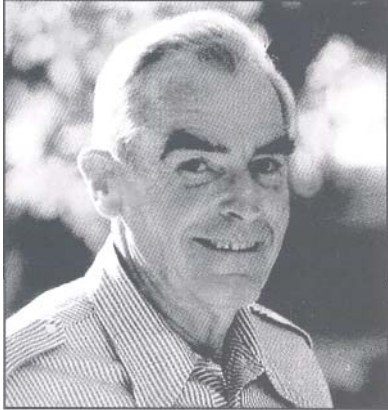


## 2001 OLIVER ATKINS AWARD OF MERIT

• **GEORGE ZENTMYER** •

Professor Emeritus, University of California, Riverside



Award presented by W. H. Brokaw.

It is my responsibility and privilege to present the award of the California Avocado Society from the section that has to do with nurseries and varieties. This award is called the Oliver Atkins Award. Those of you who are about three-quarters as old as I, will remember Oliver Atkins. He was a nurseryman in San Diego County in Fallbrook. He had a lot in common with the honoree today. He was not born in California. He was a diffident sort of guy. Very straightforward, honest and of good intentions. He served the California avocado industry well.

Our honoree is probably more widely known than anybody in the avocado industry worldwide. He has served California avocado growers particularly well. In addition, many of his discoveries have been adopted in other parts of the world. I can remember him in the 1950's as a tall, lanky sort of guy, diffident, ingenuous, innocent in a sense, and very knowledgeable. And he gave of his knowledge in the effort to solve the problems caused by root rot. In the 1950's and 1960's we thought that root rot might devastate the California avocado industry. You know by now that I am talking about George Zentmyer. George got his birth in Nebraska and his education in California. He has unselfishly and competently served the California Avocado Society and the avocado industry very well. He has a sterling list of qualifications, and membership in scholarly and civic organizations. I asked for the list, and while I am not going to read it all, there are some I would like to mention. One of them has to do with his character and this is his membership on the Board of Directors of the YMCA in Riverside. Another has to do with his connection with the University where he is a member of the Association of Emeriti of the University of California, Riverside - an exclusive group by any measure. He

is also the past president of the American Phytopathology. Perhaps the most exclusive honor was his election to the National Academy of Science.

Before I present this award I would also like to recognize Dorothy Zentmyer, his wife. She has been protective and supportive of George, and has contributed to his work through the years.

It is my privilege to present this important award of the California Avocado Society - the Oliver Atkins Award - to George Zentmyer.