

Dr. M.S. SWAMINATHAN DOES US PROUD
AGAIN : BAGS THE UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA BICENTENNIAL MEDALLION

To mark the bicentennial of its establishment in 1785 as the First Chartered State University in America, the University of Georgia, USA has designed and struck a special medallions and has chosen two of the most outstanding geneticist of our time to honour them with these medallions. The recipients are Dr. Barbara McClintock, the 1984 Nobel Prize Winner for her work on transposable elements and the bright star of Indian science, Dr. M.S. Swaminathan. The medallion was presented to Dr. Swaminathan during the First International Congress on Plant Molecular Biology at Savannah, Georgia on 28 October, 1985. Dr. Swaminathan also gave a scintillating inaugural plenary lecture on "Plant Research and World Agriculture" to give a good start to the Congress.

While presenting the medallion to Dr. Swaminathan, Dr. F.C. Davison, President of the University of Georgia said the following in recognition of his meritorious contributions to science and service to humanity. "I have the honour today of presenting the first medallion. The recipient is one of your most distinguished colleagues, Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, Director General of the International Rice Research Institute.

For more than 30 years, Dr. Swaminathan has conducted research in basic and applied plant genetics and agricultural research.

His work, mainly with potato, wheat and rice species, has vastly furthered our understanding of the functions and influences of genes in plants. The volume, the scope and the impact of his research are matched by few in this generation.

Dr. Swaminathan's work has substantially enlarged the body of scientific knowledge. But more importantly, it has literally meant life to millions of people around the world. The increased yields of rice and wheat that have resulted from his research, and the work of the rice research institute, have helped provide food and hope where previously there was hunger and despair.

So dramatic has been the production rise in some locales that communities have become self-sustaining, no longer dependent on outside sources for food supplies.

I can offer no finer tribute to Dr. Swaminathan than to repeat what Dr. Norman Borlaug said when he won the 1970 Nobel Peace Prize. Referring to Dr. Swaminathan's research with Mexican dwarfs, Dr. Borlaug said, "If this work had not occurred, it is quite possible that there would not have been a green revolution in Asia".

The accomplishments and contributions of Dr. Swaminathan have been recognized and acclaimed throughout the world. It is an honour for me, on behalf of the University of Georgia, to present him this Bicentennial medallion, which carries with it our highest esteem and deepest respect for his service to science and to humanity".