

Donald Howard Wallace

June 27, 1926 — April 19, 2002

Donald Howard Wallace, Professor of Plant Breeding and Vegetable Crops, Emeritus, who died on April 19, 2002 in Ithaca after a brief illness, was a dedicated writer and teacher of the genetics and breeding of several vegetable crops. His activities involved consultation and research not only for New York but also in many countries world wide, primarily with the food grain legume crops.

Wallace's early years were in Idaho and Utah. He was born in Driggs, Idaho, and grew to manhood on an irrigated farm in the Teton Valley, a beautiful part of the western slope of the Teton mountain range. After graduating from high school in 1944, he served for two years in the United States Navy after which he went on a mission to Eastern Canada with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He returned to attend Utah State College of Agriculture in Logan, Utah, where he received the baccalaureate degree in 1953. His interest in horticulture and plant breeding was heightened by summer employment at the college in vegetable breeding.

He applied for graduate study in the Department of Plant Breeding at Cornell University with Professor Henry M. Munger. He received a research assistantship and was awarded special fellowships. Joining Munger on his graduate committee were F.C. Steward, plant physiology, and E.B. Oyer, vegetable crop production. In this experience, Wallace developed a deep interest in the physiology of plant growth and a goal to develop superior varieties for all mankind. The latter interest was stimulated by his interactions with Munger and Oyer, who had much national and international experience.

Wallace's graduate studies, initiated in 1953, were curtailed in 1955-57 when he was appointed Acting Assistant Professor on the vegetable breeding project in place of Thomas L. York, Associate Professor of Plant Breeding and Vegetable Crops, who was on leave to serve in that capacity with the Cornell-Los Banos contract in the Philippines. Upon Professor York's return, Wallace resumed graduate studies and received the Ph.D. degree in 1958. He again was named to an Assistant Professorship, which became available by the untimely death of York in 1957. Don was promoted to Associate Professor in 1965, Professor in 1971, and Professor Emeritus in 1992.

Don was the mentor and chairman for thirteen masters and fourteen doctoral students; at least half were from other countries. Most were concerned with the genetics and breeding of grain legumes, vital food crops. He continued interaction with many of these students and cooperated with scientists at several of the international research centers; in particular, CIAT in Columbia, South America, and ICRISAT in India. In recent years, he developed

an International Plant Breeding Newsletter in cooperation with Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) in Rome, Italy on the World Wide Web, whereby interested scientists could exchange ideas and information on plant genetics and breeding. Another scholarly contribution in this area was the publication in 1997 of a comprehensive book entitled, *Plant Breeding and Whole-System Crop Physiology: Improving Crop Maturity, Adaptation and Yield*, in collaboration with Weikai Yan, a Visiting Scholar from China.

Early in his career, Don concentrated on the physiological genetics of crop yield in dry beans and hybrid varieties of cabbage. Today, from his research, inbred lines of cabbage are used by private companies and several varieties of dry beans are used widely. The American Society of Horticultural Science recognized him with the Campbell award in 1979, and the Asgrow award in 1981.

He was very dedicated to his science and his students. In his quiet, almost retiring manner, he was a leader and his advice often sought. He served one to three month consultations in Guatemala, Ecuador, Michigan State University, CIAT and ICRISAT. These activities were much of his life until a mild stroke curtailed them a few weeks before his death.

Wallace was married to Naomi Parrish in 1949. They had three daughters and three sons.

Donald E. Halseth, Bruce Rich, Royse P. Murphy