



NORTH DAKOTA Farm Research

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Director's Column

H. Roald Lund



Forty years ago, a young man from Thodenskjold Township in Barnes County started school at the NDAC. He was the first child in his family and among the first in his community to go to college. The Korean War was in progress, 15B stem rust had reduced his father's durum crop to a small pile of shriveled wheat in the granary, and there were only six people in his graduating class. The loss of farms and small towns in North Dakota had started.

Fortunately, an uncle and aunt without children gave him 200 bushels of Kubanka durum from their 1948 crop. That, plus a \$200 Sears Roebuck scholarship secured by encouragement from his mother, a Valley City State Teacher's College graduate, sent him on his way to the NDAC.

I was that young man. At the NDAC, I met Dr. H.L. Walster, the dean and director for agriculture. He was a great mentor for us farm boys, away from home at the big college! I was encouraged to apply for work in Professor Stoa's Department of Agronomy, and was sent to Dr. Ruben Heermann, the USDA durum wheat breeder on campus at that time. He had succeeded Dr. Glenn Smith who now worked with Dr. L.R. Waldron, principal HRS wheat breeder. I worked for Dr. Heermann until 1958 and completed a master's degree in agronomy.

This story illustrates the impact of mentoring and impact that the cereal grains industry has had upon my life and profession. The economy of the state of North Dakota has been and is tied to a viable cereal grain industry and to a strong work ethic by its public employees. Today, we lead the nation and the world in publicly supported HRS and durum wheat breeding. Very few of the varieties grown in this region did not have their roots in the soil owned by the people of this state, the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station.

A legacy started many years ago continues today, with bright young minds, shiny new buildings, and tools of new technology. My confidence in the future soars when I meet in halls of the buildings at NDSU the confident and poised young men and women, many of whom will be second and third generations of college graduates from the farms and ranches of North Dakota. Please note the lead article in this issue, Plant Science in the Next Century. It is an emerging success story.

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On the Cover: The new Loftsgard Hall on the NDSU campus forms the center of the complex that houses plant science teaching and research. In this issue Earl Foster, chair of Crop and Weed Sciences, discusses directions in the plant sciences and crop agriculture into the next century. Photo by Dana Sherman.

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