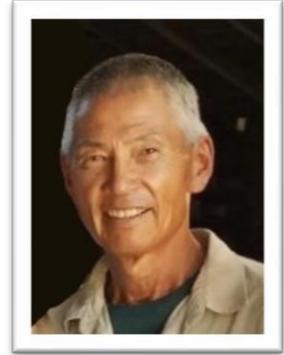


Gene Miyao - CA-ASA Honoree

University of California Cooperative Extension, Farm Advisor, Vegetable Crops, Yolo, Solano and Sacramento counties

Gene Miyao joined UC Cooperative Extension in 1980 as a farm advisor in Yolo County with commodity responsibility in vegetable crops, sugar beets and dry beans. In 1990, he accepted a management position with the California Tomato Research Institute. After a year, he returned to his UC position, which expanded to include Solano County and later Sacramento County. He remained in that vegetable crops position for 38 years before retiring in July 2018. His primary focus has been serving the local processing tomato industry, especially growers and allied industry, on crop production issues.



Gene was raised in Clarksburg (near Sacramento) on a small-scale family farm. He attended UC Davis and graduated with a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Science and Management. Concurrently, he also took summer, evening classes at Sacramento City College. Miyao continued with his studies for a master's degree in Agricultural Economics from UC Davis, as well as taking additional post-graduate, college-credit classes in plant pathology, biochemistry and agricultural marketing. He grew processing tomatoes after college in the upper Delta area. It was in 1980 that Gene made the tough decision to leave the farm and join UC Cooperative Extension in a position opened up by the retirement of a respected farm advisor, Mel Zobel.

Miyao is thankful to the many growers, PCA's, seed company and other industry personnel, as well as the UC and county colleagues who assisted and cooperated on various projects and programs over his many years in Cooperative Extension. Within the Yolo office, agronomist Tom Kearney mentored Gene in experimental plot design, scientific inquiry, crop production and effective communication. The senior tomato advisors at the time were Don May, Bob Mullen and Phil Osterli. The statewide specialist for the vegetable crops program was Tim Hartz. Tim's insight was invaluable for developing nutrient research programs, as were those of Specialist Kent Tyler. Weed ecologist Tom Lanini was interested in nightshade control and bindweed management. His enthusiasm for weed control and fishing were infectious. Gene worked more closely with plant pathologist Mike Davis to collaborate on research projects than any other specialist in the UC system. He thanks advisor colleague Brenna Aegerter for her counsel on programs. The current team of tomato advisors are productive and collaborative. Working in close proximity to UC Davis, Gene has been fortunate to receive campus assistance from many individuals—most notably plant pathologists Dennis Hall, Ken Kimble, Bob Gilbertson & his lab and Frank Zalom, former UC-IPM Director.

In his career, Gene is proud to have helped tomato growers with:

- implementation of integrated pest management (IPM)
- working on a team to narrow the timing and application rate of the herbicide Matrix for nightshade control
- assisting growers in transitioning from directly field seeding to the use of greenhouse-grown transplants

- leading a team of UC advisors on statewide processing tomato variety evaluations to identify productive cultivars, including disease resistance
- explored management of many plant diseases including blackmold, *Phytophthora* root rot, Fusarium wilt, powdery mildew and several viruses and bacterial pathogens
- cooperating with a team of advisors to demonstrate the value of sulfur dust for powdery mildew control
- demonstrating the risk of spreading Fusarium wilt from infested stems pieces on equipment
- modified management of nitrogen
- demonstrating the benefit of supplemental applications of potassium and of phosphorus, cover crops and composted manure
- participating in sample cost of production studies and updating the economic assumptions of local farming.

Gene recognizes that his programs were enriched by many summer student workers, some of whom were members of local farm families, while others remained active in the agricultural industry.

In retirement, Gene is looking forward to fishing in local waters, hiking, mushroom forays and some travel adventures with Donna and friends. However, he is still keeping an eye on advances in agricultural crop production.