Hutjens Named National Dairy Shrine Guest of Honor

Dr. Michael F. Hutjens, internationally acclaimed dairy cattle nutrition expert and esteemed educational communicator, is being recognized this year with National Dairy Shrine’s highest recognition, the Guest of Honor Award. This annual award recognizes a contemporary dairy leader for their outstanding accomplishments and contributions to the dairy industry.

Mike Hutjens, who makes his home at Savoy, Illinois, grew up on a Holstein dairy farm at DePere, Wisconsin, where he was active in 4-H and FFA. He would earn his Bachelor, Master’s and Ph.D. degrees in dairy science and nutritional sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. From 1971-79, Hutjens was the Extension Dairy Specialist at the University of Minnesota. While there he coached the National Champion dairy cattle judging team in 1978.

In 1979, Hutjens became the Extension Dairy Specialist for the Department of Animal Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. After 32 distinguished years in this role, he was named “Professor Emeritus”. While “officially retired”, Hutjens continues to keep a very full schedule as a teacher, speaker and writer. As David Fischer, retired Extension Dairy Educator at the University of Illinois, says, “I know of no one in the dairy industry and educational system that is more dedicated to serving the people for the advancement and improvement of the dairy industry than Mike Hutjens. Whether a consultant on the farm, a teacher in the classroom, a presenter at a multi-state or international conference, Mike is always full of enthusiasm and sound information.”

One of the most highly sought after speakers in the world for his expertise in dairy cattle nutrition, Hutjens speaks at an average of 100 meetings a year where he presents cutting-edge research and nutrition information. He has spoken, or provided nutrition instruction or training, in 46 states and 17 foreign countries. “He has the scholarly background and ability to talk with peer groups, as well as to interpret research results and present it in an easy-to-understand manner to dairy producers, agri-business personnel and youth,” says Dr. Jimmy H. Clark, Professor Emeritus at Illinois State University. As Clark says, “Mike is a ‘born’ teacher and leader in his chosen field of dairy cattle nutrition. He displays a genuine love and enthusiasm for teaching that motivates those around him.”

Hutjens is a prolific writer. Over the last four decades, he has authored, or co-authored, countless articles and four books on dairy cattle nutrition (Feed Guide, Feeding Systems, Dry Cow Management, and Forage Guide) for Hoard’s Dairymen magazine. He was the catalyst for Hoard’s Dairymen’s monthly dairy education webinar series that began in 2011. Hutjens continues to serve as the co-producer, co-host, and sometimes presenter, of this award winning
agricultural webinar which this year marked its 100th edition. “In bringing the best dairy information to those who need it most, Mike has left a lasting legacy of hands-on, practical dairy education to serve many generations to come,” say Corey Geiger and Maggie Seiler of Hoard’s Dairyman.

Hutjens has also written feed columns for Wisconsin Agri-View, Dairy Today, Dairy Japan and Progressive Dairy Magazine. In addition to these popular press articles, Hutjens has authored scientific abstracts and papers in the Journal of Dairy Science, co-authored the textbook “Principles of Dairy Science”, and written several computer programs.

Hutjens’ groundbreaking work and experience in “online” education put him at the forefront of dairy education when it came to using the Internet and other computer technologies. He was the coordinator and editor of the first National Dairy Database, the first time computer technology was used for dairy extension information and education. The launching of his CD ROM, and now Internet based, “Dairy Certificate” program in the 1990s, was the first university animal science class of its kind offered in the United States. This self-supporting program was the only online Dairy Certificate program in the country for 20 years.

Hutjens provides the leadership and coordination each year for Illinois Dairy Days, an annual program held for Illinois dairy producers. He then prepares the Illinois Dairy Report, a summary of the conference’s presentations and information on new dairy research being conducted at the University of Illinois. Since 1975, Hutjens has also been involved in numerous dairy cattle nutrition training programs for veterinarians in the United States and around the world.

Hutjens has served on many industry boards and academic committees throughout his career. He has been president of both the American Dairy Science Association (ADSA) and Midwest ADSA Division, a member of the Journal of Dairy Sciences’ Editorial Board, a Federation of Animal Science Societies’ Board member, and a director for the Illinois Holstein Association. Hutjens has received some of the industry’s highest honors for his leadership and teaching including the ADSA’s Award of Honor, Distinguished Service and Fellow awards, and World Dairy Expo’s Industry Person of the Year.

Dr. Mike Hutjens will be presented with the 2019 Guest of Honor Award during the National Dairy Shrine Awards Banquet on Thursday, October 3rd in Madison, Wisconsin. For more information about the banquet, or the students, producers and dairy industry individuals being recognized by National Dairy Shrine, contact National Dairy Shrine’s office at info@dairyshrine.org. To learn more about Dairy Shrine, and how to become a member, visit www.dairyshrine.org.

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Pictures of the honorees are available upon request by contacting info@dairyshrine.org.