



Wortman (L. Sterling) papers

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Summary Information

Repository:	Rockefeller Archive Center
Creator - aut:	Wortman, Sterling
Creator:	Rockefeller Foundation
Title:	L. Sterling Wortman papers
ID:	FA1121
Date [inclusive]:	1950, 1956, 1958-1959, 1964-1981
Physical Description:	4.56 Cubic Feet
Language of the Material:	English

Preferred Citation

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Biographical / Historical

Sterling Wortman began his career with the Rockefeller Foundation (RF) as a plant geneticist with the Mexican Agricultural Program (MAP). He went on to become a leading figure in the Foundation's efforts to establish international agricultural research institutes in the 1960s and 1970s.

Wortman was born in Quinlan, Oklahoma on April 3, 1923. He earned his B.S. in agronomy from Oklahoma State University (1943) and Ph.D. in plant breeding and genetics from the University of Minnesota (1950). In 1950, Wortman was hired as a corn breeder in the Mexican Agricultural Program's corn improvement program. He left the MAP in 1955 to head the Plant Breeding Department at the Pineapple Research Institute in Honolulu, Hawaii, and returned to the RF in 1960.

In the 1960s and 1970s the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations collaborated in creating several international agricultural research institutes to carry out MAP's pioneering agricultural work on a global scale. Wortman played a central role in these efforts. He helped launch the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the Philippines, focused on researching and re-engineering the rice plant to increase rice production, and served as the IRRI's Assistant Director (1960-1962) and Associate

Director (1962-1964). In his 1992 book *An Adventure in Applied Science: A History of the International Rice Research Institute*, IRRI Founding Director Robert F. Chandler, Jr. emphasized that "Wortman's contribution to the progress of IRRI in those early years cannot be overestimated."

The Foundation's success with IRRI spurred the development of additional international agricultural institutes and organizations. After his appointment as the RF's Director for Agricultural Sciences in 1966, Wortman helped reorganize the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) in Mexico as private corporation. The move dramatically improved the Center's funding and efficacy. He helped establish the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) in 1971, which served to mobilize and coordinate public and private funding for international research centers. And after becoming a RF Vice-President in 1970, Wortman helped establish the International Agricultural Development Service (IADS), which worked to strengthen agricultural programs in developing nations. He served as the President of IADS from 1975 to 1979.

Wortman assumed the role of the Foundation's Acting President after the death of President John H. Knowles in March 1979. He left his full-time work with the RF after Stanford University President Richard W. Lyman was appointed President in 1980.

Sterling Wortman died of cancer in 1981 at the age of 58.

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Scope and Contents

Type of records include: Reports, publications, newspaper articles, correspondence, reprints, speeches, and a manuscript

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Arrangement

Original Order

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Processing Information

Standard Processing by Beth Jaffe-Davis, 2016

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Collection Inventory

Office Files, 1950, 1956, 1958-1959, 1964-1965, 1967-1969, 1972-1981

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Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research, Inc. (BTI), 1980	box 1	folder 2
Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical (CIAT), 1980	box 1	folder 3
Centro Internacional de Mejoramiento de Maiz Y Trigo (CIMMYT), 1980	box 1	folder 4
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Conditions Governing Access:

Conditions Governing Access

Restricted from scholarly access-Confidential material

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"International Agricultural Development", In Honor of John Milton Poehlman, Columbia, MO, 1980 October 21	box 8	folder 71
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Address, Food Editors of America, Rye, NY, 1978 November 1	box 8	folder 73
"Horticulture's Third Era", 75th Annual Meeting of American Society of Horticultural Science, Boston, MA, 1978 July 17, 1978-1979	box 8	folder 74
"Accelerating Agricultural Development: The Challenge, The Strategy", IMC Food Production Conference, Santo Domingo, DR, 1977 November 8	box 8	folder 75
"Accelerating Agricultural Development", Coromandel Lecture, New Delhi, India, 1977 February 8	box 8	folder 76
"The Alleviation of World Hunger", National Council of Philanthropy 22nd Annual Conference, St. Louis, MO, 1976 December 2	box 8	folder 77
"The Alleviation of World Hunger", Amended, 2nd Presbyterian Church Series, Indianapolis, IN, 1976 October 6	box 8	folder 78
"Food and Agriculture", Scientific American, 1976 September	box 8	folder 79
"Agricultural Research: The Emerging World Network", Wageningen Symposium, The Netherlands, 1976 June 16-18	box 8	folder 80
"The World Food Situation and Technical Assistance", Stillwater, OK, 1976 April 22	box 8	folder 81
"Strategy for the Alleviation of World Hunger", Rochester, NY, 1976 April 12	box 8	folder 82

