

Zoltan Irme Kertesz

September 2, 1903 — August 23, 1968

Professor Kertesz died unexpectedly at his home in Geneva, New York, on August 23, 1968. His passing deprived the University, the state, the country, and the world of a valuable source of counsel in food science and technology.

Professor Kertesz was educated in his native Hungary, receiving his doctorate in 1927 from the Royal Hungarian University at Debreczen. Following post-doctorate training at the Biochemical Institute in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1928, he accepted an appointment as assistant in research at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station at Geneva, New York. He advanced to associate in 1930 and to professor of chemistry in 1940. Professor Kertesz took an early retirement from the University in 1962 in order to become chief of the Food Science and Technology Branch, Nutrition Division, Food and Agriculture Organization, a branch of the United Nations. He maintained his office in Rome, Italy, until the fall of 1966 at which time he returned to the United States to serve as secretary of the Protein Advisory Group of the same organization until earlier this year.

As reflected by his professional itinerary, Professor Kertesz was best characterized as having a vigorous enthusiasm for his work and a drive to contribute to his chosen field in the largest way possible. At the Experiment Station, his research as a plant biochemist yielded 160 publications, of which about half were concerned with his special field of pectin chemistry. Unwilling to restrict his activities to the research laboratory, he became interested in the practical application of pectin chemistry to problems of fruit and vegetable processing. He was successful in developing the industrial use of clarifying enzymes for the production of fruit and vegetable juices, and the use of calcium salts to firm canned vegetables, for which he received an award from the National Cannery Association. He was in almost constant touch with the processing industry and its problems of vegetable texture. In his last few years at the Experiment Station, Professor Kertesz applied his knowledge and energies to investigating the use of high energy radiation as a means of food preservation, a process which he ardently believed could be a significant factor in enhancing the world food supply.

Professor Kertesz became intimately involved in problems of world health and nutrition which culminated in his association with the United Nations organization. His success in these activities led to his being awarded the Institute of Food Technologists' coveted International Award in 1967.

Professor Kertesz was an active member of many professional organizations, including the American Chemical Society, American Society of Plant Physiologists, American Association for the Advancement of Science,

Institute of Food Technologists (charter member), Sigma Xi, and Phi Tau Sigma. He served as editor of both *Food Technology* and *Food Research* for the years 1950-52, and subsequently served as consulting editor. He edited a series of monographs entitled *Economic Crops*, published by Interscience Publishers. His monograph *The Pectin Substances*, which was published in 1951 by Interscience Publishers, is a classic, widely cited by pectin chemists. At the time of his death he was in the process of compiling and editing an *Encyclopedia of Food* to be published by John Wiley and Sons.

Professor Kertesz also served on numerous national and international committees including the United States Technical Industrial Intelligence Committee (England, Germany, Austria, France), 1945; scientific consultant, Office of Technical Services, United States Department of Commerce, 1946-47; nutrition officer with Food and Agriculture Organization in Ceylon, 1952-53; acting resident representative, United Nations Technical Advisory Board, 1953; consultant, Interdepartmental Committee on Nutrition for National Defense, participating in surveys in Korea (1956), Turkey (1957-58), Libya (1957), and Ethiopia (1958).

In addition to his dynamic professional interests, Professor Kertesz was also an ardent athlete, particularly adept in tennis and skiing. Those who participated with him in these activities knew well his competitive spirit.

Professor Kertesz is survived by his wife, Anna Frommer; a son, Christopher; a daughter, Vera Cobb; two grandchildren; and several brothers and sisters living in his native Hungary.

R. S. Shallenberger, J. P. Van Buren, L. M. Massey, Jr.