

Kirklyn M. Kerr



Dr. Kirklyn McNeer Kerr, D.V.M., Ph.D., was born in Green Bank in 1936, one of nine children. He was president of the Green Bank FFA Chapter and was a delegate to the national convention in 1953-1954. He has remained an advocate for youth agricultural education programs throughout his career.

He graduated from WVU with a degree in Animal Science and later earned his D.V.M. degree from Ohio State University in 1961. He also has a M.S. degree in Medical Microbiology from WVU and a Ph.D. in Veterinary Pathology from Texas A&M University. He has been a certified Diplomate in the American College of Veterinary Pathologists since 1968.

He is a former member of the Mountaineer football team, and credits his educational achievements to his early work in 4-H, turning sheep shearing earnings into tuition money. He has taught, or served as an administrator, at five colleges in five states: WVU, Louisiana State University, The Ohio State University, Texas A&M, and the University of Connecticut.

Specializing in poultry diseases, Kerr served as faculty pathologist at Texas A&M and Ohio State, researching mycoplasma diseases of chickens before moving into a career in administration. He is the author or co-author of more than 70 research articles, and holds Distinguished Alumnus awards from both WVU and Ohio State. His encyclopedic knowledge and laboratory expertise continues to serve veterinarians and others in the profession.

At LSU, he was the head of the Department of Veterinary Science and Dean for Research and Advanced Studies. He was Director of the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center and Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture at Ohio State University. During his tenure, grant and contract support rose from \$5.1 million to \$14.2 million for the experiment station alone. The center's budget reached \$45 million in 1991.

In 1993, Kerr became Dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Connecticut, Director of the Connecticut Cooperative Extension System and Director of Storrs Agricultural Experiment Station. Student

enrollment doubled under his leadership, 4-H counted 45,500 members, and the Veterinary Medical Diagnostics Laboratory was nationally accredited in 2005. Connecticut achieved statewide mastitis control, identification of West Nile Virus, cloning of a dairy cow and development of pathogen-free chicken eggs for infectious disease research.

The Connecticut State Legislature funded a scholarship in his honor. Over the past nine years, 38 students have received \$1.5 million to attend veterinary school at Iowa State University. No such schools exist in New England, but 25 “replacement veterinarians” are needed annually to provide for animal health in Connecticut.

From 1998-2008, Kerr co-chaired the UCONN 2000 Facilities Master Plan Advisory Committee, a 20-year, \$1 billion construction and modernization project. He also chaired a similar project at the Louisiana State School of Veterinary Medicine from 1978-1987.