

McLean County Museum of History

Funk Bros. Seed Co. Collection

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Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	2 boxes
COLLECTION DATES:	1907-1989
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History.
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	Record in National Union Catalog Manuscripts Collection On-Line
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	See also: Photograph Collection People Funk; Photograph Collection Subject Funk Bros. Seed Co.

History

The Funk family arrived in McLean County from Ohio in 1824. The family set up a homestead and farm about 10 miles southwest of Bloomington and named the area Funk's Grove. Over the years Isaac Funk acquired 22,000 acres of farmland and upon his death his sons and daughters inherited the land. Eugene Duncan (E.D.), a grandson of Isaac, formed the Funk Bros. Seed Company, Inc. in 1901 with about 12 other Funk family members. The Funk Bros. Seed Company, Inc. sought to produce higher yield corn varieties and a way to prevent diseases from attacking corn crops.

E.D. Funk was the president of the company for many years and was active in the political arena by becoming the president of the National Corn Association, a member of the Agricultural Advisory Committee of the Food Administration, and treasurer of the State Live Stock Association of Illinois. He was also selected by President Woodrow Wilson to help keep wheat prices steady. Around 1915, Funk Bros. developed a hybrid corn, Funk's Tribred. In the late 1930s the company also developed another hybrid variety, the Funk's G-Series Hybrid.

In 1967 Funk Bros. Seed Co. was purchased by CPC International, Inc. and in 1972 the company went public under the name Funk Seeds International, Inc. In 1974 the company was purchased by Ciba-Geigy. Ciba-Geigy had already been producing insecticides, pesticides, and herbicides. The company has since merged with several others: AstraZeneca and Sygenta which is still producing agricultural products.

Scope Note

This collection contains materials produced by the company including brochures, sales catalogs, and annual reports. Some company correspondence, invoices, and employee memos are also included in the collection.

Box 1

Folder 1: General History

- 1.1.1 “Centennial Catalogue Commemorating 100 Years Ownership of the Funk Farms,” by the Funk Family, assumed to be issued in 1924 (2 copies)
- 1.1.2 “Centennial Catalogue Commemorating 100 Years Ownership of the Funk Farms,” by the Funk Family, photocopy of 1926 reprint
- 1.1.3 “25th Anniversary Hybrid Seed Crop,” prepared by Funk Bros. Seed Co., copyright 1940
- 1.1.4 “History of Funk’s G-Hybrids Topics for Material Accumulation,” author unknown, outline includes 1824-1955, no date (1 pg)
- 1.1.5 “Funk’s Grove Timber,” by Helen M. Cavanagh, 1957, brochure, (8 pgs)
- 1.1.6 Letter to Albert I. Melton from E. D. Funk, Jr. that accompanied copy of *Seed, Soil and Science*, a book about Eugene Funk, December 17, 1959.
- 1.1.7 “The Founding of Funk Seeds,” compiled by Dr. Leon Steele, Funk employee and consultant, 1940-? Years recorded: 1824-1982, brochure, 28 pgs (2 copies)

Folder 2: Research Acres History

- 1.2.1 “Historical Background of Research Acres,” dated 9-20-1951, and including addendums: “A View of Funk Forest Natural Area,” dated 9-26-1951; “New Procedures for Giving Our Customers Even Better G Hybrids Are Constantly Under Study and Observation, dated 9-17-1951; and “Reprint From July 6, 1951, Saturday Evening Post,” dated 9-26-1951; author unknown, 9 pgs
- 1.2.2 “Research Acres,” document reprints first five pages of the above listed “Historical Background of Research Acres,” author unknown, undated, 5 pgs
- 1.2.3 “Still Another Million Acres in 1955,” a management booklet for mid-winter meeting in Chicago, January 1954, 24 pgs
- 1.2.4 “The 40th Anniversary of Continuous Research Making Possible Today’s and Tomorrow’s Funk’s G-Hybrids,” report for summer conference, Bloomington, Ill., Aug. 1-3, 1955, booklet, 24 pgs
- 1.2.5 “The Heritage of Research Acres,” from address delivered by E.D. Funk, Jr., to the summer conference, Bloomington, Ill., June 23, 1964, booklet, 24 pgs, copyright 1965 (3 copies)

Folder 3: Research Acres Reports and Miscellaneous Information

- 1.3.1 “Tour of Dr. J.R. Holbert and Other Members of the Funk Hybrid Corn Research Staff to Nebraska, Northwestern Iowa and Southeastern South Dakota (Oct. 24 to 30, 1943),” prepared by A.R. Crabb, E.H. Brown Advertising Agency, booklet, 25 pgs
- 1.3.2 “How Our Germinator Looks and Operates,” photos and text by Ross Vinson, undated, booklet, 16 pgs

- 1.3.3 “How the Corn Breeder Puts Insect Resistance Into Modern Hybrid Corn,” by Dr. J.R. Holbert, director-Funk Hybrid Corn Research staff, undated, booklet, 44 pgs
- 1.3.4 “The Producers of Funk’s G-Hybrids present Research Acres, a 16 mm, sound in beautiful natural color,” author unknown, undated; brochure, including Q&A, could be used a 2-minute introduction to film, “Research Acres”
- 1.3.5 Brochure for Future Farmers of America promoting film, “Research Acres” undated, author unknown

Folder 4: Annual Reports

- 1.4.1 Fiftieth Annual Report of Funk Brothers Seed Company,” fiscal year ended June 30, 1951, 8 pgs (2 copies)
- 1.4.2 Fifty-second Annual Report of Funk Brothers Seed Company,” fiscal year ended June 30, 1953, 8 pgs
- 1.4.3 Sixty-fifth Annual Report of Funk Bros. Seed Co.,” fiscal year ended June 30, 1966, 13 pgs.

