

Dr. Norman Borlaug, Who Saved a Billion Lives, Honored by Congress This Week

By ACSH Staff — July 16, 2007

New York, NY -- July 17, 2007. The American Council on Science and Health (ACSH) is delighted to acknowledge that Dr. Norman Borlaug, one of our founding directors (in 1978), today receives the Congressional Gold Medal in honor of his tireless work and multiple accomplishments in agricultural science. A Congressional Gold Medal is the highest civilian award bestowed by the United States Congress. Dr. Borlaug's award is to be presented by President George W. Bush and Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi.

For nearly three decades, Dr. Borlaug has been actively involved in directing and advising ACSH's activities in multiple public health areas. His frequent attendance at ACSH board meetings and other activities has provided invaluable assistance as we strive to provide the best scientifically valid information to the media and to consumers.

Dr. Borlaug has been called the "Father of the Green Revolution" for his contributions to improving the characteristics of crop plants (especially corn and wheat), allowing Mexico, Pakistan, and India to expand their food production and avoid widespread famines. Indeed, it has been said that Dr. Borlaug has saved more lives than any other single person in history.

In a career spanning over five decades, Dr. Borlaug has received the Nobel Peace Prize (1970) for his agricultural achievements. He also received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1977. Dr. Borlaug is one of only five individuals who have been awarded the Nobel Prize, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, as well as the Congressional Gold Medal (Mother Teresa, Elie Wiesel, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Nelson Mandela are the others who received all three). He is also a member of the National Academy of Sciences.

Now 93, Dr. Borlaug still travels widely to developing countries to encourage the application of agricultural advances in the interest of both human wellbeing and environmental conservation. He teaches part of the year at Texas A & M University and is a special consultant to (and former director of) the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) in Mexico. He also works for the Sasakawa Global 2000 program in Africa.

ACSH president Dr. Elizabeth Whelan, one of many attending the award ceremony, comments that "Norman Borlaug is one of the great Americans of the past century. It is entirely appropriate that this honor be given to a man who, through his tireless work, has given so much both to Americans and to people around the world. I cannot imagine anyone more deserving. I am honored to know Dr. Borlaug, as are all those associated with the American Council on Science and Health."

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The American Council on Science and Health is an independent, non-profit consumer education organization concerned with issues related to food, nutrition, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, lifestyle, the environment and health. For more information visit <http://www.acsh.org> [1] or <http://HealthFactsandFears.com> [2]

Whelan and Borlaug at the July 17, 2008 ceremony:

Dr. Norman Borlaug with Dr. Elizabeth Whelan at his Congressional Gold Medal ceremony, July 17, 2007.

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