

# California Avocado Society

## 2012 Oliver Atkins Award of Excellence

**Sam McIntyre**  
Moorpark, California



Award Presented  
by Mike Nunez

We are fortunate have this year's worthy recipient of the CAS's Oliver Atkins Award in attendance tonight, complete with his entire family! It's a special night when we can get the whole gang together, so I'll start by sharing a few details on a man who has worked so diligently to transform the avocado industry in California into the vibrant business it is today. Sam McIntyre graduated from California State Polytechnic State University, Pomona, in 1958, which fellow graduates remember as the Voorhis campus/ranch.

Soon after graduating, he worked for Ortho in Oxnard, after which he and Robert Needham started a business in Ventura County, Pacific Pest Control.

In an industry ripe for expansion, Sam went on to work for Kaiser-Aetna developing many of the original citrus and Hass avocados groves planted between 1969 and 1971 in both Ventura and Riverside Counties. Many of the early players such as Sam deemed these areas suitable for orchard, and the rush was on! Kaiser's Rancho Ventura development was a 10,000 acre project in the Las Posas Valley, and in the

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Temecula area of Riverside County, in which Kaiser controlled 97,000 acres, today's Rancho California growing district was born.

In the early seventies, Sam formed Pro-Ag Inc., based out of Somis, with two other partners as a full service management and development company. During Sam's tenure, Pro-Ag planted over 3,500 acres in Ventura County to citrus and avocado orchards.

When not busy managing Pro Ag's daily business, Sam found time to serve as the President of Ventura County Farm Bureau, and the California Avocado Commission (CAC), where for 20 years he served as either a director or and on various research committees critical to insuring the fruitful direction the industry was heading. He was instrumental as a cooperater in the many rootstock trials that have given us the multiple stocks used today.

In 1988, after the dissolution of Pro Ag, Sam formed Somis Pacific Ag, which today farms over 5500 acres in Ventura, Riverside and San Diego Counties together with his son Scott's Sierra Pacific Farms, based in Temecula. Scott has since purchased and merged the Somis Pacific Ag Management Company with his Sierra Pacific Temecula operation. Both continue to see that the Somis and Sierra Pacific properties are used to further the research needs to advance the potential of the avocado crop in all regions of California in which we all as industry stakeholders benefit.

Sam is married to Carol, his wife of 57 years, and has three sons Steve, Scott, and Mike, nine grandchildren and one great grandson.

Many of his family are here tonight to wish him the best as we present this prestigious award, given to those who tirelessly promote improved production methods. Please join me in welcoming Sam, my former employer while I was at Pro Ag, to the podium!