

1999 OLIVER ATKINS AWARD OF MERIT



GREG PARTIDA, Ph.D

Professor, California Polytechnic University, Pomona

Presentation remarks by Len Francis

It is a real privilege to make this presentation of the Oliver Atkins Award. Our honoree today is Dr. Greg Partida.

Dr Partida is a Professor, Farm Manager, and Coordinator of Fruit Industries in the Department of Horticulture / Plant and Soil Sciences at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. He received his Bachelor of Science degree at the same college where he now teaches. He received his Master's and Ph.D degrees at the University of California, Riverside.

He started his professional career as an assistant professor at Kansas State University. He soon returned to teach at Cal Poly Pomona where he remains on the faculty today. Among the courses he teaches are: avocado production, fruit tree propagation, citrus production, fruit science, pomology, advanced propagation, advanced pomology, orchard management practices, plant identification, insect vectors as well as guiding the efforts of student interns. Greg is first and foremost a teacher, who works with young adults. One of the distinctions of Cal Poly Pomona is that there are real orchards where the students learn by doing "hands on" work. One of those orchards is the Pine Tree Ranch in Santa Paula. Greg has been the manager of this ranch since 1981. He has been responsible for the cultural care and maintenance of its forty acres of avocados and twelve acres of citrus.

Greg and his interns have been working on avocado canopy management at the Pine Tree Ranch. They saw the need in the California avocado industry, indeed in the global

avocado industry, for canopy management. The trials at Pine Tree Ranch have shown that Hass trees limited in height at twelve to fifteen feet will produce more pounds of avocados per acre. It is for this work, especially, that we are honoring Dr. Partida this morning. His work, and the work of his students, went beyond just research. He personally shared his results with the California avocado industry. He has given freely of his time to conduct hundreds of hours of lectures, field meetings, and demonstrations. Literally thousands of growers have seen the results of his work and heard his recommendations.

The work at Pine Tree Ranch continues and can be viewed by reservation for all who want to see the trials that Greg and his interns have put together, as well as the extension of that program into the rest of the orchard.

Greg has given us more than practical research, he has given of himself.