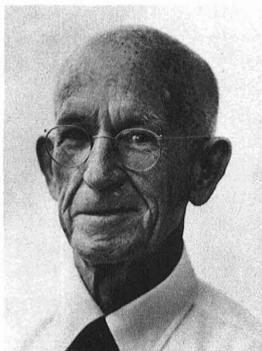


Eubanks Carsner, 1891-1979

C. W. Bennett and J. S. McFarlane



Dr. Eubanks Carsner, a long-time employee of the United States Department of Agriculture, passed away in Honolulu, Hawaii on October 7, 1979, at the home of his daughter, Constance, after a protracted illness. He was born in San Antonio, Texas, in 1891, graduated from the University of Texas in 1912 with a B.S. degree and received a Ph.D. degree in plant pathology from the University of Wisconsin in 1917. Immediately after receiving his graduate degree, he accepted a

position as Plant Pathologist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and was assigned to the investigation of curly top of sugarbeet, a disease which had all but destroyed the beet sugar industry in much of the western United States.

He was first stationed at Salinas, California, but transferred to Riverside, California in 1919 where he remained until his retirement in 1952. He made excellent progress in the selection of curly top resistant strains of sugarbeet. This work demonstrated that the development of resistant cultivars offered great promise and in 1929 the Curly Top Project of the U.S. Department of Agriculture was greatly expanded to include a central research station at Riverside with other laboratories at Salt Lake City and Twin Falls, Idaho. All of these laboratories were placed under Dr. Carsner's supervision and much of his time was devoted to the administration of the Curly Top Project.

The first curly top resistant cultivar, designated U.S. 1, was released for commercial production in 1933. This release was soon followed by others with higher resistance and greater adaptation to the western United States. By the mid-1940's, the disease no longer posed a serious problem to the beet sugar industry. For this achievement, Carsner and his staff in 1947

received the Superior Service Award of the U.S. Department of Agriculture with the citation, "For saving the sugarbeet industry in the intermountain west through finding resistance to curly top and breeding and introducing sugarbeet varieties resistant to the disease."

Prior to the release of the curly top resistant cultivars, nearly all of the sugarbeet seed used in the United States was imported from Europe. The development of locally adapted cultivars created a need for domestic seed production. Dr. Carsner was one of the pioneers in the development of our present sugarbeet seed industry. He correctly visualized that high quality sugarbeet seed could be grown in the Pacific Northwest by the overwintering method. Following his recommendations, a domestic company was established at Salem, Oregon, and most of our seed is produced in that state.

Through his observations and studies of the relationships of desert plants to the increase and distribution of the leafhopper vector of the curly top disease, Dr. Carsner acquired a keen interest in the ecological problems of plant successions in the western range lands and their relationship to intermittent farming and to overgrazing. He collaborated with others in publications in this field.

Outside of his chosen field of science, Dr. Carsner had a wide range of interest in cultural, social, and civic affairs. He and his wife, Harriett, were strong supporters of the Riverside opera. He was a leader in the organization of the Intercultural Scholarship Society dedicated to aiding deserving students of minority nationalities.

For much of his life Dr. Carsner was a member of the Society of Friends. He took an active part in the promotion of American Friends Service Committee and served as a member of the regional executive committee for a number of years. After his retirement, Dr. Carsner's time and energy were largely directed toward the furtherance of the precepts and ideals of the Society of Friends.