

The Institution of Agricultural Engineers

Founded 1938 – Incorporated 1960

Award of Merit

Hugh Crabtree

FIAGR

Hugh Crabtree is an internationally recognised authority on ventilation systems for pig production. He is well known and respected in the UK pig industry and has more than 40 years of commercial experience in supplying technology to farmers.

Hugh graduated from the University of Reading with a First Class Honours degree in Agriculture in 1976, continuing with postgraduate research into the thermal performance of pig buildings.

He was a founder member of Farmex Ltd, set up in 1979 to supply ventilation systems to UK pig farmers. The company was incorporated in 1980, and is now the market leader for ventilation systems for pig production in the UK with its “dicam” controller used in a wide range of other agricultural applications from calf rearing to potato storage, LED lighting control to wireless grain store operation. Farmex is a three-time winner of the New Equipment Award at the British Pig & Poultry Fair, and is now at the forefront of real-time production monitoring in the UK and the USA.

Hugh was the founding chairman of the Allied Industries Group (AIG) of the National Pig Association (NPA). He chairs the AIG today, is a board member of the National Pig Association and was recently awarded a Lifetime Fellowship of the National Pig Association.

Hugh has always been keen to drive innovation and has led three UK Research and Innovation funded collaborative R&D projects and is active in the field of precision livestock farming and the application of information and communication technology (ICT) in agriculture. He is now the sole owner of Farmex Ltd and a co-owner/director of Dicam Technology Ltd.

Hugh has been a member of the IAGR since 1997, becoming a Fellow in 2001. He has served on the IAGR Council and Executive from 2016 to 2022, always providing wise counsel and considered advice. There is little doubt that Hugh has had a distinguished and influential career in agricultural engineering and his association with IAGR has been of substantial benefit to the Institution.

Outside agricultural engineering, Hugh founded, and is the driving force behind, the celebrated band “Feast of Fiddles”. Hugh plays melodeon and sings as well as compering the show on the night. He still plays for Morris as well as in various pub bands with other members of the Feast. He also enjoys rugby and beer!

It is very fitting that Hugh be awarded the Award of Merit from The Institution.

