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FOREWORD

The development of corn (*Zea mays* L.) paralleled the development of the great nations of the Western Hemisphere. Corn was a staple in the diets of the Aztecs and Incas. Its development and use by the natives and European colonists of North America and later by farmers and agricultural scientists in the USA laid a foundation of agricultural development upon which this great nation was built.

In the USA, corn emerged as a major feed crop for both domestic use and export, thus providing abundant, high-quality animal products for consumption in many nations. More recently, corn has become an important raw material for producing industrial products, such as ethanol.

Even after centuries of development, there is still great untapped potential in the corn crop. In this book, world authorities on corn describe its past development and forecast its future possibilities. The authors were chosen carefully to represent many different perspectives and areas of expertise. They represent both the seasoned veterans and the rising stars of corn research and development.

This book will serve as a valuable research and teaching reference. It provides a base of knowledge from which to launch new research efforts on corn improvement, production, and use. Hopefully, it will stimulate an expanded effort to exploit the full potential of this great species.

We particularly appreciate the efforts of Drs. George F. Sprague and John W. Dudley of the University of Illinois in performing the many duties associated with editing this book. They have made it a truly exceptional volume, one that will serve as the definitive work on corn and corn improvement for many years into the future.

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