

## An Interview with 2015 IPNI Science Award Winner - Dr. Cynthia Grant

The International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI) named Dr. Cynthia A. Grant as the winner of the 2015 IPNI Science Award.

Dr. Grant received her B.S.A. from the University of Manitoba in 1980; her M.Sc. from the University of Manitoba in 1982; and her Ph.D. from the University of Manitoba in 1986. Since 1986, Grant has worked as a research scientist at the Agriculture Canada Research Station in Brandon, Manitoba, Canada.

### Q. What influenced your path into agronomy?

*I grew up on a mixed farm and was actively involved in 4-H. I wanted to become a scientist, and agronomy seemed the logical choice.*

Throughout her decades long career, Grant has earned respect and recognition from her colleagues and the industry for her valuable research on soil fertility, crop nutrition, as well as the trace element contaminant cadmium.

**Q. What was the best advice you were given and what advice would you give to young scientists in the field?** *A good team can do far more to understand an issue than a person working alone. Good agronomic studies can be very expensive to run. Work with a team to get as much information out of every trial as you can.*

Since the 1990s, Grant has worked to assess the usefulness of enhanced efficiency fertilizers (EEFs) in cropping systems and in Canada. She has published 17 scientific papers, two review articles, a chapter on EEFs, and has prepared dozens of technology transfer articles and presentations on the topic in North America, Europe, and Asia.

Dr. Grant also worked to develop and assess beneficial management practices for nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, sulfur, and chloride to improve nutrient use efficiency, becoming one of the first Canadian researchers supported by the international Fluid Fertilizer Foundation.

**Q. What in your research career has given you the most satisfaction?** *My career in agronomy has allowed me to work cooperatively with some of the most interesting, dedicated and collaborative people on the planet. This has been intensely satisfying. Also, this is a career where your job description is to go out and learn new things. What could be better?*

Grant has published 165 journal articles on nutrient management, co-authored chapters on soil fertility management in dryland agriculture and sulfur manage-

ment, and co-edited a book on Integrated Nutrient Management. Her research has been recognized with several awards including, the International Fertilizer Industry Association Award, The Robert E. Wagner Award, the Fluid Fertilizer Foundation Researcher of the Year Award, and the Manitoba-

North Dakota No-Till Non-Farmer of the Year Award. She also served on the editorial board of several scientific journals and as Associate Editor of the Journal of Environmental Quality, Canadian Journal of Soil Science, and Canadian Journal of Plant Science.

**Q. What are your thoughts on the future challenges for agronomy?** *Future challenges to agronomy will center around the need to produce enough food for our growing population without destroying our natural resources. We need to be able to effectively use the scientific tools that become available to us. At times, good technology may be left unused because of philosophical concerns or fears, rather than on real risks. Science literacy is becoming more and more important, both for agriculture and for the general public. It is also a challenge to communicate the importance of agriculture to a population that is increasingly isolated from the farm.*

The IPNI Science Award is intended to recognize outstanding achievements in research, extension, or education; with focus on efficient management of plant nutrients and their positive interaction in fully integrated cropping systems that enhance yield potential. Dr. Grant receives a special plaque along with a monetary award of US\$5,000. A committee of noted international authorities selects the recipient.

Private or public sector agronomists, soil scientists, and crop scientists from all countries are eligible for nomination. This is the eighth year the IPNI Science Award has been presented. More information about the IPNI Science Award can be obtained from <http://www.ipni.net/awards>. **BC**



**Dr. Cynthia A. Grant**

2015 IPNI Science Award Recipient