

REMEMBERING PROF. BURT SWANSON (1939-2020)



Noted extension professional, Professor Burton E. Swanson, passed away on 23 April 2020. Many extensionists in Asia and across the world know Professor Swanson. He has written and edited many extension publications for Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations, and in India, he was instrumental in designing and piloting the ATMA Model representing the World Bank during 1997-2003. He was a founder and first president of the Association of International Agricultural Extension Education (AIAEE).

He edited the FAO (1997) reference manual *Improving Agricultural Extension* (with Robert P Benz and Andrew J Sofranko); FAO (2008) *Global Review of Good Agricultural Extension and Advisory Service Practices*; World Bank (2010) Discussion Paper *Strengthening Agricultural Extension and Advisory Systems: Procedures for Assessing, Transforming, and Evaluating Extension Systems* (with Riikka Rajalahti); and the GFRAS (2014) *Summary Report of Status of Agricultural Extension and Rural Advisory Services Worldwide* (with Kristin Davis).

In India, Prof Swanson worked very closely with the Extension Division of the Ministry of Agriculture during the NATP/ATMA pilot phase with Dr V V Sadamate (Directorate of Extension/Ministry of Agriculture), Dr M N Reddy (MANAGE), Dr Sanat Mishra (OUAT) and Dr K M Singh (MANAGE faculty), consultants and ATMA Project Directors (Dr M N Reddy, Dr G R Desai, Dr Sanat Mishra (OUAT), Dr K M Singh (DRPCAUI). Both Dr Rasheed Sulaiman V (CRISP) and Dr Sarvanan Raj (MANAGE) had immense professional relationship with Professor Swanson. All of them recollect their association with him here below.



Dr K M Singh

I came to know him in 2004, when he was a part of ITR mission of ATMA project in India at MANAGE, Hyderabad. He has been like a mentor to me ever since. I remember after my presentation on success story on Vincarosea, he came to me and said that this needs to be shared with global audience, which resulted in my visit to UIUC and Chicago to participate in IAMA conference in June/July 2005. I owe to him much of my work and success in agricultural extension despite being an economist, as Burt was always available to help and guide. I wish his wife Iris strength in these difficult times. In the end, I can only pray that his soul rests in peace.

Dr V V Sadamate

Prof Swanson extensively contributed to the discipline of extension. I had a wonderful opportunity to work with him on extension reforms in India in the mid-nineties when we designed and piloted the ATMA model under the guidance of him, Dr Rita Sharma and Dr R S Paroda. MANAGE provided an excellent back up to this successful experiment. R&D linkage was another area of deep interest for him. Prof. Swanson took a lot of interest in the Indian way of life, its culture and farmers' wisdom. Extension professionals world over would recall his great contributions. For me, it is a great personal and professional loss. Sincere prayers for his departed soul.

Dr Sanat Misra

We not only missed an extension professional but more importantly a very good human being. Let his soul rest in peace.

Dr M N Reddy

Very big loss to the extension fraternity. He was instrumental in bringing reforms in agricultural extension world-wide in general and in India in particular. I had an opportunity to work with Dr. Burt very closely for a decade. It is a personal loss to me and I pray Almighty to rest his soul in peace

Dr Rasheed Sulaiman V

I met Professor Swanson for the first time during one of the NATP design workshops at the Directorate of Extension (Krishi Vistar Bhavan) in 1998. Later, I interacted with him in Ethiopia during the International Conference on Advancing Agriculture in Developing Countries through Knowledge and Innovation, 7-9 April 2008, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and we had a lunch meeting on the world-wide extension study and use of indicators for assessing extension. Since then, I had several professional exchanges with Prof. Swanson on several aspects of extension reforms including the status of ATMA in India.



Dr Saravanan Raj

As an agricultural extension student, I read Professor Swanson's edited book Improving agricultural extension- a reference manual and as an extension professional, I am fortunate to meet, discuss and spend time with Burt Swanson in 2008 (Goa/India) and in Kenya) in 2011. He received the first copy of my book Agricultural Extension: Worldwide Innovation during the book release function held in Goa (INSEE conference) in 2008. He has a great professional commitment for agricultural extension.

On behalf of AESA, our heartfelt condolences go out to his family. All of us will surely miss the presence of such a truly lovable and kind person who has been passionate about reforming extension and advisory services worldwide.

An international study-abroad scholarship, The Burt Swanson Scholarship In Rural Development, has been established at the **University of Illinois** in his memory. For questions about the scholarship, contact Matthew Smith at msmi@illinois.edu.

ALSO READ: Burt Swanson - Celebrating an Extension Champion (May 15, 2020) by *Kristin Davis & Andrea Bohn*

https://dlec.hivebrite.com/news/282289?fbclid=IwAR2LxRAW7fQeflM5QS4Wi-EbAm_Hj9Dzhd4JQonCva576pkwYUFVOQ55IZs

ALSO READ: The Memorial Statement about Professor Emeritus Burt Swanson from the University of Illinois

<https://www.aesanetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/The-Memorial-Statement-about-Professor-Emeritus-Burt-Swanson-from-the-University-of-Illinois.pdf>