

In memoriam: H. Allen Tucker, PhD

J. J. Ireland¹

Department of Animal Science, Michigan State University, East Lansing, 48824

©2009 American Society of Animal Science. All rights reserved.

J. Anim. Sci. 2009. 87:3830–3831
doi:10.2527/jas.2009-2433



Figure 1. H. Allen Tucker.

It is with great sadness that I share news of the passing of Herbert Allen Tucker (“Tuck”; Figure 1), professor emeritus of animal science and physiology at Michigan State University (MSU). Tucker was a leading expert on mammary biology and lactation in dairy cattle who had served on the Michigan State faculty for 38 years. He died Wednesday, July 15, 2009, at Sparrow Hospital. The following remembrance is an attempt to capture in words the remarkable impact Tuck had on his colleagues and field of research.

H. Allen Tucker (“Tuck”) was born in 1936 in Milford, Massachusetts. Throughout his adult life Tuck thoroughly enjoyed gardening, fishing, deer hunting, scouting, camping, antiquing, and going to his cabin. At work, he was the consummate old-style professor who believed the purpose of his research program was to train others. He labored tirelessly to train graduate students, fellows, visiting scientists and colleagues like me how to write about, evaluate and conduct research. Tuck often used the word “pithy,” although few of us ever knew what the word meant. He also strongly believed, even preached, that everyone’s research design, lectures, and scientific writings, including his own, could be improved by constructive criticism. Many of us owe much of the success in our scientific careers to Tuck’s pithy, sometimes stinging, yet always well-deserved criticisms.

Tucker obtained his BS degree in animal husbandry from the University of Massachusetts in 1958 and his MS and PhD in animal physiology at Rutgers University in 1960 and 1963 under the guidance of Ralph Reece. Tucker joined the Michigan State University Dairy Science Department in 1962 where he rose to the rank of professor in the Departments of Animal Science and Physiology and remained until his retirement in 2000. During his highly productive career, he and his colleagues were responsible for development of radioimmunoassays for prolactin, growth hormone, insulin, glucocorticoids, and thyroid hormones in cattle. His descriptions of variations in these hormones during mammary growth, lactation, and the different seasons were among the first published. He also concentrated his efforts on understanding how temperature and photoperiod might be used to control hormone secretion and, as a consequence, rate of growth and lactation in cattle. Results of these efforts demonstrated clearly that 16 h of light increased growth and lactational performance in cattle. This novel research was highlighted by a publication in *Science*. Tucker was internationally recognized as a leader in the field of endocrine control of lactation. He authored 355 scientific publications and co-authored the most widely used textbook for college courses in dairy science, *Dairy Cattle: Principles, Practices, Problems, Profits*. He was the first editor of the *Michigan Dairy Review* at MSU. Tuck was recipi-

¹Corresponding author: ireland@msu.edu
Received August 25, 2009.
Accepted August 26, 2009.

ent of numerous prestigious awards including the Sigma Xi Research Award at Michigan State, the Borden Award (American Dairy Science Association; **ADSA**), the Morrison Award (American Society of Animal Science; **ASAS**), Cyanamid Animal Physiology & Endocrinology Award (ASAS), MSU's Distinguished Faculty Award, the Upjohn Physiology Award (ADSA), and the Casida Award (ASAS) for excellence in graduate training. Tucker's outstanding career was also highlighted by his ability to obtain external funding totaling nearly \$4,500,000. Tucker trained 45 graduate students, fellows, and visiting scientists. He also served the scientific community as part of numerous editorial and granting agency review boards, including the *Journal of Animal Science*. Throughout Tucker's outstanding career, he was an enthusiastic supporter of animal agriculture and a staunch proponent of high quality basic and applied research. Despite all the aforementioned accomplishments, Tuck will be most remembered and appreciated by his colleagues for his unflagging attention to the development and success of others. He set the standard for the next generation of faculty at MSU as well as other institutions of higher learning. Tuck is survived by his wife Ann, to whom he was married

to for 50 years; his 3 sons, Glenn, Wayne, and David, who were all Eagle Scouts and now have their own very successful careers, and their wives (Joni, Audra, and Jennifer) and grandchildren (Hannah, Zachary, Brittini, Shea, and MacCabe); and his brother and wife, Wayne and Lois. Tuck was a mentor and friend to many, and we will all miss him very much.

INSPIRATIONAL QUOTATIONS TUCK WOULD HAVE APPRECIATED

You cannot teach a man anything. You can only help him discover it within himself.
Galileo Galilei

If I accept you as you are, I will make you worse; however if I treat you as though you are what you are capable of becoming, I help you become that. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Reason does not work instinctively, but requires trial, practice, and instruction in order to gradually progress from one level of insight to another. Immanuel Kant