

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS HAZEL LEE SHANDS**

Hazel Lee Shands, emeritus professor of agronomy, died in Madison, Wisconsin on December 27, 2002. He was born October 19, 1908 near Landrum, South Carolina.

Dr. Shands received his B.S. degree in agronomy from Clemson University in 1929 and his Ph.D., in agronomy and plant pathology from UW-Madison in 1932. His Ph.D. thesis concerned stripe rust, a serious disease of barley. He was appointed associate agronomist in 1933 at the UW-Madison, assistant professor in 1936, associate professor in 1942, and professor in 1946. He remained at the UW Department of Agronomy until his retirement in 1974.

He had a productive research career in plant breeding and genetics, concentrating on quality, disease resistance, and agronomic traits of small grains, primarily oats. His research also included barley, winter wheat, and rye. Cultivar development was an important aspect of Shands' research program. His keen eye, his wise choice of parental breeding stocks, and his consistency in evaluation of germplasm, early-generation progenies, and advanced test selections all contributed to his development of 22 crop cultivars, with contributions to many others. Many of these cultivars, especially the oats and Argee winter wheat, became the backbone of the Wisconsin Crop Improvement's Certified Seed sales program. At one time, nearly all oat cultivars grown in Wisconsin and more than 50% of those grown in the north central states originated from Dr. Shands' program.

The cultivar Vicland, which he released in 1941, was the first improved oat cultivar released by the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station. Vicland was resistant to crown rust, a persistent, devastating disease of oat. Vicland was immediately popular, and by 1945 was grown on 92% of Wisconsin's oat acreage. Beedee, released in 1956, had plump kernels and led the state in certified acres for ten years. Dal, released in 1971, was developed for its high protein content in response to needs of the milling industry. It remained the leader in Wisconsin certified cultivars for ten years. Argee, a soft red winter wheat cultivar released with R.A. Forsberg in 1977, had exceptional quality.

His classroom teaching, his mentoring of the research work of his many graduate students, and his teaching by example provided his students with solid foundations that contributed to their success as agronomists worldwide. During his career, he trained 15 M.S. and 22 Ph.D. students, several of whom became internationally recognized researchers. He taught an undergraduate course in Cereal Crop Production each year for his entire career, co-taught basic Plant Breeding, and taught the small grains portion of the Farm Short Course.

Dr. Shands was named as a fellow in the American Society of Agronomy and the Crop Science Society of America in 1955. The North American Oat Workers awarded him the Distinguished Service to Oat Improvement Award in 1974.

After his retirement, Dr. Shands initiated a project to develop oat germplasm suitable for use as cultivars or breeding stocks in developing countries. He distributed small seed lots of cultivars, pure-line selections, and segregating populations to oat breeders worldwide. He was especially revered by South American oat workers for his teaching, leadership, and counsel. His efforts resulted in the development and release of improved oat cultivars, an increase in oat acreage, and the training of many graduate students. Many of these students became faculty members of South American universities or cereal breeders at federal institutions. Dr. Shands received a special citation at the First South American Oat Workers Conference in Tres Arroyos, Argentina in 1991. He remained active with the international project and experimental field plantings on the West Madison Farm well into his retirement.

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Dr. Shands was a longtime member of Bethany United Methodist Church. He is survived by his wife, JoBelle, sons Allan of Madison, Jay (Holly) of Chillicothe, Ohio, and Severt (Louise) of Springfield, Virginia, a daughter Jody (Joe) of Plymouth, Minnesota, and two grandsons, Andrew and Perry Shands.

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