrison Lectureship in 2005.

In addition, he served as APS' vice president in 2006 and will serve as its president in 2008-2009. He also sat on SAF's Research Committee from 1990-2003. He graduated from Penn State University in 1975 with a Ph.D. in plant pathology.

For more information or to nominate an industry member for the Alex Laurie Award for Research and Education, visit [www.safnow.org/awards](http://www.safnow.org/awards) or contact Debi Aker at (800) 336-4743; [daker@safnow.org](mailto:daker@safnow.org).

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