

## **Dr. Kurt D. Nolte**

Did you know that Yuma Arizona produces 90% of the leafy greens grown in the USA during winter? It's because of hard working farmers and agriculturalists that we can have leafy greens all year long! One of those dedicated individuals is Dr. Kurt Nolte.

Dr. Kurt Nolte was born in the Coachella Valley of California. His family lived on an 80-acre homestead. In that area a lot of grapes and citrus is grown, so Dr. Nolte grew up learning about those industries. In the 1970's, he decided to further his education at the University of California. He gained not one, but two bachelor's degrees while he was there. He always planned to go back to farming, specifically with vine and tree crops. However, Kurt discovered he has a real passion for education! He started working for Sunkist Growers while he went to night school to earn a bachelor's degree in computer programming. He moved to Florida, and got his master's degree in plant science, as well as a PhD in Cellular Molecular Biology!

Kurt got married and moved to Yuma, Arizona. He intended to make his way back to California, but instead he got a job with Arizona Western College. There, he combined his two passions, agriculture and education, to direct their agriculture program. Eventually, Dr. Nolte started working for the University of Arizona as the Yuma Agricultural Center Director, Yuma County Extension Director, and Arizona Vegetable Production Specialist. In Yuma, Dr. Nolte created an impact by promoting agritourism, and educating people about Yuma agriculture. In 2010, the Yuma Fresh Vegetable Association awarded Kurt the Distinguished Service Award, and the USDA National Statistics Service awarded him the Exemplary Service Award.

Kurt Nolte is working in multiple roles that he loves. He helps Arizona vegetable growers do their jobs and teaches students of all ages to positively impact the future of Arizona agriculture. He also helps attract new companies to Yuma to grow the economy.

