



Biography

John M. Dole

Dr. John Dole grew up in the horticulturally rich area of West Michigan, which inspired his life-long career in agriculture. In his younger days, he picked strawberries, raspberries, and apples as well as planted and harvested gladiolus for local farm market stands and worked for a local dairy. He was an avid 4-H'er, becoming a state winner and attending the National 4-H Congress.

Dr. Dole began his higher education at Grand Rapids Community College and transferred to Michigan State University for his BS in Horticulture. He worked in California at the Paul Ecke Ranch prior to his PhD from the University of Minnesota. Dole was on the faculty of Oklahoma State University for eleven years before moving to NC State in 2000. He became Director of Graduate Programs for the Horticultural Science Department in 2004 and Head of the Department in 2011.

For six years, Dr. Dole served as Associate Dean for Academic Programs, before serving as interim Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Science from 2022 – 2023. As Associate Dean, Dole worked to increase educational access for all students, especially those from rural areas and from underrepresented backgrounds, and increase number of students entering the majors most in need of students to meet employer demand. He started the CALS Online Academy, launched the national FFAR Fellows program, and championed new certificates and degree programs to update CALS academic programs.

In July 2024, Dr. Dole became the Director of the Food System Leadership Institute (FSLI), which provides executive leadership education for food and agricultural professionals in higher education, industry, NGOs and government. FSLI was nurtured and launched by the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities and is overseen by the FSLI Commission. As a member of Cohort 11, he is a proud alumnus of FSLI.

Dr. Dole's research focuses on the production and postharvest physiology of floriculture crops, in particular, working with cut flowers, poinsettias, and vegetatively-propagated cuttings. Dole authored or co-authored eight books, over 100 refereed journal articles, and more than 300 industry publications. He has mentored over 20 MS and PhD students and advised hundreds of undergraduate students. He serves as Executive Advisor of the Association of Specialty Cut Flower Growers, a 3,000 member national organization, and was previously President of the American Society for Horticultural Science.

Dole is one of the founding members of Seed Your Future, whose mission is to inspire people to pursue careers working with plants. This public private partnership between universities, ASHS and Longwood Gardens has grown to become a full-fledged national movement and organization.