Professor Emeritus Bernard (Bud) F. Stanton died September 25, 2020 at age 95. He was a member of the faculty of the Department of Agricultural Economics (now the Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management) for 39 years, retiring in 1992. He served as department chair from 1968 to 1976. In retirement, Bud remained keenly interested in the agricultural economics profession and authored two books, one a history of the Cornell Agricultural Economics Department and the other a biography of George Warren. Moreover, he served Cornell as the part-time director of its Health Careers Office from 1996 to 2008.

His contributions to Cornell and agricultural economics were extensive and impactful. As department chair, Stanton instituted recruitment policies to diversify the graduate training of the faculty and to expand its subject matter expertise. New appointments in environmental and natural resource economics and in development economics concurrently increased strengths in econometrics and other quantitative methods. These changes were made while maintaining and improving traditional strengths in agricultural economics.

Bud’s leadership skills took other forms as well. He encouraged collegial interactions among the faculty by introducing a morning coffee time. He provided encouragement and feedback to young faculty and when he thought it was needed, critical evaluations. His teaching and publishing led by example. Although his principal subject matter area was production economics and farm management, he taught an undergraduate course in statistics, introduced an upper-division course in linear programming, and co-taught graduate courses in research methods and in price analysis.

He authored or coauthored numerous publications on farm-management related topics. The economies and diseconomies of farm size was a topic of special interest. His American Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA) presidential address “Perspective on Farm Size” (American Journal of Agricultural Economics, December 1978) highlighted the literature on the economies of size, still a timely topic with the continued increase in the average size of farms.
Using survey data collected at 10-year intervals from 1907 to 2007, Stanton and his collaborators provide readers with insights into the dramatic changes in the size and productivity of dairy farms in the Town of Dryden, Tompkins County, New York (Cornell University Department of Applied Economics and Management RB 2008-02).

The breadth of his research is illustrated by the article “Seasonal Demand for Beef, Pork, and Broilers” Agricultural Economics Research XIII (1961):1-14, which received an AAEA research award in 1962. Its main objective was to compare the demands for meats in the summer with those in the winter. The paper also illustrates the influence of alternative model specifications on results. The numerous results reported are especially impressive given that they were computed on a desk calculator.

Bud’s professional work demonstrated a persistent interest in accurately accumulating, presenting, and interpreting economic data. He served on the nation’s Census Advisory Committee on Agricultural Statistics. He is the author of “Expressing Ideas with Tables and Charts” (Cornell Agricultural Economics AE Extension 80-26). And one could sense Bud’s distain when a seminar speaker would say “I know that those of you in the back of the room cannot read this slide, but [an excuse].”

Bud’s contributions included much service. He served as the AAEA president in 1978-79, on the editorial council of the AJAE and as chair of the awards committee. An active participant in the International Association of Agricultural Economists, he was responsible for organizing the 1991 meeting in Tokyo. In addition, he was active in the Northeastern Agricultural Economics Association, including service on the Executive Committee. Stanton was the CALS’ faculty representative to the SUNY Faculty Senate 1978-84 and served on the Board of Directors of the Springfield Bank for Cooperatives.

He was willing to undertake difficult assignments that offered little or no reward to himself, simply because he was aware of their importance. His contributions made a difference to his profession and society at large and led to a variety of recognitions and awards. Stanton was named a Fellow of AAEA in 1983 and an Honorary Life Member of the International Association in 1994. He received an honorary doctorate from the University of Helsinki, and he was lauded by a former rector of the Slovak College of Agriculture for fostering channels of communication and cooperation among international academics. He received an Outstanding Faculty Award from the CALS Alumni Association in 1996.

Bernard F. Stanton was born August 3, 1925 on Old Homestead Farm, Westerlo Township, New York. Growing up on a farm, Bud was active in 4-H and the local dairy club. He graduated from Greenville High School in 1942, and after working on the farm during World War II, matriculated at Cornell University’s College of Agriculture. He was president of the senior class and received a B.S. degree in 1949. He then entered the graduate program in agricultural economics at the University of Minnesota, earning M.S. and Ph.D. degrees. He also spent a year at Oxford University as an Elmhurst Scholar. He returned to Cornell as an assistant professor of agricultural economics in 1953.

Sabbatical leaves in Washington DC, Finland, Australia, India, and Belgium enriched both his
professional and family lives. He also undertook guest lectures in Japan, China, and Slovakia.

Bud was predeceased by his wife Lara of nearly 65 years. She was a native of North Dakota, and they met on a blind date in 1955 while she was attending Cornell for summer course work. They were active in St. Luke Lutheran Church where Bud sang in the choir. He is survived by three children, Margaret McNamara, Karen Clark, and Randy Stanton, six grandchildren, and a great-granddaughter.

*Written by Bill Tomek, Loren Tauer, and Nelson Bills*