



Dedication

Erna Bennett 83 years on August 5 ,2008



Erna Bennett in 1972

I dedicate this issue of August to Erna Bennett on her 83th birthday on August 5, 2008. As Founder of Crop Ecology and Genetic resources Unit of FAO during the sixties and seventies of the last century, she was the most pioneer of this discipline. I congratulate her and express my gratitude for her enormous contribution to Plant Genetic Resources. During all my work I was inspired by what she done in the past and in present.

Professor Swaminathan sent this message to be published at Geneconserve in this Occasion

Erna Bennett – A Crusader for Genetic Resources Conservation

I had known Erna Bennett during the nineteen sixties and seventies when she was with FAO. She and Sir Otto Frankel organized several important workshops and consultations relating to in-situ conservation and ex-situ preservation of plant genetic resources. I was deeply impressed with the commitment of Erna and her passion for protecting the rights of developing countries in the matter of equitable use of PGR. Erna's untiring efforts helped to create global awareness of the need for accelerated efforts in the area of genetic resources conservation and sustainable use. Her life and work will always remain a source of inspiration and guidance to all young scholars who wish to save plants for saving lives and livelihoods.

Erna wrote in this occasion to Geneconserve

Really, I am very touched, but feel at a loss for what to say. First of all, I must say that my eightieth birthday is already well behind me, and the time for commemorative volumes, or collections of kind words of appreciation is also long past. I did what I had to do because I believed in it, just as you too believe in what you are doing. Your own work is as important as anything I have done, and students and workers trained and inspired by you are the army of the future, who will have to face battles even more difficult than those we faced in the past. I hope you agree, so let's quietly drop ideas of pouring praise in my direction. The future will need not only the inspiration of past battles but also the toil and sweat of future struggles, greater - from the way things now seem to be developing - than any of our generation ever

faced.

Thank you, my friend, for your esteem and friendship, and here's wishing you the strength and the courage for the future.