

From the Oat Newsletter, volume 35, 1984:

DEDICATION
To Matthew B. Moore



Matthew B. Moore (Photo by Minneapolis
Star and Tribune, 1982)

Matthew B. Moore, known to most of us as "Matt," a Professor Emeritus in the Department of Plant Pathology, University of Minnesota, was born April 11, 1905 and lived most of his early life on a small fruit farm that is now engulfed by residences in the expanding city of St. Paul. He attended Mechanic Arts High School in St. Paul in 1920, and the School of Agriculture on the St. Paul Campus from 1920-24. He attended the University of Minnesota from 1924-29, ultimately obtaining his B.S. degree. In 1929, he began his career as a technician for the USDA on a cereal rust project. He also joined the staff at the University of Minnesota as an Instructor in the School of Agriculture and as an Assistant in the Department of Plant Pathology that same year. He spent a sabbatical leave at Louisiana State University in 1931-1932 as an Instructor in Botany. He then returned to the University of Minnesota as a staff member in the Department of Plant Pathology until he retired in June, 1973. In 1960 and again in 1962, Matt spent sabbatical leaves as a consultant to the Alaska Agricultural Experiment Station where

he advised them on potato disease problems, barley yellow dwarf in cereals, timothy and alfalfa diseases.

Matt played a major role in the development of seventeen oat cultivars released by the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station. He worked cooperatively with several oat breeders in the Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics and the program reflects the philosophy and approaches advocated by Matt. Each of the last six cultivars that have been released possess generalized resistance to crown rust based on their testing in the buckthorn nursery.

Matt has had a significant national and international impact on plant pathology and plant pathologists. His principal contributions have been on diseases of oats, however, his philosophy and fundamental discoveries on broadly-based resistance to fungal pathogens have been applicable to other crops as well. The buckthorn plot on the St. Paul Campus was established in 1953 and expanded again in about 1965 to the consternation of some who condemned the establishment of such rust "race factories." Matt prevailed and, as a result, many lines and six most recent cultivars released by the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station have durable resistance to crown rust. In 1952, Matt published an abstract on "the cause and transmission of blue dwarf and red leaf of oats" in which he reported that he had found a virus transmitted by aphids to be the cause of red leaf. Red leaf was later shown to be the same virus that causes barley yellow dwarf, a cereal disease of world-wide importance.

Matt is an avid and dedicated naturalist. Field trips with him were particularly stimulating because of his depth of understanding of crops, their diseases, and his magnitude of perception of a vast array of natural phenomena. Trips down the freeway were avoided if reasonable alternate routes "down the back roads" were available. Fields, woodlands, and pastures were classrooms and the crops and diseases were reviewed and discussed in frequent stops. Sometimes we arrived at our destination late, possibly somewhat weary, but stimulated and wiser.

Matt is innovative with equipment and gadgets. This may have resulted partly because his career stretched back to the time when either funds were limited or equipment to do certain tasks had not been manufactured. Matt developed smut inoculators and multiple rust inoculators; he modified and devised plot planters such as illustrated in the photograph. Many of these gadgets and devices are yet in use in one form or another across the country.

Matt has been a stimulating and challenging educator. Those of you who have had the good fortune to take a course in Introductory Plant Pathology from him remember that as a unique experience. Matt taught this course for approximately 35 years, usually fall and spring quarters and over the years reached probably 3,000-4,000 students. A lab project was usually one component of this course and through this, many students received their first exposure to experimental techniques under Matt's guidance. Some were prompted into careers in plant pathology or other sciences because Matt stimulated and encouraged students who appeared to possess a spark of scientific

curiosity. It was not uncommon to find Matt and a couple of students investigating cultures of pathogens or discussing their discoveries long after the scheduled lab was over. He undoubtedly taught one of the best courses at the University of Minnesota.

Matt has touched many lives in his long and useful career. He is one of the strongest supporters of the Department of Plant Pathology at St. Paul. His specific and broadly-based contributions are of real and lasting value. Matt has been unable to attend our annual national Phytopathology meetings for several years because of poor health. It is not unusual at these meetings for a dozen or more different acquaintances or former students of Matt to inquire about him and request that I bring a "Hello and Best Regards to Matt Moore" when I return to St. Paul. Matt currently resides at 1170 Eldridge Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55113 with his wife Dorothy.