

Marius Peter Rasmussen

October 1, 1893 — January 18, 1970

Marius Peter Rasmussen died in Largo, Florida, on Sunday, January 18, 1970.

Professor Rasmussen, believed to have been the first professor of fruit and vegetable marketing in this country, retired from Cornell University in 1959 after more than thirty-eight years of service in the Department of Agricultural Economics.

Professor Rasmussen was born at Bennington, Vermont. He received the B.S. degree from Cornell University in 1919 and worked as agricultural economist at the University of Vermont. In 1921 he returned to Cornell for graduate study in farm management, marketing, and economics. While pursuing graduate studies from 1921 through 1924 he served as instructor in farm management in the New York State College of Agriculture. Upon being awarded the Ph.D. degree in 1924 he was appointed assistant professor of marketing at Cornell. Six years later he was promoted to full professor, continuing in that position until the date of his retirement.

During his long period of service at Cornell, Dr. Rasmussen gave special attention to the marketing of fruits and vegetables. He taught an undergraduate course and also graduate seminars in that subject.

His experience in research as well as in consulting and advisory work outside the University enabled him to give his students an intimate view of the organization, methods, and problems of fruit and vegetable marketing. Many of his former students are now teaching and doing research at colleges and universities or in government departments throughout the United States and in other countries. Others are doing important work as executives of commercial organizations in the fruit and vegetable industry.

Dr. Rasmussen's research and that of graduate students working under his direction covered a broad field, including marketing costs and efficiency, regional and terminal market facilities, merchandising, cooperative marketing, and improved methods of supplying food to the armed forces. He was the author of numerous publications and articles based on his research, including several experiment station bulletins and government reports. He also supervised the preparation of many manuscripts that have been published under the authorship of graduate students.

In addition to his teaching and research, to which he devoted himself intensively, Dr. Rasmussen did a considerable amount of extension work with farmers, cooperatives, and other marketing organizations. His reputation as one of the country's leading experts in the marketing of fruits and vegetables caused him to be called upon to

serve as consultant to many government agencies and industry organizations throughout the United States and abroad. In 1929 he visited Europe as an American delegate to the First International Conference of Agricultural Economists (England). In connection with this trip he conducted a study of markets in England and Denmark. In this enterprise he was aided by his command of the Danish language. Among the agencies and organizations that he served on a temporary or part-time basis during his active professional career were the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, USDA, (1922-30); the U.S. Farm Credit Administration (1934-52); the U.S. War Production Board (1942-48); New York State Commission on Agriculture (1953-59); Fruit and Vegetable Committee, American Farm Bureau Federation (1933-41); Florida Citrus Commission (1941); American National Co-op Exchange and American National Foods, Inc. (1933-59); and the United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association (1935-50).

Dr. Rasmussen was a member of the honor societies Phi Kappa Phi and Sigma Xi and of the Alpha Zeta fraternity. He also was a member of the following professional societies: American Agricultural Economics Association, American Marketing Association, and International Association of Agricultural Economists.

Among his colleagues and students, Professor Rasmussen established a lasting reputation as a dynamic, industrious person of the highest integrity. He took his work seriously as he pursued it with unflagging energy. He had no patience with abstract theories but always sought to find the essential facts of any problem that he studied. To him they provided the only sound basis for conclusions. Professor Rasmussen was never an agitator for change in the University or in society. He found in his own field of study a sufficient outlet for his thought and his energies, yet he was not uninterested in other persons or in the progress of the Department or the University. He was ever the warm and helpful friend, completely dependable, and always the perfect gentleman. He will be remembered long by those who knew him.

He is survived by his wife, Ellen Nelson Rasmussen, and two sons, Allen E. and Kenneth E., their mother, Elsa M. Rasmussen, having died in 1957.

M. Slade Kendrick, Bennett A. Dominick, Jr., Maurice C. Bond