

# Dr. Wayne Smith is 2004 Cotton Genetics Research Award Recipient

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NEW ORLEANS, LA – Dr. C. Wayne Smith, a professor of Cotton Breeding and associate head of Texas A&M University's Soil and Crop Sciences Department in College Station, is the recipient of the 2004 Cotton Genetics Research Award. The announcement was made here today during the Cotton Improvement Conference of the National Cotton Council (NCC)-coordinated 2005 Beltwide Cotton Conferences.

Smith received \$1,000 in recognition of his efforts, which include 30 years of scientific and academic service to the U.S. cotton industry combined with his cooperative research with scientists around the globe.

U.S. commercial cotton breeders have presented the Cotton Genetics Research Award for more than 40 years to a scientist for outstanding basic research in cotton genetics. The Joint Cotton Breeding Policy Committee, comprised of representatives from state experiment stations, USDA, private breeders and the NCC, establishes award criteria.

One of Smith's nominator's, Dr. Roy Cantrell, vice president of Cotton Incorporated's Agricultural Research Division, said Smith's research in A&M's Cotton Improvement Lab focuses on genetic enhancement of cotton for yield potential, earliness, fiber quality, host plant resistance and drought tolerance. He said that significant progress has been made in all of these areas with well more than 100 germplasm releases since 1974 – a number unsurpassed by any current public plant breeder.

"Dr. Smith has demonstrated exceptional skill and hard work in bringing fundamental genetic information from the basic level all the way through improved germplasm," Cantrell said. "This breadth of genetic enhancement

is rare in the specialized and compartmentalized research community that exists in the public sector today.”

Cantrell also noted that Smith is a valued colleague in the cotton community illustrated by his extensive collaboration with molecular biologists, physiologists, fiber quality specialists, pathologists and agronomists.

“He is a role model for contemporary cotton breeding by integrating all of these components into the Cotton Improvement Lab research program that he coordinates,” Cantrell said. “Some of his more recent germplasm releases have provided exceptional fiber properties in high yielding and adapted genetic backgrounds.”

Dr. Dick Auld, chair of Texas Tech University’s Department of Plant & Soil Sciences, said Smith has an equally impressive record as a teacher and mentor of students. Over the past 18 years, he has taught more than 400 students in his classes while directing 11 Ph.D. and 14 master’s level students.

Auld said Smith also has generated 53 refereed journal articles, 47 research reports, 74 proceedings, 60 invited presentations, 11 book chapters, a book and edited four additional books.

Smith has served as editor of *Crop Science* since 1991. He chaired the Beltwide Cotton Improvement Conference in 1987 and the Cotton Germplasm Committee from 1991-1997, and has been a member of the National Cotton Variety Testing Committee since 1987. He also served as president of the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society from 2001-03. He is a member of the Crop Science Society of America and the Agronomy Society of America.

Prior to joining A&M in 1986, Smith was a professor of Agronomy at the University of Arkansas Cotton Branch Experiment Station in Marianna for 12 years. He earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Auburn University and his Ph.D. from the University of Tennessee.

Smith is the second consecutive award recipient from A&M's Department of Soil and Crop Sciences following Dr. Peggy Thaxton, a research scientist who garnered the 2003 prize.

Source: National Cotton Council