

## **Willard F. Crosier**

*October 26, 1904 — October 24, 1996*

Dr. Willard F. Crosier, a world leader in seed pathology and a Professor Emeritus at Cornell University's New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, New York, died following a long illness.

Willard was born in Juanita, Nebraska. He was awarded an A.B. degree from the University of Kansas in 1927 and a Ph.D. degree from Cornell University in 1932. His Ph.D. research on late blight of potato was considered a major advance in the study of this disease. His active career at Cornell spanned 43 years before his retirement as Professor Emeritus in 1970. He authored or co-authored about 250 scientific articles in the fields of chemistry, entomology, mycology, plant pathology and seed technology. He was especially well known for his research into the detection and control of seed borne diseases. He served in numerous capacities in the field of seed technology, including chairing the Research Committee of the Association of Official Seed Analysts and editor of the Proceedings of that Association. He helped to organize the International Seed Pathology Congress in 1958 that was held in Cambridge, England. In addition, Willard served continuously as chair or co-chair of the Committee of Detection of Seedborne Diseases of the International Seed Testing Association from 1937 until his retirement in 1970. He enjoyed several sabbatical leaves in the important seed production areas in Idaho and Virginia and a three-month leave during which he attended the Tenth Congress of the International Seed Testing Association in Ireland and visited the best known seed testing stations in Europe.

During the 1940s, Willard was a member of Company K, the New York State Guard and served as its last commanding officer in 1947-48. He was Director of Civilian Protection in the town of Waterloo and trustee of Waterloo School District number 5. He was a member of the Board of Education of the Waterloo Central School District from 1973-77.

Following his retirement, he was employed as a caseworker with the Department of Social Services in Seneca County, as a substitute teacher, and a Fayette town assessor. Crosier was very active in promoting the cause of senior citizens in Seneca County and in the State of New York. He was elected to the state Senior Citizens Action Council where he served on the Constitution and Bylaws committees. He served in Seneca County as president of the Senior Citizens Action Council, was chairman of the board of the Seneca County Senior Center, member of the Seneca County Nutrition Advisory Council Board, and treasurer of the Seneca County Senior Center. For his efforts on behalf of seniors, Willard was named Seneca County Senior Citizen of the year in 1981.

His wife of 67 years, the former Lucille Maude Guilfus, three children, seven grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren survived him. He also was survived by a sister, two nieces and two nephews.

Throughout his long life, Willard never outgrew his love of the earth and the beauty of and bounty brought forth from planting seeds.

*Nathan Peck, Morrill Vittum, Gary Harman*