

## **Benjamin Lucas Norwood**

Ben, a retired farmer and agricultural researcher from McBee, S.C., died Wednesday, Jan. 20, 2016. A son of James Theophilus Norwood and Florence Stone Norwood, he was born in McBee on March 6, 1934, and later became known by many locally simply as Mr. Ben. A graduate of McBee High School and Clemson University, he also did graduate work in agriculture at the University of Maryland after serving in the U.S. Army. In the aftermath of 1989's Hurricane Hugo, he was featured in The State for his work growing Atlantic Coastal panic grass, or sea grass, to help with dune stabilization along the coast. In addition to traditional row crops, he produced specialty crops for erosion control and wildlife management. He grew sericea for reclaiming mined land and developed an innovative method of transplanting bicolor lespedeza seedlings for bobwhite quail habitat. Earlier in his career, he was a research agronomist for the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture in Beltsville, Md. After retiring from farming in McBee, he worked for the federal government's citrus canker eradication program in Florida. He is survived by a daughter, Robyn Norwood, and her husband Mark Whicker of Long Beach, and a son, Michael Benjamin Norwood and his wife Tina of Camden, S.C. He was predeceased by his sons Jeffrey and Daniel and by his brother, James T. Norwood Jr. He also is survived by seven grandchildren, Eric, Hannah, MaryAnna, Joanna, Olivia and Mary Norwood and Philip Whicker, as well as a great-grandson, James Theophilus Norwood, known as Theo. Service was held at 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 6, at McBee Baptist Church followed by burial in McBee Cemetery. Memorials may be made to McBee Baptist Church, P.O. Box 416, McBee, SC 29101, or the McBee Depot Library and Railroad Museum, P.O. Box 506, McBee, SC 29101