



Ivan L. Garrison

January 20, 2007

Ivan L. Garrison, 87, of Pittsgrove Township, passed away Saturday evening, January 20, in the house in which he was born. He had been in failing health since November. At the time of his death, he was owner and manager of a thriving agribusiness and farm that he and his late wife, Stella Stahl Garrison, worked side by side to create.

In 1948, the Garrisons purchased 100 acres that were added to the 55 acre family farm. They continued to acquire land, including the Grier Farm in Deerfield, as well as additional parcels in Cumberland and Salem counties. At one point, they were US Steel's largest fertilizer dealer on the east coast. The farm received many honors, including annual awards from Asgrow, for the highest sales of soybeans on the east coast. In 1998, the New Jersey Agribusiness Association, Inc. presented him the "Business of the Year" award for outstanding service to New Jersey Agriculture. "I'm a firm believer in taking care of the soil. If you do, it will take care of you," he would say. And he never forgot the "beginnings," the depression days when he was a promising basketball player (Bridgeton High School, class of 1937), that he put aside to help his parents on the farm; or waiting in long lines of farm trucks in Bridgeton to deliver tomatoes to Water Street can houses.

He was a man who honored his word, and commanded the respect and loyalty of his customers and employees. Many saw him as a father figure,

saying that he never asked them to do anything that he wouldn't do himself. He and his wife, in turn, considered their employees "family."

He cared for his community. He took pride in being a founding member of the Centerton Fire Company in 1966, and was honored in recent years by the Fire Company for his contribution. He also served on the board of the Olivet Cemetery Association.

At the celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary, Mrs. Garrison remarked that she and her husband worked hard so that they could go on vacation, but when they started expanding their operation, they hardly could find time for a vacation. Nevertheless, they were able to take trips to Europe, South America, Hawaii, and the Caribbean, some in conjunction with agriculture awards they had won. They also enjoyed visiting friends and relatives across the country.

He is survived by four nieces and four nephews. In addition to his wife, he is predeceased by two sisters, Erma Garrison Hemple of Clayton and Ethlyn Garrison Schalick of Centerton, a brother, Raymond Wilson Garrison of Woodstown, and his parents, Raymond and Irene Lawrence Garrison.

A viewing will be held at the Adams Funeral Home, Elmer at 9:30 a.m. Friday, January 26, followed by an 11 a.m. service. In his memory, contributions may be made to the Centerton Fire Company or a charity of choice.