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News

Western PGR group honors California farm adviser

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(3/21/2007)

The 2007 Western Plant Growth Regulator Society recently bestowed the Fellow Award to Bob Beede, a University of California Cooperative Extension farm adviser for Kings and Tulare counties.



The designation goes to someone who has performed exceptional service in the discovery, research and development, or educating growers about plant growth regulator use to improve food quality and profitability in the Western United States.

The award is the highest honor the society gives an individual.

Beede attended UC Davis where he received a bachelor's degree in plant science in 1975 and a master's in horticulture in 1978.

In 1979, he joined the Kings County Extension staff as the grape, tree fruit and nut crops adviser. When Steve Sibbett retired from Extension in 2001, Beede assumed his role to support nut crops in Tulare County.

Among his projects has been increasing the effectiveness of ethephon as a preharvest aid in walnuts.

Beede also tested horticultural mineral oil as a rest-breaking agent for pistachios in 1994.

His single-limb spray trials on Serr walnuts in 2003 with ReTain, a plant growth regulator from Valent U.S.A. of Walnut Creek, Calif., led to the discovery that pistillate flower abscission could be reduced substantially.

PFA occurs when excessive pollen causes overproduction of ethylene, eventually resulting in flower abortion.

Beede's continued research prompted the addition of walnuts to the ReTain label in 2006.

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