

HONORARY MEMBER



L. Gene Albrigo
*University of Florida, IFAS,
Citrus Research and Education Center*

L. Gene Albrigo was born many years ago in California where he earned a BS in Pomology in 1962 and an MS in Plant Physiology in 1964 from University of California–Davis. He moved to Rutgers University in NJ where he received a PhD in Horticulture in 1968. Since 1968, his career of 44 years has been focused on the Florida Citrus Industry as a University of Florida (UF), IFAS Professor of Horticulture at the Citrus Research and Education Center (CREC), Lake Alfred.

Gene has been an active FSHS Member since 1969 (43 years) and has published regularly in the Proceedings since 1970. He has contributed to the content of FSHS meetings and Proceedings by either publishing as an author, a co-author, or having his work cited 479 times! His publications in the “Citrus” and “Handling and Processing” sections will impact the growers of Florida and beyond for years to come.

Since 2006, Gene has been the FSHS Sponsorships Coordinator. The underlying reason why our Society has been able to sponsor the various awards and great social receptions is due to the generosity of our sponsors. The FSHS sponsorship committee, with Gene Albrigo as Chair, has worked tirelessly since 2006 contacting companies and individuals to garner support for FSHS meetings and Best Paper Awards. Gene started the “Why not Sponsor an Award?” Program.

Throughout Dr. Albrigo’s career, he has been a dedicated teacher developing Citriculture courses and taking the lead on developing multiple-site teaching by Polycorn and Distance Education. It is no exaggeration to say that Gene’s students are the backbone of

the past and present Florida citrus industry—both in production and postharvest. Gene’s courses allowed personnel working in various aspects of the citrus industry to continue their education without the burden of traveling to UF in Gainesville. Many growers regularly made the trek to CREC because Dr. Albrigo’s classes were so valuable. Several of Albrigo’s student-growers are on the Florida Citrus Production Research Advisory Council awarding millions of hard-earned grower dollars for research to find legitimate solutions to industry problems.

Gene’s citrus-related research has covered a broad range of topics including environmental stress physiology along with pre-harvest pests and diseases that affect postharvest fruit quality and handling. This led to work on citrus leaf and cuticle development and interactions of peel development with spray technology. Even after retirement in 2009, he continues research in remote sensing to evaluate citrus acreage, tree health and eventually tree response to diseases and production practices.

Gene has led research on improving the citrus industry’s understanding of environmental and cultural practices affecting flowering and fruit set. This work was transformative in that he developed and delivered to the industry a grower friendly model to determine the intensity of flower induction, bloom date and the ability to enhance next year’s crop with a simple, affordable, well-timed nutritional spray. This is phenomenal! Dr. Albrigo’s “Flower Bud Induction Advisory” reports are useful for growers anywhere in the state, linking the model to actual, real, weather data collected from the FAWN weather system sites so that the

information is relevant wherever a grove might be. Dr. Albrigo worked with growers across the state documenting the positive effects of foliar nutritional sprays. This work laid the foundation for the nutritional spray programs that all citrus growers use today.

Dr. Albrigo also provided a usable model to determine how long copper sprays provide protection. Now growers have a tool based on precise rainfall and variety that also informs them when NOT to spray, saving money and chemicals and reducing crop loss. This is the essence of what research is supposed to do!

Gene has published countless scientific articles, co-authored several book chapters and was a co-author with F.S. Davies of the seminal book entitled *Citrus* through CAB International (1994). He is currently revising this book for the second edition. Gene has organized nine International symposia, the 1989 ASHS Annual Meeting, the 2000 International Society of Citriculture Congress in Orlando and the Inter-American Citrus Network under the aegis

of FAO United Nations. He is an active member of the American Society for Horticultural Science and the International Society of Citriculture and was elected ASHS Fellow in 1998 and ISC Fellow in 2008.

Gene's work has helped growers, packers and processors. Gene is still the "go to" person for many industry people when working with UF and CREC on a wide array of citrus issues. In addition, Gene has long been the person that all researchers and extension specialists—both current and retired, go to with difficult citrus questions or to get confirmation on solving problems from citrus nurserymen, growers, packers and processors. There is no question that Dr. L. Gene Albrigo has distinguished himself as a leader in the citrus community and FSHS with far-reaching impact. He deserves the honor of Honorary Membership bestowed by members of the FSHS. If you know Gene, you will agree that he will never be duplicated!