

MEDIA RELEASE

BSES Limited



13 May, 2010

Long-serving BSES members honoured

Yesterday, BSES farewelled two staff members who between them had clocked up more than 86 years service with BSES. They are Dr Nils Berding and Mr Alan Hurney (unfortunately Alan was unable to attend the function).

At a dinner in their honour BSES CEO Eoin Wallis spoke of the enormous contribution that the two had made to both BSES and the Sugarcane Industry. He praised Nils as an exceptional scientist who had applied innovative thinking to a diverse range of topics and come up with solutions that have provided the Sugar Industry with significant benefit.

Nils accepted a BSES scholarship in his 4th year of Bachelor of Agricultural Science degree at the University of Queensland in 1965. He commenced duty at Meringa on the 4th of January 1966 on a salary of £2189.1.0.

He later undertook a PhD at the University of California, Davis, then progressed to become a Principal Research Officer with major responsibility for the crossing/breeding program. In this role he attracted substantial external funding, established the photoperiod houses at Meringa, developed the base NIR understanding to develop the SpectraCane NIR system and, with his team, continued to release improved cultivars for adoption throughout the industry. His excellence was recognised through the award of the ASSCT President's Medal in 1989 and the inaugural SRDC Research Award in 1998.

Alan joined BSES at Meringa just after Nils, in August 1966, after completing his Agricultural Science degree at the University of Queensland. Eoin acknowledged him as an accomplished agronomist who focused on plant nutrition, weeds, cultural practices, soil limits, harvesting practices, drainage and all other issues thrown at him – even responsibility in Plant Breeding in North Queensland in 1989.

Alan transferred to Tully in 1980 where he remained until his retirement. He has held a number of positions there – as Officer in Charge (later Senior Officer) and Chairman of the Station Executive Committee. Alan's other significant contributions include his work in the Babinda area on the underlying factors of low CCS, which commenced in 1968 and concluded that an influence of local climate was the cause of the problem. He was also a senior author to two reports on the damage caused by Cyclone Larry. And although he officially retired in January 2009 he was employed again to help run the Six Easy Steps training as part of the Reef Rescue program.

The event was also an opportunity for BSES Chairman, Paul Wright to make presentations for long service to three exceptional staff members. They are: Trevor Willcox for 40 years of service, Joanne Stringer for 25 years of service and Mike Cox for 20 years of service.



Pictured: (L to R) Dr Nils Berding with wife Barbara, BSES Chairman Paul Wright, BSES CEO Eoin Wallis.

>>> ends

For more information contact: Eve McDonald, Communications Manager, ph 07 3331 3340

About BSES Limited - BSES Limited is the leading provider of research, development and extension services to the Australian sugarcane industry.

P: 07 3331 3333 F: 07 3871 0383 W: bses.org.au E: info@bses.org.au

50 Meiers Road, Indooroopilly | PO Box 86, Indooroopilly Q 4068