

## University of California: In Memoriam, 2001

### Bor S. Luh, Food Science and Technology: Davis

1916-2001

Professor Emeritus

Bor S. Luh, who played a major role in developing modern food technology in California, the United States, and 26 other countries, died in Hilo, Hawaii, on June 4, 2001. Dr. Luh and his wife of 60 years, Bai Tsian Liu (Betty), were visiting their daughter Janet Luh, son-in-law John Seastrom, and grandson Jeffrey, who entered UC Berkeley this fall.

Dr. Luh was born in Shanghai, China, on January 13, 1916. He completed his B.S. degree in chemistry in 1938 at Chiao Tung University, Shanghai, China, and the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in food science and food chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1948 and 1952, respectively. He studied with Professor Herman Phaff. Dr. Luh was appointed Junior Specialist in the Department of Food Technology at UC Davis in January 1952. Subsequently, by his retirement on July 1, 1986, Dr. Luh had risen to Food Technologist in the Experiment Station, Step VI, and also served as a Lecturer in Food Science. Such was the recognized value of his skills and experience that he was immediately recalled, and he continued to serve the industry for several more years. Even after his "retirement" became complete, Dr. Luh's service ethic meant that he continued to work at an unabated pace. One colleague described him as "the most inquisitive and eager-to-learn scientist I ever met." He never missed a weekly department seminar, always taking copious notes, and you could count on him to ask an encouraging question of every speaker.

As a food chemist, food biochemist and food technologist, Dr. Luh's expertise was in great demand in California, the United

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— 152 —

States, and internationally. His contributions to the California fruit and vegetable processing industry include notable studies relating to pectin retention during tomato processing, to browning of peaches, and to softening of canned apricots. Dr. Luh also had a substantial, direct impact on the development and improvement of food science and technology in many Asian, Latin American, and Middle East countries. Through his education of over 100 students and numerous visiting scientists from those countries, many of whom now hold distinguished positions in universities, government, and industry, he made a significant impact in improving food processing, nutrition, safety, and food availability internationally.

Dr. Luh was a prolific writer, with both high scientific and high literary accomplishment. His work was, in many instances, seminal, and addressed real problems in food processing, chemistry, nutrition, and safety and in the storage of fruits and vegetables. In addition to more than 200 research papers, Dr. Luh published 86 major chapters in books, and was writer/editor of three books. He continued to publish throughout his retirement; his last contribution, published in 2001, was a chapter on rice production.

Dr. Luh's advice was sought by a number of agencies. He was invited to be a consultant to AID on Taiwan (1965-67), to FAO on Taiwan (1968-69), to the United Nations on Austria (1972-73), to the National Science Council, Taiwan (1973-77), and to the World Bank on China (1985-87). He was an adviser to the Chinese Institute of Engineers in Food Processing (1969-73), the Food Processing Institute, Hsinchu, Taiwan (1970-71), the Chinese Institute of Food Science and Technology, Taiwan (1971-73) and the Food Industry Research and Development Institute, Hsinchu, Taiwan (1972-77). Dr. Luh was one of the founders and most supportive member, as well as the first president, of the Chinese American Food Society, founded in 1975.

Throughout his career, Dr. Luh received many awards and citations recognizing his major contributions to the development of food science and food processing. He was honored in 1980 with the MOEA Service Award from

the Ministry of Economic Affairs in Taiwan and the Achievement Award by the Chinese American Food Society for International Contributions to Food Science and Technology. He was selected as a Fellow of the Institute of Food

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— 153 —

Technologists in 1986 and received the 1994 Distinguished Service Award from the California League of Food Processors.

Dr. Luh was more than a scientist and researcher. He was a generous, gracious, and quiet person who gave of himself unstintingly to graduate and undergraduate students and visiting scientists from around the world, as well as often traveling world-wide to share his expertise and help other countries develop their food science and technology. He was asked by several foreign student brides to be their surrogate father at their weddings in the United States when their own fathers could not attend. As one colleague wrote, "Professor Luh was much like my grandpa. Although I did not graduate from UC Davis, he treated me like his student and cared for my research and development." On several occasions he and his wife Betty provided significant financial support to the Department of Food Science and Technology; the latest contribution was for a Food Laboratory, named for B.S. Luh in a ceremony chaired by alumnus Martin Yan exactly a month before Dr. Luh's death. When asked why he contributed so much to others, Dr. Luh always replied humbly and quietly, "A small contribution considering what I have received from others."

Bor S. Luh was a truly gentle man.

Shu Geng Herman J. Phaff David S. Reid John R. Whitaker

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