

# UNH's Brent Loy Receives Big E Agricultural Adventurers Award

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*J. BRENT LOY WITH HIS WIFE, SARAH LOY, AFTER THE PRESENTATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL ADVENTURERS AWARD IN EPPING. CREDIT: EASTERN STATES EXPOSITION*  
Dr. J. Brent Loy, University of New Hampshire professor emeritus and long-time NH Agricultural Experiment Station researcher, has received Eastern States Exposition's 2020 New England Fellowship of Agricultural Adventurers Award.

The honor was announced May 21 at the Big E annual meeting, with a special presentation made to Loy June 8 at his home in Epping, by former NH Commissioner of Agriculture Steve Taylor who serves as the Agricultural Adventurers committee chair and a Big E trustee, and Eugene Cassidy, Big E president and CEO.

"Receiving this award is a humbling, moving experience because it involves agriculture. It has been my privilege to have contributed to agriculture," Loy said.

Loy's experiment station-funded work, which has largely taken place at the Kingman Research Farm, Woodman Horticultural Research Farm, and Macfarlane Research Greenhouses, has resulted in his developing more than 80 new varieties of squash, pumpkins, gourds, and melons during his career. His work represents the longest squash and pumpkin breeding program in North America, and his seed varieties are sold in seed catalogs throughout New England and the world.

Loy holds a bachelor's degree from Oklahoma State University in horticulture, and a master's degree and PhD from Colorado State University in genetics and horticulture. His primary teaching responsibilities are in plant genetics, plant breeding, vegetable crops and crop production technologies.

Loy's crops are nutrient-rich, his seeds and germplasm research have influenced the harvest of countless farmers while delighting home gardeners and consumers alike. He has served as a professional mentor to scores of undergraduate and graduate students throughout his career.

Rob Johnston, founder and chairman of Johnny's Selected Seeds of Maine, attributes much of his success to his association with Loy. "My association with Brent was critical to my own plant breeding work. Brent is my senior as a geneticist, as a plant physiologist, and as a practical plant breeder. To a degree, I can attribute my own success to the knowhow and inspiration that has rubbed off on me during our thirty-some years of working together," Johnston said.

UNH Professor Emeritus Otho Wells said, "Outstanding varieties of melons, pumpkins, and squashes developed by Dr. Loy are currently found in just about every seed catalog printed, although his name is rarely mentioned. He is a very humble person, despite his many achievements."

In addition to his vast contributions to teaching, research and service at UNH, Loy has mentored many students who now serve as mentors and educators in their communities and colleges. As a collaborative researcher, Loy has shared his work at the county and state levels. He has collaborated with cooperative extension to widely disseminate his research and its practical applications.

Loy has been awarded numerous grants, licenses, and royalties in recognition of his cutting edge, extensive research in plant breeding development and plasticulture – the use of plastics in agricultural systems. This innovative research has contributed to the development of new varieties of crops suited for New England and has enhanced farm capacity and viability via enhanced growing season extension.

UNH has executed more than 50 exclusive licenses for inbreds and hybrids developed by Brent Loy. Throughout his career at UNH, more than 200 hybrids and inbreds have been licensed or utilized in trial and germplasm agreements. Royalties generated by this portfolio continue to increase each year, including an expected 10 percent increase from last year. Royalties have generated more than \$2 million for the university since commercialization began of these varieties.

He has received numerous honors including the 2015 Vegetable Breeding Working Group Award of Excellence and the 2007 Outstanding Vegetable Publication Award by the American Society of Horticultural Science. In 2011, Loy was named the inaugural UNH Innovator of the Year for his research program and its impact on the university's commercialization efforts. The award, thereafter, was named the J. Brent Loy Innovator of the Year Award. In 2010 and 2011, he was named a finalist for the Christopher Columbus Foundation Fellowship Foundation Agriscientist of the Year Award and received the Pioneer Award of the American Society of Plasticulture in 2000.

The Fellowship of Agricultural Adventurers has honored outstanding leaders in New England agriculture since 1953. Awardees are selected based on innovation, pioneering, and lifetime dedication to the betterment of agriculture.

The Big E takes place Sept. 18-Oct. 4, 2020, in West Springfield, Mass. For more information and to interact with the Fair through social media, visit [www.TheBigE.com](http://www.TheBigE.com).

Founded in 1887, the [NH Agricultural Experiment Station](#) at the [UNH College of Life Sciences and Agriculture](#) is UNH's original research center and an elemental component of New Hampshire's land-grant university heritage and mission. We steward federal and state funding, including support from the [USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture](#), to provide unbiased and objective research concerning diverse aspects of sustainable agriculture and foods, aquaculture, forest management, and related wildlife, natural resources and rural community topics. We maintain the Woodman and Kingman agronomy and horticultural research farms, the Macfarlane Research Greenhouses, the Fairchild Dairy Teaching and Research Center, and the Organic Dairy Research Farm. Additional properties also provide forage, forests and woodlands in direct support to research, teaching, and outreach.

The University of New Hampshire is a flagship research university that inspires innovation and transforms lives in our state, nation and world. More than 16,000 students from all 50 states and 71 countries engage with an award-winning faculty in top ranked programs in business, engineering, law, liberal arts and the sciences across more than 200 programs of study. UNH's research portfolio includes partnerships with NASA, NOAA, NSF, and NIH, receiving more than \$100 million in competitive external funding every year to further explore and define the frontiers of land, sea, and space.

- WRITTEN BY:

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**NH AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION**



University of New Hampshire

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