

From the Oat Newsletter, volume 24, 1973:

Spas Simeonoff Ivanoff, 1899-1973

At the age of 17, Spas emigrated from Bulgaria where he was born in Sevlievo on March 20, 1899. With a determination to learn the language of his adopted country and avail himself of the education opportunities opened to him, he earned a B.S. degree in agriculture by 1928 at Cornell University. From the University of Wisconsin he earned a M.S. degree in Plant pathology in 1930, and his Ph. D. degree in biology in 1932. He remained as a research associate at the University of Wisconsin until 1937, when he accepted a position as plant pathologist at the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station at Crystal City. In 1945 Spas joined the Mississippi Agricultural Experiment Station, Department of Plant Pathology and Physiology, where he advanced in rank to Head, in 1954. It was at Mississippi State that Spas developed a keen interest in oat diseases, particularly leaf blotch and Victoria blight. 'Midsouth' (C.I. 6977) with Victoria blight resistance, and 'Forager' (C.I. 7136), a grazing oat, were two varieties released by him.

Spas retired as Head of the Department of Plant Pathology at Mississippi State University in 1964 and accepted an appointment as Visiting Professor at Belhaven College in Jackson, Mississippi, where he taught botany for 4 years. Upon his second retirement in 1968 he moved to his cabin at Little Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, where he passed away on October 26, 1973. He is survived by his wife, Julia.