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Guide to the Ezra J. Kraus Papers 1915-1947



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.EJKRAUS
Title	Kraus, Ezra J. Papers
Date	1915-1947
Size	2.5 linear feet (4 boxes)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract Ezra J. Kraus (1885-1960), botanist and horticulturist, served as a professor in the University of Chicago's Department of Botany from 1927-1948, and as chair of the department from 1934-1947. His research in plant physiology focused on nutrition in relation to development and behavior, established the principle of the carbohydrate-nitrogen growth ratio in plants, and pioneered the use of synthetic substances in the regulation of plant growth. During World War II, Kraus worked with the National Research Council to direct research and development of herbicides for use in biological warfare. This collection documents Ezra J. Kraus's research in agriculture and horticulture, as well as his work as an administrator at the University of Chicago, the Bureau of Plant Industry and the National Research Council.

Information on Use

Access

Open for research. No restrictions

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Kraus, Ezra J. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note

Ezra Jacob Kraus (1885-1960), botanist and horticulturist, received a bachelor's degree from Michigan State College in 1907, and a Ph.D. from University of Chicago in 1917. He held teaching positions and conducted research in agriculture and horticulture at Oregon State College and University of Wisconsin. Returning to University of Chicago in 1927, he served as a professor in the Department of Botany until his retirement as professor emeritus in 1948. In his retirement, Kraus returned to Corvallis, Oregon where he continued to teach at Oregon State College.

His research in plant physiology focused on nutrition in relation to development and behavior, established the principle of the carbohydrate-nitrogen growth ratio in plants, and pioneered the use of synthetic substances in the regulation of plant growth. In 1938, Kraus began working as principal plant physiologist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Plant Industry, where he supervised research in plant growth regulators. During World War II, he worked with the National Research Council to direct research and development of herbicides for use in biological warfare. This work led to the development of the weedkiller 2,4-D.

While at University of Chicago, Kraus held administrative positions including chair of the Department of Botany (1934-1947). He also edited the *Botanical Gazette* from 1934-1947. He held leadership positions in several professional organizations, was a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and served on advisory boards for the National Research Council and the State of Illinois. For his achievements, the American Horticultural Society named Kraus among the three greatest contributors to horticulture in the twentieth century; he also received an honorary doctorate from Oregon State College in 1938.

As a horticulture enthusiast, Kraus developed dozens of hybrid garden plant varieties, including chrysanthemums, daylilies, iris, azaleas and clematis.

Scope Note

This collection documents Ezra J. Kraus's research in agriculture and horticulture, as well as his work as an administrator at the University of Chicago, the Bureau of Plant Industry and the National Research Council. A smaller amount of material relates to his work with professional organizations, such as the American Horticultural Society.

Material in this collection consists primarily of correspondence, but also includes reports, publications, pamphlets, article drafts, research data, and photographs. Included are correspondence and reports detailing Kraus's administration of research and development of herbicides during WWII, as well as his work on biological warfare committees of the National Research Council.

Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html>

Charles E. Olmsted. Papers

University of Chicago. Department of Botany. Records

Paul D. Voth. Papers

Subject Headings

- Kraus, Ezra J.
- National Research Council (U.S.)
- United States. Bureau of Plant Industry
- University of Chicago. Department of Botany
- Biological warfare
- Botany
- Herbicides
- Botanists
- Horticulturists

INVENTORY

Box 1

Folder 1

Special gymnosperms course, 1917

Box 1

Folder 2

H.R. Kraybill, apple leaves and stems research, 1918

Box 1

Folder 3

Correspondence, 1915-1919

Box 1

Folder 4

University of Chicago Committee on Educational Policy, 1937-1939

Box 1

Folder 5

United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Plant Industry, United States Horticultural Station, 1938-1940

Box 1

Folder 6-7

United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Plant Industry, 1938-1940

Box 1

Folder 8

United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Plant Industry, C.E. Schoenhals, 1938-1940

Box 1

Folder 9

United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Plant Industry, progress reports, 1938-1940

Box 1

Folder 10

Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, Committee on Research Monographs, 1939-1940

Box 1

Folder 11

Correspondence, 1940-1946

Box 1

Folder 12

American Horticultural Society, 1941-1942

Box 2

Folder 1

University of Chicago Department of Botany, applicants for positions, 1941-1943

Box 2

Folder 2-3

Correspondence, 1942-1943

Box 2

Folder 4

National Research Council, 1942

Box 2

Folder 5

National Research Council, Division of Biology and Agriculture, Committee on Animal Nutrition, 1942-1943

Box 2

Folder 6

National Research Council, Division of Biology and Agriculture, 1942-1944

Box 2

Folder 7

National Research Council, Division of Biology and Agriculture, Committee on Animal Health, 1943

Box 2

Folder 8

United States Civil Service Commission, 1943

Box 2

Folder 9

2,4-D herbicide research, 1944-1945

Box 2

Folder 10

National Academy of Sciences and National Research Council, ABC Committee and DEF Committee, biological warfare research, 1944-1946

Box 3

Folder 1

National Research Council, biological warfare research, 1945

Box 3

Folder 2

National Research Council, Advisory Committee on Scientific Publications, 1945

Box 3

Folder 3

National Research Council, biological warfare, greeting card, 1946

Box 3

Folder 4

National Research Council, Plant Sciences Subcommittee, 1947

Box 4

University of Chicago Zoology Club, commemoration of visit to Wychwood, circa 1930s