



Spark Star

Anna McClung, PhD

Director

Dale Bumpers National Rice Research Center

Dr. Anna McClung is the Center Director for the United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, Dale Bumpers National Rice Research Center, in Stuttgart, Arkansas. She earned degrees from Texas A&M University and North Dakota State University in agronomy and plant breeding and has worked as a geneticist with the USDA/ARS for 29 years following nine years in the private research industry.

Dr. McClung leads a group of 30 employees, including 10 scientists, who are focused on exploring the genetic control of economically important traits in rice for the development of new rice cultivars to be grown in the United States. She has developed 18 rice cultivars that have been grown throughout the southern U.S. as well as in Brazil and Spain and has received three federal technology transfer awards for these efforts.

Dr. McClung has published more than 135 scientific manuscripts in the area of genetic marker discovery for use in plant breeding, developing high-throughput plant breeding methods, improving rice cooking, processing, and nutritional quality, and optimizing rice varieties for organic and sustainable crop production. She is the recipient of two awards for distinguished research from the USA rice research community.

Dr. McClung has worked to transfer her passion for agricultural research to students and educators through development of hands-on learning activities that range from DNA

extraction, to grain chemistry analysis, and transplanting rice and have been presented to hundreds of student visitors. She was a co-recipient of a USDA ARS Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity award for implementation of the Future Scientists program that trains educators in implementing agricultural science in the classroom. In addition, Dr. McClung serves on the executive board of the Arkansas Genealogical Society, the Lonoke 2022 Executive Board, the Lonoke Beautification and Recreation team, and the Lonoke County Museum, which are working to vitalize and enhance appreciation of their rural Arkansas community.

Igniting and fueling a passion for science, technology, engineering, arts and math

