Julio A. Penna

Ph.D., Agricultural Economics, 1974

After a wealth of global experience, Dr. Penna has traveled full circle and settled in his native land of Argentina. As head of the Department of Economics in the School of Agricultural Sciences at the Catholic University of Argentina, he fills the roles of teacher, researcher, and administrator. Dr. Penna is also a senior economist at the National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA), a government-funded organization conducting agricultural research and establishing extension programs to provide the benefits of new technology directly to farmers. Listed among INTA’s plentiful contributions are breeding developments in wheat, corn, potatoes, sugarcane, and cattle.

After receiving a bachelor’s degree from the University of Buenos Aires and a master’s degree from the Graduate School of Agricultural Sciences in Buenos Aires, Dr. Penna ventured to Purdue University. Led here by his desire to improve agriculture, and therefore, the quality of life for Argentines and other South Americans, Dr. Penna took full advantage of his international experience. For the past 25 years, Dr. Penna has continued to cultivate a relationship between Purdue andINTA as well as other universities he has been associated with, such as the Federal University of Viçosa in Brazil. Dr. Penna has welcomed Purdue faculty to Argentina in an effort to establish joint research, teaching, and exchange programs. He has also returned to Purdue himself, consulting with the deans of several Purdue schools.

Dr. Penna’s research and teachings have made monumental contributions to economic policy reform in Argentina by liberating trade, reducing agricultural subsidies, and adopting modern agricultural technology. His research provides convincing evidence to political leaders wishing to improve life for Argentina’s citizens. By spreading the findings of his work through the written word and powerful oration, Dr. Penna has distinguished himself as an accomplished leader in all aspects of agricultural economics.

For contributions to his profession and community, and for bringing distinction to his alma mater, Purdue University School of Agriculture is proud to present the Distinguished Alumnus Award to Dr. Julio A. Penna.