

George M. Darrow Retires

Dr. George M. Darrow, founder of research on small fruits in the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and outstanding authority in this field, retired from the Department March 31, after 46 years of Government service.

Dr. Darrow, who lives at Glenn Dale, Md., is widely recognized for his work in originating a number of high-yielding strawberry varieties and in helping to make possible the commercial production of blueberries in the United States through cross-breeding and selection of wild varieties of this fruit.

He is credited with the development, through his own efforts and in cooperation with State Agricultural Experiment Stations and private plant breeders, of 23 varieties of strawberries, including 10 that are of current commercial importance. One, the Blakemore strawberry, is now produced on about 30 percent of the commercial acreage in this country. Dr. Darrow received the U. S. D. A.'s Distinguished Service Award in 1954 for his achievements in horticultural research.

Dr. Darrow returned recently from a two-month mission for the Department to Chile, Columbia, and Ecuador, where he obtained wild strawberry, raspberry, and other small fruit plants and seeds for use in plant breeding as possible sources of disease resistance.

Dr. Darrow has been engaged in small fruits research ever since he joined the USDA staff in July 1911. After a year in the U. S. Army during World War I, Dr. Darrow began the work on breeding and improving small fruits that has brought him recognition as the nation's foremost authority in this field. His work has included studies of photoperiodism

in strawberries, the development of virus-free varieties, and introduction of 14 varieties of blueberries, hybrid blackberries, and superior raspberries.

In 1948 Dr. Darrow was awarded the Wilder Medal for "leadership in the development of small fruits and in the origination of meritorious varieties." He is past-president of the American Society for Horticultural Science and of the Washington (D.C.) Botanical Society and has served on the Editorial Board of the American Genetic Association since 1923.

After his retirement, he will continue as a consultant to the Crops Research Division of the Department's Agricultural Research Service on problems concerning small fruit culture.



Fig. 1. George M. Darrow, famed small fruits breeder of the United States Department of Agriculture, now retiring.