Folder 5: Shareholder Reports

- 1.5.1 Prospectus and IPO for Funk Brothers Seed Company, 1950, 8 pgs
- 1.5.2 Auditors’ Report, Alexander Grant & Company, June 30, 1959, 32 pgs, plus cover
- 1.5.3 Stock Valuation Study, Alexander Grant & Company, May 1964, 37 pgs, plus cover

Also included: Reprint from *The Daily Pantagraph*, May 16, 1963, and four-page list of Funk Bros. Seed Co. employees as of 12-1-59

Folder 6: Miscellaneous Letters and Receipt

- 1.6.1 Customer’s copy of Funk Bros. Seed Co. seed cleaning and purchase record, dated October 1, 1941
- 1.6.2 Correspondence to employees regarding 1943 board of directors’ special meeting with miscellaneous shareholder information attached, 8 pgs
- 1.6.3 Correspondence to Mr. Dana Rollins dated Oct. 5, 1949, from Gene Funk Jr., requesting funding help to preserve a 63-acre tract of virgin timber that would be known as a Funk Memorial and designated as the I.G. Funk Timber, 3 pgs
- 1.6.4 Blank Funk Bros. Seed Co. stationery (two versions)

Folder 7: Employee Handbooks and Memos

- 1.7.1 “Welcome to Funk Bros. Seed Co.” brochure produced after 1963, 16 pgs
- 1.7.2 “Employees Pension and Benefit Program” brochure dated Jan. 2, 1947, 24 pgs, plus cover
- 1.7.3 “Employees Pension and Benefit Program” brochure dated June 20, 1960, 28 pgs, plus cover
- 1.7.4 “Employees Pension and Benefit Program” brochure undated but assume June 30, 1963, 20 pgs, plus cover

- 1.7.5 "The Funk's G Organization Directory, 1960-61," 29 pgs, plus cover
- 1.7.6 Memo to employees that accompanied copy of Objectives, April 18, 1967.
- 1.7.7 "21st Annual Employee Awards Funk Seeds International," 1982
- 1.7.8 "Funk Seeds International" corporate brochure including memo to employees and friends dated Dec. 11, 1984, brochure, 28 pgs, (one additional copy without memo)

Folder 8: Sales Literature

- 1.8.1 Question and Answer Series regarding corn growing, Collection booklet marked 1953-1954
- 1.8.2 "Funk's G Hybrids – Our Business Is Growing," a handbook for dealers, undated, 32 pgs
- 1.8.3 Set of Funk's G Hybrid product description sheets, undated, 19 one-page sheets

Folder 9: Sales Catalog

- 1.9.1 "Book on Corn," 1906, booklet, 30 pgs plus order form in mailing envelope (Second copy without envelope)
- 1.9.2 "Funk Bros. Seed Co., Bloomington, Illinois," booklet describing products including seed corn, legumes, and alfalfa, ca. 1931
- 1.9.3 "The Best Hybrid First From Funk," copyright 1938, booklet, 32 pgs (2 copies)
- 1.9.4 "1944 Funk's G Hybrids," 1944, booklet, 22 pgs
- 1.9.5 "A Century of Progress In Corn," 1945, booklet, 23 pgs (includes envelope)

Box 2

Folder 10: Customer Catalogs and Advertising Materials

- 2.10.1 Post cards (Funk Bros. Seed Co., postmarked Ill. 1909; Picking Funk Bros. Seed Corn, Bloomington, Ill., postmarked April 8, 1909; Funk's G Hybrids, undated)
- 2.10.2 Funk Bros. Seed Co. catalog, "100 Years of Seed Success," circa 1922, 20 pgs
- 2.10.3 Funk's Bros. Seed Co. price list with "True Stories About Funk Hybrid Corn" insert," both dated 1938, (1 sheet each)
- 2.10.4 Funk Bros. Seed Co. order form, 1938, (1 sheet)
- 2.10.5 Funk Bros. Seed Co. order form, 1940. Also included is a letter regarding last year's shipment to Frank Irvin and a return envelope.
- 2.10.6 Funk's G Hybrid advertisement, *The Prairie Farmer*, January 11, 1941, 1 pg
- 2.10.7 Funk's G Hybrids Corn Guide, circa 1948, 4 pgs
- 2.10.8 Funk's G Hybrid Corn Order Blank. Undated. 1 page order form with return envelope
- 2.10.9 Productive Profitable Pastures brochure.
- 2.10.10 Brome Grass For Green Pasture brochure

