

Washington Symposium Program: President's Welcome

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Ladies and gentlemen, honored guests, and colleagues, on behalf of the Entomological Society of America, I extend a hearty welcome to our Washington Symposium celebrating the centennial of the founding of the Entomological Society of America. In keeping with our centennial theme, "Entomology Serving Society," we have directed this symposium primarily to the nonentomologist. One of the services that ESA and the members of the entomological profession perform is to bring the results of laboratory and field research to the public who need the information. ESA must also perform the function of alerting the legislative and funding groups to current and potential problems involving insects that need to be addressed before the problems become catastrophic. We hope that this symposium will provide some of this information to you.

Insects are intimately involved in many of the major problems of the world and the environment: water quality, adequate amounts of food, costs of clothing and other materials, and infectious diseases of plants, animals, and humans throughout the world. The annual losses resulting from insect problems in the United States have been estimated to be \$5 billion. This is a significant economic problem but the beneficial functions of insects is even more economically important. Estimates I have seen for just the United States attribute \$19 billion worth of pollinating services and \$300 million of commercial products to insects. Therefore we need not only to control the destructive insects but also to protect the beneficial insects from destruction.

Entomologists are certainly the experts on the roles of insects in