



**Dr. Eric Putt.**

V. S. Pustovoit Award Winner 1980. Canada.

In North America, Dr. Eric Putt has been hailed as the “Father of sunflower breeding” as he pioneered sunflower investigations in that part of the world. In 1937 in Saskatoon he began developing techniques for controlling pollination, producing inbred lines, and testing the dates and rates of seeding. After the Second World War, he became an agronomist for a farmers’ co-operative which built the first plant for crushing sunflower seed in North America at Altona in Manitoba. He promoted the crop among the growers and developed a breeding program. In 1952 Agriculture Canada recruited him and his program.

Important aspects of the Canadian program led by Dr. Putt were the identification and genetics of disease resistance and other characters, some of which are still used world-wide. The program produced the first rust resistant varieties in the world. Prior to the discovery of cytoplasmic male sterility, Dr. Putt studied other means of bringing the benefits of heterosis to farmers. He has authored and co-authored more than 40 scientific publications.

Dr. Putt hosted the Second International Sunflower Conference at Morden in 1966. He served as advisor on breeding and production with FAO to Chile in 1959 to 1960 and with the Canadian International Development Agency to India in 1974 and 1975.

From Dr. Putt’s materials have come resistance to other major diseases. His genetic studies have provided theoretical support to much recent practical research.