Folder 11: Hybrid G Corn Data Notebooks, Each pocket-size booklet contains corn data and notes pages. (1941-1964)

- 2.11.1 25th Anniversary Souvenir Notebook, 1941
- 2.11.2 Corn Data Notebook, 1942.
- 2.11.3 Corn Data Notebook, 1942 (2 copies)
- 2.11.4 Corn Data Notebook, 1945 (2 copies)
- 2.11.5 Funks Corn Data Notebook, 1946 (3 copies)
- 2.11.6 Funk's Corn Data Notebook, 1947
- 2.11.7 Funk's Corn Data Notebook, 1948
- 2.11.8 Corn Data Notebook, 1949 (3 copies)
- 2.11.9 Corn Data Notebook, J.C. Robinson Seed Co., (associate grower, Waterloo, Neb.), 1950
- 2.11.10 Corn Data Notebook, 1951
- 2.11.11 Corn Data Notebook, 1952
- 2.11.12 Corn Data Notebook, 1953 (2 copies)
- 2.11.13 Corn Data Notebook, 1954
- 2.11.14 Corn Data Notebook, 1955
- 2.11.15 Corn Data Notebook, 1957 (2 copies)
- 2.11.16 Corn Data Notebook (20th edition), 1958
- 2.11.17 Corn Data Notebook (21st edition), 1959
- 2.11.18 Corn Data Notebook (22nd edition), 1960
- 2.11.19 Corn Data Notebook, 1963 (2 copies)
- 2.11.20 Corn Data Notebook, 1969
- 2.11.21 Booklet, "Seedsmen to the World," 1970 or 1971

Folder 12: News Script and Clippings

- 2.12.1 Aerial photo of 25,000 witnessing a husking classic of the Corn Belt, November 23, 1930, photocopy
- 2.12.2 "Visitors See First Funk Corn Picked," *Pantagraph*, Sept. 20, 1950
- 2.12.3 "Dr. James Holbert Dies at Funk Plant," *Pantagraph*, Feb. 8, 1957
- 2.12.4 "Preparing for Exhibit" and "Lapidary Show Linked with Funk's Opening," *Pantagraph* Aug. 25, 1963
- 2.12.5 "Pitchfork for Coat Rack," *Pantagraph*, Dec. 10, 1967
- 2.12.6 "Friends, Workers Honor Funk," *Pantagraph*, Aug. 8, 1969
- 2.12.7 "Seed Company Faces New Sales Challenges," *Pantagraph*, Dec. 16, 1973, p. A-7
- 2.12.8 "Funk Forced to Alter Marketing Methods," *Pantagraph*, Dec. 17, 1973
- 2.12.9 "Change in '60s for Seed Firm," *Pantagraph*, Dec. 18, 1973, p. A-6
- 2.12.10 "New stand after 75 Years," *Pantagraph*, Mar. 1, 1976, p. A-11
- 2.12.11 "Funk may move offices; costs cited," *Pantagraph*, June 11, 1988
- 2.12.12 "Shift to N.C. Funk to halve B-N staff," *Pantagraph*, no date and "Smart quitting Funk to avoid move," *Pantagraph*, Aug. 2, 1988, p. A-3
- 2.12.13 "Funk Seeds changes name," *Pantagraph*, June 21, 1989, p. C-2
- 2.12.4 Funk Folks newsletter, Vol. 1, No. 2, September-October 1963, 4 pgs
- 2.12.5 Doug Williamson's WJBC's Forum script, Aug. 4, 1988, 2 pgs

Folder 13: General Miscellaneous

- 2.13.1 "Corn," a newsletter announcing the National Corn Association officers, including President Eugene D. Funk, constitution and bylaws, Chicago, October 1907, 4 pgs
- 2.13.2 "Funk Farms Picnic," Funk's Grove, Illinois, July 9, 1915, 8 pgs
- 2.13.3 "Bloomington Is the HyBrid Corn Capital of the World," circa 1940s, 4 pgs
- 2.13.4 "The Great Story of Corn," booklet. Copyright, 1947, Funk Bros. Seed Co., 32 pgs
- 2.13.5 Eugene D Funk Sr. recognized in the "Leader, Agricultural Statesman, Friend" booklet, a document that was the outgrowth of a banquet honoring Dr. W.L. Burlison on June 27, 1951
- 2.13.6 "Seed Trade News," the weekly newspaper of the Seed Industry, Chicago, November 6, 1957, 12 pgs
- 2.13.7 "Thorp Seed Co.," an affiliate of Funk's G Hybrid, brochure, 1966, 16 pgs (2 copies)
- 2.13.8 Funk Seeds calendar, 1986
- 2.13.9 Funk Seeds calendar, 1989

Loose items in box 2:

Funk Seeds International, Inc. - Public Offering of 2,550,000 Shares of Common Stock, September 12, 1972. Bound book, 66 parts.