ASSOCIATION AFFAIRS
MEMORIAL
JOHN H. NELSON

John H. Nelson, Research Program Manager Emeritus of the Food Research Institute, University of Wisconsin-Madison, died November 3, 1997 at the age of 71. For over 40 years, Nelson was a pioneer in cheese research, quality assurance, and regulatory compliance.

A native of Bozeman, Montana, Nelson received his B.S. degree in dairy manufacturing from Montana State College in 1950 and his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in dairy and food science from the University of Wisconsin in 1951 and 1953. Nelson joined Dairyland Food Laboratories, Inc. (now Systems Bio-Industries) as Director of Research and was subsequently appointed Vice President. In 1977, he joined Kraft as Manager of Regulatory Compliance and, in 1981, was named Vice President, Quality Assurance and Regulatory Compliance. He retired from Kraft in 1987, joining the Food Research Institute where he managed industry relations and assisted in project administration. He retired from the University of Wisconsin in 1993 with distinguished service honors.

During his professional career, Nelson played a major role in the development and application of enzymes and enzyme-modified products in milk products and other foods. After pasteurized process cheese products were classified as low acid canned foods in the 1970s, Nelson was instrumental in planning research acceptable to FDA to develop technology to inhibit Clostridium botulinum via product formulation. In 1994, Nelson received the National Cheese Institute Laureate Award, which recognizes an individual who has made a significant contribution to the growth and development of the cheese industry.

John Nelson served for more than 30 years on the National Cheese Institute Research Committee and on the Food Advisory Council, the Wisconsin State Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection. Nelson was the author or coauthor of over 40 publications and was the co-inventor of five patents. He was a founder of the United States National Committee for the International Dairy Foundation and served a term as President of the United States National Committee. Nelson was also a member of American Dairy Science Association, International Association of Milk, Food and Environmental Sanitarians, Institute of Food Technologists, and Association of Food and Drug Officials.

Nelson was an active long-time member of ADSA. He served on numerous committees, including the Dairy Foods Division Nominating Committee, the Dairy Foods Division Bylaws and Operational Procedure Committee, and the Manufacturing Section Program Committee. National committee service included Flavor Nomenclature and References Standards Committee, Membership Committee, West Agro Chemical Co. Award Selection Committee, Research Committee, Internal Affairs Committee, and International Relations Committee. Nelson was Secretary and Chairman of the Manufacturing Section and a Director on the ADSA Board.

Although Nelson will be noted for his dedication to food safety, he will also be fondly remembered for his warm sense of humor and his gentle guidance. He will be greatly missed, both professionally and personally, by the staff and faculty of University of Wisconsin-Madison and by his colleagues in the food industry.

Nelson is survived by his wife, Marilyn Nelson; a son, John V. Nelson; two daughters, Janet (Ken) Lichtenberger and Margie (Steve) Best; and two granddaughters, Caroline Lichtenberger and Laura Best.