**Professor John Ryan**

John Ryan, known locally as Johnny, is a native of Ardfinnan and from a farm background. He attended high school in Cahir and then UCD on a County Council Scholarship, where he studied Agricultural Science. After graduation he pursued a Doctor of Philosophy degree in soil science. In his early years he played football for Ardfinnan, winning minor, under-21 and senior county medals in the early 1960s. He played both hurling and football in UCD.

He won a Fulbright Scholarship and spent 4 years at the University of Arizona in Tucson as a Researcher in the Soil, Water and Engineering Department. While there, he received a Master of Science Degree in Agricultural Education. He also met his American wife Barbara there.

He then spent 11 years as Professor at the prestigious American University of Beirut where he had graduate students from many countries of the region, especially Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sudan, and Lebanon.

After a year as Visiting Professor at the University of Arizona, he joined the University of Nebraska as Professor of Agronomy, based in Morocco on a USAID development project which focused on improving the agricultural sector in the semi-arid region of the country.

Subsequently, he joined the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas as Senior Scientist based in Aleppo, Syria. The Center focused on agriculture in North Africa, Central and West Asia, and other areas of the Third World. While there, he also held various administrative roles. He has mentored graduate students from many countries, such as, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Sudan, and Morocco and he has lectured widely in the US and Australia, as well as New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, Iran, Korea, Kenya,  North Africa and West Asia. He has published extensively on soil fertility, fertilizer use, soil conservation, soil analysis, plant nutrition, and agricultural education and development. Dr Ryan has not only left an exceptional legacy of scientific achievement to ICARDA, which he has served for 20 years, but to dryland agriculture throughout the world and to science.

 He has received many international awards for his research and educational efforts, especially from the USA and the International Union of Soil Scientists. He is holder of a rare distinction in that he is one of the very few who has been named a Fellow of ASA, CSSA and SSSA and he has won international service awards from all three societies. Dr Ryan’s career accomplishments were featured in the May 2013 CSA News magazine. In this article, one can sense John’s lifelong dedication to research, teaching, service, and to people.

In summary, Dr. Ryan is a rare individual that has had an outstanding career in agriculture, while selflessly touching and lifting the careers of many students and colleagues. He is both an academic and a common man. He is an excellent researcher and a gifted communicator.

He has severed on numerous editorial boards and international committees, especially the International Fertilizer Industry Association in Paris and the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna.

He was honored with a Doctor of Science Degree from UCD in 1999 based on his international publications.

Even though John has spent practically all of his working life outside of Ireland he never lost touch with his native Tipperary, his family and his friends from his student days. He bought a house and small farm in his native Ardfinnan some years before his retirement and Barbara and himself are well settled there. The quality of the land, in the heart of the Golden Vale, is far removed from the arid and semi arid regions of the Middle East but no doubt he will find some aspect of the soil that he can improve. However, although now retired in Tipperary, he remains professionally active at the international level, and was honored with giving the "Dr Tom Walsh Centenary Lecture" in Johnstown Castle in Wexford on World Soils Day in 2014.

**He is being inducted into the Tipperary Hall of Fame for his significant contributions to advancement of science and the welfare of humanity, especially in the developing world.**

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