
Obituary

Professor Gordon Rosen

9 May 1926 – 22 July 2015



It is with great sadness that I have to report the death of Professor Gordon Rosen in July 2015. He was 89 years old. Gordon was an exceptional animal scientist and a wonderful character who will be greatly missed. Gordon started out by completing a degree in chemistry, at a younger age than most students, a taster of his prodigious talents. However, he came to prominence in the 1960's with his work on antibiotics in animal feed, where his expertise was held in great esteem. His recommendations were so highly

thought of he was once flown to the USA on Concorde at very short notice – something he was very proud of. In later times, he ran his own business called Pronutrient Services from his home in Wimbledon, London, where most of you will have had contact with him. Within this work he redefined the term 'additives' as 'pronutrients' arguing in his own uniquely precise and persuasive manner, that if you had feed 'additives', surely you must have 'subtractives', and that didn't make any sense. Instead, he believed that such zootechnical ingredients that contribute to an animals' digestion, health and performance should be termed 'pronutrients' as they complement the nutrition implicit in the diet formulation. Many of us have adopted this term within our own descriptions and writing. Ultimately he established the 'Rosen evaluation technique' for feed ingredients, which continues to be used for product evaluations and to improve trial design.

I first met Gordon in a taxi on the way to a poultry meeting in Peebles in Scotland in the mid-1990's, and found him a great source of knowledge and fun. With my status as a recently qualified PhD, he became a mentor for me, and we worked together on many projects over the years – all of which were intellectually taxing, but incredibly useful in the understanding of the conditions required for the performance of feed ingredients in various species. Many people remember Gordon as the sweet old man sat at the front of conference sessions, who would deliver killer questions to the unsuspecting or poorly prepared. He was a stickler for proper statistics and trial design especially. His particular application of science to animal nutrition was highly logical and very descriptive – and allowed many commercial companies and end users to better understand the application of feed related products.

Gordon remained an enthusiastic scientist well into his retirement, and was honoured with emeritus positions in the USA and various honours from his peers in recognition of his contribution to science. He was a resolute supporter of animal science, and was financially very generous to the WPSA in supporting the membership. He was the first ever sponsor of the World's Poultry Science Journal – a fact that was used to lever financial support from many large institutions over time. As a person, he was always fun

to be with, and I personally have had many good nights out with Gordon over the years – as I know many of you have done. Sadly, in the last couple of years Gordon, then in his late 80's, became frail and was diagnosed with dementia, leading to him requiring 24 hour care. His lovely wife Vanda has been by his side throughout his recent illness, and our thoughts go to her and his family in this difficult time.

Our thanks to the organisers (especially Dr. Mamduh Sifri) of the Poultry Science Association in the USA who honoured Gordon by naming the highly popular informal nutrition symposium after him at their July meeting. The board of the WPSA will be announcing how they intend to honour his memory at their meeting in Prague in August. A memorial service in London is being planned probably in early September (to coincide with those travelling to the Prague meeting from other continents), and members of WPSA, BSAS and PSA will be notified of the arrangements as soon as they are organised. Details will be on the relevant websites. Please note that attendance may be limited due to space available so RSVPs are essential. Please pass the information onto those who knew Gordon and may wish to attend but may be missed via these channels.

Dr Lucy Waldron.