



## 2021 CRAWFORD FUND MEDALLIST

### Dr T.J. Higgins

The Crawford Fund's success is based on people: trainees and trainers who are seeking to make an enduring contribution to global food security. Their commitment and perseverance, often over long periods, mark the Crawford Fund out as a unique contributor. Many go unnoticed and their contributions unheralded.

Accordingly, in 2010 the Crawford Fund decided to recognise people who have made a considerable and continued contribution to international agricultural research through our programs and related activities.

It is, therefore, with great pleasure that we are presenting the 2021 Crawford Fund Medal to Dr T.J. Higgins for his extensive and continuing contributions to international agricultural research. T.J.'s nomination is for:

**“national and international leadership of agricultural biotechnology research and its application to improved food security via the development of insect resistant cowpeas.”**

T.J. is a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin and did his Ph.D. at the University of California, Davis before coming to ANU in Canberra in 1971. Subsequently, he has had an illustrious career with CSIRO where he excelled in research and held significant leadership roles and continues to contribute as an honorary research fellow.

His nomination is based on this and his individual leadership of research to develop insect resistant genetically modified Bt cowpeas, with a major focus in Nigeria and to a lesser extent in Bangladesh in an ACIAR supported project. This work is delivering results that expected to increase yields by 20% and reduce chemical insecticide sprays from seven to two each season. It is making a major contribution to reducing poverty in West Africa and is a significant Australian contribution to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

T.J. has also, via the Crawford Fund, brought West African GM regulators to Australia for training by the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator and is a long-term member of the ACT Crawford Fund Committee. He has also taken an active role in supervising Ph.D. students.

T.J. has had an illustrious career as a scientist, leader and mentor and is indeed a worthy recipient of the Crawford Fund Medal.

