



## Robert Roberson

**Robert Roberson**, known to all as Robbie, has owned and managed successful nursery operations for more than forty years. A skilled ornamental plant grower, Roberson is an equally skilled spokesperson and industry advocate. When the industry has faced challenges, Roberson repeatedly steps in to provide leadership and thoughtful solutions. Along with the countless individuals Roberson has mentored over the years, Florida agriculture has benefited enormously from his efforts and expertise.

Roberson was a founding member of the Florida Foliage Association, serving as its Foundation's president for three years. When the organization assimilated into what is now known as the Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association (FNGLA) in 1993, he became an active member of FNGLA's local Action Chapter. He received its most prestigious honor, the Gene Batson Award, and was later inducted into the FNGLA Hall of Fame.

Roberson is well known for his advocacy work for the agricultural industry on local, state and national levels. He played an instrumental role in the creation of the UF/IFAS Mid-Florida Research and Education Center (MREC) in Apopka, including leading efforts to secure more than \$14 million in funding for the consolidation of three research centers throughout the region into one state-of-the-art facility. Roberson accomplished this with great political understanding and resources. His peers call him a man of action, integrity and great influence, all which is especially evident in his pivotal role in the creation of the MREC. Roberson continues his involvement with the MREC Advisory Committee, previously having served as its chair.

Roberson has also served on the national Council for Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching, including two years as the chair of its Southern Region; as a longtime member and past president of the Florida Agriculture Council; as the agricultural representative on the Orange County Planning and Zoning Board; and as the chair of the Orange County Commission's Agricultural Advisory Committee. Additionally, he has held leadership positions on the boards of the Orange County Farm Bureau and Fam Credit of Central Florida.

Roberson has long been a community in leader. He was honored by the Apopka Jaycees in 1966 after chairing the very first Apopka Foliage Festival which, 54 years later, is still an annual event. Rotary International selected Roberson as a Paul Harris Fellow in recognition of his volunteer contributions to his church, local schools and the surrounding community. His work on the Northwest Orange County Improvement Association and at this family's church typifies his exceptional service to others. Roberson has also been the recipient of the Award of Merit from the Agriculture Honor Society Gamma Sigma Delta at University of Florida.

Described by his colleagues as down-to-earth and outgoing, Roberson is regarded as a trusted mentor and the go-to guy for the industry.

Roberson lives in Tangerine with his wife, Sue. They have two children and two grandchildren.