

# AURORA SPOREALIS

June, 1985



Borlaug Hall

Conrad Buhr Photo

**Department of Plant Pathology**  
University of Minnesota    St. Paul, Minnesota

## LETTER FROM THE DEPARTMENT HEAD

As I write this, I will have been in the position of Head of the Department of Plant Pathology at the University of Minnesota for a little over four months. As the first non-Minnesota alumnus to be appointed to this position, I believe it is important to continue to maintain the traditions that are so much a part of this department while looking for opportunities for us to take advantage of the new technologies that will move us forward aggressively into the future of agriculture. My arrival at Minnesota is accompanied by a nearly complete change in administrators in the College of Agriculture including a new Dean and new Heads in the Departments of Agronomy & Plant Genetics, Entomology, Horticulture, and Soil Science within the past three years. Dr. C. Eugene Allen is the new Dean of the College of Agriculture and Associate Director of the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station. Dean Allen was a faculty member in the Departments of Animal Science and Food Science & Nutrition, prior to becoming Dean. Dr. Orvin Burnside, a weed scientist from the University of Nebraska, is the new (April 1, 1985) Head in Agronomy and Plant Genetics. In Entomology, Dr. Richard Jones is now the Department Head. Dr. Jones was on the Entomology faculty at Minnesota prior to becoming Head. Dr. James Bartz came to Minnesota from private industry and has been Head of Horticultural Science and Landscape Architecture for the past three years. The Head of Soil Science is Dr. William Larson who held an Agricultural Research Service position in the Soil Science Department prior to becoming Head. It truly is a new era at the University of Minnesota and an excellent opportunity to establish new cooperative ventures among the departments. I am extremely optimistic about this happening.

I believe the major items of news that should be mentioned should include the institution of a new organizational structure within the department; the completion of the first phase of the new building addition about July 1, to be named Borlaug Hall that will house our administrative offices, classrooms, the plant pathology library and growth chamber facilities; and the initiation of a new integrated pest management undergraduate curriculum in the fall of 1985 that will be administered by Plant Pathology.

The new organizational structure has facilitated initiation of some extremely important activities in the department. Five standing committees have been appointed. They are: Education, Research, Extension, Public Alumni and Institutional Relations, and Physical Resources. Each of these committees has been charged with a total review of all facets of our departmental operation and has been requested to make recommendations with respect to new directions that we should be taking in each of these areas. The effect has been that faculty, students, and staff have all become aware of how our department functions within the context of their committee assignments. Each committee is currently developing a long range plan that will be incorporated into a total departmental document that will be used in determining departmental direction and resources needed to accomplish the stated objectives. Deadline for completion of the long range study is June, 1985. The next challenge before us is to effectively use the results of this report in a meaningful way that will allow us to move into the future in a thoughtful but aggressive manner that will ensure that we maintain a leadership role in plant pathology at the University of Minnesota and continue to provide services to the people of Minnesota and beyond.

The opportunity to move into new teaching facilities in Borlaug Hall comes at a time when we are making a renewed commitment to teaching at Minnesota. We want to be certain that we are incorporating the new methodologies in biotechnology into our instructional programs that are now influencing the direction of plant pathology as well as providing attention to the instructional needs that allow our students to respond to immediate problems facing agricultural producers relative to plant disease management. As we phase out the Plant Health Technology undergraduate curriculum and initiate the Integrated Pest Management curriculum in fall of 1985, we look forward to the challenge of providing a quality up-to-date curriculum that will continue to provide qualified graduates at the Bachelor's level that will compete effectively for employment in plant pest management and related occupations.

I am pleased to report to you that our present graduate students are an outstanding and enthusiastic group of young people that will represent the department well as they move into employment after graduation. As has usually been the case at the University of Minnesota, there are a number of international students among the ranks who are a source of enrichment for us all. In addition to their academic and research endeavors, the graduate students have been leading the way in social activities within the department. As an example, the annual E. C. Stakman Softball Game is still alive and well and took place on May 17th of this year.

Finally, let me say that the need is greater than ever for the support of our alumni and friends. We hope that the Aurora Sporealis will continue to serve an important role in providing you with current information regarding the Department. We ask that you continue to serve as ambassadors for the department wherever you may be and invite you to stop in and see us whenever you have the opportunity.

Kindest personal regards.

Sincerely,



Philip O. Larsen  
Department Head

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