



NORTH DAKOTA
Farm Research

Bimonthly
Bulletin

Vol. 34, No. 6

July-August, 1977



Guest Column



Orville J. Banasik
Chairman, Department of
Cereal Chemistry
and Technology

Unique, different and unusual are words that could be used to describe the Department of Cereal Chemistry and Technology at NDSU. It was the first university-funded department of milling and baking to be established in the United States.

In 1905 the North Dakota Legislature passed a bill authorizing a milling and baking testing program but did not appropriate any funds for the purpose. It was not until the 1907 legislature met that \$6500 was appropriated for the building and equipment. It was this kind of foundation that the North Dakota producer used to establish his reputation for producing a high quality wheat.

The immediate objective of the work of the laboratory was to determine the milling and baking quality of different varieties of wheats grown in different parts of the state. A secondary objective was to enlarge the work to include collaborative studies with the milling industry and possibly for training students in wheat quality testing.

The work of the department during the first decade was concerned mainly with the first objective, which was the quality evaluation of hard red spring (also known as dark northern spring) wheat varieties. In addition, studies were conducted on the effect of storage, bin burn, bleached and frosted wheat on milling and baking properties. Spring wheat physical characteristics in relationship to milling and baking characteristics were studied during this period. Grain quality standards for hard red spring wheat were developed and ultimately became a part of the U.S. Grain Standards Act in 1918.

The first university-sponsored durum wheat quality program was established in the department in 1938. This is still the only university durum wheat quality laboratory in the U.S.

Although wheat is king of the spring grown cereal grains in North Dakota, barley quality is a very important part of our work. The first university-sponsored barley quality laboratory in the U.S. was established at NDSU in 1947.

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On the Cover: The career of William J. Promersberger, recently retired chairman of the Department of Agricultural Engineering, spanned many changes and developments in agricultural equipment as evidenced by the collection of model machinery in his office. Promersberger donated the collection to NDSU on his retirement. (Photo by Jim Berg)

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A BIMONTHLY progress report published
by the
**Agricultural Experiment Station,
North Dakota State University of
Agriculture and Applied Science**
Fargo, North Dakota 58102
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of Agricultural Experiment Station*
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NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY
of Agriculture and Applied Science
University Station
Fargo, North Dakota 58102
Publication

Allen L. Hayes

DIRECTOR

to

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE
AGR 101



BULK THIRD-CLASS

