

From the Oat Newsletter, volume 23, 1972:

U.S.D.A. Award to
Dr. H. C. (Pat) Murphy (deceased)

Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz on May 1, 1972, conferred Awards of Appreciation upon five outstanding cereal scientists who collectively have given over 200 years' service to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The Secretary's Certificate of Appreciation stated, in part: "One of five research investigations leaders of the Agricultural Research Service who, within the same era...have established the Department as a world leader in cereal crops research."

The ARS scientists honored are: Dr. C. Roy Adair, research agronomist and Rice Investigations Leader; Dr. Hickman C. Murphy (deceased), research plant pathologist and former Leader of Oat Investigations; Dr. Louis P. Reitz, research agronomist and Leader of Wheat Investigations; Dr. George F. Sprague, research agronomist and Leader of Corn and Sorghum Investigations; and Dr. Gustav A. Wiebe (retired), research agronomist and former Leader of Barley Investigations.

Dr. Murphy's award was accepted by his son, Dr. Charles F. Murphy, an associate professor in the Department of Crop Science at North Carolina State University, Raleigh. The U.S.D.A. announcement of the award stated: "The late Dr. Murphy had given 40 years of service to the Department before his tragic drowning in 1968 at the age of 66. Appointed Investigations Leader in 1951, Dr. Murphy received the USDA Superior Service Award in 1967. Dr. Murphy figured prominently in international oat research for developing disease resistant oat varieties and in spearheading programs to improve oat quality. Recently, the new cereal rust research laboratory of the University of Tel-Aviv was named in his honor. He was first to screen the world oat collection for resistance to crown rust, one of the most destructive diseases of oats, and to establish a standard procedure for identifying pathogenic races of the crown rust fungus. Dr. Murphy was born in Montrose, W. Va., and received his Ph. D. from Iowa State University, Ames. He was a member of ASA, the Crop Science Society of America, and the American Phytopathological Society." An extensive writeup on Dr. Murphy appeared in the 1968 Oat Newsletter.