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"World Crop Productivity: Challenges to Science", International Conference on Crop Productivity: Research Imperatives, Lansing, MI, 1975 October 20	box 9	folder 84
Plant Studies in the People Republic of China, A Trip Report of the American Plant Studies Delegation, National Academy of Science, 1974-1975	box 9	folder 85
"The World Food Situation: A New Initiative", U. S. House of Representatives Testimony, 1975 September 23	box 9	folder 86
"Agriculture in China", Scientific American, 1975 June	box 9	folder 87
"Impact of International Research on the Performance and Objectives of National Systems", Warrenton, VA, 1975 January 26-29	box 9	folder 88
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"The Rural Development System of the People's republic of China: Impressions and Questions", 1974 November	box 9	folder 90
"Food, Resource Use, and International Agriculture", 15th Anniversary Celebration of Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX, 1974 October 17	box 9	folder 91
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"New Era in Crop Improvement", Herbert Kendall Hayes Memorial Lecture, St. Paul, MN, 1974 February 5, 1974-1975	box 9	folder 97
"Extending the Green Revolution", World Development, Vol. 1 No. 12, 1973 December	box 9	folder 98
"International Agricultural Research Institute: Their Unique Capabilities", 10th Anniversary Convocation of International Rice Research Institute, 1972 April 20-21	box 9	folder 99
"Meeting World Needs for Agricultural Technology", and Summary, Bellagio II, 1970 February 3-6	box 9	folder 100

"Challenges to Agricultural Scientists", The American Phytopathological Society, Spokane, WA, 1969 August 20	box 9	folder 101
"Strengthening National Agricultural Research and Development Systems", 1969	box 9	folder 102
"Meeting Protein Needs Through Plant Breeding, Getting the Job Done", American Society of Agronomy Meeting, New Orleans, LA, 1968 November 12	box 9	folder 103
"Expanding Food Production in Hungry Nations: The Promise, The Problems", The American Assembly, Harriman, NY, 1968 October 31-November 3	box 9	folder 104
"Agricultural College: Their Greatest Challenge", Columbus, OH, 1967 November 14	box 9	folder 105
"Intensification of Crop Production", National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council, Washington, D. C., 1967 May 9	box 9	folder 106
"World Food Problem: Myths and Musts", 1967	box 9	folder 107
"The Crop Production Equation", The Weed Society of America, Washington, D. C., 1967 February 13-16	box 9	folder 108
"Approaches to the World Food Problem", Southwest Agricultural Forum, Tulsa, OK, 1967 January 19	box 9	folder 109
"Making Agronomy Serve Developing Countries", American Society of Agronomy, Stillwater, OK , 1966 August 21-26	box 10	folder 110
"Rice Research: A Race Against Time", International Rice Research Institute, 1964	box 10	folder 111
Trip Report, Plant Studies Delegation to the People's Republic of China, 1974 August 27-September 23	box 10	folder 112
Plant Studies in the People's Republic of China: A Trip Report of the American Plant Studies Delegation, 1975	box 10	folder 113
"A First Report on Agricultural and Rural Development in the Republic of China", 1980 July 12	box 10	folder 114
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Oral History, Rockefeller Foundation Program in Agriculture, Interview with Sterling Wortman, 1966 August 2, 4	box 11	folder 119
"The Case for a "Development College"	box 11	folder 120
"SUNY: A Tenth Dimension", Conference on International Programs and Activities, Albany, NY, 1979 November 1	box 11	folder 121

"The Technological Basis for Intensified Agriculture", 1969 April 23-15	box 11	folder 122
Economic Impact, A Quarterly Review of World Economics, No. 32, 1980	box 11	folder 123
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