

Developing the Netafim Award

Freddie Lamm, who is much honored to be nominated and selected by his peers as the first award recipient, shares his story behind developing the Netafim Award.

What motivated you to develop the award?

*I have been a member of ASABE for many years and have regularly attended the Annual International Meeting and its awards luncheon. **I have always thought this was a good avenue for honoring those members that have made significant contributions to our profession.** I noted that although there were awards honoring those in the surface and sprinkler irrigation topic area, there was no such award honoring those in microirrigation. As my tenure as SW-245 Microirrigation committee chair was ending, I volunteered, along with Terry Howell, Sr. and Jay Robbins to form an ad-hoc committee to explore ways to rectify this situation.*

What piece of advice would you give to someone who is considering developing an endowed award or scholarship?

The idea for an award had been rolling around in my mind for a few years and I think the biggest impediment was concern about the difficulty of achieving the goal. This was totally unfounded anxiety. Once I contacted Carol Flautt, Awards administrator at ASABE, she alleviated many of my concerns by sending me details of how to begin the process, and she sent examples, rules, and guidelines that our ad-hoc committee found very helpful in formulating our own award guidelines. She also put me in touch with James Koelliker, ASABE Foundation treasurer, who explained all the financial aspects of creating the endowed award. Dr. Koelliker was very helpful in all stages of the process. We visited numerous times by phone and through email and his efforts greatly expedited the process by alerting me to deadlines and details that needed to be ironed out.

*I have to say that Carol Flautt and James Koelliker sure made the process much easier to understand and to ultimately accomplish. Our committee had most of our knowledge about the process in hand before we approached the sponsor. I think this preparation, which was greatly aided by ASABE staff, enabled us to give a more complete picture initially to the award sponsor, which allowed the sponsor to make an informed decision. The details provided to us by Dr. Koelliker allowed the sponsor and our committee to negotiate quickly the aspects of the award and the timing of the initial award in 2014. My overall advice is to **consult ASABE about the process, form a good hardworking committee, and work closely with potential sponsors keeping them fully involved and apprised of committee progress.***

What are your hopes for how this award might impact the future of agricultural and biological engineering?

*Although the worldwide land area currently using microirrigation is still quite small, this technology has been proven to be environmentally sound and economically competitive with other types of irrigation. **We hope this award can recognize and highlight the advancements made thus far in microirrigation and encourage others to build on these stepwise advancements in the future.** We believe microirrigation is a technology that is well suited to the water challenges of this century.*