

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

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS EARLE W. HANSON

Earle William Hanson, professor emeritus in the Department of Plant Pathology, died on Tuesday, October 5, 2004 at the age of 93. He is survived by his wife Maryan, and daughters Paula Jean (Tom) Baumgarten, Ruth Ann (Larry) Copely, and several brothers and sisters. He was born in Wheaton, Minnesota on October 18, 1910. He grew up on a farm, attended a rural elementary school, and the School of Agriculture at Morris, Minnesota. He maintained his strong allegiance to agriculture while attending the University of Minnesota where he obtained his B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. in 1933, 1939, and 1941, respectively. Earle began his professional career as a plant pathologist in February 1937 when he joined the U.S. Department of Agriculture to work on wheat diseases. He was a member of a team of plant breeders, plant pathologists and biochemists located at the University of Minnesota engaged in developing superior wheat varieties for the north central region. Dr. Hanson's pattern of close cooperation and support of colleagues was one which he epitomized throughout his career.

After a brief stint working with rubber diseases as a part of the war effort during World War II, he came to Wisconsin in 1946. His assignment was to conduct research on forage crops, and he joined a group of UW plant breeders in the development of improved varieties. He retained his USDA appointment initially while accepting a joint faculty position within the department, but in 1956 he was promoted to full professor and resigned his appointment with the USDA. Dr. Hanson's research emphasized the etiology, epidemiology and control of legume diseases, particularly red clover. He studied host-parasite relations of *Erysiphe polygoni*, the cause of powdery mildew disease; *Kabatiella caulivora*, the cause of anthracnose; and a complex of viruses that were seriously affecting red clover production. He was instrumental in developing screening methods that made it possible to incorporate their resistance into new varieties. He was always a strong advocate of a team approach to the solution of problems, thus he played an important role in the introduction of highly improved Lakeland and Arlington red clover varieties.

Dr. Hanson also assumed a teaching role in the department. He organized and taught a course entitled "Diseases of Forage Crops," and participated or co-taught in a number of others. Perhaps his greatest teaching contribution was in the collaborative development of a field disease survey course entitled "Diseases of Economic Plants" that was organized during his latter years of work. It was designed to give students whose primary orientation was laboratory and fundamental research an opportunity to experience the practical concerns of their field. The course remains today. He authored more than 120 papers in scientific journals and extension publications and also wrote several chapters for books. Dr. Hanson trained 14 graduate students. He participated in many national and international meetings and was an official representative of the American Phytopathological Society to the X International Grassland Congress in Helsinki, Finland in 1966. Dr. Hanson traveled professionally in the United States, Europe, Africa, Canada, Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, Israel and Lebanon.

It is not surprising, then, that in 1967 he chose to participate in a project in Nigeria, West Africa, which was in response to that country's request for assistance in developing a college of agriculture at the new University of Ife. The project was cooperative between the UW, the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Nigerian government. Its purpose was to recruit and train staff, develop curricula, initiate research and academic programs and help plan facilities. Dr. Hanson served as chief of party for the UW contingent from 1967–1971. Upon his return he continued his research program while also assuming a role in extension. He retired in 1967 after an exceedingly busy and productive career. Always interested in serving society, Dr. Hanson continued to do so upon retirement and was recognized by Oakwood Village for his voluntary work with the sick and infirm.

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

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