

Ernst Athearn Bessey was born on February 20, 1877 in Ames, Iowa. He attended the University of Nebraska where his father and famed botanist, Charles Edwin Bessey, was a professor. From the same school, he received a Bachelor of Arts in 1896, a Bachelor of Science in 1897, and a Master of Arts in 1898. He completed his doctoral work at the University of Halle in Germany in 1904. In 1910, Bessey became professor of Mycology and Botany at Michigan Agricultural College. In 1927, he became Acting Dean of the Division of Applied Science and later served as Dean of the Graduate School from 1930 to 1944. In 1941, Bessey founded the Mycological Society of America, for which he served as its president in the same year. He died on July 17, 1957. Bessey Hall on MSU's campus is named in his honor.