Erich Tschermak Von Seysenegg Encyclopedia Article

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Erich Tschermak Von Seysenegg

1871-1962

Austrian botanist who was one of three scientists to re-introduce Gregor Mendel's laws of heredity. Erich Tschermak von Seysenegg completed his doctorate at the University of Halle, then spent several years working at various seed-breeding institutions. He joined Vienna's Academy of Agriculture in 1901, where he would remain as a professor for the majority of his career. In 1898, Tschermak was conducting breeding experiments on the garden pea at the Botanical Garden of Ghent, when he discovered that his findings were similar to those of geneticist Gregor Mendel. Mendel's work with the hybridization of pea plants had lain virtually ignored for more than 30 years. Upon reviewing Mendel's papers, Tschermak realized that his findings indeed duplicated those of his predecessor. Around the same time, botanists Hugo de Vries and Carl Erich Correns also reported on their individual re-discoveries of Mendel's work. Tschermak applied Mendel's theories to the development of new plant hybrids, such as wheat-rye and a disease-resistant oat, as well as new plants, including Hanna-Kargyn barley.