



In Memoriam: Dr. Marty Carson



Marty at his retirement party in 2011

Marty Carson, formerly of the USDA-ARS Cereal Disease Laboratory in St. Paul, MN, died May 9th, 2019, at his home in Roseville, MN, with his wife Deb by his side.

Marty was born in Arcola, IL, and attended Eastern Illinois University as an undergraduate. He did his graduate studies (M.S. and Ph.D) in Plant Pathology at the University of Illinois. Marty was a faculty member at South Dakota State University for eight years and then joined the USDA-ARS Plant Science Unit in Raleigh, NC, in 1989. With the USDA-ARS in Raleigh, Marty became well known for his work on maize diseases and in maize germplasm improvement. In 2002, Marty accepted the Research Leader position at the USDA-ARS Cereal Disease Laboratory in Minnesota. In St. Paul, he identified sources of durable resistance in cultivated oat to the crown rust fungus, *Puccinia coronata*. He used these oat selections to develop a number of recombinant inbred line populations that are still being studied today. He also characterized populations of *Puccinia coronata* in the USA for virulence to crown rust resistance genes and for molecular genetic polymorphism.

Marty was active in the Crop Science Society of America and American Phytopathological Society (APS), served as associate editor and senior editor for *Phytopathology*, and was recognized as a Fellow of APS for his research and leadership accomplishments.

During his time as Research Leader at the USDA-ARS Cereal Disease Laboratory, Marty oversaw a major expansion of the research facilities, with new labs, conference room, plant pathogen containment facility, and an additional seed storage unit. He also oversaw a major retrofit of the CDL laboratory and greenhouse facilities. At the same time, he was instrumental in hiring new scientific and support staff. During his time as Research Leader, the CDL gained worldwide stature in the global efforts to mitigate losses due to cereal rust diseases and *Fusarium* head blight. He was highly supportive of the scientists and support staff at the CDL.

Marty was an avid gardener, as seen by his beautifully landscaped backyard. He also tried his hand at breeding azaleas. He was a dedicated athlete, having competed in (and finished!!) the Iron Man competition in Hawaii. He could often be seen biking on the Gateway trail in St. Paul, and swimming in the pool at the St. Paul Gym.