



2011 Oliver Atkins Award of Excellence

Terry Schaeffer
Ventura, California

Award Presented
by Carl Stucky

The Oliver Atkins Award is presented annually by the Society in remembrance of industry icon and nurseryman Oliver Atkins. Oliver not only did his job well, but went beyond what was required or expected, and avocado industry benefitted greatly from his work. This devotion and commitment to their work, which involves activities embedded in the day to day operation of the industry, characterizes the spirit of this Award.

The involvement and commitment of this year's honoree extends to his involvement in the community at large as well. As a volunteer, he has coached high school and collegiate cross-country and track for 19 years. He has volunteered as a tutor at the Ventura County Juvenile Hall. Currently, he volunteers twice a week at a local elementary school. A member of Rotary for 31 years, he is a recipient of the Rotarian of the Year Award at both the club and district levels.

After serving in the US Navy, he first came to work in Ventura County in 1976. He had a small, bare bones office over the agricultural commissioner that was cold in the winter and hot in the summer. This probably served him well, in that he truly could tell what the weather was like outside! Now with 40 years of professional meteorological ex-

perience, he is one the nation's most experienced experts in the fields of microclimates and fire weather.

His daily weather forecasts have been, and continue to be, an invaluable part of the fabric of the agricultural industry in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. Originally distributed over a single phone line via an "Electronic Secretary", his daily weather advisories, seasonally twice a day, were also broadcast on five local radio stations, 1 to 2 times a night, and seven days a week.

When the Agricultural Weather Service was eliminated in 1996, he set up his own consulting business, Weather by Schaeffer. One of his biggest concerns at the time was that "his" growers still needed to have good weather forecasting, particularly for cold events. He dreads seeing the development of freezing weather coming, and suffers right along with all of us.

Thousands of area farmers know the lead-in to his report by heart: "This is the agricultural weather advisory and fruit frost report for southern Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, meteorologist --- Terry Schaeffer--- reporting". Please welcome this year's recipient of the 2011 Oliver Atkins Award, Terry Schaeffer.