

Dr. Virgil G. Lilly



Virgil G. Lilly, a native of Oregon, received his M.S. and Ph. D. degrees from West Virginia University. A research scientist and teacher at West Virginia University for 36 years, Dr. Lilly authored and co-authored more than 100 scientific articles and papers, and one text book.

Dr. Lilly began his work at West Virginia University in 1934 and was assigned to research on fungus physiology in cooperation with the late Professor Leon H. Leonian. For most of his career, Dr. Lilly worked in the following areas of fungus physiology: vitamin requirements; factors required for sexual reproduction in *Pythium* and *Phytophthora*; carbon and nitrogen sources utilized by fungi; the production of carotene by fungi; and the effects of light on fungi.

The research done by Dr. Lilly, resulted in basic work in the control of plant diseases, the use of bacteria in the production of vitamins, and the early diagnosis and control of oak wilt disease, all important areas of concern to West Virginia foresters, farmers, and gardeners.

Dr. Lilly's principal contribution to teaching at West Virginia was a course for interested graduate students in the biological sciences, "Physiology of Fungi," from 1948 until he retired in 1970. During his career he was a major professor and sponsor for 11 M.S. and 9 Ph. D. candidates.

His research brought him national and international recognition and he was invited to present major papers at Stanford University in 1957 and at Texas A&M University in 1972. He was elected Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1945 and of the Indian Phytopathological Society in 1964. He served as President of the West Virginia Academy of Science and in 1968 received the West Virginia University Gamma Sigma Delta Senior Faculty Certificate of Merit. At the 100th Anniversary Faculty Honors held at West Virginia University in 1967, Dr. Lilly was selected as one of 12 of the University's most valuable professors.

Dr. Lilly also was a member of other societies and organizations, including the American Chemical Society, the Botanical Society of America, the Microbiological Society of America, and served as Archivist for the Society for Industrial Microbiology.