

IN MEMORIAM

## Dr Walter Douglas Gubler



Dr Walter Douglas Gubler, an internationally recognized plant pathologist and a founding member of the International Council of Grapevine Trunk Diseases, passed away unexpectedly on July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Doug was born in St. George, Utah (USA) in 1946. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Botany from Southern Utah University, a Master of Science in Plant Pathology from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, and a Ph.D. in Plant Pathology from the University of California, Davis, where he led plant pathology research as a Specialist in Cooperative Extension for 33 years. During Doug's remarkable scientific career at UC Davis, he contributed immensely to the field of plant pathology through research, teaching and public outreach. He was specifically interested in advancing knowledge on the etiology, biology, epidemiology and management of fungal plant diseases, primarily those affecting grapevines, small fruits and other orchard

fruit crops. He co-authored over 200 publications including refereed scientific journal articles, many book chapters, disease compendia and numerous industry articles. Doug was especially proud of serving as one of the editors of the most recent edition of the *Compendium of Grape Diseases, Disorders, and Pests*, published by the American Phytopathological Society. This worldwide resource serves as a primary reference for those in the fields of grapevine pathology and viticulture. During his career, Doug presented hundreds of talks at scientific conferences, industry workshops, grower field days, and symposia locally, nationally and internationally. Doug's commitment and exceptional natural ability to share his knowledge not only with the scientific community but also with growers, pest control advisors and others within industry led him to become a highly coveted speaker and an international authority on grapevine diseases. Although

Doug conducted research in many diverse areas of plant pathology and on different crops, he will be most remembered for his pioneering applied research on grapevine powdery mildew, Botrytis bunch rot and grapevine trunk diseases. Doug's research investigating the biology and epidemiology of grape powdery mildew led to the development and implementation of the UC Davis Powdery Mildew Risk Index (i.e. Gubler-Thomas Model), an instrumental disease forecasting model for the grape industry worldwide. Doug's research on grapevine trunk diseases began in the late 1990's, with the primary goal of developing effective management strategies that would mitigate the tremendous economic losses they often cause. For over 20 years, he led a research team of graduate students and postdoctoral researchers, whose scientific contributions and findings provided the grape industry with novel information on the etiology and epidemiology of these diseases as well as with effective and innovative control strategies. In addition to his research, Doug contributed extensively to teaching, service, and outreach throughout his career. He

had one of the most distinguished and robust plant pathology extension programs in the United States. In recognition of his outstanding program he received The American Phytopathological Society (APS) Excellence in Extension Award in 1998 and was named an APS Fellow in 2009 for his distinguished contributions to plant pathology and to APS. He was also the recipient of the Chevalier de L'Ordre des Coteaux De Champagne in France. During his career, Doug mentored and supported many graduate students, post-docs, and other researchers, providing them with extensive opportunities for professional growth. Many members of his research team have become instrumental players in the field of plant pathology, with influence far beyond the borders of California. He is survived by and deeply missed by his wife Carol, his children Curtis, Kirsten, Sherie, Andrea, and Natalie, his large extended family and by his many friends and colleagues in California, the US and around the world.

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