

**IN DEDICATION TO  
DR. DONALD MCVEY**

Dr. Donald V. McVey, retired USDA-ARS Research Plant Pathologist, Cereal Disease Laboratory, St. Paul, passed away at home, surrounded by family on December 16, 2010. He was 88 years old. Don retired from the Agricultural Research Service on 3 September, 2001, after more than 40 years of service.

Don's research played a pivotal role in the protection of cereal crops from leaf and stem rust, especially in spring and winter wheat cultivars in the Central and Northern Great Plains. Don began his career with ARS in 1960 working in Puerto Rico testing wheat accessions for resistance to race 15B of stem rust, which had caused serious losses in wheat in 1953 and 1954. In 1965, Don was transferred to the Cooperative Rust Laboratory.

Don was best known for his work in testing wheat breeding lines for resistance to stem and leaf rust resistance. Don excelled in evaluating rust resistance in field nurseries, using carefully selected rust races and methods that enabled selection for resistant genotypes to be made each season. Don was a leader in postulating the identity of leaf and stem rust resistance genes that were present in advanced breeding lines from wheat programs throughout the country. Working with Dr. Bob Busch, Don was involved with the release of 'Era' wheat in 1970. Era was the first semidwarf spring wheat cultivar in the upper Midwest that was released by a public institution. Era offered a significant yield advantage over previous spring wheat cultivars and was resistant to stem and leaf rust. Era has been used as a parent in wheat breeding programs and is in the pedigree of many of the present day spring wheat cultivars. Don also contributed greatly in the development of the cultivar 'Marshall' that was released by Minnesota in 1982. Marshall had high yield potential and was the yield standard for the hard red spring wheat. Another notable cultivar that Don helped to develop was the winter wheat 'Siouxland' released by Nebraska. This cultivar was the first wheat to have two leaf and stem rust resistance genes derived from wild relatives of wheat. Siouxland was widely adapted to the Great Plains region and was grown from Texas to South Dakota.

In his latter years at the Cereal Disease Laboratory, Don worked particularly closely with the wheat breeding programs at the University of Minnesota, South Dakota State University, and the University of Nebraska. Don was listed as an author on many wheat cultivars that were released by these institutions. A recent cultivar from Minnesota that Don helped to develop is 'McVey', which was one of the first modern spring wheat cultivars with some resistance to Fusarium head blight. The fact that stem rust was virtually eliminated as a pathogen of wheat in the U.S. can be attributed to the thorough screening for stem rust resistance that Don performed for wheat breeding programs throughout the U.S. In his last years at the Cereal Disease Laboratory, Don also assumed responsibility for conducting the annual race survey of wheat stem rust in the U.S. that has been very important in the development of breeding lines for stem rust resistance. Through his publications and participation in workshops and conferences, Don's contributions were widely recognized and appreciated by both cereal rust pathologists and wheat breeders.