THE WISCONSIN EXPERIMENT ASSOCIATION

The Wisconsin Experiment Association is an organization composed of farmers and other interested persons who desire to render a useful service to that portion of the people of the State of Wisconsin who make their living primarily from the cultivation of the land. The association was formed to help disseminate such special bred field crops which, as a result of many tests, have been found to be more productive than those formerly grown by the average farmer.

Owing to the wide variation in climatic and soil conditions in the state, it has become necessary to secure or develop crops which are adapted to those unusual conditions. Improvement of crops to meet these requirements has been accomplished in three ways: (1) Straight-line breeding, (2) Cross breeding, and (3) Introduction of new varieties. A combination of two of the methods named was occasionally employed. The first method was used in the production of Pedigree No. 1 oats, the second method in breeding Golden Glow corn, and the third in the dissemination of hardy strains of alfalfa.

Organization

The association was founded by Professor R. A. Moore in 1901 with 187 charter members, most of whom were students of the Short Course in Agriculture at the University that year.

The members are distributed in every county in the state. The membership increased gradually until the association had a membership of over 2,000. In order to facilitate the handling of large shipments of seeds and to perfect the work of the association, county orders were formed. Nearly all of the members of the State Association are also members of their county order. The total number of members of the association who belong either to the state organization or to their respective county orders aggregated about 5,000 in 1918.