

2001 AWARD OF HONOR PRESENTATION

• TED CANHAM •

Professor Emeritus, California Polytechnic University, Pomona
Award presented by Len Francis

I want to thank the Board of Directors of the California Avocado Society for giving me the privilege of presenting this year's Award of Honor. After considering all the nominations and reviewing the qualifications and endorsements, our recipient today is the unanimous choice, and that does not always happen. An honoree must have caused some effective change and improvement in our California avocado industry. Many of our past awardees have done so with continuous works.

Mr. Ted Canham has done so by cultivating the fertile minds of young people. He has educated college students in avocado culture. Beginning in 1948, and for the following 32 years, Mr. Canham developed and taught the first college level courses specifically for avocados. Many of his students in the Food Industries Department of the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, as an extension of his instruction, have gone on to improve the production of avocados and citrus in their own way and in their own fields. Many of them are here today to honor Mr. Canham.

Mr. Canham, you are a dear friend and mentor. You were born in 1917 - 84 years ago. Along the way you graduated from UCLA. Your academic endeavors were interrupted by World War II when you served in the U.S. Navy aboard a destroyer. We thank you for defending our freedoms and us. In 1948 you were asked to take over and develop the Food Industries Department at Cal Poly. One of the reasons that lead to this appointment was your experience teaching in the Veterans on the Farm - a program developed by the California State Department of Education. At that time he was a veteran teaching veterans. Mr. Canham taught in the Food Industries Department until his retirement in 1980. Fulfilling the Cal Poly motto of "learning by doing", he devised another Cal Poly requirement that each student must complete a senior project. He used that requirement to instill in his students the value and procedures of conducting scientific research. They learned the rote practices but also learned how to prove the value of those practices. Classroom and in field teaching is the most valuable asset that Ted gave to his students. Through his programs, his students were able to enter the field of agriculture as growers, orchard managers, consultants, pest control advisors, agri-business economists, agricultural insurance agents, packinghouse managers, chemists, teachers, and even politicians. But the way, California State Senator Dave Kelly sends his best regards and congratulations.

Ted's programs were much more than his in field teaching. He recruited many students from high school and junior colleges for he sold his program. Then before graduation he was lining up the job offers. Many of his graduates have come back to seek his guidance in starting a second or third endeavor in agriculture. Mr. Canham was their college professor and he would always be their friend.

