

## **Nomination**

**To The Inter-American Institute For Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)  
of**

**Harold M. Riley**

Professor Emeritus

Department of Agricultural Economics

Michigan State University

### **For Leadership in Contributing to Progress in Agriculture in the Americas**

The Department of Agricultural Economics at Michigan State University nominates Professor Emeritus Harold M. Riley to be recognized by IICA as one of the 60 individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the progress of agriculture in the Americas in the past 60 years. Professor Riley's contributions can be seen through the personal example of professionalism and integrity he has set for innumerable students and colleagues, his lifelong commitment to mentoring of students and young professionals – and those individuals' subsequent records of accomplishment. Results of his efforts are also shown in the pioneering approach to marketing and food systems analysis that he championed and which has so profoundly affected the work of a generation of marketing economists working in and with food and agriculture in the Americas..

Letters supporting this application from colleagues working throughout the Americas are attached, and attest to the personal example of professionalism and integrity that Harold Riley set over the course of his 35 year career. He was strongly committed to mentoring in the classroom and beyond. In the classroom, he developed and taught a popular graduate-level course on industrialization of agricultural markets which has defined MSU's approach to agricultural marketing for three decades. He has supervised the research of more than 70 graduate students from both the U.S. and developing countries, including 12 from Latin America and 7 U.S. Ph.D. dissertations on agricultural and food marketing problems in Latin American countries. Outside the classroom, Professor Riley lead teams combining local professionals, MSU faculty from several departments, and MSU graduate students in major programs of food system research and policy outreach in Puerto Rico, Northeast Brazil, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Colombia, the Eastern Carribean, Ecuador, and Costa Rica. Professor Riley ensured that building local capacity through in-service training and careful mentoring was at the center of these efforts. Payoff to this approach was seen in the effectiveness of IICA's Hemispheric Agricultural and Food Marketing Program (HIAMP), which was lead for many years by young professionals who worked closely with Professor Riley. He also conceived and co-directed an innovative four-year program funded by the Kellogg Foundation to advance the leadership capabilities of 31 mid-career professionals from 22 countries (12 from Latin America) focusing on improving food systems in their countries. The program included travel-study activities in Brazil, Mexico, and several African and Asian countries.

Professor Riley was a leader at Michigan State University of a team of researchers undertaking path-breaking, collaborative research, technical assistance and training projects addressing food system development problems in Latin America. The integrated food systems approach that he helped develop and which he applied in these projects heavily influenced marketing research in the continent, and continues to be seen in today's "supply chain" analysis, including current efforts by

IICA to understand and enhance the impacts of increased expanded global trade and agribusiness investment in Latin America and other developing countries. Professor Riley twice served two-year assignments on Michigan State University projects in Colombia, helping design and implement food and agricultural marketing programs, including substantial assistance in Bogota to CORABASTOS and to the Coffee Federation's Diversification Program. He was sought by the World Bank for major sector assessments in Mexico and Ecuador, and maintained close liaison and collaborated with marketing programs in FAO, IICA, BID, and the US Department of Agriculture. He served six years (1972-78) as chair of the MSU Department of Agricultural Economics administering teaching, research, extension, and international projects.

As summarized in one of the letters of support for this nomination, "Harold Riley is one of those quiet and self-effacing professionals whose work can easily go unnoticed because for an entire career he has unselfishly focused on mentoring students and other young professionals who would make a difference in the lives of common people around the world and especially in Latin America." We believe the record shows that Professor Riley's quiet but tenacious efforts have had major impacts on the understanding of agricultural markets and food systems in Latin America. His work has likewise helped to strengthen many countries' ability to design effective policies and programs to improve those systems and, through them, the lives of millions of people. We can think of no better basis for naming someone as one of the 60 individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the progress of agriculture in the Americas in the past 60 years.