

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON**

**ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS GUSTAAF A. DE ZOETEN**

Professor Emeritus Gustaaf (Gus) A. de Zoeten passed away on November 29, 2003 in Denver, Colorado. The varied circumstances surrounding his personal and professional life served to create a legacy of respect for his scientific accomplishments and an appreciation for his role as mentor and friend to students and colleagues that will be long remembered.

Gus was born in 1934 in Tjepoe, Indonesia. Following the invasion of Indonesia during World War II, he spent four years in concentration camps. At the end of the war his family moved to The Netherlands, where he resumed his education at the age of 13. In 1957 he received his degree as a candidate in horticulture and entomology at the State Agricultural University in Wageningen and spent the following year working on physiological diseases of fruit trees in South Africa. In 1960, he earned his M.S. in horticulture, plant pathology, and organic chemistry at Wageningen. Following two years of service as a meteorologist in the Dutch Royal Navy, he moved to the University of California at Davis, where in 1965 he earned his Ph.D. in plant pathology and botany, followed by two years of postdoctoral studies at the University of California at Berkeley.

In 1967 Gus became an assistant professor in the UW Department of Plant Pathology, charged with teaching and conducting research on plant viruses. In this new role he continued to expand his reputation as an authority on ultrastructural research, which began at Davis where he was recognized with a Student Achievement Award for Electron Microscopy. These studies continued during his postdoctoral work at Berkeley, and soon after coming to Wisconsin he was again recognized by receiving a National Institutes of Health Career Development Award.

In the early 1970's, the field of molecular plant virology was rapidly evolving. For the next 30 years, Gus combined his technical expertise, his knowledge of the ultrastructure of viral infections and virus particles, and his special talent for inspiring graduate students, to create a program focused on the replication, transmission, and systemic spread of pea enation mosaic virus. This program and the work carried forward by the eight M.S. students, 10 Ph.D. candidates, and 10 postdoctoral researchers that participated in it, constitutes the most important collective contribution to our current understanding of this pathosystem. These and related studies resulted in funding from diverse competitive sources, the presentation of numerous invited and contributed papers, and over 100 refereed publications.

In 1989, Gus became chair of the Department of Botany and Plant Pathology at Michigan State University (MSU), where he served with distinction until his retirement in 2000. His unusual knowledge of and appreciation for the applied agricultural sciences as well as fundamental botany and molecular biology, made him an especially effective leader in this diverse department. He was proud that he developed a strong, visible undergraduate program in botany and plant pathology at MSU and that the department attained a national ranking within the top five plant biology departments under his leadership. Given the fiscal constraints experienced in all of academia, these were difficult years to be an administrator. His ability to retain both the affection and respect of his colleagues is a tribute to his leadership skills.

Beyond the departments he served, his contributions and expertise have been recognized by numerous honors, awards, and requests to partake in important decision-making forums. In 1987-1988 he served as a visiting scientist at the Friederich Miescher Institute of CIBA-GEIGY, in Basel, Switzerland. In 1992, he was named Fellow of the American Phytopathological Society (APS), and in 1995 he accepted an invitation to spend a month at the Rockefeller Study Center at Bellagio, Italy. His involvement in the

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activities of APS included service on the Virology Committee (chair 1981-1982), the New Projects Committee, and organizing the virology program for the 1976 annual meeting. He served as an associate editor for both *Phytopathology* and *Virology*. He served on a long list of national and international committees. In recent years his interest in the use of transgenic plants in agriculture led to his consulting on several national and international committees investigating the safety of this technology.

In addition to his documented achievements, Gus also will be remembered in significant, intangible ways. When those who were lucky enough to have Gus as a mentor find themselves together, either by design or chance, a discussion frequently arises relating to the fact that all present acquired from Gus some important trait that has made their career richer and more satisfying. The communication consists primarily of nodding in agreement and smiles of understanding, because no one has yet been able to define precisely what Gus's gift was. But all know that it's real and a very good thing and hope that they possess it enough to pass it on to their own charges.

Beyond the professional aspects of Gus's life was a rich and robust human agenda. Gus, his wife Ineke, and their children were frequent and extraordinary hosts not only to his students, associates, and the faculties of departments in which he was a member but to numerous other friends and associates both locally and internationally. He was unusually blessed with the ability to keep a balanced perspective on the value of work and family and took time to play soccer, curl, ski, camp, hike, fish, and generally enjoy life with his beloved family. He was a doting husband to Ineke, who preceded him in death. He is survived by his three children: Ruurdjan of Sugarland, Texas; Marjike Osrud of Driggs, Idaho; Edwin of Denver, Colorado; and four grandchildren.

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