



## Obituary of Dr. Kenneth Eskins

Dr. Kenneth Eskins, 58, died Sunday, January 31, 1999 at his home. Dr. Eskins was born on January 18, 1941 in Beckley, West Virginia. He obtained a B.S. degree in chemistry from Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, in 1962 and a Ph.D. degree in organic chemistry from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois, in 1966. After a year as a post-doctoral associate at the Rosewell Park Memorial Institute in Buffalo, New York, Ken joined the Northern Regional Research Center (now National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research), Agricultural Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Peoria, Illinois.

Ken served in various research and managerial positions in the USDA Research Center for 31 years. During this time he conducted exploratory research in a wide variety of areas including: (1) the photochemistry of proteins, amino acids, and cellulose; (2) temperature regulation of gene expression in plants; (3) reactive oxygen in vitamin E; (4) the effect of light quality on plant development; (5) development of Fantesk<sup>TM</sup>, a novel class of starch-oil composite. Fantesk<sup>TM</sup> is currently being examined by many companies world wide for a number of applications ranging from foods, to oil drilling and lubrication. Fantesk<sup>TM</sup> is currently one of only two trademarks held by the United States Department of Agriculture. The success and growth of this technology is one of the greatest tributes to Ken's technical career.

During his scientific career Ken published over 50 scientific publications and was an invited speaker at many international meetings. He served as the Research Leader of the Seed Biosynthesis and, later, Biomaterials Processing Research Units at the USDA National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research. He received numerous awards during his career including the 1996 USDA Technology Transfer Award, the 1997 USDA Midwest Scientist of the Year, the 1997 Federal Laboratory Consortium Award for Excellence in Technology Transfer, and the 1998 Secretary of Agriculture's Honor Award for Superior Service. He was a member of the American Chemical Society.

Ken is survived by his wife, Sandra; his two sons, Douglas of Gales Ferry, Connecticut, and David of Chicago; his two daughters, Michele of Aurora, Colorado, and Sara of Laura, Illinois; his brother, James of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and five grandchildren. Ken was a friend, mentor, and collaborator to many individuals throughout the world. His patience, counsel, and spirit of exploration will be missed by all.

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