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2022 Award Winner Announced by North American Renderers Association (NARA)

Dr. David Meeker Receives “Don Franco Distinguished Service Award”

November 8, 2022 – The North American Renderers Association (NARA) is pleased to announce that the 2022 “Don Franco Distinguished Service Award” has been presented to Dr. David Meeker, Ph.D., M.B.A., for his leadership and longtime commitment to the rendering industry, NARA, and the association’s research and related programs.

The Don Franco Distinguished Service Award is NARA’s highest honor. It recognizes truly outstanding work on behalf of the rendering industry in science, policy, marketing, or communications and is presented to a member, staff, or friend of the North American Renderers Association for their exceptional contribution and service on behalf of the rendering industry.

Dr. Meeker serves as Senior Vice President of Scientific Services for NARA. He is the scientific and technical advisor to the North American rendering industry on science, animal disease, and feed safety issues. He also serves as Research Director for [The Fats and Proteins Research Foundation \(FPRF\)](#), the association’s research arm. In his role as FPRF Research Director he has been instrumental to programs and research conducted by the foundation to include designing the plan for NARA to manage FPRF for increased administrative efficiencies and assisting in expanding the foundation’s donor base.

Over the past three decades, Dr. Meeker has been an advisor to numerous governmental, professional, and business organizations in the U.S. and internationally. He is past president of the U.S. Animal Health Association, a member of the scientific advisory panel of the World Renderers Organization (WRO). He is also a former member of the USDA Secretary’s Advisory Committee on Animal Health.

At NARA he launched and managed multiple successful programs and projects and has navigated the association through numerous negotiations including FDA rulemaking for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), as well as rulemaking for the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). He helped to guide NARA and its members through several salmonella, poultry and swine diseases unfairly being blamed on rendered products, and also initiated a collaborative research effort that resulted in the creation of the Pet Food Alliance.

Dr. Meeker will be retiring on December 31, 2022. In his retirement he looks forward to enjoying time with his family, traveling, consulting, biking, and “slowing down.”

The Don Franco award was presented to Dr. Meeker at NARA’s recent 2022 Annual Convention in Dana Point, California.

About Dr. Don Franco

Dr. Don Franco, who passed away in 2015, was a highly respected and influential leader as NARA’s former Vice President for Scientific Services and President of the Animal Protein Producers Industry (APPI) organization. He was one of the editors of *The Original Recyclers* published by NARA in 1996 and was a contributing author to *Essential Rendering* in 2006. Dr. Franco held a master’s degree in Public Health and a Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine. Today’s North American rendering industry benefits greatly from his work.

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About the North American Renderers Association

The North American Renderers Association (NARA) represents the interests of the North American rendering industry to regulatory and other governmental agencies, promotes the greater use of animal byproducts, and fosters the opening and expansion of trade between foreign buyers and North American exporters. In addition to its U.S.-based headquarters, the association maintains offices in Mexico and Hong Kong, and has market consultants in strategic locations around the world. NARA publishes a bi-monthly trade magazine, *Render*. For more information, visit www.nara.org.

