



Fred W. Tanner
1945-1946

Who is Fred W. Tanner?

Fred Wilbur Tanner (1888-1957) was an American food scientist and microbiologist who served in the founding of the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) and was the founder and one of the first editors for the scientific journal Food Research, now called the Journal of Food Science.

Dr. Tanner joined the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1923 where he was the first chair of Bacteriology (now Department of Microbiology) until 1948. His work focused on food safety issues, specifically pasteurization and meat curing. He was the author of more than 150 publications in microbiology and public health. Dr. Tanner remained as professor until his retirement in 1956. His research in food science and technology would also lead to the establishment of the food technology department at the University of Illinois in 1948.

Dr. Tanner served as IFT President in 1945-46, would win the Stephen M. Babcock Award (now called Babcock-Hart Award) in 1952 for his outstanding contribution to food technology resulting in improved public health. Dr. Tanner was posthumously awarded the Pasteur Award in 1959. The Chicago Section IFT would establish the Fred W. Tanner Lectureship in 1960, which is a lecture given every May by leaders in the food industry.

The By-Laws of the Chicago Section IFT state:

“The Fred W. Tanner Lectureship Committee will advance the profession and practice of food science by bringing to the SECTION outstanding scientific persons not normally available to the SECTION in this field or its related sciences, to speak on recent advances in the formulation, processing, preservation, packaging, distribution, preparation, nutritional quality, and enjoyment of food. A plaque shall be prepared and presented to the lecturer, with an honorarium of two thousand dollars (\$2,000) or more and a printed program shall be given to guests at the meeting.”