

Outstanding Achievement Award Recipients

Research/Academia

Dr. Jose Alfonso “Poncho” Ortega-Santos

Dr. “Poncho” Ortega’s achievements in rangeland management research and education have been truly outstanding. His work spans two countries. Dr. Ortega made significant contributions to the management of rangelands in Mexico before coming to Texas A&M University-Kingsville in 2001. He served as National Leader of the Range and Forage Program in Livestock Division, National Research Institute of Forestry, Crops and Livestock (INIFAP) in Northern Mexico. He had a major influence over the direction and development of range management research in Mexico during his tenure as director. He worked closely with producers in Mexico, and brought about significant improvements in grazing management on numerous ranches in Mexico.



In his role as an assistant and associate professor at Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Dr. Ortega has made contributions to rangeland management working as a liaison with universities in Mexico; teaching and research; service to the Texas Section, Society for Range Management and International Society for Range Management; and authoring of significant publications including one published book and one book in preparation.

He has been strongly involved in Plant Identification Contests at Texas Section and Society for Range Management meetings, and he coaches the Texas A&M University-Kingsville Plant Identification team.

In addition to academic achievements, Dr. Ortega is also a range management practitioner. He owns a working ranch in Mexico and trains horses in his 'spare time.' There are few people in the range profession that have both the academic and practical expertise in rangeland management possessed by Dr. Ortega.