

Farm Science Review Honors Hall of Fame Recipients

By Jennifer Kiko

They've battled rain, mud and unpredictable crop conditions. They've interpreted the needs of 20 some equipment manufacturers and managed to keep everyone happy. They've consumed gallons of coffee at 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. when emergency meetings resolved the latest dilemma. And they did it all with efficient success.

Jim and Norma Trotter, both recently retired from the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center's (OARDC) Wooster campus have dedicated a combined 42 years to Farm Science Review. And even in retirement the couple plans to continue working as the organizational structure behind field demonstrations at the annual Review.

Both Jim and Norma are wholeheartedly committed to Ohio State's agricultural endeavors, and it's that commitment that makes them this year's Farm Science Review Hall of Fame inductees. The Review, an Ohio State University event, runs Sept. 18-20 at the Molly Caren Agricultural Center near London, Ohio.

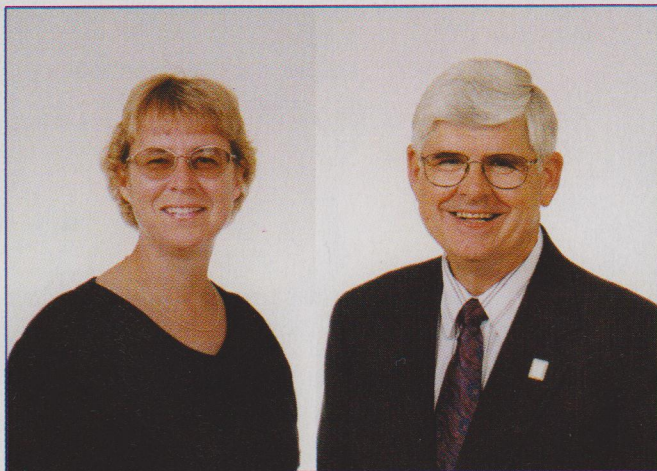
"The Trotters have provided service above and beyond the call of duty," said Craig Fendrick, manager of the Review. "Both Jim and Norma do a tremendous job. During Jim's tenure of 20 some odd years, everything has run without a single hitch."

Jim said it wasn't always easy to keep things running smoothly—especially during the first year at the Molly Caren site. "It had rained so much the parking areas couldn't be used, so cars were parked along the roads. The field equipment had to go on a five mile detour to get to the fields, because the combines and other large pieces of equipment wouldn't fit between the cars on the road."

Neither the mud nor the detour stopped the field demonstrations, however. "It was muddy on top, but fairly dry underneath, and we were able to keep things going," Jim said.

In fact, keeping things going is what the Trotters' job is all about. "We have weather challenges every year," Jim said. "Some years things can't be planted on time and when August rolls around we're not sure if the grain is going to be dry enough to harvest. Some years a cool summer may delay crop growth so things don't mature on time, even though planting was done on schedule. The biggest challenge is making decisions late in the summer on what we expect crops to do by September."

If at all possible, the Trotters want demonstrations to commence, even though the weather may be questionable. Visitors have driven many miles to see equipment operating in the field. And thanks to new technology, they can plan ahead.



Norma and Jim Trotter will be honored at the Review.

"We used to try to track storms on a weather radio, but with the Internet we can now tell more accurately what's going to happen where and when," Jim said. "We want the demonstrations to be a success—we don't want to disappoint the people."

Fendrick said it's during the most trying times that the Trotters shine the brightest. "Jim and Norma have the ability to very calmly analyze any situation that arises. They have provided great leadership to that phase of the Review," he said.

Their leadership stems from a love for the event itself and respect for each other. "We thoroughly enjoy working with people and the atmosphere at the Review," Jim said. "It's a totally different job than what we did in Wooster—a chance to get out in the field." And a chance to be farmers, Norma quipped. "Norma has been a major help to me," Jim said.

Norma remembers one year when Jim got sick on Tuesday night. Norma worked with the field operations and was able to go ahead with planned activities, with assistance from Jack Bardall, Randall Reeder, Jim Karcher and Mike Lichtensteiger. The demonstrations continued and the crowds were once again pleased.

Though they'll continue their Farm Science Review duties, the Trotters have a new agenda. The couple built a house about 10 years ago and now they have the time to enjoy homeowner duties, including gardening. Travel will also be part of their retirement since their grandchildren live in California.

The Trotters will be recognized during the Vice President's Luncheon on Tuesday, Sept. 18. Jim and Norma join previous Hall of Fame inductees: Judy and Kelso Wessel, Ed Johnson, Harold Bauman, Jim Caldwell, Naurine McCormick, Francille Firebaugh, Robert Miller, Jim Utzinger, David R. Miskell, Robert L. Eby, C.L. "Lep" Lephart, Dorothy R. Friday, Paul C. Leidheiser, Thomas M. Stockdale, Ted L. Jones, William L. George, Earl W. McMunn, Roland L. Leeper, James W. Yingling, William B. Zipf, Wilbur A. Gould, Shirley A. Brooks-Jones, Marion E. Grimes, Molly Caren Fisher, Novice G. Fawcett, Dale T. Friday, Roy M. Kottman, and Thomas F. Wonderling.