

# Genebank Staff Accomplishment Highlight

April 19, 2017

Charles J. “Chico” Fernandez



Chico worked for over 30 years as the genebank’s horticulturist at the Peninsular Agricultural Research Station (PARS) at Sturgeon Bay. He retired in 2010, but

remains active in the program. He shares authorship on 5 peer reviewed publications. He won the 2004 National Plant Germplasm System outstanding staff member award. He has participated in 14 wild potato collecting expeditions to the southwest USA (so far) and is responsible for discovering the unique pigmentless mutant in *S. fendleri* (*American Journal of Potato Research* 83:437-445).

**His latest contribution** is discovering a novel mutant in the Mexican species *S. cardiophyllum* with tubers almost as big as those of cultivars, and breeding the trait into other primitive 1EBN species which have very small tubers, but are known to have a great array of very valuable insect and pest resistances, as well as nutritional qualities. This was first formally reported at the Potato Association of America meeting in July, 2016.

Please join us in congratulating Chico on this outstanding work.



*S. cardiophyllum* big tuber  
mutant tubers from the greenhouse



Normal-sized *S. jamesii* tubers



Field tubers of *S. jamesii* x *cardiophyllum* hybrids