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Ronald Elliott new department head

In its search for a new department head, the biosystems and agricultural engineering department found the perfect candidate right under its nose. In fact, the department discovered it already had its Mr. Right.

Dr. Ronald Elliott, professor at Oklahoma State University, was named the new head of the biosystems and agricultural engineering department on Jan. 1, 2001. Dr. Billy Barfield stepped down from the position at the end of September, and Dr. Edwin Miller,

associate dean of the college of agricultural sciences and natural resources, served as interim department head for three months.

Dr. Raymond Huhnke, head of the search and screen committee, believes Elliott has all of the essential ingredients for keeping the department on track to becoming one of the top five agricultural engineering departments in the country.

"Dr. Elliott is a well-respected professional who is recognized by students, faculty, colleagues and university administration," said Huhnke. "We are extremely fortunate to have Dr. Elliott as our new leader."

Elliott obtained his bachelor's degree in agricultural engineering from the University of Illinois in 1973 and received his master's degree there the following year. After working in the state government in Ill. and obtaining a Ph.D. degree from Colorado State University, his career at OSU began in 1981 when he joined the department as an assistant professor. He was promoted to associate professor in 1985. While on sabbatical leave in 1989, Elliott worked in Denver, Colo., as a research specialist for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. Elliott was promoted to the rank of professor in 1990. During his time at OSU, Elliott's

major areas of interest have included soil/water/plant/atmosphere relations, evapotranspiration, automated weather networks, irrigation management and plant growth modeling. He has provided leadership in the development of the Oklahoma Mesonet, an internationally recognized weather and soil monitoring network jointly operated by OSU and the University of Oklahoma.

Elliott's decision to apply for the position didn't come lightly and was one that he arrived at after careful consideration. He enjoyed the research and teaching position he had occupied for many years and had heard many suggest that the best job in the university was being a full professor. But Elliott recognized that he had administrative skills and was ready for new challenges.

"I derive a great deal of satisfaction from being a facilitator - one who can

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In addition to his duties as department head, Elliott also serves on the Athletic Council.

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